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Európsky parlament

OTÁZKY NA PÍSOMNÉ ZODPOVEDANIE

2013/C 355 E/01 Otázky na písomné zodpovedanie, ktoré predložili poslanci Európskeho parlamentu, a odpovede inštitúcií Európskej únie na ne 1

(Pozri poznámku pre čitateľa)

SK

Poznámka pre čitateľa

Táto publikácia obsahuje otázky na písomné zodpovedanie, ktoré predložili poslanci Európskeho parlamentu, a odpovede inštitúcií Európskej únie na ne.

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ECR	Európski konzervatívci a reformisti
GUE/NGL	Konfederatívna skupina Európskej zjednotenej ľavice – Severskej zelenej ľavice
EFD	Skupina Európa slobody a demokracie
NI	Nezaradení poslanci

SK

IV

(Informácie)

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OTÁZKY NA PÍSOMNÉ ZODPOVEDANIE

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(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000766/13
an die Kommission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(25. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Subventionierung der polnischen Fenster- und Türenindustrie mit europäischen Fördergeldern zu Lasten anderer EU-Mitgliedstaaten

Mit Unterstützung durch den Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE) fördert das polnische Wirtschaftsministerium den Export von in Polen hergestellten Fenstern und Türen. Ziel dieser Exportbeihilfen ist jedoch nicht die Erschließung neuer Märkte außerhalb der EU-Mitgliedstaaten, sondern die Förderung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit innerhalb des EU-Binnenmarktes. Nach den vorliegenden Informationen zielen die Beihilfen insbesondere auf die Vermarktung auf den Absatzmärkten der Mitgliedstaaten Deutschland, Frankreich, Tschechische Republik und Schweden ab.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission diese durch europäische Fördergelder unterstützten Maßnahmen, die polnischen Unternehmen einen strategischen Vorteil auf den Märkten anderer EU-Mitgliedstaaten verschaffen und besonders heimische kleine und mittlere Unternehmen ernsthaft in ihrer Wettbewerbsfähigkeit gefährden?

2. Welche Maßnahmen ergreift die Kommission, um die Verwendung von EU-Haushaltsmitteln zum Vorteil einzelner und Nachteil vieler Mitgliedstaaten zu verhindern?

3. Sieht die Kommission in den Subventionen der polnischen Fenster- und Türenindustrie einen Verstoß gegen Artikel 107 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union, der Beihilfen zur Förderung gewisser Wirtschaftszweige nur dann gestattet, wenn sie die Handelsbedingungen nicht in einer Weise verändern, die dem gemeinsamen Interesse zuwiderläuft?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(20. März 2013)

Wie die Kommission bereits in ihren Antworten auf die Anfragen E-010805/2012, E-010830/2012, E-011184/2012, E-011525/2012, E-011533/2012 und E-000389/2013 erläutert hat, ist eine Beschwerde über staatliche Beihilfen eingegangen, die die polnische Regierung in Polen ansässigen Fenster- und Türenherstellern zur Förderung ihrer Ausfuhren gewährt haben soll.

Diese Beschwerde wird derzeit von den Dienststellen der Kommission geprüft. Es ist bekannt, dass für die in Rede stehende Maßnahme EFRE-Mittel verwendet werden.

Im Rahmen der Prüfung haben die Kommissionsdienststellen ein Auskunftsersuchen an Polen gerichtet, auf das sie vor kurzem eine Antwort erhalten haben. Anhand dieser Auskünfte und der vom Beschwerdeführer übermittelten Informationen sollten die Kommissionsdienststellen jetzt prüfen können, ob die Maßnahme mit den Artikeln 107 und 108 AEUV im Einklang steht.

Gelangt die Kommission zu dem Ergebnis, dass die gewährte Unterstützung nicht mit dem Binnenmarkt vereinbar ist, wird sie Polen auffordern, die Beihilfen von den Begünstigten zurückzufordern. Die Begünstigten müssten dann die bisher erhaltenen staatlichen Beihilfen in voller Höhe zuzüglich Zinsen an den polnischen Staat zurückzuzahlen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000766/13
to the Commission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(25 January 2013)

Subject: Use of EU funding to subsidise the Polish window and door industry to the detriment of other EU Member States

The Polish Ministry of the Economy supports the export of windows and doors manufactured in Poland with the help of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Yet the aim of these export subsidies is not to open up new markets outside the EU Member States, but to boost competitiveness within the EU's internal market. According to the information available, the subsidies are aimed in particular at supporting marketing measures carried out on the markets of the Member States Germany, France, the Czech Republic and Sweden.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. What is the Commission's assessment of these EU-funded measures, which provide Polish companies with a strategic advantage on the markets of other EU Member States and seriously jeopardise the competitiveness of domestic companies, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises?

2. What steps is the Commission taking to prevent EU funds being used to benefit individual Member States to the detriment of many others?

3. Does the Commission believe that the subsidisation of the Polish window and door industry violates Article 107 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which only permits subsidies to be granted to certain economic sectors in cases where they do not adversely affect trading conditions to an extent contrary to the common interest?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2013)

As the Commission already explained in its answer to Question E-010805/2012, E-010830/2012, E-011184/2012, E-011525/2012, E-011533/2012 and E-000389/2013 the Commission has received a complaint about the alleged state aid granted by Poland in favour of window and door producers located in Poland to promote their export activities.

The Commission services are currently analysing this complaint and are aware of the fact that the measure in question is based on ERDF support.

As part of the assessment, the Commission services requested information from the Polish authorities, which it recently received. This information together with the data provided by the complainant should allow the Commission services to assess the measures in the light of Articles 107 and 108 TFEU.

If the Commission finds that incompatible aid has been granted, it orders the Member State to recover the incompatible aid from the beneficiaries. In such a hypothesis, beneficiaries would then be required to pay back to the Member State's budget the amount of the state aid received together with the applicable interests.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000767/13
an die Kommission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(25. Januar 2013)

Betrifft: Versorgung des EU-Zuckermarktes mit Importen aus AKP-Staaten und den am wenigsten entwickelten Ländern (LDC) im Rahmen des EU-Zuckerquotensystems

Ein wesentliches Kennzeichen des EU-Zuckermarktes ist seine Mengenregulierung. Die Produktion von Quotenzucker ist derzeit auf 85 % des EU-Eigenbedarfs begrenzt. Die restlichen 15 % sollen durch Zuckerimporte aus den AKP-Staaten und den am wenigsten entwickelten Ländern (LDC) abgedeckt werden.

Die AKP-Staaten und LDC-Länder sind offenbar nicht in der Lage, ausreichende Mengen Zucker am EU-Markt bereitzustellen. Seit Ende 2010 war die Kommission daher immer wieder gezwungen, Notmaßnahmen zu ergreifen, um das Gleichgewicht am EU-Zuckermarkt wiederherzustellen. So wurden in den letzten beiden Jahren 2,4 Mio. Tonnen Zucker zusätzlich verfügbar gemacht. Auch für 2013 werden Engpässe erwartet, die erneute Eingriffe durch die Kommission erfordern werden.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wie erklärt die Kommission die fehlenden Mengen aus den AKP- und LDC-Ländern am EU-Zuckermarkt ?

2. Wie schätzt die Kommission die künftige Attraktivität des EU-Marktes für Lieferungen von Zucker aus LDC-/AKP-Staaten ein?

3. Wie bewertet die Kommission die zukünftige Entwicklung der Weltmarktpreise vor dem Hintergrund der steigenden Nachfrage nach zuckerhaltigen Lebensmitteln weltweit und der Nachfrage nach Biokraftstoffen und Bioenergie?

4. Welche Lösungsansätze verfolgt die Kommission, um zukünftig ausreichend Zucker aus den AKP-/LDC-Staaten zur Versorgung des europäischen Marktes zu gewährleisten?

5. Wie schätzt die Kommission die Entwicklung der heimischen Zuckererzeugung bei Abschaffung des Zuckerquotensystems im Jahr 2015 ein, und wie sieht sie die Entwicklung der Einfuhren aus den LDC-/AKP-Staaten in die EU?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(12. März 2013)

Die Kommission bestätigt, dass in den vergangenen Wirtschaftsjahren auf dem EU-Zuckermarkt Knappheit herrschte, da die Einfuhren aus den AKP-Staaten und den am wenigsten entwickelten Ländern (LDC) die Diskrepanz zwischen der mengenbegrenzten Zuckererzeugung der Europäischen Union und dem EU-Verbrauch nicht vollständig decken konnten.

1. Der langsame, aber stetige Anstieg der Ausfuhren aus AKP-/LDC-Ländern in die EU ist auf mehrere Faktoren zurückzuführen. Die Weltmarktpreise waren in den letzten drei Jahren besonders hoch, so dass der EU-Markt weniger attraktiv war und die AKP-/LDC-Länder von den hohen Preisen auf regionalen Märkten sowie auf dem Weltmarkt profitierten. Im Jahr 2011 führten die AKP-/LDC-Länder weltweit 3,2 Mio. t Zucker aus, wovon lediglich 1,9 Mio. t in die EU gelangten.

2.-3. Wie die Folgenabschätzung der EU zeigt, wird die EU voraussichtlich ein Nettoimpor-teur ([1]) bleiben, und die EU-Zuckereinführer werden auch weiterhin zoll- und quotenfreien Zucker von AKP-/LDC-Partnern beziehen. Die Kommission geht davon aus, dass die EU-Einfuhren aus diesen Ländern künftig weiter steigen werden, da der EU-Zuckermarkt aufgrund der über den Weltmarktpreisen liegenden EU-Preise attraktiv ist.

4. Die Zuckereinfuhren von AKP-/LDC-Partnern sind bereits zoll- und quotenfrei. Es ist Sache der Einführer in der EU, sich größere Zuckermengen mit solchem Präferenzursprung zu sichern.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/analysis/perspec/cap-2020/impact-assessment/full-text_en.pdf

5. Im Rahmen der am 12. Oktober 2011 verkündeten Reform der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik (GAP) hat die Kommission nicht vorgeschlagen, die Zuckerquotenregelung über den 1. Oktober 2015 hinaus zu verlängern. Aus Sicht der Kommission ist die Abschaffung des Quotensystems die geeignetste Lösung, um dem Zuckersektor eine langfristige Perspektive zu geben. Das Verhältnis zwischen der EU-Zuckererzeugung (Zuckerrüben) und Zucker aus den AKP-/LDC-Ländern (Rohrzucker) wird von der relativen Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der beiden Wirtschaftszweige abhängen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000767/13
to the Commission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(25 January 2013)

Subject: Supply of imports from the ACP countries and the least-developed countries (LDCs) to the EU sugar market under the EU sugar quota system

The regulation of volumes is a key characteristic of the EU sugar market. In-quota sugar production is currently restricted to 85 % of EU demand. Imported sugar from the ACP countries and the least-developed countries (LDCs) is supposed to cover the remaining 15 %.

The ACP countries and LDCs are apparently not able to supply the EU market with sufficient quantities of sugar. On a number of occasions since late 2010, therefore, the Commission has been forced to take emergency measures in order to stabilise the EU sugar market. An additional 2.4 million tonnes of sugar were made available in the past two years, for example. Shortages are expected again in 2013, requiring fresh intervention by the Commission.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. What is the Commission's explanation of the shortfall in supplies of sugar from the ACP countries and the LDCs to the EU sugar market?

2. How attractive does the Commission believe the EU market will be in future for exporters of sugar from the LDCs/ACP countries?

3. How does the Commission expect global market prices to develop in future, given the increasing global demand for foods that are high in sugar and the demand for biofuels and bioenergy?

4. Which approaches is the Commission pursuing in order to ensure that the ACP countries/LDCs can supply the European market with sufficient quantities of sugar in future?

5. How does the Commission expect domestic sugar production to change following the abolition of the sugar quota system in 2015, and what changes does it expect in terms of imports from the LDCs/ACP countries into the EU?

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

The Commission confirms that in recent marketing years the EU sugar market has been facing a shortage of sugar, as imports from ACP/ LDCs did not entirely fill the gap between Union sugar production under quotas and EU consumption.

1. Several factors explain the gradual but continuing rise in ACP/LDCs exports to the EU. World market prices have been particularly high over the last 3 years and the EU market has been therefore less attractive and ACP/LDCs took advantage of high priced regional and world markets. ACP/LDCs exported in 2011 worldwide 3.2 million tonnes of sugar, of which only 1.9 million tons to the EU.

2-3. As shown in the EU's impact assessment, EU is expected to remain a net importer ([1]) and EU sugar importers will continue to import from ACP/LDCs partners duty free and quota free. The Commission expects that the Union imports from these countries will continue to increase in the future because of EU sugar market attractiveness, due to EU prices higher than world prices.

4. Sugar imports from ACP/LDCs partners are already duty free quota free. It is up to the EU importers to secure increasing supplies of sugar from these preferential origins.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/analysis/perspec/cap-2020/impact-assessment/full-text_en.pdf

5. In the context of the Common Agricultural Policy reform announced on 12 October 2011, the Commission has not proposed to prolong the sugar quota regime beyond 1st October 2015. For the Commission the end to the quota system is the most appropriate option for providing the sugar sector with a long-term perspective. The balance between EU (beet) sugar production and ACP/LDCs (cane) sugar will depend on the relative competitiveness of both industries.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-001060/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(31 de enero de 2013)

Asunto: Dique flotante de Navantia en la ría de El Ferrol

Según informaciones aparecidas en los medios de comunicación, la compañía Navantia habría paralizado sus planes para construir un dique flotante en la ría de El Ferrol destinado a la reparación de grandes buques en sus astilleros Fene-Ferrol basándose en una supuesta negativa comunitaria.

¿Ha sido presentado o notificado a la Comisión algún proyecto de construcción de un dique flotante en la ría de El Ferrol destinado a la reparación de grandes buques por parte de Navantia?

¿Ha expresado la Comisión alguna negativa con relación a algún proyecto de esta naturaleza?

¿Puede indicar la Comisión si ha sido consultada por parte del SEPI, de Navantia o de alguna autoridad autonómica o estatal española sobre la posibilidad de un proyecto de estas características?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de marzo de 2013)

Las autoridades autonómicas españolas y el SEPI discutieron informalmente este proyecto con los servicios de la Comisión responsables de las ayudas estatales. El proyecto no se notificó formalmente a la Comisión para su evaluación con arreglo a las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001060/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(31 January 2013)

Subject: Navantia's plans to build a floating dock in the Ferrol estuary

According to media reports, Spanish company Navantia has suspended its plans to build a floating dock in the Ferrol estuary (Galicia) after objections were raised to them at EU level. Navantia had planned to use the dock to moor large ships sent in for repairs at the Fene-Ferrol shipyard.

Has the Commission been presented with or notified of any plans to build a floating dock in the Ferrol estuary where large ships undergoing repairs at the Navantia shipyard could be moored?

Has the Commission raised objections to a project of this kind?

Can it say whether it has been consulted by Spain's state-owned industrial holding company (SEPI), Navantia or any Spanish regional or central government authority about the possibility of carrying out such a project?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

The Spanish regional authorities and SEPI informally discussed this project with the responsible state aid services of the Commission. The project was not formally notified to the Commission for assessment under EU State aid rules.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-001061/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(31 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ραγδαία εξάπλωση ενεχυροδανειστηρίων σε κράτη μέλη λόγω οικονομικής κρίσης — Ανάγκη νομοθετικής ρύθμισης σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο

Στην τριετία 2010-2012, δηλαδή στην χρονική περίοδο που εκδηλώνεται με σφοδρότητα η οικονομική κρίση, στην Ελλάδα παρατηρείται κατακόρυφη άνοδος και ραγδαία εξάπλωση της λειτουργίας ενεχυροδανειστηρίων και καταστημάτων αγοράς χρυσού. Σύμφωνα με αξιόπιστες πληροφορίες, μέσα σε 3 χρόνια έχουν δημιουργηθεί περίπου χίλιες τέτοιες εμπορικές επιχειρήσεις. Με βάση στοιχεία που δόθηκαν πρόσφατα στη Βουλή των Ελλήνων από τον αρμόδιο υφυπουργό Οικονομικών, το ποσοστό παραβατικότητας αυτών των επιχειρήσεων ξεπερνά το 60%. Ενδεικτικά αναφέρεται ότι σε 292 ελέγχους που πραγματοποίησε το Σώμα Δίωξης Οικονομικού Εγκλήματος διαπίστωσε 1 885 παραβάσεις. Πρόκειται για φαινόμενο που έχει τις ρίζες του στην βαθιά οικονομική ύφεση που πλήττει με επώδυνο τρόπο την Ελλάδα και τους Έλληνες πολίτες. Η ραγδαία ανάπτυξή τους σε συνδυασμό με τα πολύ υψηλά ποσοστά παραβατικότητας (μη σύννομη ίδρυση και λειτουργία, φοροδιαφυγή, τοκογλυφία, κ.λπ.) των δραστηριοτήτων τους, καθιστά επιτακτική την ανάγκη για ένα αυστηρό πλαίσιο λειτουργίας και ελέγχου τους ώστε να διασφαλιστεί η προστασία των συμφερόντων των πολιτών και του κράτους.

Με δεδομένο ότι η οικονομική κρίση και η μεγάλη ύφεση, καθώς και τα νοσηρά αποτελέσματα τους, δεν πλήττουν μόνο την Ελλάδα αλλά και έναν αυξανόμενο αριθμό κρατών μελών, ειδικά στον ευρωπαϊκό νότο, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Παρακολουθεί με τη δέουσα προσοχή τη ραγδαία ανάπτυξη και επέκταση αυτού του φαινόμενου και, εάν ναι, ανησυχεί για την ανάπτυξη αυτή; Ποια είναι τα στοιχεία που έχει στη διάθεσή της για το τι συμβαίνει στην Ελλάδα, καθώς και σε άλλες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, για το ζήτημα αυτό την περίοδο 2010-2012;

— Πιστεύει ότι είναι αναγκαίο να υπάρξει συγκεκριμένη ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία που θα αφορά και θα ρυθμίζει σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο τους όρους ίδρυσης, λειτουργίας και ελέγχου της συγκεκριμένης κατηγορίας επιχειρήσεων, οι οποίες συχνά λειτουργούν ως παρατράπεζες, και, κατά συνέπεια, διαμορφώνουν μια παρατραπεζική αγορά που αποβαίνει σε βάρος των πολιτών και των φορολογικών εσόδων του κράτους;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Μαρτίου 2013)

Οι δραστηριότητες των ενεχυροδανειστηρίων, δηλ. η χορήγηση δανείων που εξασφαλίζονται με προσωπικά περιουσιακά στοιχεία, δεν φαίνεται να υπόκεινται σε άδεια βάσει της οδηγίας 2006/48/ΕΚ σχετικά με την ανάληψη και την άσκηση δραστηριότητας πιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων (οδηγία περί κεφαλαιακών απαιτήσεων — CRD). Εξ όσων γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή, οι εν λόγω οντότητες δεν ασκούν δραστηριότητα που συνίσταται «στην αποδοχή από το κοινό καταθέσεων ή άλλων επιστρεπτέων κεφαλαίων» και επομένως δεν αποτελούν πιστωτικά ιδρύματα κατά την έννοια της οδηγίας CRD.

Δεδομένου ότι δεν υφίστανται σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο απαιτήσεις προληπτικής εποπτείας οι οποίες να αφορούν συγκεκριμένα τα ενεχυροδανειστήρια, οι εθνικές αρχές είναι καταρχήν αρμόδιες, σύμφωνα με τη Συνθήκη, για τον περιορισμό ανάλογων δραστηριοτήτων. Σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη, τα ενεχυροδανειστήρια περιορίζονται πράγματι σε οντότητες που υπόκεινται σε προληπτική ρύθμιση και εποπτεία.

Η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε πέρυσι Πράσινη Βίβλο σχετικά με το σκιώδες τραπεζικό σύστημα. Από τη διαβούλευση και τις ποικίλες παρατηρήσεις που ακολούθησαν τη δημοσίευση της Πράσινης Βίβλου, περιλαμβανομένης της έκθεσης ιδίας πρωτοβουλίας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου («έκθεση El Khadraoui»), οι δραστηριότητες των ενεχυροδανειστηρίων δεν έχουν μέχρι σήμερα προσδιοριστεί ως τομέας προτεραιότητας. Η Επιτροπή θα αναπτύξει περαιτέρω τις προθέσεις της όσον αφορά το σκιώδες τραπεζικό σύστημα εντός του τρέχοντος εξαμήνου. Ένα πεδίο έρευνας θα ήταν ενδεχομένως ο εντοπισμός οντοτήτων που προτείνουν δραστηριότητες τραπεζικής υφής αλλά παραμένουν εκτός του πεδίου εφαρμογής της άδειας λειτουργίας τραπεζικού ιδρύματος. Στην περίπτωση αυτή, θα μπορούσε να διοργανωθεί διερευνητική άσκηση για τον εντοπισμό των οντοτήτων αυτών και των συναφών κινδύνων. Εφόσον οι δραστηριότητες των «ενεχυροδανειστηρίων» ενέχουν σημαντικό κίνδυνο, θα προσδιοριστούν αναλόγως.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001061/13
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(31 January 2013)

Subject: Rapid spread of pawnshops in Member States due to the economic crisis — Need for regulation at European level

In the three years 2010-2012, i.e. the time when the economic crisis violently erupted, there was a sudden increase in the number of pawnshops and shops buying gold in Greece. According to reliable information, within three years approximately one thousand such businesses were established. On the basis of information provided recently to the Greek Parliament by the deputy minister of finance, the minister responsible, over 60% of these companies are acting illegally. 292 inspections carried out by the Financial Crime Investigation Unit found 1 885 violations. This is a phenomenon that has its roots in the deep economic recession painfully affecting Greece and Greek citizens. Their rapid growth in combination with the very high rates of illegal activity involved (unlawful establishment and operation, fraud, tax evasion, usury, etc.) make it imperative to establish a strict operating and control framework so as to safeguard the interests of citizens and the state.

Given that the financial crisis and the major recession, and their harmful consequences, affect not only Greece but also an increasing number of other Member States, particularly in southern Europe, will the Commission say:

— Is it monitoring with due attention the rapid growth and expansion of this phenomenon and, if so, is it worried about this development? What data does it have about what was happening in Greece and other European countries in this area during the period 2010-2012?

— Does it believe that it is necessary to have specific European legislation regulating at European level the conditions of establishment, operation and control of enterprises of this specific type, which often function as unofficial banks, thereby forming a parallel banking market at the expense of the citizens and state tax revenue?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

The activities carried out by pawnshops, i.e. granting of loans secured by personnal property, do not seem to be subject to authorisation under Directive 2006/48/EC relating to the taking-up and pursuit of the business of credit institutions (the Capital Requirements Directive — CRD). As far as the Commission is aware, such entities do not 'receive deposits or other repayable funds from the public' and are therefore not credit institutions in the meaning of the CRD.

In the absence of any prudential requirements at European level specifically targeting pawn shops, national autorities are in principle competent to restrict such activities in compliance with the Treaty.In some Member States, pawnshops activities are indeed limited to entities subject to prudential regulation and supervision.

The Commission published a Green paper on shadow banking last year. From the consultation and various contributions following the Green paper — including the European Parliament own-initiative Report ('El Khadraoui report') -, pawnshops activities have not been identified as a priority area so far. The Commission will further detail its intention regarding shadow banking later this semester. One area of investigation could be the identification of entities proposing bank-like activities, but remaining outside the scope of the banking licence. In this case, a fact-finding exercice could be organised to identify these entities and the associated risks. Should the 'pawnshops' activities pose significant risk, they would be identified as such.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001063/13
à la Commission
Louis Michel (ALDE)
(1er février 2013)

Objet: Situation actuelle de la sidérurgie européenne

À l'heure où le secteur sidérurgique belge est en proie à un futur licenciement massif de plus de 1 300 ouvriers de l'industrie ArcelorMittal, portant un coup à l'économie belge et européenne, quelles sont les stratégies sociales que l'Union européenne pourrait adopter en vue d'endiguer le phénomène du chômage?

Plus particulièrement, compte tenu du fait que le Fonds social européen et le Fonds européen d'ajustement à la mondialisation pourraient jouer un rôle non négligeable dans le sauvetage des emplois de ce secteur en crise, deux autres questions se posent: pourront-ils agir? Et dans quel délai?

De manière générale, quelles sont les mesures proposées par l'Union pour faire respecter les règles de concurrence en matière de politique industrielle, et plus spécialement dans le domaine de la sidérurgie, au regard de l'article 102 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne?

Enfin, puisque la fermeture du site sidérurgique liégeois causera de lourds problèmes socioéconomiques, l'Union européenne est-elle compétente pour agir dans l'urgence?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(5 mars 2013)

1. Si la plupart des politiques d'emploi relèvent de la compétence nationale des États membres, la Commission propose des lignes directrices et un soutien (par exemple, dans le cadre de l'analyse annuelle de la croissance et *via* son «Paquet emploi» ([1])) visant à améliorer la résistance des marchés du travail et les investissements dans le capital humain, de manière à épauler les secteurs concernés dans leur adaptation aux changements, d'une part, et à aider les gens à rester sur le marché du travail, d'autre part. La Stratégie d'investissements sociaux adoptée récemment contient d'autres analyses et d'autres conseils quant à la façon d'employer au mieux les fonds de l'Union européenne à cette fin ([2]).

2. Pour autant que les suppressions d'emplois soient dues à la mondialisation des échanges commerciaux, la Belgique pourrait recourir au Fonds européen d'ajustement à la mondialisation (FEM) pour aider les travailleurs licenciés à retrouver un emploi au plus vite. Par ailleurs, le Fonds social européen (FSE) peut cofinancer des politiques actives du marché du travail, qui ont pour objectif d'assister les travailleurs dans leur retour sur le marché de l'emploi; ainsi, il cofinance la structure interne du SPE ([3]) wallon (Forem), qui coordonne les cellules de reclassement s'occupant de licenciements massifs.

3. L'article 102 du TFUE interdit aux entreprises d'exploiter de façon abusive une position dominante dans le marché intérieur ou dans une partie substantielle de celui-ci dans la mesure où les échanges entre États membres risquent d'en souffrir notablement. À ce stade, la Commission ne dispose pas d'indications selon lesquelles la situation du secteur de la sidérurgie pourrait justifier l'application de l'article 102 du TFUE.

4. Sous certaines conditions, le FEM peut soutenir la réinsertion professionnelle des travailleurs dans les domaines, secteurs, territoires ou bassins d'emploi touchés par des perturbations économiques graves. L'auteur de la question pourrait prendre contact avec le correspondant du FEM en Belgique et lui demander si une démarche en ce sens est envisagée pour l'instant. Des renseignements utiles figurent sur le site *web* du FEM ([4]).

([1]) Communication intitulée «Vers une reprise génératrice d'emplois» [COM(2012)173].
([2]) COM(2013)83 final du 20 février 2013.
([3]) Service public de l'emploi.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=750&langId=fr

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001063/13
to the Commission
Louis Michel (ALDE)
(1 February 2013)

Subject: Current situation in the European steel industry

At a time when the Belgian steel sector is facing large-scale redundancies, with more than 1 300 workers being laid off by ArcelorMittal, dealing a blow to both the Belgian and European economy, what social strategies could the European Union adopt to curb unemployment?

More specifically, given that the European Social Fund and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund could play a significant role in safeguarding jobs in this crisis-hit sector, two questions arise: can they take action, and if so, when?

And in general, what measures is the EU proposing as a means to enforce competition rules with regard to industrial policy, particularly in the steel sector, in view of Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?

Finally, since the closure of the Liège steelworks will cause serious socioeconomic problems, does the EU have the power to take emergency measures?

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

1. While most of employment policy is within Member States' competence, the Commission offers policy guidance and support (e.g. in the Annual Growth Survey and through its 'Employment Package' ([1])) calling for improvements in the resilience of labour markets and investments in human capital so as to help sectors adapt to change and people to remain in the labour market. The recently adopted 'Social Investment Package' offers further analysis and advice on how to make best use of EU fund to this end ([2]).

2. Provided that the redundancies were caused by trade related globalisation, Belgium could apply to the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) to support the workers made redundant to find new jobs as quickly as possible. The European Social Fund (ESF) can co-finance active market policies helping workers to regain employment, as for instance, it currently co-finances the structure inside the Walloon PES ([3]) (FOREM) in charge of coordinating the resettlement units dealing with large-scale redundancies.

3. Article 102 TFEU prohibits undertakings from abusing a dominant position within the internal market or in a substantial part of it, insofar as it may appreciably affect trade between Member States. At this stage, the Commission does not possess indications that the current situation in the steel sector could prompt the enforcement of Art. 102 TFEU.

4. Under certain circumstances, the EGF can support the re-integration into employment of workers in areas, sectors, territories, or labour market regions suffering the shock of serious economic disruption. The Honourable Member may wish to contact the EGF Contact Person for Belgium to ask whether an application is being planned. The relevant details can be found on the EGF website ([4]).

([1]) Communication 'Towards a Job-rich recovery', COM(2012) 173.
([2]) COM(2013) 83 final of 20 February 2013.
([3]) Public Employment Service.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=fr

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-001065/13
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(1 februari 2013)

Betreft: Enquête „Herziening van het Europees beleid voor biologische landbouw — Wetgeving en actieplan"

Sinds 15 januari 2013 (tot 10 april 2013) loopt op de website van de Commissie de enquête „Herziening van het Europees beleid voor biologische landbouw — Wetgeving en actieplan" ([1]).

We kregen al diverse reacties en opmerkingen over de vragenlijst. Veel consumenten vinden de vragen te technisch (bijvoorbeeld vraag 3), te tendentieus (soms zeer opvallend, bijv. 4.3) of te zwart-wit (bijv. 4.1).

Meerdere vragen vereisen een nuancering, maar hier is geen ruimte voor (zeer vergaand op dat vlak is 4.16).

Er is nauwelijks ruimte voor eigen inbreng, dat moet dan via een apart mailadres. Dit lijkt niet bepaald een aanmoediging om echt je mening te kunnen geven.

Soms is het alsof de biowetgeving alle problemen moet gaan oplossen, terwijl andere wetgeving misschien logischer is, maar ook daarvoor is geen ruimte om dit aan te geven (bijv. de vragen i.v.m. ggo's).

Is de Commissie bereid de enquête bij te sturen, of — indien niet — ze weg te halen tot een nieuwe, meer genuanceerde en klantvriendelijke vragenlijst ter beschikking is?

Antwoord van de heer Cioloş namens de Commissie namens de Commissie
(20 februari 2013)

De Commissie heeft in haar werkprogramma voor 2013 een herziening van het bestaande beleids- en wetskader voor de biologische productie opgenomen, meer bepaald Verordening (EG) nr. 834/2007 van de Raad ([2]). In dit verband is op 15 januari een openbare raadpleging — aan de hand van een online vragenlijst — van start gegaan die loopt tot 10 april. De herziening betreft de wetgeving over biologische landbouw, maar niet het wetskader over genetische gemodificeerde organismen.

Deze raadpleging is enthousiast ontvangen, zoals mag blijken uit de 25 000 antwoorden die tot dusverre zijn binnengelopen. De diensten van de Commissie hadden deze belangstelling verwacht en precies daarom is geopteerd voor een vragenlijst met gesloten vragen: de antwoorden daarop kunnen namelijk automatisch worden geanalyseerd aan de hand van statistische software. Verder uitgewerkte antwoorden kunnen eenvoudig via e-mail naar de diensten van de Commissie worden gestuurd. De Commissie heeft reeds 600 dergelijke bijdragen ontvangen.

Uit respect voor de vele mensen die de vragenlijst al hebben beantwoord, is de Commissie niet van plan de lijst te wijzigen of te verwijderen. De Commissie is van mening dat een goed evenwicht is bereikt: het publiek wordt om zijn mening over technische kwesties gevraagd zonder dat de zaak al te eenvoudig wordt voorgesteld. Hoe dan ook zullen de resultaten zorgvuldig worden geanalyseerd.

De openbare raadpleging is overigens maar één deel van het raadplegingsproces. De Commissie heeft al met meer dan 90 belanghebbende partijen gesproken en pleegt geregeld overleg met de raadgevende groep biologische landbouw.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=orgagric2013&lang=nl.

([2]) Verordening (EG) nr. 834/2007 van de Raad van 28 juni 2007 inzake de biologische productie en de etikettering van biologische producten en tot intrekking van Verordening (EEG) nr. 2092/91 (PB L 189 van 20.7.2007).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001065/13
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(1 February 2013)

Subject: The survey 'Review of EU policy on organic agriculture legislation and action plan'

Since 15 January 2013 (and due to continue until 10 April 2013), a survey has been under way on the Commission's website entitled 'Review of EU policy on organic agriculture legislation and action plan' ([1]).

We have already received various responses and comments on the survey questions. Many consumers find the questions too technical (for example Question 3), too tendentious (sometimes very much so, e.g. 4.3) or too black and white (e.g. 4.1).

A number of questions require a qualified answer, but there is no scope for this (4.16 is an extreme case).

There is hardly any opportunity for respondents to add their own contributions: anyone wishing to do so must use a separate e-mail address. This will hardly encourage people to genuinely state their opinions.

Sometimes it seems as if legislation on organic farming is expected to solve all the problems, while other legislation is perhaps more logical, but here again there is no space to indicate this (e.g. the questions on GMOs).

Will the Commission improve the survey, or — if not — remove it until a new, less oversimplified and more user-friendly list of questions is available?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The Commission work programme for 2013 includes a review of the current political and legislative framework for organic production in particular Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 ([2]). In this context, a consultation to the public through an online questionnaire was launched on 15 January and will be open until 10 April. The review covers the legislation on organic farming but not the legislative framework related to genetically modified organisms.

This consultation has been received with enthusiasm and more than 25 000 replies have been submitted so far. Such interest had been anticipated by the Commission services. This is the reason why it was decided to propose a questionnaire with close questions, for which the replies can be automatically analysed thanks to a statistical software. More qualified answers can easily be adressed to the Commmission services by simple e-mail. More than 600 of these contributions have been received so far.

In full respect to the numerous people who have already replied to the questionnaire, the Commission does not intend to modify or to remove it. The Commission considers that the right balance has been found to ask the opinion of the public on technical issues without excessive simplification. In any case, the results will be cautiously analysed.

The public consultation is only one part of the consultation process. The Commission has already interviewed more than 90 stakeholders and regularly consults the advisory group on organic farming.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=orgagric2013&lang=en.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products (OJ L 189, 20.07.2007).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001066/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(1 February 2013)

Subject: Addressing the failures of the EU regulatory system for food safety and traceability

On 15 January 2013, horsemeat DNA was found in frozen beefburgers processed at Irish plants and supplied to several Irish and British supermarkets. One of the plants in question is one of Europe's biggest burger plants and is responsible for making 200 million burgers a year.

Had it not been for the vigilance and exceptionally high standards of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, this act of food fraud would not have been detected.

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland found beefburgers containing 29 % horse DNA, for example, and the discovery led to supermarkets clearing their shelves of 10 million units of the product and Burger King cancelling their contract with the suppliers.

After a thorough investigation on the part of the Irish authorities, a Polish plant has been indentified as the source of the equine DNA content in certain beefburgers.

1. The Polish plant is an EU-accredited supplier of meat products and, given that it asserts that it does not use horsemeat in its manufacture process, could the Commission outline how its regulatory system for food safety and traceability had failed in this regard?

2. What immediate measures will be taken to address this significant breach of food safety and transparency standards?

3. As the company involved takes beef product from about five different slaughtering facilities in Poland, will the Commission give details on how it will improve standards so as to avoid a repeat of this fraudulent situation?

4. What action will the Commission take to ensure that trust is built up again in Europe's regulatory system for food safety and traceability? Does the Commission intend to increase the legal requirements for testing regimes used across the EU and to introduce widespread DNA testing?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([1]) requires food business operators to have systems and procedures in place to identify other businesses from whom and to which their products have been supplied.

The operation of this system is the responsibility of the food business operator. The role of the competent authority of the Member States is to verify the functioning of this system randomly. The Commission Inspection service, the Food and Veterinary Office, audits the Member States to verify the system.

The horse meat fraud referred to by the Honourable Member revealed lack of compliance to existing rules. The Commission therefore focuses currently on ensuring compliance.

In relation to the correct labelling of horse meat the Commission has adopted on 19 February 2013 a recommendation to the Member States ([2]) to perform 2350 DNA tests on beef products to ascertain that these products do not contain horse meat. In addition to that the Commission recommends that Member States test every 50 tonnes of horse meat on the presence of phenylbutazone which is a frequently used anti-inflammatory veterinary medicine in horses that can adversely affect human health. Both control actions are currently being carried out.

([1]) OJ L 31 1.2.2002.
([2]) OJ L 48 21.2.2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001188/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(5 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Financiación del activo circulante en las PYMES

Según la encuesta Cámaras (Consejo Superior de Cámaras de Comercio) ([1]), sobre el acceso de las PYMES a la financiación ajena en el cuarto trimestre de 2012, sólo un 24 % de ellas han intentado acceder a financiación externa en comparación con un 51,5 % en el cuarto trimestre del año 2011. Del total, sólo un 68 % obtuvo finalmente financiación. En dicho estudio, realizado sobre un universo de más de 1,4 millones de empresas, se muestra de forma nítida y fehaciente que las condiciones de acceso al crédito y sus costes han crecido de forma notable.

Según el citado estudio el 93,8 % de las PYMES han solicitado recursos ajenos para financiar el circulante para sólo un 21 % para proyectos de inversión. Cabe tener en cuenta la alta morosidad de la administración central en el Reino de España, donde el 63 % de las PYMES ha tenido problemas para cobrar, situándose el retraso medio en el cobro para las PYMES de la administración central en 7,0 meses.

A la luz de lo anterior y dada la acuciante crisis de crédito que sufre la economía productiva en el Estado español,

¿Qué piensa hacer la Comisión para que las empresas puedan financiar su circulante y poder de esta manera seguir con su actividad económica?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de abril de 2013)

La Comisión está abordando las dificultades de acceso a la financiación de las PYME a través de una serie de instrumentos financieros. Los instrumentos de capital y de garantías de préstamo del programa PIC ([2]) son gestionados por el FEI ([3]) en nombre de la Comisión y están a disposición de las PYME a través de intermediarios financieros, como los bancos, sociedades de garantía recíproca y los fondos de capital-riesgo.

El programa responde al cambio producido en la demanda de diversos tipos de financiación en algunos Estados miembros, como España, proporcionando sustancialmente más garantías de capital circulante. En España, el FEI coopera con CERSA ([4]), que ofrece contragarantías relativas a préstamos, y la Caixa, que proporciona microcréditos y cuasi-capital. Se han beneficiado de préstamos garantizados por el PIC más de 50 000 PYME españolas, que suponen una cuarta parte de todas las PYME que participaron en el programa en la EU. Con respecto al capital-riesgo, el fondo español Bullnet Capital II ha recibido financiación en el marco del PIC ([5]). En España también se puede disponer de los fondos Jeremie ([6]).

Por otra parte, el BEI ([7]) concede préstamos a bancos comerciales locales, que apoyan a las PYME a través del programa «Loans for SMEs» ([8]) del BEI. Entre 2010 y 2012, el BEI puso a disposición de las PYME españolas 6 300 millones de euros; por otra parte, el total de préstamos en 2012 aumentó un 76 % con respecto al año anterior.

([1]) http://www.camaras.org/publicado
([2]) Programa Marco para la Innovación y la Competitividad 2007-2013.
([3]) Fondo Europeo de Inversiones.
([4]) Compañía Española de Reafianzamiento S.A.
([5]) El FEI coopera con otros fondos españoles ajenos a su mandato relativo al PIC, como Cabiedes & Partners y Crossroads Biotech Fund.
([6]) En el contexto de la Iniciativa en favor de la juventud, los fondos Jeremie, que reciben una contribución del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional de unos 320 millones de euros, se han reprogramado para facilitar el acceso al crédito para las PYME españolas. Se han establecido cinco fondos Jeremie, que ya están operativos (todos ellos son gestionados por agencias nacionales u organismos regionales): Andalucía (coste total de 235 millones de euros), Cataluña (50 millones de euros), un fondo nacional en el marco del programa operativo del Fondo Tecnológico ICO-CDTI (120 millones de euros), Extremadura (coste total de 20 millones de euros), Canarias (coste total 23 millones de euros). La ejecución del fondo Jeremie en Andalucía (el mayor fondo regional en la EU hasta el momento) resulta particularmente apreciable y, dado su éxito, el Gobierno regional ha decidido completarlo con nueve fondos sectoriales similares financiadas íntegramente con recursos propios (hasta un importe total de unos 950 millones de euros). Además, a finales de 2012 se firmó con el Centro para el Desarrollo Tecnológico Industrial la creación de un fondo renovable destinado a facilitar el acceso a la financiación a las PYME innovadoras con garantías (coste total: 115 millones de euros). Se prevé la creación de otro fondo renovable en la región de Valencia por un coste total de 20 millones de euros en 2013.
([7]) Banco Europeo de Inversiones.
([8]) http://www.eib.org/projects/topics/sme/index.htm

Para el período 2014-2020, la Comisión ha presentado propuestas para una nueva generación de instrumentos financieros. El nuevo programa Cosme, para el que se ha propuesto un presupuesto de 2 500 millones de euros, se basará en la experiencia adquirida con el actual PIC. La propuesta de presupuesto de 1 400 millones de euros para los instrumentos financieros puede mejorar el acceso de las PYME a la financiación a través de un mecanismo de capital para el crecimiento y un instrumento de garantías de préstamo. Ambos completarán los instrumentos financieros en el nuevo programa Horizon 2020 ([9]).

([9]) Horizon 2020 apoyará la investigación y la innovación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001188/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(5 February 2013)

Subject: Funding of current assets by SMEs

According to the *Cámaras* survey (by the Spanish High Council of Chambers of Commerce) of access by small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) to outside funding during the last quarter of 2012, only 24 % of SMEs tried to obtain external funding during this period, compared with 51.5 % during the last quarter of 2011. Of these, only 68 % were able to obtain finance. The survey, which looked at over 1.4 million enterprises, clearly and reliably shows that the conditions for accessing credit and the costs involved have increased considerably.

According to the abovementioned survey, 93.8 % of SMEs requested outside resources to fund their current assets, against only 21 % seeking loans for investment projects. It should be noted that Spain's central administration has a high payment default rate, and that 63 % of SMEs have had problems collecting payment, encountering average delays of seven months when collecting from state authorities.

In light of the above and in view of the acute credit crisis affecting Spain's productive economy, what does the Commission intend to do to enable enterprises to finance their current assets and thereby continue their economic activity?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The Commission is addressing the difficult access to finance situation for SMEs through a variety of financial instruments. The equity and loan guarantee facilities of the CIP ([1]) programme are managed by the EIF ([2]) on behalf of the Commission and are made available to SMEs through financial intermediaries, such as banks, mutual guarantee societies and venture capital funds.

The programme is responding to the shift in demand for various types of financing in some Member States like Spain by providing substantially more guarantees for working capital. In Spain, the EIF cooperates with CERSA ([3]), which provides counter-guarantees relating to loans, and La Caixa, which provides micro-credit and quasi-equity. CIP-guaranteed loans have reached more than 50 000 Spanish SMEs, which is one quarter of all the SMEs that participated in the programme in the EU. On the risk capital side, the Spanish Fund Bullnet Capital Fund II has received investment under CIP ([4]). JEREMIE funds are also available in Spain ([5]).

Moreover, the EIB ([6]) provides loans to local commercial banks, which support SMEs through the EIB 'Loans for SMEs' programme ([7]). From 2010 to 2012, the EIB made EUR 6.3 billion available to Spanish SMEs and total lending in 2012 rose 76% compared to the previous year.

For the period 2014-2020, the Commission has put forward proposals for a new generation of financial instruments. The new COSME programme, with a proposed budget of EUR 2.5 billion, will build on experience gained from the current CIP. The proposed budget of EUR 1.4 billion for financial instruments would improve access to finance for SMEs via an Equity Facility for Growth and a Loan Guarantee Facility. These two facilities will complement financial instruments in the new Horizon 2020 programme ([8]).

([1]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme 2007-2013.
([2]) European Investment Fund.
([3]) Compañía Española de Reafinanciamiento SA.
([4]) The EIF cooperates with other Spanish funds outside its CIP mandate, i.e. Cabiedes & Partners and Crossroads Biotech Fund.
([5]) In the context of the Youth Initiative, JEREMIE funds with a European Regional Development Fund contribution of some EUR 320 million have just been reprogrammed to ease access to credit for Spanish SMEs. Five JEREMIE funds have been set up and are already operational (all of them are managed by national agencies or regional bodies): Andalucía (total cost EUR 235million), Cataluña (EUR 50 million), a national fund within the Operational Programme Technological Fund ICO-CDTI (EUR 120 million), Extremadura (total cost EUR 20 million), Canarias (total cost EUR 23 million). The implementation of the JEREMIE fund in Andalucía — the largest regional fund in the EU so far — is particularly noteworthy and, given its success, the regional government has decided to complement it with nine similar sectorial funds integrally financed by own resources (up to a total amount of some EUR 950 million). In addition, a revolving fund aiming at easing access to finance for innovative SMEs providing guarantees was signed with the Centre for Industrial Technological Development at the end of 2012 (total cost EUR 115 million). Another revolving fund is planned to be set up in the region of Valencia for the total cost EUR 20 million in 2013.
([6]) European Investment Bank.
([7]) http://www.eib.org/projects/topics/sme/index.htm
([8]) Horizon 2020 will support research and innovation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001190/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(5 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Viabilidad de la Seguridad Social

El galopante incremento del desempleo registrado en este primer mes del año 2013 en el Estado español ha hecho que la ratio entre afiliados y beneficiarios de prestaciones de la Seguridad Social española sea de tan sólo 1,93. Dicha barrera, de dos afiliados por cada beneficiario, es considerada por muchos expertos como crítica para la estabilidad y viabilidad de un sistema de reparto ([1]).

A la luz de lo anterior y dado el déficit estructural del sistema de la Seguridad Social, ¿cuál es la opinión de la Comisión sobre la viabilidad del sistema español de la Seguridad Social?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de marzo de 2013)

La Comisión está de acuerdo en que una elevada tasa de desempleo pone en peligro la sostenibilidad de los sistemas de Seguridad Social.

Es de vital importancia restablecer cuanto antes las condiciones que permitan que España y otros Estados miembros profundamente afectados por la crisis recuperen unos niveles de actividad y crecimiento económicos que impulsen la creación de puestos de trabajo. Ello conlleva, ante todo, la aplicación de las reformas estructurales y de las medidas adoptadas en el paquete de empleo y las REP.

A nivel de la UE, el Presidente de la Comisión, José Manuel Barroso, presentó un Pacto por el Crecimiento y el Empleo que fue aprobado por el Consejo en junio de 2012. La Comisión presentó una evaluación de la sostenibilidad de las finanzas públicas en el informe de 2012 sobre la sostenibilidad presupuestaria de diciembre de ese mismo año ([2]), teniendo sobre todo en cuenta el impacto del envejecimiento de la población. Asimismo, tras el paquete de empleo de abril de 2012 y el paquete de empleo juvenil de diciembre de 2012, la Comisión adoptó en febrero de 2013 un paquete de inversión social que hace hincapié en la importancia del gasto social y en la mejor forma de aumentar su eficiencia ([3]).

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2013/02/04/actualidad/1359965499_037083.html
http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/10/08/actualidad/1349724412_940535.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/fiscal-sustainability-report_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=es&catId=457&newsId=956&furtherNews=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001190/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(5 February 2013)

Subject: Viability of the Spanish social security system

The galloping increase in Spain's unemployment figures registered during the first month of 2013 has led to a ratio of only 1:93 between beneficiaries and subscribers in its social security system. This ratio, of two subscribers to each beneficiary, is considered by numerous experts as the critical threshold for the stability and viability of a distribution system.

Taking into account this situation and the structural deficit of the social security system, what is the Commission's opinion concerning the viability of Spain's social security system?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

The Commission agrees that high unemployment increases the risks for the sustainability of social security systems.

It is of crucial importance to restore as soon as possible conditions that allow Spain and other Member States that are hard-hit by the crisis to recover a level of economic activity and growth that will create jobs. This entails in particular the implementation of structural reforms and actions established in the Employment Package and CSR.

At the EU level, President Barroso has put forward a Growth and Jobs Compact that has been endorsed by the Council in June 2012. The Commission has presented an assessment of the sustainability of public finances, taking in particular account of the impact of demographic ageing, in the Fiscal Sustainability Report 2012 of December 2012 ([1]). It also adopted after the Employment Package in April 2012 and the Youth Employment Package in December 2012 a Social Investment Package in February 2013 which recalls the importance of the social spending and how they can be made more efficient ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/fiscal-sustainability-report_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1807&furtherNews=yes

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001311/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποτελέσματα θεματικής ομάδας εργασίας για την πρόωρη εγκατάλειψη του σχολείου

Για να υποστηρίξει τις προσπάθειες των κρατών μελών για την καταπολέμηση του φαινομένου της πρόωρης σχολικής εγκατάλειψης, η Επιτροπή δρομολόγησε μια θεματική ομάδα εργασίας που συγκροτήθηκε, τον Δεκέμβριο του 2011, στο πλαίσιο της ανοιχτής μεθόδου συντονισμού. Στόχος της ομάδας ήταν η χαρτογράφηση και η ανάλυση των υφιστάμενων συστημάτων των κρατών μελών και η αναζήτηση προτάσεων για την καλύτερη αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποια είναι τα αποτελέσματα που προκύπτουν από την θεματική ομάδα για την καταπολέμηση του φαινομένου της πρόωρης εγκατάλειψης του σχολείου; Ποια τα αποτελέσματα για την Ελλάδα;

— Έχει προχωρήσει η Επιτροπή σε κοινωνική χαρτογράφηση της πορείας των παιδιών που εγκαταλείπουν πρόωρα το σχολείο, όπως επανειλημμένως έχουμε ζητήσει από την Επιτροπή;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαρτίου 2013)

Η θεματική ομάδα εργασίας για την πρόωρη εγκατάλειψη του σχολείου θα δημοσιεύσει τα πρώτα αποτελέσματα των εργασιών της το 2ο εξάμηνο του 2013. Η έκθεση θα βασίζεται σε δραστηριότητες εκμάθησης από ομοτίμους, σε διαδικασίες χαρτογράφησης των αναγκών και σε μελέτες. Θα επικεντρώνεται στη συλλογή δεδομένων, στην παρακολούθηση του φαινομένου της πρόωρης εγκατάλειψης του σχολείου και στη διατομεακή συνεργασία για τον περιορισμό της πρόωρης εγκατάλειψης του σχολείου. Η έκθεση θα εξετάζει τα συνήθη προβλήματα που αντιμετωπίζουν τα κράτη μέλη και δεν θα επεκτείνεται πολύ στην εξέταση της κατάστασης σε επιμέρους χώρες

Το 2012 το έργο της θεματικής ομάδας εργασίας επικεντρώθηκε στους βασικούς λόγους που προκαλούν το φαινόμενο της πρόωρης εγκατάλειψης του σχολείου. Μέχρι σήμερα, δεν έχει εξεταστεί αναλυτικά η κατάσταση στην οποία περιέρχονται οι νέοι μετά την πρόωρη αποχώρησή τους από την εκπαίδευση και κατάρτιση. Ωστόσο, η έρευνα εργατικού δυναμικού παρέχει πληροφορίες για την επαγγελματική κατάσταση των νέων που εγκαταλείπουν πρόωρα από σχολείο: στην ΕΕ, το 54,8% των νέων που εγκατέλειψαν πρόωρα το σχολείο (ηλικίας 18-24 ετών) είναι άνεργοι ή άεργοι. Το 70% από αυτούς επιθυμεί να εργαστεί. Συγκριτικά, η συνολική ανεργία στους νέους στην ΕΕ φθάνει το 21,3% (βλέπε Education and Training Monitor 2012, που δημοσιεύτηκε τον Νοέμβριο του 2012).

Η Επιτροπή ξεκίνησε βιβλιογραφική ανασκόπηση (που προβλέπεται να ολοκληρωθεί το καλοκαίρι του 2013) για το κόστος της πρόωρης εγκατάλειψης του σχολείου που θα παρέχει, επίσης, πληροφορίες για την κοινωνική κατάσταση των νέων που εγκαταλείπουν πρόωρα το σχολείο· και ένα ερευνητικό σχέδιο μεγάλης κλίμακας για την πρόωρη εγκατάλειψη του σχολείου (τελικά αποτελέσματα μόνο το 2017), που επιπλέον θα εξετάζει την επαγγελματική πορεία αυτών των νέων. Επιπροσθέτως, η Επιτροπή προτείνει να συμπεριληφθούν στη μελλοντική έρευνα για το εργατικό δυναμικό συμπληρωματικές ερωτήσεις για τη μετάβαση από την εκπαίδευση στην εργασία, ούτως ώστε να συγκεντρωθούν περισσότερα στοιχεία για τις δυσκολίες που αντιμετωπίζουν οι νέοι που εγκαταλείπουν πρόωρα το σχολείο στην προσπάθειά τους να μπουν στην αγορά εργασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001311/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: Conclusions of the Thematic Working Group on early school leaving

In order to support efforts by the Member States to combat the problem of early school leaving, the Commission set up a thematic working group in December 2011 under the Open Method of Coordination. The aim of the group was to map and analyse existing systems in the Member States and propose better ways of combating the problem.

In view of the above:

— What conclusions did the thematic group reach in terms of combating the problem of early school leaving? What were the conclusions for Greece?

— Has the Commission mapped how earlier school-leavers have fared in social terms, as we have repeatedly called on it to do?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Thematic Working Group on Early School Leaving (ESL) will publish first results of its work in the 2nd semester of 2013. The report will be based on peer learning activities, mapping exercises and studies. It will focus on data collection and monitoring of ESL processes and on cross-sectoral cooperation to reduce early school leaving. The report will address typical problems encountered across EU Member States and will address the situation in individual countries only to a limited extent.

In 2012 the Thematic Working Group concentrated its work on the main triggers leading to ESL processes. The situation of young people after dropping out from education and training has not yet been addressed in detail. However, the Labour Force Survey (LFS) provides information on the employment status of early school leavers: across the EU, 54.8% of early school leavers (18-24 year old persons) are either unemployed or inactive. About 70% of these would like to work. By way of comparison, overall youth unemployment stands at 21.3% across the EU (see Education and Training Monitor 2012, published November 2012).

The Commission has launched a literature review (to be finalised in summer 2013) on costs of early school leaving which will also provide information on the social situation of early school leavers; and a large-scale research project on early school leaving (final results only in 2017), which will also address the career trajectories of early school leavers. In addition, the Commission proposes to include in the future LFS additional questions on the transition from education to work, thus providing more evidence on the difficulties of early school leavers to enter the labour market.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001313/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εθνικά κέντρα συνεργασίας για την επιτήρηση των συνόρων

Σύμφωνα με την από 12.12.2011 ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής, το Eurosur θα δώσει ώθηση στην ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών και τη συνεργασία μεταξύ των αρχών ελέγχου των συνόρων των κρατών μελών, καθώς και με τον Frontex. Προς τον σκοπό αυτό, κάθε κράτος μέλος. με χερσαία και θαλάσσια εξωτερικά σύνορα, θα δημιουργήσει ένα εθνικό κέντρο συνεργασίας για την επιτήρηση των συνόρων, το οποίο θα ανταλλάσσει πληροφορίες με τα υπόλοιπα εθνικά κέντρα συνεργασίας και με τον Frontex, μέσω προστατευόμενου δικτύου επικοινωνίας.

Καθώς, το 2008, η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε ανακοίνωση που καθόριζε έναν χάρτη πορείας για την ανάπτυξη, τη δοκιμή και την εφαρμογή του συστήματος και προέβλεπε ότι τα κράτη μέλη θα δημιουργήσουν εθνικά κέντρα συντονισμού για την επιτήρηση των συνόρων, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει αναφορές για το αν το σύνολο των κρατών μελών έχουν σε επιχειρησιακή ετοιμότητα εθνικά κέντρα συντονισμού για την επιτήρηση των συνόρων;

— Καθώς τον Νοέμβριο του 2011, ο Frontex διασυνέδεσε σε πιλοτική βάση τα πρώτα έξι εθνικά κέντρα συντονισμού μέσω προστατευόμενου δικτύου επικοινωνίας (τα υπόλοιπα εθνικά κέντρα συντονισμού των κρατών μελών θα συνδεθούν εντός του 2013), ποια είναι τα πρώτα εμπειρικά συμπεράσματα του πιλοτικού προγράμματος; Ανταποκρίνονται στις φιλοδοξίες της Επιτροπής όπως αυτές ορίστηκαν στον χάρτη πορείας το 2008;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Μαρτίου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο και το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο διεξάγουν επί του παρόντος διαπραγματεύσεις σχετικά με την πρόταση κανονισμού της Επιτροπής για την ίδρυση του Eurosur, σύμφωνα με την οποία τα εθνικά κέντρα συντονισμού (ΕΚΣ) πρέπει να εφαρμόσουν τον εν λόγω κανονισμό σε δύο στάδια:

— Την 1η Οκτωβρίου 2013, τα ΕΚΣ των κρατών Σένγκεν που βρίσκονται στα νότια και ανατολικά εξωτερικά σύνορα (Βουλγαρία, Κύπρος, Εσθονία, Φινλανδία, Γαλλία, Ελλάδα, Ουγγαρία, Ιταλία, Λετονία, Λιθουανία, Μάλτα, Νορβηγία, Πολωνία, Πορτογαλία, Ρουμανία, Σλοβακική Δημοκρατία, Σλοβενία και Ισπανία, και ενδεχομένως επίσης η Κροατία) θα πρέπει να εφαρμόσουν το Eurosur.

— Την 1η Οκτωβρίου 2014, τα ΕΚΣ όλων των υπολοίπων κρατών Σένγκεν θα πρέπει να εφαρμόσουν το Eurosur.

Έως τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, τα 18 κράτη μέλη που από τον Οκτώβριο του 2013 αναμένεται να εφαρμόζουν το σύστημα Eurosur δημιούργησαν τα ΕΚΣ τους, τα οποία ο Frontex συνέδεσε στο δίκτυο επικοινωνίας του Eurosur, σε πιλοτική βάση. Ορισμένα ΕΚΣ φαίνεται ότι ήδη πληρούν τις απαιτήσεις του Eurosur, ενώ τα ΕΚΣ σε αρκετά άλλα κράτη μέλη (συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Ελλάδας) εξακολουθούν να χρειάζονται τεχνική αναβάθμιση ή κατάλληλη εγκατάσταση.

Η Επιτροπή ευελπιστεί ότι το σχέδιο κανονισμού θα εγκριθεί σύντομα από τους συννομοθέτες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001313/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: National coordination centres for border surveillance

According to a Commission communication dated 12 December 2011, Eurosur will encourage information exchange and cooperation between Member States' border control authorities and with Frontex. In order to achieve this, every Member State with land and maritime external borders must operate a national coordination centre for border surveillance which exchanges information with other national coordination centres and with Frontex via a secure communication network.

Given that the Commission issued a communication in 2008 laying down a roadmap for the development, testing and rollout of the system and requiring the Member States to establish national coordination centres for border surveillance:

— Does the Commission have any information as to whether all the Member States have national coordination centres for border surveillance which are ready to operate?

— As Frontex connected the first six national coordination centres via a secure communication network in November 2011 (the national coordination centres of the other Member States will be connected during the course of 2013), what are the first empirical results of the pilot programme? Do they meet the Commission's expectations as set out in the 2008 roadmap?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2013)

The Council and the European Parliament are currently negotiating on the Commission's proposal for a regulation establishing Eurosur, according to which the national coordination centres (NCCs) should apply this regulation in two stages:

— On 1 October 2013 the NCCs of the Schengen States located at the southern and eastern external borders (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Spain; eventually also Croatia) should apply Eurosur.

— On 1 October 2014 the NCCs of all remaining Schengen States should apply Eurosur.

By December 2012 the 18 Member States which are expected to apply Eurosur as of October 2013 established their NCCs and Frontex connected their NCCs to the Eurosur communication network on a pilot basis. A number of NCCs seem to be already fulfilling the Eurosur requirements, whereas the NCCs in several other Member States (including Greece) still need to be technically upgraded or to be properly installed.

The Commission hopes that the draft Regulation will soon be adopted by the co-legislators.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001314/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιπτώσεις της παγκόσμιας επισιτιστικής κρίσης στα παιδιά

Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση της κοινωφελούς οργάνωσης «Save the children», το ένα τέταρτο των μικρών παιδιών της Γης, δηλαδή 450 εκατομμύρια παιδιά, δεν λαμβάνουν αρκετά θρεπτικά στοιχεία για να αναπτυχθούν σωστά και 300 παιδιά πεθαίνουν από ασιτία κάθε μέρα, δηλαδή περίπου 2,6 εκατομμύρια παιδιά κάθε χρόνο. Υπάρχουν μάλιστα περίπου 170 εκατομμύρια παιδιά ηλικίας έως πέντε ετών, η ανάπτυξη των οποίων παρεμποδίζεται εξαιτίας της έλλειψης φαγητού, τόσο για τα ίδια όσο και για τις μητέρες τους που τα θηλάζουν και η κατάσταση σημειώνει σημαντική επιδείνωση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Με ποιο τρόπο η ΕΕ προτίθεται να συμβάλει στην αντιμετώπιση και ανάσχεση της σημαντικής αύξησης των ποσοστών των παιδιών και των μητέρων που δεν έχουν πρόσβαση στην τροφή;

— Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το πόσα παιδιά υπολογίζεται ότι δεν λαμβάνουν αρκετά θρεπτικά στοιχεία για να αναπτυχθούν σωστά στην Ευρώπη; Σε ποια κράτη μέλη διαπιστώνονται τα μεγαλύτερα προβλήματα;

Απάντηση του κ. Piebalgs εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Η ΕΕ, μέσω της αναπτυξιακής και ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας που παρέχει, διαδραματίζει πάντα ηγετικό ρόλο όσον αφορά την αντιμετώπιση της πείνας και αποτελεί τον μεγαλύτερο δωρητή στον κόσμο όσον αφορά την επισιτιστική και διατροφική ασφάλεια. Η ΕΕ επιδιώκει να αντιμετωπίσει το σύνολο των πτυχών που σχετίζονται με την φτώχεια και την πείνα και να στηρίξει την επαρκή πρόσβαση και διάθεση ασφαλούς και θρεπτικής τροφής για όλους, μεταξύ άλλων, βοηθώντας τις χώρες να θεσπίσουν και να θέσουν σε λειτουργία συστήματα κοινωνικής προστασίας για την υποστήριξη γυναικών και παιδιών και τη διασφάλιση πρόσβασης σε τροφή. Η καταπολέμηση του υποσιτισμού είναι ζωτικής σημασίας ώστε να παρέχονται στα φτωχότερα παιδιά του κόσμου ευκαιρίες για να βγουν από τη φτώχεια και η ΕΕ δεσμεύεται να στηρίξει τις χώρες στη διαδικασία μείωσης του αριθμού των καχεκτικών παιδιών τουλάχιστον κατά 7 εκατομμύρια μέχρι το 2025. Περαιτέρω λεπτομέρειες υπάρχουν στην ανακοίνωση «Βελτίωση της διατροφής μητέρας και παιδιού στο πλαίσιο της εξωτερικής βοήθειας ([1])».

Στην ΕΕ, η προσέγγιση σχετικά με τη διατροφή πλαισιώνεται από την «Ευρωπαϊκή Στρατηγική για θέματα υγείας που έχουν σχέση με τη διατροφή ([2])». Ειδικότερα, η Επιτροπή έχει δρομολογήσει συγκεκριμένα δοκιμαστικά σχέδια που στοχεύουν στην προώθηση υγιέστερης διατροφής για τα νοικοκυριά με πρωτογενή εισοδήματα κάτω από το 50% του μέσου όρου της ΕΕ27.

Υπάρχουν περιορισμένα δεδομένα σχετικά με τη διατροφή των παιδιών στην ΕΕ. Ωστόσο, η ενότητα EU-SILC ([3]) του 2009 που αφορά την υλική στέρηση παρέχει ειδικά στοιχεία όσον αφορά τη στέρηση τροφής των παιδιών. Υπογραμμίζει ότι το 4,4% των παιδιών δεν τρέφονταν με φρέσκα φρούτα ή λαχανικά μία φορά την ημέρα και ότι περίπου το 5% δεν λάμβαναν ένα γεύμα που να περιέχει κρέας, κοτόπουλο, ψάρι ή χορτοφαγικό ισοδύναμο (πρωτεΐνες) την ημέρα λόγω οικονομικής δυσχέρειας.

Τον Οκτώβριο, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε τη δημιουργία του Ταμείου Ευρωπαϊκής Βοήθειας προς τους Απόρους με σκοπό τη στήριξη της διανομής τροφής ή βασικών αγαθών σε παιδιά που υποφέρουν από τη φτώχεια.

([1]) COM(2013)141.
([2]) COM(2007)279.
([3]) Στατιστικές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για το εισόδημα και τις συνθήκες διαβίωσης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001314/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: Impact of the global food crisis on children

According to a survey by the charity Save the Children, one-quarter of young children on this planet, that is 450 million children, fail to develop properly due to inadequate diet, and every hour of every day 300 children die of malnutrition, that is approximately 2.6 million children a year. Around 170 million children under the age of five are stunted due to lack of food, both for them and their breastfeeding mothers, and the situation is getting much worse.

In view of the above:

— How does the EU intend to help combat and check the significant increase in the numbers of children and mothers without access to food?

— Is the Commission in a position to advise how many children in Europe fail to develop properly due to poor diet? Which Member States face the worst problems?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

Through its development and humanitarian assistance, the EU has always played a leading role in tackling hunger and is the world's largest grant donor to food and nutrition security. The EU seeks to tackle all aspects related to poverty and hunger and to support sufficient access to and availability of safe and nutritious food for all, including by helping countries establish and operate social protection mechanisms to support women and children and ensure they have access to food. Fighting under-nutrition is vital to equip the world's poorest children with the chances to pull themselves out of poverty and the EU is committed to supporting countries in reducing the number of stunted children by at least 7 million by 2025. Further details have recently been outlined in the communication 'Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance ([1])'.

In the EU, the approach related to nutrition is framed by the 'Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related health issues' ([2]). In particular, the Commission has launched specific pilot projects aimed at promoting healthier diets in households where primary incomes are below 50% of the EU-27 average.

There is little detailed data on children's diets in the EU. However, the 2009 EU-SILC ([3]) module on material deprivation provides specific data on children's food deprivation. It highlights that 4.4% of children did not eat fresh fruit or vegetables once a day and that around 5% did not eat one meal with meat, chicken, fish or vegetarian equivalent (proteins) per day because the household could not afford it.

In October, the Commission proposed creating the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived in order to support the distribution of food or basic goods to children suffering from poverty.

([1]) COM(2013)141.
([2]) COM(2007)279.
([3]) The European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001316/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(7 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Acciones contra las Agencias de Calificación Crediticia por los gastos públicos incurridos fruto de sus calificaciones

El Fiscal General de los Estados Unidos, Eric H. Holder Jr., anunció el pasado 5 de febrero que el Gobierno Federal estadounidense se sumará a las acciones legales lanzadas por 16 Estados contra la agencia de calificación crediticia Standard & Poor's para exigir indemnizaciones por las calificaciones realizadas por la agencia sobre productos relacionados con el mercado hipotecario. Estas iniciativas estarían fundamentadas en que Standard & Poor's habría supuestamente engañado a los inversores al sostener que sus calificaciones eran objetivas, independientes y sin conflictos de interés, y en la costosísima intervención pública que las pérdidas de estas inversiones han provocado.

El impacto de la crisis en la EU está siendo enorme. Es evidente en el sector bancario, que disponía del 52 % de los activos bancarios mundiales, según el informe sobre integración financiera europea presentado por la Comisión a finales de 2007, pero también en otros ámbitos del sistema financiero y en el conjunto de la economía. Todo ello ha motivado una intervención pública a gran escala que, en último término, traslada los fallos a los contribuyentes y a los ciudadanos más afectados por los ajustes presupuestarios.

¿Va a promover la Comisión alguna iniciativa para lanzar acciones a nivel europeo o coordinar las acciones de los Estados miembros a fin de reclamar responsabilidades a las agencias de calificación crediticia por el perjuicio a las finanzas públicas derivado de las malas prácticas de las mismas?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de abril de 2013)

El Reglamento sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia [Reglamento (CE) n° 1060/2009] tiene por objeto garantizar unas calificaciones crediticias transparentes, independientes y de alta calidad a fin de preservar la estabilidad financiera dentro de la Unión Europea, bajo la supervisión de la Autoridad Europea de Valores y Mercados (AEVM) desde el 1 de julio de 2011.

Si una agencia de calificación crediticia comete alguna de las infracciones contempladas en el anexo III del Reglamento (CE) n° 1060/2009, la AEVM puede tomar una amplia gama de medidas, pudiendo imponer multas, proceder a la baja registral de la agencia, prohibir temporalmente que emita calificaciones crediticias o suspender su uso con fines reglamentarios, con efecto en toda la Unión y hasta que se haya puesto fin a la infracción.

Además, el Reglamento sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia permite a las autoridades nacionales competentes solicitar a la AEVM que suspenda el uso con fines reglamentarios de las calificaciones crediticias de una agencia determinada en caso de infracciones lo suficientemente graves y persistentes como para tener una incidencia importante en la protección de los inversores o la estabilidad del sistema financiero de un Estado miembro.

Además, el nuevo Reglamento, que aprobó el Parlamento Europeo el 16 de enero de 2013, establece un verdadero régimen de responsabilidad civil a escala de la Unión Europea.

Por último y más en general, la AEVM, en la que confía plenamente la Comisión Europea en lo que respecta a su función de vigilar la estabilidad de los mercados, puede recibir el encargo de coordinar una actuación a nivel de la Unión Europea, en caso de urgencia constatada por el Consejo a petición propia, de la Comisión Europea o de la Junta Europea de Riesgo Sistémico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001316/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: Legal action against the credit ratings agency for public expenditure caused by their ratings

The United States Attorney-General, Eric H. Holder Jr., announced on 5 February 2013 that the US Federal Government is to join the legal action taken by 16 US states against the credit rating agency Standard & Poor's in order to demand compensation for the agency's ratings of products linked to the mortgage market. The basis of these claims is that Standard and Poor's is alleged to have deceived investors by insisting that its ratings were objective, independent and without conflicts of interest, and that the losses caused by these investments led to massively expensive public intervention.

The crisis is having a huge impact in Europe. It is keenly felt not only in the banking sector, which according to the report on European financial integration presented by the Commission at the end of 2007 held 52 % of the world's bank assets, but also in other areas of the financial system and in the economy as a whole. All of this has resulted in widespread public intervention, which ultimately passes on the problem to taxpayers and to those citizens most affected by the budget cuts.

Does the Commission intend to support some form of legal action at European level or to coordinate claims action taken by Member States with a view to demanding that credit rating agencies be made accountable for the damage to public finances caused by their malpractice?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(5 avril 2013)

Le Règlement sur les agences de notation (Règlement 1060/2009) vise à assurer des notations transparentes, de haute qualité et indépendantes afin de préserver la stabilité financière au sein de l'Union européenne soumis à la surveillance par l'Autorité européenne des marchés financiers (AEMF) depuis le 1er juillet 2011.

Si une agence de notation a commis une des infractions énumérées à l'annexe III du Règlement 1060/2009 l'AEMF dispose d'un large éventail de mesures et peut ainsi imposer des amendes, retirer l'enregistrement, interdire temporairement l'émission de notations de crédit ou suspendre leur utilisation à des fins réglementaire, avec effet dans l'ensemble de l'Union et jusqu'à ce qu'il ait été mis fin à l'infraction.

De plus, le Règlement sur les agences de notation permet aux autorités nationales compétentes d'adresser à l'AEMF une demande de suspension de l'utilisation à des fins réglementaires des notations de crédit d'une agence spécifique en cas d'infractions suffisamment graves et persistantes pour avoir une incidence significative sur la protection des investisseurs ou sur la stabilité du système financier dans un État membre.

En outre, le nouveau Règlement, qui a été approuvé par le Parlement européen le 16 janvier 2013, met en place un véritable régime de responsabilité civile à l'échelon de l'Union européenne.

Enfin de façon plus générale, l'AEMF, en laquelle la Commission européenne a entière confiance pour assurer sa fonction de surveillance pour la stabilité des marchés, peut être amenée à coordonner une action au niveau de l'Union européenne, en cas de situation d'urgence constatée par le Conseil à sa propre demande, à la demande de la Commission européenne ou du Conseil des Risques Systémiques.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001317/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D), Raimon Obiols (S&D) y Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(7 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Representación Exterior CCAA

Recientemente, el Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación de España, José Manuel García-Margallo, ha manifestado públicamente su voluntad de agrupar en las Embajadas españolas a los funcionarios de las oficinas autonómicas en el exterior.

Dada la importancia de las decisiones que se acuerdan a nivel europeo, todas las comunidades autónomas españolas, salvo Castilla-La Mancha y Asturias, disponen de oficinas de representación ante la UE. De hecho, esto no es característico únicamente de España, ya que sólo en Bruselas existen más de 250 oficinas regionales de toda Europa.

Con la entrada en vigor del Tratado de Maastricht, las regiones europeas empezaron a tener una mayor importancia en la construcción europea, al serles reconocida, en el artículo 203 del TCE, la posibilidad de que puedan representar a su Estado miembro en reuniones del Consejo.

La mayor participación de las regiones en el proyecto comunitario se fundamentó en base a los dos principios fundamentales de la UE recogidos en el artículo 5 del Tratado de la UE: el de subsidiariedad y el de proporcionalidad.

Ante este contexto,

¿Considera la Comisión que la propuesta del Sr. Margallo respeta los principios de subsidiariedad y proporcionalidad?

¿Considera que la limitación en la representación exterior de las comunidades autónomas españolas es coherente con el principio de que las decisiones se tomen lo más cerca posible de los ciudadanos?

Respuesta del Sr. Barroso en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de marzo de 2013)

Los principios de subsidiariedad y proporcionalidad rigen el ejercicio de las competencias de la Unión (artículo 5 del Tratado de la Unión Europea). La cuestión de si esos principios también rigen la organización política interior de un Estado miembro y, de ser así, hasta qué punto, incumbe al Derecho constitucional nacional. Además, tal como se establece en el artículo 4, apartado 2, del Tratado de la Unión Europea, la Unión debe respetar la identidad nacional de los Estados miembros, que es «inherente a las estructuras fundamentales políticas y constitucionales de estos, también en lo referente a la autonomía local y regional». Por lo tanto, no corresponde a la Comisión formular observaciones sobre las estructuras internas de un Estado miembro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001317/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D), Raimon Obiols (S&D) and Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: External representation of Spain's autonomous communities

Spain's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, José Manuel Margallo, recently stated in public that he would like to regroup the staff of the autonomous communities' external offices in the Spanish embassies.

Given the importance of decisions being taken at European level, all Spain's autonomous communities — with the exception of Castile-La Mancha and Asturias — have their own offices to represent them before the EU. Spain is not alone in this: just in Brussels, there are over 250 regional offices representing all parts of Europe.

With the entry into force of the Treaty of Maastricht, the European regions took on a more important role in the construction of Europe, with the recognition in Article 203 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC) that they could represent their Member State at Council meetings.

This increased participation by the regions in the Community project was based on the two fundamental EU principles set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU): subsidiarity and proportionality.

Consequently:

Does the Commission consider that Mr Margallo's proposal respects the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality?

Does it see the limitation of the autonomous communities' external representation as being consistent with the principle that decisions should taken as closely as possible to the EU's citizens?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2013)

The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality govern the use of Union competences (Article 5 TEU). The question whether, and, if so, to what extent, these principles also govern the internal polticial organisation of a Member State is a matter of national constitutional law. Further, as laid down in Article 4(2) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the Union must respect the Member States' 'national identities, inherent in their fundamental structures, political and constitutional, inclusive of regional and local self-government'. It is therefore not for the Commission to comment on the internal structures of a Member State.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001318/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: EU-Wasseraufsichtsvorschriften betreffend Korneuburger Grundwasser

Am 29.11.2012 wurde bekannt, dass die österreichische Bezirkshauptmannschaft Korneuburg seit mehreren Tagen pestizidverseuchtes Grundwasser in die Donau pumpte. Die vorhergehende Verseuchung des Grundwassers mit den Pestiziden Clopyralid und Thiamethoxam erfolgte durch die Firma Kwizda Agro Austria. Nach Angaben der Umweltorganisation Global 2000 wurde die Verseuchung von den zuständigen Behörden über einen Zeitraum von zwei Jahren nicht festgestellt. Nachdem die Verseuchung bekannt wurde, wurde die Bevölkerung unzureichend über mögliche Risiken informiert.

1. Erfüllten die österreichischen Behörden nach Kenntnis der Kommission alle nach EU-Recht gültigen Aufsichts- oder Informationsvorschriften?

2. Wenn ja, sieht die Kommission aufgrund der Verseuchung einen Grund für die Änderung bestehender Aufsichts- und Informationsvorschriften und/oder der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie?

3. Wenn nein, in welcher Form haben die österreichischen Behörden gegen EU-Richtlinien verstoßen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(18. März 2013)

1. Die Kommission hat die Bewirtschaftungspläne für die Einzugsgebiete der Mitgliedstaaten im Jahr 2012 bewertet und einen ausführlichen Umsetzungsbericht zu den Feststellungen für jeden Mitgliedstaat (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/implrep2007/index_en.htm) veröffentlicht. In Bezug auf die Überwachung und die Konsultation der Öffentlichkeit ergab die Bewertung, dass Österreich die erforderlichen Systeme und Verfahren eingerichtet hat, wenngleich einige Mängel festgestellt wurden, die zusammen mit den österreichischen Behörden weiterverfolgt werden.

2. Derzeit sieht die Kommission keinen Grund, die Gültigkeit der Überwachungsvorschriften der Wasser-Rahmenrichtlinie ([1]) anzuzweifeln. Die Kommission hat kürzlich einen Eignungstest („Fitness Check") der EU-Süßwasserpolitik im Jahr 2012 ([2]) durchgeführt, in dessen Rahmen die Gültigkeit der Überwachungsvorschriften unbestritten blieb.

3. Der Kommission sind die Einzelheiten dieses konkreten Falls nicht bekannt. Wie bereits oben gesagt wird die Kommission alle Mängel der Umsetzung der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie, bei denen dies erforderlich ist, im Rahmen der Folgemaßnahmen zur Bewertung der Bewirtschaftungspläne für die Einzugsgebiete gegenüber den österreichischen Behörden zur Sprache bringen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2000/60/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Schaffung eines Ordnungsrahmens für Maßnahmen der Gemeinschaft im Bereich der Wasserpolitik, ABl. L 327 vom 22.12.2000, S. 1-73.
([2]) SWD(2012)393 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001318/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: EU water monitoring provisions in relation to groundwater in Korneuburg

On 29 November 2012 it was revealed that groundwater contaminated with pesticides had for several days been pumped into the Danube in the Austrian administrative district of Korneuburg. The contamination involved the pesticides clopyralid and thiamethoxam and was caused by the Kwizda Agro Austria company. The Global 2000 environmental organisation reports that the authorities responsible failed over a period of two years to identify the contamination; then, when news of the incident became known, local people were given insufficient information about possible risks.

1. As far as the Commission knows, did the Austrian authorities satisfy all the provisions in EC law on monitoring and the provision of information?

2. If so, does the Commission think that, in the light of the contamination, there are grounds for amending the current provisions on monitoring and the provision of information and/or the Water Framework Directive?

3. If not, in what way did the Austrian authorities contravene EU directives?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

1. The Commission has assessed the River Basin Management Plans of the Member States in 2012 and published a detailed implementation report on the findings per Member State (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/implrep2007/index_en.htm). In respect of monitoring and public consultation the assessment found that Austria established the required system and procedures, though it identified some shortcomings that will be followed up with Austrian authorities.

2. For the present, the Commission sees no reason to doubt the validity of the monitoring provisions of the Water Framework Directive ([1]). The Commission has recently carried out a Fitness Check of the EU freshwater policy in 2012 ([2]) where the validity of the monitoring provisions was not contested.

3. The Commission is not aware of the details of the specific case. As mentioned above the Commission will raise all necessary shortcomings in the implementation of the Water Framework Directive with Austrian authorities in the context of the follow-up to the assessment of the River Basin Management Plans.

([1]) Establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1-73.
([2]) SWD (2012) 393 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001320/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διεξαγωγή ερευνών από την Τουρκία στην Αποκλειστική Οικονομική Ζώνη της Κύπρου

Σύμφωνα με την τουρκική εφημερίδα Hurriyet, το νέο σκάφος σεισμικών ερευνών της Τουρκίας Polarcus Samur θα διαπλεύσει την Ανατολική Μεσόγειο στις αρχές Μαρτίου, συνοδευόμενο από πολεμικά πλοία. Το σκάφος πρόκειται να διεξαγάγει έρευνες για τον εντοπισμό κοιτασμάτων υδρογονανθράκων σε οικόπεδα που χαρτογραφούνται εντός της Αποκλειστικής Οικονομικής Ζώνης (ΑΟΖ) της Κύπρου (οικόπεδα 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 και 12), που η Τουρκία ισχυρίζεται ότι ανήκουν στην ΑΟΖ του ψευδοκράτους της Βορείου Κύπρου. Το σκάφος θα διεξαγάγει επίσης έρευνες εντός της ΑΟΖ του ελληνικού νησιού Καστελόριζο, απέναντι ακριβώς από την τουρκική ακτή.

Βάσει των ανωτέρω, καλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στις ακόλουθες ερωτήσεις:

1. Τι συμβουλεύει την Κυπριακή Κυβέρνηση να πράξει όσον αφορά την παράνομη ενέργεια της Τουρκίας να ερευνήσει την ΑΟΖ της Κύπρου για φυσικό αέριο και πετρέλαιο χωρίς την άδεια των κυπριακών αρχών;

2. Θεωρεί η ΕΕ αποδεκτές αυτές τις εχθρικές ενέργειες της Τουρκίας έναντι ενός κράτους μέλους; Αν όχι, ποια μέτρα λαμβάνει η ΕΕ για να τις σταματήσει;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-001325/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(8 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απειλές Τουρκίας εναντίον Κύπρου και Ελλάδας

Σύμφωνα με την τουρκική εφημερίδα «Hurriyet», ημερομηνίας 3 Φεβρουαρίου 2013, η Τουρκία αρχίζει έρευνες για πετρέλαιο στην κυπριακή Αποκλειστική Οικονομική Ζώνη (ΑΟΖ), με το σεισμολογικό σκάφος «Πολάρκους».

Σύμφωνα με την «Hurriyet», το «Πολάρκους» θα διενεργήσει έρευνες για τον εντοπισμό υδρογονανθράκων, στα οικόπεδα που βρίσκονται εντός της κυπριακής ΑΟΖ, δηλαδή στο 1, το 4, το 5, το 6, το 7, το 12, αλλά και έρευνες κοντά στο Καστελόριζο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Πώς θα αντιδράσει ενόψει αυτής της απειλής της Τουρκίας, η οποία προειδοποιεί ότι θα παραβιάσει την ακεραιότητα ενός κράτους μέλους της ΕΕ, της Κύπρου, αλλά και της Ελλάδας;

— Υπενθυμίζεται η απόφαση του Συμβουλίου Υπουργών Εξωτερικών της ΕΕ του Δεκεμβρίου 2012, παράγραφος 21 και καλείται η Επιτροπή να εξηγήσει τους τρόπους προληπτικής της δράσης για συμμόρφωση της Τουρκίας, ενός υπό ένταξη κράτους, με αυτή την απόφαση.

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Fule εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαρτίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τα Αξιότιμα Μέλη στα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου του Δεκεμβρίου 2012, στα οποία το Συμβούλιο επαναλαμβάνει πως η Τουρκία οφείλει να δεσμευτεί ρητώς ως προς την διατήρηση ομαλών γειτονικών σχέσεων και την ειρηνική διευθέτηση των διαφορών σύμφωνα με τον χάρτη των Ηνωμένων Εθνών, ανατρέχοντας στο Διεθνές Δικαστήριο, αν κριθεί απαραίτητο. Επίσης, το Συμβούλιο εξέφρασε εκ νέου σοβαρές ανησυχίες και παρακίνησε τη Τουρκία να αποφύγει κάθε είδους απειλή ή ενέργεια κατά ενός από τα κράτη μέλη, ή κάθε πηγή προστριβών ή ενεργειών, που θα μπορούσαν να βλάψουν τις ομαλές γειτονικές σχέσεις και την ειρηνική διευθέτηση των διαφορών. Επιπλέον, το Συμβούλιο τόνισε εκ νέου τα κυρίαρχα δικαιώματα των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ στα οποία περιλαμβάνονται, μεταξύ άλλων, η σύναψη διμερών συμφωνιών, καθώς και η εξερεύνηση και εκμετάλλευση των φυσικών πόρων τους, σύμφωνα με το κεκτημένο της ΕΕ και το διεθνές δίκαιο, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Σύμβασης των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για το Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας. Η Επιτροπή στο πλαίσιο των επαφών της με τις τουρκικές αρχές μεταφέρει επανειλημμένως το μήνυμα αυτό όπως κρίνεται ενδεδειγμένο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001320/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: Turkey to carry out exploration within Cyprus' exclusive economic zone

According to the Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet*, Turkey's new seismic vessel Polarcus Samur will sail the Eastern Mediterranean in early March, accompanied by warships. It is to conduct explorations with a view to identifying hydrocarbon deposits in plots mapped within Cyprus' exclusive economic zone (EEZ) (plots 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 12), which Turkey claims belong to the EEZ of the pseudo-state of Northern Cyprus. The vessel will also be conducting investigations within the EEZ of the Greek island of Kastelorizo, just off the Turkish coast.

In view of the above, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. What does it advise the Cypriot Government to do with regard to Turkey's illegal move to explore Cyprus' EEZ for natural gas and oil without the permission of the Cypriot authorities?

2. Are these hostile moves by Turkey towards a Member State acceptable to the EU? If not, what action is the EU taking to stop them?

Question for written answer P-001325/13
to the Commission
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Turkish threats directed at Cyprus and Greece

According to the Turkish *Hurriyet* newspaper of 3 February 2013, Turkey is commencing oil prospecting activities in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) belonging to Cyprus.

It appears that it is sending the 'Polarcus' seismic research vessel to prospect for hydrocarbons in blocks 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 12 of the Cyprus exclusive economic zone and in the vicinity of Kastellorizo.

In view of this:

— What action will the Commission take in response to this announcement by Turkey, of its intention to encroach on the territorial integrity of Cyprus and Greece which are EU Member States?

— What preventive action will the Commission take to enforce the provisions of paragraph 21 of the decision adopted by the EU Council of Foreign Ministers in December 2012 and ensure compliance by Turkey, which is an applicant for EU membership?

Joint answer given by Mr Fule on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Members to the Council Conclusions of December 2012, in which the Council reiterates that Turkey needs to commit itself unequivocally to good neighbourly relations and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice. The Council also expressed once again serious concern, and urged Turkey to avoid any kind of threat or action directed against a Member State, or source of friction or actions, which could damage good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Council moreover stressed again all the sovereign rights of EU Member States which include, *inter alia*, entering into bilateral agreements, and to explore and exploit their natural resources in accordance with the EU *acquis* and international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Commission in its contacts with the Turkish authorities repeatedly conveys this message as appropriate.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001322/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(7 februari 2013)

Betreft: Controle op het EU-noodfonds

In het Financieel Dagblad van 7 februari jl. stelt de Algemene Rekenkamer in haar EU-trendrapport 2013 dat er geen controle is over een bedrag van 240 miljard euro dat in de vorm van noodsteun is gegeven aan Griekenland, Ierland en Portugal ([1]). Dit geld is gedeeltelijk rechtstreeks door de eurolanden betaald en gedeeltelijk via het noodfonds EFSF uitgekeerd. De Rekenkamer stelt dat er over dit geld geen controle is.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het artikel in het Financieel Dagblad?

2. Waarom heeft de Commissie geen controle uitgeoefend over de eerste tranches ten bedrage van 240 miljard euro aan noodsteun?

3. Waarom is er ook na 2010 geen controle uitgeoefend op de eerste tranches aan noodsteun?

4. Welke gevolgen verbindt de Commissie aan het gebrek aan controle op de noodsteun?

5. Wordt de 240 miljard euro teruggegeven aan de donerende lidstaten?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(11 april 2013)

De Europese Commissie levert geen commentaar op artikelen in de pers. De financiële steun van de EFSF en de Griekse leningfaciliteit is onderworpen aan de stringente voorwaarden van een alomvattend macro-economisch aanpassingsprogramma waarvan de nakoming elke drie maanden wordt gecontroleerd. De resultaten van deze controles zijn publiekelijk beschikbaar en kunnen via de website van de Europese Commissie worden geraadpleegd. De specifieke resultaten van de beoordelingen van de Griekse, Portugese en Ierse programma's zijn te vinden via de volgende weblinks.

Griekenland:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

Portugal:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/ireland/index_en.htm

Ierland:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/portugal/index_en.htm

([1]) http://fd.nl/economie-politiek/380555-1302/geen-controle-op-eu-noodfonds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001322/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: Monitoring of the use made of the EU's Emergency Fund

On 7 February 2013, the Financieel Dagblad reported that, according to the 'EU Trend Report' of the Netherlands Court of Audit for 2013, there was no monitoring of the use made of EUR 240 billion given to Greece, Ireland and Portugal as emergency aid ([1]). Part of this money was paid directly by the eurozone countries, and part of it via the emergency fund EFSF. The Court of Audit states that the use made of this money is not monitored.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the article in the Financieel Dagblad?

2. Why did the Commission not perform any monitoring of the use made of the first instalments of the emergency aid, totalling EUR 240 bn?

3. Why was there no monitoring of the use of the first instalments of emergency aid after 2010 either?

4. What action will the Commission take in the light of the failure to monitor emergency aid?

5. Will the EUR 240 bn be refunded to the donor Member States?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The European Commission does not comment on press articles. The financial assistance provided by the EFSF and the Greek Loan Facility is subject to a comprehensive macroeconomic adjustment programme with strict conditionality, the monitoring of which takes place on a quarterly basis. The results of this monitoring are publicly available and can be accessed through the European Commission's website. More specifically, the results of the reviews of the Greek, Portuguese and Irish programmes can be found at the following weblinks.

Greece:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

Portugal:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/ireland/index_en.htm

Ireland:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/portugal/index_en.htm

([1]) http://fd.nl/economie-politiek/380555-1302/geen-controle-op-eu-noodfonds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001323/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: Neonicotinoid study by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recently carried out and published a review of three neonicotinoid pesticides: clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam. In doing so, it recognised that 'as much of the data were generated before publication of the opinion, a number of shortcomings were identified. Because the final guidance document for the risk assessment of plant protection products and bees is still under development, there is a high level of uncertainty in the latest evaluations'.

1. Can the Commission explain why EFSA has used guidelines that have not yet been approved and authorised?

2. Can the Commission ensure that any decision on policy will be based solely on technical assessments of the products in real conditions of use?

3. Can the Commission provide any evidence of colony loss due to neonicotinoid insecticides in the EU since the introduction of mitigation measures under Directive 2010/21/EU?

4. Can the Commission ensure that it will carry out a thorough comparative impact assessment, based on the substitution principle, of the use of alternative plant protection products that may result in restrictions on use of neonicotinoid pesticides?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2013)

1. In the framework of the review of approval of neonicotinoids undertaken under Article 21 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]), the Commission asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to take into account the latest scientific research available in the field and to use the 'Opinion on the science behind the development of a risk assessment of Plant Protection Products on bees ("Apis mellifera, Bombus" spp. and solitary bees)'. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the report of the European Parliament on honeybee health and the challenges for the beekeeping sector ([2]), which invites the Commission to improve the risk assessment methodology for pesticides as regards colony health and population development.

2. The conclusions reached by EFSA are based on the uses authorised at national level, as communicated to EFSA by industry and by the Member States. The Commission has no reasons to believe that the current authorised uses, as supported by industry, would not represent the actual conditions of use.

3. Although incidents due to neonicotinoids have been reported to the Commission even after the entry into force of Directive 2010/21/EC, it is recognised that honeybee losses and population decline are multifactorial.

4. Comparative assessment is exclusively done by the Member States and only for substances listed as candidates for substitution. The Commission has no obligation to carry out a comparative assessment and the review of approval undertaken is not meant to classify neonicotinoids as candidates for substitution.

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([2]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0493.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001324/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(7 February 2013)

Subject: Illegal bird hunting in Malta

It has once again been brought to my attention that the Maltese Government is still failing to comply with the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC).

Is the Commission aware of the case recently reported by Birdlife Malta ([1]) where a man was caught on camera and admitted to illegally shooting and killing a barn swallow, but was not charged after a court decided that there was insufficient evidence?

Can the Commission provide an update on how it is ensuring that Malta and all the other Member States are complying with the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)?

What does the Commission intend to do if countries such as Malta continue to fail to prevent the illegal hunting of protected birds?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2013)

The incident reported by Birdlife Malta was brought to the attention of the Commission in an earlier question. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-347/2013 ([2]) by Mr Ashley Fox.

([1]) http://www.birdlifemalta.org/view.aspx?id=378.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001326/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Arresti politici in Azerbaigian

A seguito di alcune proteste avvenute il 23 gennaio nella città di Ismayilli, il 26 gennaio si è tenuta una dimostrazione pacifica nelle strade della capitale Baku, sfociata in arresti indiscriminati. Il 4 febbraio, in seguito a questi eventi, anche il candidato alle presidenziali di ottobre, Illgar Mammadov, del partito di opposizione REAL (Republican Alternative), e un attivista del principale partito di opposizione, il Musavat, sono stati arrestati.

Alla luce dei recenti eventi già denunciati nell'interrogazione E-000406/2013, del fatto che le prossime elezioni presidenziali si svolgeranno nell'ottobre 2013 e dei rapporti diplomatici e commerciali che l'Unione europea intrattiene con la Repubblica dell'Azerbaigian, Stato costituzionalmente democratico, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere:

— se sono state intraprese ulteriori azioni per assicurare uno svolgimento trasparente delle prossime elezioni?

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

La dichiarazione congiunta rilasciata il 9 febbraio dai portavoce dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e del Commissario Füle riflette le preoccupazioni in merito agli arresti di Ilgar Mammadov e di Tofig Yagublu avvenuti il 4 febbraio. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha auspicato indagini eque, trasparenti e rapide in merito alle imputazioni di entrambi. Questa posizione è stata ribadita in una dichiarazione dell'UE sulla situazione dei diritti umani in Azerbaigian, rilasciata nell'ambito del Consiglio permanente dell'OSCE del 14 febbraio. Al contempo, negli incontri politici del massimo livello, l'UE ha sottolineato e continuerà a sottolineare la necessità di una campagna equa e trasparente condotta in condizioni di parità e pienamente in linea con le raccomandazioni dell'OSCE-ODIHR formulate in seguito alle elezioni del 2010. Si ritiene che l'Azerbaigian debba garantire uno spazio politico aperto che consenta un dialogo sostanziale e accolga opinioni divergenti, in linea con gli impegni assunti dal paese in sede di Consiglio d'Europa, OSCE e partenariato orientale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001326/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Political arrests in Azerbaijan

Following protests on 23 January 2013 in the town of Ismayilli, a peaceful demonstration held on 26 January 2013 on the streets of the Azeri capital, Baku, was broken up by the police, who made indiscriminate arrests. In the wake of these events, on 4 February 2013 Illgar Mammadov, who stood for the opposition party REAL (Republican Alternative) in the presidential election held in October 2012, and an activist from the main opposition party, Musavat, were also arrested.

In the light of the recent events referred to in Written Question E-000406/2013 and the fact that the next presidential election are due to be held in October 2013, and given that the European Union maintains diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Azerbaijan, an ostensibly democratic state, can the Vice-President/High Representative say whether she has taken further steps to ensure that the forthcoming elections are free and fair?

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

Concerns about the arrests of Ilgar Mammadov and Tofig Yagublu on 4 February were reflected in the joint statement made by the spokespersons of the HR/VP and Commissioner Füle on 9 February. The HR/VP has since called for a fair, transparent and speedy investigation of the charges against both. This position was also reiterated in an EU statement on the situation of human rights in Azerbaijan, made in the framework of the OSCE Permanent Council of 14 February. At the same time, in political meetings at the highest level, the EU has underlined and will continue to underline the need for a fair and transparent campaign conducted on a level playing field and fully in line with the OSCE-ODIHR recommendations issued following the 2010 elections. I believe that Azerbaijan should guarantee an open political space allowing a substantive dialogue that includes diverging views, in line with Azerbaijan's commitments towards the Council of Europe, OSCE and the Eastern Partnership.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001327/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Riconoscimento della lingua italiana dei segni

In Italia la lingua dei segni non è ancora stata riconosciuta come lingua ufficiale a tutti gli effetti.

Alla luce di quanto segue:

— tale riconoscimento sarebbe una tutela dei diritti di pari opportunità, dignità e rispetto della persona;

— la «Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea», pienamente vincolante per le istituzioni europee e per gli Stati membri, stabilisce all'art. 22 il rispetto delle diversità culturali e linguistiche e, all'art. 26, riconosce il diritto dei disabili di beneficiare delle misure volte a garantire l'autonomia, l'inserimento sociale e professionale e la partecipazione alla vita della comunità;

— le risoluzioni del Parlamento europeo del 17 giugno 1988 (GU CE C187 del 18 luglio 1988) e del 18 novembre 1998 (GU CE C379 del 7 dicembre 1998), oltre alla Carta europea delle lingue regionali o minoritarie del 1992, che l'Italia ha ratificato;

— l'Italia ha ratificato, con legge n. 18 del 3 marzo 2009, anche i principi proclamati dalla Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti delle persone con disabilità;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Quale sia, alla luce della presenza di varie e distinte risoluzioni ed enunciazioni di diritti, la reale situazione in ambito comunitario sul riconoscimento della lingua dei segni come lingua ufficiale;

2. Se e quali misure siano previste per assicurare un quadro legislativo europeo armonizzato, con la dovuta salvaguardia del principio di sussidiarietà?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(10 aprile 2013)

In base alle informazioni contenute nell'ultima edizione del testo «*Sign Language Legislation in the European Union*», pubblicato nel 2012 dall'Unione europea dei sordi (EUD), la lingua dei segni è riconosciuta, almeno in una certa misura, in tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea, salvo tre: Bulgaria, Malta e Lussemburgo. Per quanto riguarda l'Italia, pur non essendo riconosciuta giuridicamente a livello nazionale, la lingua dei segni è, a volte, prevista dalla normativa regionale, per esempio in Sicilia o in Val d'Aosta ([1]).

La Commissione è impegnata ad applicare, nei limiti delle sue competenze, la convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti delle persone con disabilità. Gli specifici provvedimenti volti a rispettare il diritto dei non udenti di utilizzare la lingua dei segni sono, principalmente, di competenza degli Stati membri. In questo ambito non è prevista una disciplina armonizzata dell'Unione europea. La Commissione sostiene, tuttavia, l'azione degli Stati membri, incentivando lo scambio di conoscenze e le attività di sensibilizzazione, anche attraverso il finanziamento delle spese di gestione dell'Unione europea dei sordi, nel quadro di un accordo di partenariato triennale.

([1]) Wheatley, Mark e Pabsch, Annika, Sign Language Legislation in the European Union, 2a edizione, Bruxelles, 2012, pag. 265 e segg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001327/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Recognition of the Italian sign language

In Italy, sign language is not yet recognised as an official language for all purposes.

— Given that such recognition would protect the rights of equal opportunities, dignity and respect of the individual;

— in view of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which is fully binding on the European institutions and the Member States, and Article 22 of which establishes respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, with Article 26 recognising the right of persons with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community;

— in the light of the European Parliament resolutions of 17 June 1988 (OJ C187 of 18 July 1988) and 18 November 1998 (OJ C379 of 7 December 1998), and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of 1992, which Italy has ratified;

— considering that Italy has ratified, by Law No 18 of 3 March 2009, also the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

can the Commission say:

1. What, in the light of the various different resolutions and statements of rights, is the real situation in the EU with regard to the recognition of sign language as an official language?

2. Whether provision has been made for any measures to establish a harmonised European legal framework, with due protection of the subsidiarity principle, and if so, what those measures are?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

According to the recently published 2012 edition of 'Sign Language Legislation in the European Union' by the European Union of the Deaf (EUD), sign language is legally recognised at least to some extent in all but three EU Member States: Bulgaria, Malta and Luxembourg. As regards the situation in Italy, while there is no legal recognition at the national level, sign language is sometimes included in regional legislation, for example in Sicily or in the Aosta Valley ([1]).

The Commission is committed to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to the extent of its competences. The specific measures needed in respect of the right of deaf persons to use sign language fall mainly within the competences of the Member States. A harmonised European legal framework in this area is not envisaged. However, the Commission supports Member States' action by fostering exchange of knowledge and awareness raising activities, including via its subsidy of the operating costs of the EUD under a three-year partnership agreement.

([1]) Wheatley, Mark and Pabsch, Annika. Sign Language Legislation in the European Union, 2nd edition. Brussels 2012, p. 265 ff.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001328/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: LIFE+ funding: figures and review

It has been brought to my attention that UK participation in the LIFE+ financial instrument is well below expectations.

1. Can the Commission provide figures on the number of applications made by the UK for LIFE+ funding and state how many have been successful in securing funding?

2. Does the Commission have any plans to review the application and evaluation process of LIFE+ in order to make it easier for projects to go ahead?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2013)

Between 2007 and 2011 there were 125 UK applications for funding under LIFE+. 32 were selected for funding. The success rate is comparable to the overall success rate across the EU.

The aim is to ensure value for money by focusing EU funding on the highest quality proposals. The Commission is, however, working with national authorities to encourage more high quality proposals from all Member States. Training courses are organised to make sure that all Member State National Contact Points for LIFE+ have a thorough understanding of the selection process and the main issues that lead to failure for proposals during the evaluation, so that they can provide assistance to potential applicants.

The Commission is working closely with DEFRA to improve the success rate of LIFE+ applications in the UK. For several years annual information sessions have taken place in London to promote a greater understanding of which type of projects can be funded under LIFE+, how to transform a good idea into a high quality LIFE+ application etc.

The evaluation of the proposals submitted in 2012 will be finalised in May 2013. At that point it should be possible to see if the efforts have had any positive effects on the success rate.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001329/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento do número de casos de cancro

Considerando que:

— De acordo com dados do Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE), em 2011 o cancro foi a causa de morte de 25 593 pessoas em Portugal;

— O cancro é uma das maiores causas de morte em todo o mundo e estima-se que o número de novos casos por ano duplique nos próximos 25 anos, atingindo os 22 milhões em 2030;

— No passado dia 4 de fevereiro, assinalou-se o Dia Mundial de Luta Contra o Cancro, e os especialistas em oncologia que participavam no Fórum Mundial de Oncologia alertaram para o facto de as «atuais estratégias para controlo do cancro não estarem a funcionar»;

Pergunto à Comissão:

A estratégia da UE em matéria de saúde prevê a implementação de novas medidas no combate a esta doença?

Resposta dada por Joe Borg em nome da Comissão
(27 de março de 2013)

Em 2009, a Comissão adoptou uma comunicação intitulada Acção Contra o Cancro: Parceria Europeia ([1]). A parceria é posta em prática através da Ação Conjunta cofinanciada pelo Programa de Saúde da UE. Tem por objetivo contribuir para a redução da incidência do cancro através da prevenção e da promoção da saúde; despistagem e diagnóstico precoces; cuidados de saúde relacionados com o cancro; cooperação e coordenação da investigação e dos dados sobre o cancro.

A Parceria apoia os Estados-Membros na partilha das melhores práticas e no desenvolvimento dos planos nacionais de luta contra o cancro, o que deve representar um contributo sustentável na redução da incidência do cancro na UE. Um dos objetivos da Parceria é ajudar a reduzir a incidência do cancro em 15 % até 2020.

A parceria termina no final de 2014. A Comissão e os Estados-Membros estão agora a preparar uma nova Ação Conjunta para continuar a lutar contra a incidência do cancro. O objetivo é desenvolver um guia europeu sobre a melhoria da qualidade em termos de luta contra o cancro. O guia deve abordar aspetos de luta integrada contra o cancro, incluindo a prevenção, a despistagem, o tratamento, o acompanhamento, cuidados de apoio e paliativos e sobrevivência. Esta ação contribuirá para alcançar os objetivos da Parceria Europeia contra o Cancro e assentará nas suas realizações e em ações anteriores da UE de luta contra o cancro.

A Comissão coordena igualmente um «Observatório Europeu» sobre radioisótopos médicos, que tem por finalidade garantir a produção e o fornecimento de radioisótopos para imagiologia médica para apoiar a luta contra o cancro.

O Centro Comum de Investigação da Comissão continua a investigação em matéria de métodos inovadores e melhorados para o tratamento do cancro e de desenvolvimento de materiais de referência certificados para o acompanhamento de pacientes e contribui em várias iniciativas comuns com os Estados-Membros.

([1]) COM(2009) 291 final de 24.6.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001329/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Rise in the number of cancer cases

According to data from Statistics Portugal (INE), 25 593 people died from cancer in Portugal in 2011.

Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide and the annual number of new cases is expected to double in the next 25 years, reaching 22 million in 2030.

World Cancer Day was held on 4 February 2013 and oncology experts who participated in the World Oncology Forum warned that 'current strategies for controlling cancer are not working'.

Does the EU's health strategy include the implementation of new measures to combat this disease?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

In 2009, the Commission adopted a communication on Action Against Cancer: European Partnership ([1]). The Partnership is implemented via a Joint Action co-funded by the EU Health Programme. It aims to contribute to the reduction of the cancer burden through health promotion and prevention; screening and early diagnosis; cancer-related healthcare; cooperation and coordination in cancer research and cancer data.

The Partnership supports Member States in sharing best practice and developing National Cancer Plans which should make a sustainable contribution to reducing the burden of cancer in the EU. One of the Partnership's aims is to help reduce the cancer incidence by 15% by 2020.

The Partnership will end in 2014. The Commission and Member States are now preparing a new Joint Action to continue addressing the burden of cancer. The aim is to develop a European guide on quality improvement in cancer control. The guide should address aspects of integrated cancer control, including prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, follow-up, supportive and palliative care, and survivorship. This will contribute to reaching the aims of the European Partnership Against Cancer, and will build on its achievements and on previous EU actions on cancer.

The Commission is also coordinating a 'European Observatory' on medical radioisotopes, which aims to secure the production and supply of radioisotopes for medical imaging to support the fight against cancer.

The Commission's Joint Research Centre further carries out research on innovative and improved methods for cancer treatment and on development of certified reference materials for patient monitoring, and contributes to various common initiatives with Member States.

([1]) COM(2009) 291 final of 24.6.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001330/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Visita de Ahmadinejad ao Cairo

O Presidente do Irão, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, é o primeiro líder da república Islâmica a visitar o Egito desde que Teerão rompeu as relações diplomáticas com o referido país em 1980.

Durante a sua estadia no Egito, Ahmadinejad afirmou que «se Teerão e o Cairo concordassem em mais questões regionais e internacionais, muita coisa iria mudar».

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente:

Que avaliação faz da visita e das declarações de Ahmadinejad no Egito?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente registou a visita ao Cairo do Presidente Ahmadinejad do Irão, bem como as suas declarações. Neste momento, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente entende que a situação não é mais do que um encontro de duas Partes para discutir assuntos regionais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001330/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Ahmadinejad's visit to Cairo

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the President of Iran, is the first leader of the Islamic Republic to visit Egypt since Tehran severed diplomatic ties with the country in 1980.

During his stay in Egypt, Mr Ahmadinejad said that 'If Tehran and Cairo see more eye-to-eye on regional and international issues, many [issues] will change.'

What is the Vice-President's assessment of Mr Ahmadinejad's visit to Egypt and the statement he made there?

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

The HR/VP has taken note of Iran's President Ahmadinejad's visit to Cairo and the statement he made. Currently, the HR/VP makes no further assessment of the situation than that it is a meeting of two parties having discussions on regional issues.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001331/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento das taxas de desemprego

Considerando o seguinte:

— Em Espanha, os números relativos ao desemprego registaram um novo aumento em janeiro, colocando mais 132 055 pessoas fora do mercado laboral; atualmente, 4,9 milhões de cidadãos estão desempregados, ou seja mais de 26 % da população ativa;

— Atualmente, a Espanha e a Grécia possuem as taxas de desemprego mais elevadas da zona euro, situação que continua a afetar sobretudo os jovens com menos de 25 anos;

— Estes valores são um reflexo das políticas de austeridade que têm vindo a ser impostas;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz da dimensão das taxas de desemprego registadas nestes países?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(2 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão considera que a elevada taxa de desemprego na Espanha e na Grécia é um problema grave. Para além da perda de produção e de rendimento, o desemprego é uma fonte de dificuldades sociais e humanas. Assim, a Comissão considera que não devem ser poupados esforços para enfrentar as consequências sociais da elevada taxa de desemprego e restabelecer as condições para a criação sustentada de postos de trabalho. A este respeito, a Comissão propôs recentemente uma Garantia para a Juventude e os Estados-Membros aprovaram uma Iniciativa para o Emprego dos Jovens com uma dotação de 6 000 milhões de euros.

As insuficiências do mercado de trabalho já eram uma característica dos mercados de trabalho grego e espanhol muito antes do início da crise económica e financeira, sobretudo a segmentação do mercado de trabalho em Espanha e baixas taxas de emprego e participação na Grécia. A crise da dívida que atingiu estes países fez das reformas estruturais e da consolidação fiscal credível condições necessárias para restaurar a confiança e restabelecer a solvência fiscal e incentivar o crescimento económico a médio prazo. Caso não se proceda a uma consolidação, o resultado será uma crise orçamental mais grave e efeitos muito mais desastrosos na atividade económica e no emprego.

Por esse motivo, apesar das diversas situações dos Estados-Membros enumeradas pelo Senhor Deputado, estes países, independentemente de uma possível existência de programas de assistência financeira, têm vindo a envidar esforços para que as finanças públicas entrem numa via sustentável, empreendendo simultaneamente reformas para reforçar a capacidade de ajustamento e melhorar a competitividade. Essas reformas são condições prévias para promover a criação de emprego e abordar os problemas do mercado de trabalho que já vinham atingindo estas países quando as suas economias estavam a crescer rapidamente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001331/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Rise in unemployment

Unemployment in Spain rose again in January, with an additional 132 055 people finding themselves out of work. Some 4.9 million Spaniards are currently unemployed, which is more than 26 % of the working population.

Spain and Greece currently have the highest unemployment rates in the euro area, a situation that continues to affect mainly young people under 25 years of age.

These figures are a reflection of the austerity policies that have been imposed.

What is the Commission's assessment of the unemployment rates in these countries?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

The Commission sees high unemployment in Spain and Greece as a serious problem. Besides the loss of production and income, joblessness is a source of social and human hardship. Thus, the Commission is of the view that no effort should be spared to address the social consequences of high unemployment and re-establish the conditions for sustained job creation. In this respect it recently proposed a Youth Guarantee and Member States agreed to a 6 billion Euros Youth Employment Initiative.

Labour market weaknesses characterised the Greek and the Spanish labour markets well before the start of the economic and financial crisis, most notably labour market segmentation in Spain and low employment and participation rates in Greece. The debt crisis that hit these countries has made credible fiscal consolidation and structural reforms necessary conditions to restore confidence and re-establish fiscal solvency and foster economic growth over the medium term. Failing to undertake consolidation would result in a more acute fiscal crisis and much more disastrous effects on economic activity and employment.

For this reason, despite the very varied situations of the Member States listed by the Honourable Member, these countries, irrespective of a possible presence of financial assistance programmes, have been dovetailing efforts to put public finances on a sustainable track, while undertaking reforms to enhance adjustment capacity and improve competitiveness. These reforms are preconditions to promote job creation and tackle the labour market problems that these countries were already experiencing when their economies were growing fast.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001333/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Rede Rural Nacional V

A Rede Rural Nacional é uma estrutura de ligação entre agentes com papel ativo no desenvolvimento rural que querem partilhar as suas experiências e os seus conhecimentos, melhorar o desempenho e obter melhores resultados.

À Rede Rural Nacional podem aderir agentes do desenvolvimento rural localizados em qualquer zona do país.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Qual a dotação financeira disponível até ao final do programa?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001334/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Rede Rural Nacional VI

A Rede Rural Nacional é uma estrutura de ligação entre agentes com papel ativo no desenvolvimento rural, que querem partilhar as suas experiências e conhecimentos, melhorar o desempenho e obter melhores resultados.

À Rede Rural Nacional podem aderir agentes do desenvolvimento rural localizados em qualquer zona do país.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tendo conhecimento do atraso na sua execução, gostaria de saber se já foram perdidas verbas à data de dezembro de 2012?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001335/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Rede Rural Nacional VII

A Rede Rural Nacional é uma estrutura de ligação entre agentes com papel ativo no desenvolvimento rural que querem partilhar as suas experiências e os seus conhecimentos, melhorar o desempenho e obter melhores resultados.

À Rede Rural Nacional podem aderir agentes do desenvolvimento rural localizados em qualquer zona do país.

Pergunto à Comissão:

No que diz respeito à Rede Rural Nacional, quais foram as atividades desenvolvidas no quadro da sua participação na Rede Rural Europeia e quais as verbas despendidas com a mesma à data de dezembro de 2012?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001336/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Rede Rural Nacional VIII

A Rede Rural Nacional é uma estrutura de ligação entre agentes com papel ativo no desenvolvimento rural que querem partilhar as suas experiências e os seus conhecimentos, melhorar o desempenho e obter melhores resultados.

À Rede Rural Nacional podem aderir agentes do desenvolvimento rural localizados em qualquer zona do país.

Pergunto à Comissão:

No que diz respeito à Rede Rural Nacional, quais foram as verbas despendidas em assistência técnica e qual o valor, em percentagem, do total da assistência técnica até dezembro de 2012?

Resposta conjunta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(12 de março de 2013)

A verba remanescente do Feader relativa ao programa português da rede rural nacional é de 4,2 milhões de euros.

Em 2012 não se perderam fundos desse programa.

As redes rurais nacionais são parceiros importantes à escala nacional, que participam em numerosas atividades da rede europeia de desenvolvimento rural (REDR). As despesas de deslocação são reembolsadas no caso do comité de coordenação da REDR, do subcomité Leader e dos seminários da REDR.

Em 2012 os representantes das redes rurais nacionais foram convidados a participar nos seguintes eventos:

— Três seminários do comité de coordenação da REDR sobre «*Programação estratégica e acompanhamento e avaliação dos PDR 2014-2020*»; «*Ligação em rede no futuro*» e «*Instrumentos financeiros*»;

— Duas reuniões do comité de coordenação da REDR, uma delas seguida pelo seminário «*Programação com êxito*»;

— Uma reunião do subcomité Leader seguida pelo seminário «*Desenvolvimento local promovido pelas comunidades*»;

— *Um evento Leader da REDR em 2012 sobre «Estratégias de desenvolvimento local e cooperação»*.

Para mais informações sobre as atividades da REDR e da rede rural nacional portuguesa, queira consultar: (http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/) e (http://www.rederural.pt/index.php/actividades).

A rede rural nacional portuguesa prevê que uma percentagem de entre 10 e 25 % do montante atribuído ao programa (9,3 milhões de euros de contribuição do Feader) é gasta com o funcionamento da rede rural, estando incluídas todas as atividades relacionadas com a REDR. A Comissão não pode especificar os montantes atribuídos especificamente para este efeito até dezembro de 2012.

Em conformidade com o artigo 66.º, n.º 3, do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1698/2005 ([1]), todas as redes rurais nacionais operam com fundos provenientes da assistência técnica. Até dezembro de 2012, um montante total de 5,1 milhões de euros do Feader foi pago ao programa da rede rural nacional, o que representa 16 % das despesas gerais de assistência técnica do conjunto de todos os programas portugueses de desenvolvimento rural.

([1]) JO L 277 de 21.10.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001333/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: National Rural Network V

The National Rural Network is a structure linking active players in rural development who wish to share their experiences and expertise, improve performance and obtain better results.

Rural development actors from any part of the country may join the National Rural Network.

What is the available financial envelope for this programme up to its completion?

Question for written answer E-001334/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: National Rural Network VI

The National Rural Network is a structure linking active players in rural development who wish to share their experiences and expertise, improve performance and obtain better results.

Rural development actors from any part of the country may join the National Rural Network.

In view of the delay in execution, can the Commission state whether any appropriations had been 'lost' as of December 2012?

Question for written answer E-001335/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: National Rural Network VII

The National Rural Network is a structure linking active players in rural development who wish to share their experiences and expertise, improve performance and obtain better results.

Rural development actors from any part of the country may join the National Rural Network.

What activities were carried out within the framework of the National Rural Network's participation in the European Rural Network and what funding had been disbursed for this purpose as of December 2012?

Question for written answer E-001336/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: National Rural Network VIII

The National Rural Network is a structure linking active players in rural development who wish to share their experiences and expertise, improve performance and obtain better results.

Rural development actors from any part of the country may join the National Rural Network.

Can the Commission specify, for the National Rural Network, what amounts have been spent on technical assistance, and what this represented as a percentage of all technical assistance as of December 2012?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2013)

The remaining EAFRD financial envelope of the Portuguese National Rural Network (NRN) Programme amounts to EUR 4.2 million.

In 2012 no funds were lost by this programme.

The NRNs are important partners at the national level, participating in many activities of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD). Travel costs are reimbursed in the case of ENRD Coordination Committees (CC), Leader Sub-Committees (LsC) and ENRD workshops.

In 2012 NRNs representatives were invited to participate in the following events:

— Three ENRD CC Workshops on 'Strategic Programming and Monitoring and Evaluation for RDPs 2014-2020'; 'Networking in the Future' and 'Financial Instruments';

— Two ENRD CC meetings, one of them followed by the seminar 'Successful Programming';

— One ENRD LsC meeting followed by the workshop: 'Community-led Local Development';

— One ENRD Leader event 2012 on 'Local Development Strategies and Cooperation'.

More information on the ENRD and Portuguese NRN activities is available at: http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/ and http://www.rederural.pt/index.php/actividades

The Portuguese NRN foresees that between 10 and 25% of the allocated amount to the programme (EUR 9.3 million of EAFRD contribution), is spent on the functioning of the Rural Network, including all related ENRD activities. The Commission is unable to specify the funds disbursed for this specific purpose up to December 2012.

According to Article 66.3 of Regulation (EC) 1698/2005 ([1]), all NRNs operate with funds coming from technical assistance. Until December 2012, a total EAFRD amount of EUR 5.1 million has been paid to the NRN Programme, representing 16% of the overall expenditure in technical assistance spent by all Portuguese Rural Development Programmes.

([1]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001337/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Suíça quer limitar entrada de imigrantes portugueses

Considerando que:

— As autoridades suíças ponderam utilizar uma cláusula de salvaguarda sobre a livre circulação de pessoas, prevista no acordo assinado com a União Europeia, para impedir a entrada de imigrantes do Sul da Europa, nomeadamente cidadãos de nacionalidade portuguesa, espanhola e italiana;

— Segundo o jornal francês «Les Echos», a Suíça não quer «hospedar a miséria da Europa», devendo o Conselho Federal decidir-se pela redução de trabalhadores europeus já em abril;

— O governo suíço já limitou a entrada, desde o início de abril de 2012, de cidadãos de oito países da UE (Estónia, Letónia, Lituânia, Hungria, Polónia, Eslováquia, Eslovénia e República Checa);

— O recurso a uma cláusula do acordo bilateral assinado entre a Suíça e a UE permite o recurso a um sistema de controlo da circulação das pessoas, representando o estabelecimento de quotas para a entrada de emigrantes no território;

— A Suíça é um dos principais destinos da imigração portuguesa, sendo a maior comunidade estrangeira neste país;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que posição assume sobre a referida intenção do país helvético de limitar a entrada de portugueses, espanhóis e italianos neste país?

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

A Comissão remete para as suas respostas às perguntas precedentes O-000115/2012, O-000113/2012 e E-004403/2012 ([1]) sobre as restrições quantitativas decididas pelo governo suíço em abril de 2012 relativamente aos cidadãos da República Checa, Estónia, Letónia, Lituânia, Hungria, Polónia, Eslovénia e Eslováquia.

O Acordo sobre a livre circulação de pessoas, alterado pelo Protocolo de 26 de outubro de 2004, prevê, no seu artigo 10.°, n.° 4, que até doze anos após a entrada em vigor do Acordo (ou seja, até 1 de junho de 2014), a Suíça poderá limitar unilateralmente o número de novas autorizações de residência de qualquer uma dessas categorias (residência por um período superior a quatro meses e inferior a um ano ou residência por um período igual ou superior a um ano) concedidas a trabalhadores assalariados e independentes da União Europeia, se o número de novas autorizações de residência de uma das duas categorias concedidas a trabalhadores assalariados e independentes for superior à média dos três anos anteriores em mais de 10 %. Esta possibilidade diz respeito aos nacionais de todos os Estados-Membros sem distinção (a Bulgária e a Roménia ainda estão abrangidas por medidas de transição por força do Protocolo de 27 de maio de 2008 do Acordo).

A Comissão não recebeu qualquer comunicação oficial da Suíça relativamente ao eventual alargamento das restrições quantitativas aplicáveis aos nacionais dos Estados-Membros.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001337/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Switzerland's intention to limit the number of Portuguese immigrants

The Swiss authorities are considering invoking a safeguard clause on the free movement of persons, under an agreement concluded with the European Union, to prevent the entry of immigrants from southern Europe, including Portuguese, Spanish and Italian citizens.

According to the French newspaper *Les Echos*, Switzerland does not want to become a refuge for the destitute of Europe. In April 2012, the Federal Council decided to cut the number of EU workers in the country.

Since the beginning of April 2012, the Swiss Government has placed restrictions on the entry of citizens from eight EU countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Czech Republic).

A clause in the bilateral agreement concluded between Switzerland and the EU allows for the implementation of a system for monitoring the movement of persons, resulting in quotas for immigrants entering the country.

Switzerland is a leading destination for Portuguese immigrants, and they form the largest foreign community in the country.

What is the Commission's view of Switzerland's intention to limit the number of Portuguese, Spanish and Italian immigrants?

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

The Commission refers to its replies to previous questions O-000115/2012, O-000113/2012 and E-004403/2012 ([1]) on the quantitative restrictions decided by the Swiss Government in April 2012 as regards the nationals of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia.

The Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons, as amended by the Protocol of 26 October 2004, provides in its Article 10(4) that, up to twelve years after the entry into force of the Agreement (i.e. until 1 June 2014), Switzerland may limit unilaterally the number of new residence permits of either of two categories (residence for a period of more than four months and less than one year and residence for a period equal to, or exceeding, one year) for employed and self-employed persons of the European Union if the number of new residence permits for either of the two categories issued to employed and self-employed persons in a given year exceeds the average for the three preceding years by more than 10%. This possibility concerns the nationals of all the Member States without distinction (bar Bulgaria and Romania, still under transition measures on the basis of the Protocol of 27 May 2008 to the Agreement).

The Commission has not received any official communication from Switzerland regarding a possible extension of the quantitative restrictions to the nationals of Member States.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001338/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Biocombustível na UE

Considerando o seguinte:

— Segundo um estudo publicado na revista «Nature Climate Change», esta aposta poderá revelar-se responsável não só por uma redução da produção agrícola para consumo humano, mas também por uma escalada de preços nos alimentos;

— O relatório em causa, da autoria de um grupo de investigadores britânicos da Universidade de Lancaster, em Inglaterra, prevê ainda que a produção de biocombustível, apesar de reduzir as emissões de gases com efeito de estufa, como o CO_2, quando comparada com combustíveis fósseis — petróleo, carvão ou gás — pode contribuir ainda mais para a poluição;

— Após a aprovação da Diretiva de Energia Renovável (RED) em 2009, que determina uma serie de objetivos ambientais a cumprir até 2020, o biocombustível tem sido uma das apostas da União Europeia para reduzir o efeito de estufa e a emissão de gases nocivos para a atmosfera.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento do referido relatório? Como o avalia, tendo em conta que aponta no sentido oposto ao defendido pela União Europeia?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(4 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do relatório em causa ([1]) na revista «*Nature Climate Change*», da autoria de um grupo de investigadores britânicos da Universidade de Lancaster, em Inglaterra.

Com base numa avaliação do impacto da plantação de 72 Mha de talhadia em rotações curtas (choupo, salgueiro ou eucalipto) na poluição pelo ozono e dos seus efeitos na saúde humana e nas colheitas, o estudo sugere que as emissões de gases com efeito de estufa não devem ser o único critério a ter em conta quando se desenvolvem políticas relativas aos biocombustíveis.

A Comissão avalia uma série de impactos quando elabora iniciativas sobre políticas, incluindo para os biocombustíveis. Essa avaliação engloba o impacto ambiental, social e económico, como foi o que aconteceu quando a Comissão adotou recentemente uma proposta com vista a minimizar os impactos negativos estimados das alterações indiretas da utilização dos solos associadas à utilização de biocombustíveis ([2]). Contudo, as análises da Comissão não consideraram os impactos referidos no estudo referido, não podendo a Comissão confirmar a sua validade ou pertinência.

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de quaisquer discussões sobre os preços dos alimentos neste estudo.

([1]) «O impacto da cultura de biocombustíveis na mortalidade e nas colheitas» (Impacts of biofuel cultivation on mortality and crop yields), K. Ashworth, O.Wild e C. N. Hewitt, disponível em: http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/pdf/nclimate1788.pdf

([2]) Proposta e avaliação de impacto disponível em: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/biofuels/land_use_change_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001338/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Biofuel in the EU

According to a study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, greater dependence on biofuel could lead to not only a reduction in agricultural production for human consumption, but also to an escalation in food prices.

This study, authored by a group of British researchers from Lancaster University in England, predicts that biofuel cultivation may add to pollution, despite reducing emissions of greenhouse gases such as CO_2 compared with fossil fuels such as oil, coal and gas.

Following the adoption of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) in 2009, which establishes a series of environmental goals to be achieved by 2020, the EU has identified biofuel as a way of reducing the greenhouse effect and the emission of harmful gases into the atmosphere.

Is the Commission aware of this report? How does it evaluate it, given that it contradicts the EU's stance on biofuel?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of a study ([1]) in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, authored by a group of British researchers from Lancaster University in England.

Assessing the impacts of planting 72 Mha of short rotation coppice (poplar, willow or eucalyptus) on ozone pollution and its effects on human health and crop yields, the study suggests that not only greenhouse gas emissions should be the criteria when policies concerning biofuels are developed.

The Commission assesses a range of impacts when it develops policy initiatives, including for biofuels. Such assessment include wider environmental, social and economic impacts, as for example was the case when the Commission recently adopted a proposal to minimise the estimated negative impacts of indirect land-use change emissions, associated with the use of biofuels ([2]). However, the Commission's analyses have not considered the impacts suggested by the above study, and the Commission cannot confirm their validity or relevance.

The Commission is not aware of any discussion of food prices in this study.

([1]) 'Impacts of biofuel cultivation on mortality and crop yields', K. Ashworth, O.Wild and C. N. Hewitt, available here: http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/pdf/nclimate1788.pdf

([2]) Proposal and Impact Assessment available here: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/biofuels/land_use_change_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001340/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório do Banco Mundial

Considerando que:

— Os peritos do Banco Mundial, no seu relatório semestral sobre as «Perspetivas Económicas Globais», referem que «a economia europeia só deverá sair da recessão em 2014, um ano mais tarde que o previsto»;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento das conclusões deste relatório?

2. Que pensa fazer para contrariar o facto de a recessão na Europa, previsivelmente, vir a prolongar-se até 2014?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(13 de março de 2013)

Para uma apreciação das perspetivas económicas da UE e da área do euro, convidamos o Senhor Deputado a consultar as recentes Previsões Económicas europeias do Inverno 2013, apresentadas a 22 de fevereiro de 2013, e disponíveis no seguinte endereço:
(http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/forecasts/index_en.htm).

Na sua Análise Anual do Crescimento, de 28 de novembro de 2012, a Comissão Europeia definiu as prioridades económicas para 2013; prosseguir uma consolidação orçamental diferenciada, favorável ao crescimento, restabelecer as condições normais de concessão de crédito à economia real, incentivar o crescimento e a competitividade no presente e no futuro, combater o desemprego e as consequências sociais da crise e modernizar a administração pública. As medidas céleres e ambiciosas tanto a nível da UE como dos Estados-Membros, a par com estas orientações, contribuirão para atenuar os efeitos económicos negativos a curto prazo e, ao mesmo tempo, para lançar as bases para o regresso ao crescimento sustentável e à criação de emprego.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001340/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: World Bank Report

In its biannual report on 'Global Economic Prospects' experts from the World Bank say that the European economy is only likely to emerge from recession in 2014, a year later than expected.

1. Is the Commission aware of the findings of this report?

2. What will it do to address the fact that the recession in Europe is predicted to last until 2014?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2013)

For an appreciation of the economic outlook for the EU and euro area, the Honourable Member is pointed to the recent winter 2013 European Economic Forecast presented on 22 February 2013 and available under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/forecasts/index_en.htm

The European Commission has set out its economic priorities for 2013 in the Annual Growth Survey of 28 November 2012; pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation, restoring normal lending to the economy, promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow, tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis and modernising public administration. Taking swift and ambitious action on both EU and national level along these lines will contribute to mitigating negative short term economic developments while laying the foundations for a return to sustainable growth and jobs creation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001341/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Situação em Chipre

Considerando que o BCE tem formulado preocupações em relação à situação de crise em Chipre e ao possível contágio da zona euro, em especial numa altura em que Irlanda e Portugal tentam regressar aos mercados;

Pergunta-se:

Como analisa a situação de Chipre?

Chipre já apresentou algum pedido de resgate, como tem vindo a ser anunciado?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(12 de março de 2013)

Em 22 de fevereiro de 2013, a Comissão publicou as suas previsões do inverno, que incluem as projeções macroeconómicas e orçamentais para todos os Estados-Membros da UE, incluindo Chipre ([1]).

A República de Chipre apresentou um pedido de assistência financeira por parte dos Estados-Membros da zona do euro, no final de junho de 2012. A declaração do Eurogrupo, publicada em 27 de junho de 2012, está disponível no seguinte endereço:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/131308.pdf

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2013_winter/cy_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001341/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Situation in Cyprus

The ECB has expressed concerns about the crisis in Cyprus and possible contagion in the euro area, especially at a time when Ireland and Portugal are trying to return to the markets.

How does the Commission view the situation in Cyprus?

Has Cyprus already submitted a bailout request, as has been reported?

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

On 22 February 2013, the Commission has published its Winter Forecast which includes the macroeconomic and fiscal outreach for all EU Member States, including Cyprus ([1]).

Cyprus submitted a request for financial assistance from euro area Member States in late June 2012. The statement of the Eurogroup, released on 27 June 2012, can be found at:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/131308.pdf

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2013_winter/cy_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001342/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Reembolso das LTRO ao BCE

Considerando que:

— O BCE revelou que, na primeira oportunidade, 278 bancos irão pagar 137,2 mil milhões de euros de reembolso das LTRO;

— Há um ano, o Banco Central Europeu (BCE) lançou duas linhas de refinanciamento para os bancos europeus, denominadas LTRO, de forma a evitar um estrangulamento do crédito no sistema financeiro;

— Para os analistas, o reembolso ao BCE sinaliza o regresso da estabilidade ao setor financeiro, depois da crise de confiança registada em consequência da crise da dívida soberana;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento das conclusões deste relatório?

2. Que pensa fazer para contrariar o facto de a recessão na Europa, previsivelmente, vir a prolongar-se até 2014?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(15 de março de 2013)

1. A Comissão tem conhecimento das decisões tomadas por certos bancos da UE de procederem ao reembolso parcial dos montantes atribuídos no âmbito das operações de refinanciamento a longo prazo (LTRO).

Porém, uma parte significativa da liquidez injetada através das LTRO a três anos permanecerá no sistema bancário. Além disso, a devolução de uma parte do excesso de liquidez pode constituir, na realidade, um sinal do regresso da confiança aos bancos da UE. Tais sinais podem permitir aos bancos ponderar a transferência dos «amortecedores de liquidez» onerosos que ainda mantêm para a concessão de empréstimos à economia.

2. A Comissão está igualmente preocupada com os riscos de recessão na Europa. Para fazer face aos receios de disfunções no fluxo de crédito para a economia, a Comissão apresentou recentemente propostas de criação de uma união bancária destinada a reforçar o quadro institucional financeiro europeu. Estas propostas, associadas às propostas legislativas sobre os requisitos de fundos próprios para as instituições financeiras (os chamados RRFP1/DRFP4), contribuirão para salvaguardar a estabilidade financeira e reforçar a confiança. A confiança no sistema bancário é uma condição prévia indispensável ao fluxo contínuo de empréstimos bancários para a economia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001342/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: LTRO repayments to the ECB

— The European Central Bank (ECB) has revealed that 278 banks will repay EUR 137.2 billion under the LTRO (longer-term refinancing operation) at the earliest opportunity.

— A year ago, the ECB launched two refinancing lines for European banks, called LTRO, to avoid a bottleneck of credit in the financial system.

— Analysts believe that repayments to the ECB signal the return of stability to the financial sector, after the crisis of confidence resulting from the sovereign debt crisis.

1. Is the Commission aware of the findings of this report?

2. What will it do to address the fact that the recession in Europe is predicted to last until 2014?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the decisions of some EU banks to repay partially the amounts allotted in the longer-term refinancing operations (LTRO).

However, an important part of the liquidity injected through the 3-year LTROs will still remain in the banking system. In addition, returning some excess liquidity may be actually a signal of the return of confidence in EU banks. Such signs may allow banks to consider transferring the costly liquidity buffers they still hold towards lending to the economy.

2. The Commission is also concerned about recessionary risks in Europe. To address concerns about dysfunctions in the credit flow towards the economy, the Commission has recently tabled proposals for a Banking Union to strengthen the financial institutional framework in Europe. Together with existing legislative proposals on capital requirements for financial institutions (the so called CRR1/CRD 4) they will safeguard financial stability and increase confidence. Confidence in the banking system is a pre-requisite for a continuous flow of bank lending towards the economy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001343/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento dos prazos dos empréstimos da «troika» aos países intervencionados

Considerando que:

— Tem sido defendido que, se a «troika» alargar os prazos dos empréstimos aos países com programas de ajustamento, isso iria beneficiar o seu crescimento;

— A extensão das restituições aos credores internacionais iria apoiar o crescimento dos países, porque, caso contrário, se verão forçados a criar *superavit* primário nos próximos cinco a dez anos;

— Para manter a confiança dos investidores, é necessário um resultado positivo em cada trimestre;

— Qualquer problema com a aplicação dos programas irá minar a confiança e o sucesso das reformas;

— A extensão da maturidade da dívida dos países resgatados poderia significar uma melhoria no *rating* da dívida pública e, consequentemente, um retorno firme aos mercados;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Pensa ser possível aumentar os prazos dos empréstimos aos países intervencionados?

2. Parece-lhe que o aumento dos prazos dos empréstimos seria positivo para o crescimento económico nesses países?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(20 de março de 2013)

A possibilidade de prolongar a duração dos empréstimos concedidos a Portugal e à Irlanda pela UE e pelos Estados-Membros da área do euro — através do Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilização Financeira (MEEF) e do Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira (FEEF) — está presentemente a ser examinada. Neste contexto, tem de ser analisado um conjunto de questões jurídicas, técnicas e financeiras. A decisão de prolongar ou não a duração dos empréstimos, e, em caso afirmativo, sobre as modalidades dessa extensão, está nas mãos do Conselho e dos Estados-Membros da área do euro. O prolongamento da duração dos empréstimos concedidos pelo FMI não está a ser considerado.

A extensão da duração dos empréstimos concedidos pela UE, numa modalidade adequada, poderia ajudar Portugal e a Irlanda a aceder mais facilmente aos mercados. Esta possibilidade também poderá ter um efeito indireto no crescimento económico. Os empréstimos a baixo custo estariam disponíveis por mais tempo, pelo que a taxa de juro implícita e as correspondentes despesas financeiras de Portugal, durante os anos da extensão, seriam mais baixas (pressupondo que os investidores privados continuariam a cobrar uma taxa de juro mais elevada). O Estado poderia usar as poupanças a nível das despesas financeiras para efeitos de investimento ou consumo público e eventualmente gerar crescimento. Os programas de ajustamento económico da Irlanda e de Portugal incluem diversas medidas específicas, em particular no domínio estrutural, que incidem explicitamente na revigoração do crescimento económico nestes países.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001343/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Lengthening the maturity of loans from the Troika to the bailed-out countries

— Some argue that lengthening the maturity of loans from the Troika to the countries implementing adjustment programmes would foster their growth.

— The extent of returns to international creditors would support the growth of these countries as, otherwise, they will be forced to create primary surplus in the next 5-10 years.

— A positive result in each quarter is needed to maintain investor confidence.

— Any problems implementing the programmes will undermine confidence and the success of the reforms.

— Lengthening the maturity of loans to the bailed-out countries could improve their credit rating and therefore facilitate a strong return to the markets.

1. Is it possible to lengthen the maturity of loans from the Troika to the bailed-out countries?

2. Does the Commission believe that lengthening the maturity of loans would foster economic growth in these countries?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2013)

The possibility to lengthen the maturity of loans granted by the EU and the euro area Member States to Portugal and Ireland — via EFSM and EFSF — is currently under consideration. A number of legal, technical and financial issues have to examined in this context. The eventual decision whether and, if yes, in which format to lengthen the maturities of loans is in the hands of the Council and of the euro area Member States. The extension of IMF loans is not considered.

The extension of EU loan maturities in an appropriate format could help Portugal and Ireland to ease market access. It could also have an indirect effect on economic growth. The low-cost loans would be outstanding for longer, so Portugal's implicit interest rate and respectively interest expenditure during the years of extension would be lower (assuming that private investors would continue charging higher interest rate). The State could use savings in interest expenditure for investment or public consumption, possibly generating growth. Economic adjustment programmes for Ireland and Portugal include several specific measures, in particular in the structural field, that explicitly target the reinvigoration of economic growth in these countries.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001344/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Insolvência de empresas em Portugal

Considerando que:

— O número de empresas insolventes em Portugal aumentou 41 % em 2012, para 6 688, face a 2011, com o setor da construção a ser o mais atingido, segundo indica, esta quarta-feira, um estudo anual da seguradora de crédito e caução COSEC;

— Este setor representou cerca de 28 % do total das insolvências verificadas em 2012, com 1 846 casos, como também explica o estudo, realçando que o total das insolvências de empresas aumentou 43 % no ano passado, quando comparado com o ano anterior;

— O relatório conclui que «o ano de 2012 confirmou as estimativas [da COSEC] de menor crescimento do comércio internacional, que, em conjunto com políticas monetárias e fiscais mais restritivas, sobretudo na Europa, justificaram o desaparecimento de um número considerável de empresas»;

— A Cosec destaca também que 76 % das empresas que entraram em insolvência são microempresas, com prevalência para um número acentuado de registos nos setores da construção (20 %), no retalho (14 %) e nos serviços (13 %);

Pergunto:

1. O que pode a Comissão fazer para combater o elevado número de insolvências em Portugal?

2. Concorda a Comissão com o ponto de vista segundo o qual o excesso de austeridade tem levado a um número maior de insolvências?

Resposta dada por António Tajani em nome da Comissão
(12 de abril de 2013)

Por forma a suportar as empresas em tempos difíceis, a Comissão está a promover um melhor ambiente empresarial: isto inclui trabalhar com os Estados Membros na partilha e identificação de boas práticas, assim como procurar, sempre que possível, dispensar as microempresas da legislação da UE ([1]).

Está também a facilitar o acesso a apoio financeiro por parte das pequenas e médias empresas (PME). A Comissão está a trabalhar conjuntamente com os Estados Membros para definir um sistema abrangente de políticas e instrumentos financeiros para apoiar financeiramente as PME. Para além disso, a Comissão está a trabalhar com várias instituições financeiras para proporcionar financiamento às PME ([2]).

É essencial a existência de leis modernas e procedimentos eficientes por forma a ajudar as empresas a ultrapassar as dificuldades financeiras e a obterem uma «segunda oportunidade». Consequentemente, a Comissão adotou uma comunicação ([3]) sobre uma nova abordagem à insolvência e pretende iniciar uma consulta pública sobre esta matéria. Convidou também os Estados Membros a melhorar os seus procedimentos e serviços relacionados com as insolvências. ([4])

([1]) COM(2008) 394 «Think Small First»:Um «Small Business Act» para a Europa e COM(2011) 803, «Minimização da carga regulamentar que incide sobre as PME — Ajustamento da Regulamentação da UE às necessidades das microempresas».
([2]) O Programa-Quadro Competitividade e Inovação (PCI) 2007-13 articula-se em vários regimes e dispõe de um orçamento de mais de mil milhões de euros para facilitar o acesso das PME ao crédito e ao financiamento de capital em domínios do mercado onde foram identificadas lacunas.
([3]) COM(2012) 742, «Uma nova abordagem europeia da falência e insolvência das empresas».
([4]) COM(2012) 795 , «Plano de Ação Empreendedorismo 2020: Relançar o espírito empresarial na Europa».

Combinar a consolidação fiscal com instrumentos de reforço do crescimento é a única rota a seguir para voltar a colocar Portugal na trajetória do crescimento sustentável. As reformas em curso estão a preparar o terreno para uma economia dinâmica e competitiva, necessária para assegurar a longo prazo a viabilidade e solvência das empresas portuguesas. Estas reformas incluem uma revisão da insolvência corporativa e da lei de recuperação para melhor suportar o resgate atempado das empresas viáveis e novos mecanismos judiciais e sistemas extrajudiciais rápidos de reestruturação e reembolso da dívida empresarial (Sireve, PER), sendo postas em prática para ajudar na recuperação de empresas em dificuldades financeiras e para evitar novas falências.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001344/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Insolvency of Portuguese companies

According to an annual report by the credit and suretyship insurance company COSEC, the number of insolvent enterprises in Portugal rose to 6 688 in 2012, a 41 % increase on the figure for 2011, with the construction sector being the worst hit.

The study also explained that this sector accounted for almost 28 % of total verified insolvencies in 2012, with 1 846 cases, and that the total number of insolvent enterprises rose by 43 % in 2012 in comparison with the previous year.

The report concludes that the 2012 figures confirmed COSEC's forecast of reduced growth in international trade, which together with more restrictive monetary and fiscal policies, particularly in Europe, caused a considerable number of companies to disappear.

COSECalso highlighted the fact that 76% of the insolvent companies were micro-enterprises, with particularly large numbers of cases in the construction (20 %), retail (14 %) and services (13%) sectors.

1. What can the Commission do to combat the high level of business insolvency in Portugal?

2. Does the Commission share the view that excessive austerity has led to an increase in cases of insolvency?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

In order to support companies in difficult times, the Commission is promoting a better business environment: this includes working with Member States in identifying and exchanging good practice, as well as seeking wherever possible to exempt micro-enterprises from EU legislation ([1]).

It is also facilitating access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The Commission is working with Member States to set out a comprehensive system of financial policies and instruments to support SME financing. Moreover, the Commission is working with various financial institutions to provide SMEs with funding ([2]).

It is essential to have modern laws and efficient procedures to help businesses overcome financial difficulties and get a 'second chance'. Consequently, the Commission adopted a communication ([3]) on a new approach to insolvency and plans to launch a public consultation on the issue. It also invited Member States to improve existing procedures and services related to insolvencies ([4]).

Combining fiscal consolidation with growth enhancing instruments is the only way forward to put Portugal back on the path of sustainable growth. The reforms underway are laying the ground for a dynamic and competitive economy required to ensure the long-term solvency and viability of Portuguese companies. These reforms include a revision of the corporate insolvency and recovery law to better support early rescue of viable firms and new fast track in-court mechanisms and out-of-court corporate debt restructuring and recovery mechanisms (SIREVE, PER) were put in place to help the recovery of companies in financial difficulties and to prevent further bankruptcies.

([1]) COM(2008) 394 'Think Small First: A Small Business Act for Europe' and COM(2011) 803 'Minimising regulatory burden for SMEs — Adapting EU regulation to the needs of micro-enterprises'.
([2]) The 2007-13 Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) has several schemes and a budget of over EUR 1 billion to facilitate access to loans and equity finance for SMEs where market gaps have been identified.
([3]) COM(2012) 742 'A new European approach to business failure and insolvency'.
([4]) COM(2012) 795 'Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan: Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe'.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001345/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: 50 milhões de euros para o Mali

Considerando que:

— A Comissão vai apoiar a paz no Mali, com o envio de 50 milhões de euros;

— Esta contribuição europeia foi decidida na Conferência de Doadores, que se reuniu na Etiópia;

— Este é um forte sinal do apoio da Comissão à integridade territorial e à restauração da paz no Mali;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Qual é exatamente a finalidade do envio dessa verba para o Mali?

2. De que forma, e por quem, será fiscalizada a utilização dessa verba para os objetivos propostos?

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

Em consonância com o *Groupe international de Soutien et de Suivi sur la situation au Mali,* que recebeu em 5 de fevereiro de 2013 em Bruxelas, a UE participa na mobilização internacional em favor da estabilidade e da segurança no Mali.

Neste contexto, o Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros de 18 de fevereiro de 2013 manifestou o seu apoio político à operação francesa *Serval*, bem como à Missão Internacional de Apoio ao Mali sob liderança africana (MISMA). Reafirmou igualmente o seu compromisso de combater a ameaça terrorista.

Além disso, em paralelo com a ação dos Estados-Membros, implicados diretamente a nível operacional (França) ou indiretamente, por meio de um apoio logístico à operação africana, a UE prestará um apoio financeiro de 50 milhões de euros à MISMA através do Fundo de Apoio à Paz em África. Os fundos atribuídos destinam-se a cobrir essencialmente as despesas de subsistência das tropas e dos oficiais. Os custos associados aos equipamentos militares não podem ser cobertos pelo Fundo de Apoio à Paz em África.

A Comunidade Económica dos Estados da África Ocidental (Cedeao) assegurará a gestão financeira do apoio da UE à MISMA. Este apoio incluirá igualmente uma assistência com vista a reforçar as capacidades da Cedeao para a gestão financeira da MISMA e das futuras operações de apoio à paz na África Ocidental.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001345/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: EUR 50 million for Mali

The Commission is going to provide EUR 50 million to support peace in Mali.

This European contribution was decided at the Donors' Conference in Ethiopia.

This action strongly signals the Commission's support for territorial integrity and the restoration of peace in Mali.

1. For what purpose, exactly, is this money being sent to Mali?

2. How, and by whom, will the use of this funding for its proposed objectives be accounted for?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/ Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(3 avril 2013)

En ligne avec le Groupe international de Soutien et de Suivi sur la situation au Mali qu'elle a accueilli le 5 février 2013 à Bruxelles, l'UE participe à la mobilisation internationale en faveur de la stabilité et de la sécurité au Mali.

Dans ce cadre, le Conseil Affaires étrangères du 18 février 2013 a apporté son soutien politique à l'opération française Serval ainsi qu'à la mission internationale de soutien au Mali sous conduite africaine (MISMA). Il a également réaffirmé son engagement dans la lutte contre la menace terroriste.

Aussi, en parallèle à l'action de ses États-membres, impliqués au plan directement opérationnel (France) ou indirectement via un soutien logistique à l'opération africaine, l'UE apportera un appui financier de 50 millions d'euros à la MISMA à travers sa Facilité de Paix pour l'Afrique. Les fonds alloués couvriront essentiellement les per diem des troupes et des officiers d'état-major. Les coûts relatifs aux équipements militaires ne peuvent pas être couverts par la Facilité de Paix pour l'Afrique.

La Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Cedeao) assurera la gestion financière de la contribution de l'UE à la MISMA. Cette contribution comprendra également une assistance afin de renforcer les capacités de la Cedeao pour la gestion financière de la MISMA et de futures opérations de soutien à la paix en Afrique de l'Ouest.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001346/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Apoio da «troika» a Portugal

Considerando que:

— Em vez dos 82 mil milhões de euros que Portugal iria receber no âmbito do reforço do empréstimo, por sua vez integrado no programa de ajustamento económico e financeiro acordado com a «troika», o País só irá amealhar 80 mil milhões, em virtude de um engano da Comissão, que obrigou à correção do relatório de Bruxelas;

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Assume que terá havido um erro por parte dos seus serviços, quando anunciaram o valor de 82 mil milhões de euros?

— Qual é exatamente o valor que Portugal irá receber no âmbito do programa de ajustamento económico e financeiro acordado com a «troika»?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(25 de março de 2013)

A Comissão, por ocasião da preparação do 6.° relatório de avaliação do programa de ajustamento económico para Portugal, consultou o Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilização Financeira (MEEF), o Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira (FEEF) e o Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI) com vista a obter valores exatos relativamente aos respetivos desembolsos, passados e futuros, para Portugal. Os dados e explicações recebidos dos mutuantes foram apresentados no relatório original. A pedido expresso das autoridades portuguesas, a Comissão, em colaboração com o FEEF, concordou em rever o relatório no que toca à parte do financiamento concedida pelo FEEF, sublinhando os montantes dos desembolsos líquidos do FEEF.

O montante dos desembolsos depende da definição de desembolso adotada pelo FEEF e da perspetiva mutuante/beneficiário. O montante principal da assistência financeira a Portugal desembolsada pelo FEEF deverá atingir 28,4 mil milhões de euros. Este montante é o relevante na perspetiva dos mutuantes, uma vez que define o montante das garantias do FEEF assumidas pelos Estados-Membros fiadores. O montante do desembolso líquido do FEEF deverá ser igual a 26 mil milhões de euros. Este montante é o relevante do ponto de vista da gestão de tesouraria do país beneficiário. A diferença deve-se sobretudo à «reserva de segurança específica para o empréstimo» e à «margem pré-paga» que estavam previstas no quadro jurídico do FEEF quando este foi criado e foram aplicadas às primeiras parcelas dos desembolsos a Portugal.

O FMI acordou emprestar a Portugal um total de 23,7 mil milhões de direitos de saque especiais (DSE). Este montante era equivalente a 26 mil milhões de euros aquando o início do programa mas aumentou devido às flutuações DSE/EUR; este montante em euros pode vir a sofrer novas alterações.

O Senhor Deputado pode proceder a consultas complementares junto do FEEF ou do MEE para mais pormenores acerca das alterações no quadro legal do FEEF que afetam o montante dos desembolsos, bem como quanto às obrigações financeiras de Portugal perante o FEEF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001346/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Troika assistance to Portugal

Instead of the EUR 82 billion that Portugal was going to receive in additional borrowing, as part of the economic and financial adjustment programme agreed with the Troika, it will now only receive EUR 80 billion, owing to a mistake made by the Commission, which had to be rectified in the report by Brussels.

Does the Commission accept that its services made a mistake when they announced the amount of EUR 82 billion?

Exactly how much will Portugal receive under the economic and financial adjustment programme agreed with the Troika?

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

The Commission, when preparing the 6th review report, consulted the EFSM, the EFSF and the IMF for precise estimates of their past and future disbursements to Portugal. The data and explanations received from the lenders were presented in the original report. Upon the explicit request by the Portuguese authorities, the Commission, in consulatation with the EFSF, agreed to revise the report with respect to the EFSF lending part and to stress the EFSF net disbursement amounts in the report.

The disbursement amounts depend on EFSF disbursement definition and lender / beneficiary perspective. The principal financial assistance amounts to Portugal disbursed by the EFSF is projected to be equal to EUR 28.4 billion. This amount is relevant from the lenders' perspective as it defines the amount of EFSF guarantees to be provided by guarantor MS. The net EFSF disbursement amount is projected to equal to EUR 26 billion. This amount is relevant from the cash management perspective of the beneficiary country. The difference is mainly attributable to the 'loan specific cash buffer' and the 'prepaid margin' that were present in the EFSF legal framework when the EFSF was created and were applied to the first tranches disbursed to Portugal.

The IMF agreed to lend Portugal in total SDR 23.7 billion. This amount was equivalent to EUR 26 billion at the inception of the programme but has increased due to SDR/EUR fluctuations; this amount in EUR may further change.

The Honourable Member may further consult the EFSF/ESM for details on EFSF legal framework changes affecting the disbursement amounts as well as on Portugal's outstanding obligations vis-à-vis the EFSF.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001347/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(8. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Freihandelszone EU/USA — Datenschutz

Seit Jahrzehnten wird die Idee eines transatlantischen Binnenmarktes zwischen den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika und der Europäischen Union diskutiert. Seither gab es einige diesbezügliche Entschließungen seitens der EU, bisher ohne nennenswerte Ergebnisse. Nun aber scheint das Projekt wieder Fahrt aufnehmen. So setzten US-Präsident Barack Obama und EU-Ratspräsident Herman van Rompuy bereits Ende des vorigen Jahres eine Arbeitsgruppe ein, die die Idee erneut prüfen soll. Auch die die irische EU-Ratspräsidentschaft steht hinter dem Projekt. In vielerlei Hinsicht pflegen die USA und Europa jedoch einen sehr unterschiedlichen Zugang zu wichtigen wirtschafts- und sozialpolitischen Themen. Daraus ergibt sich folgende Frage:

Beim Datenschutz könnten die Zugänge zwischen Europäern und Amerikanern nicht unterschiedlicher sein. Sei es hinsichtlich des Zugriffs auf Bankdaten, oder auf Daten in sogenannten Clouds. Zudem exstieren einige auch für europäische Bürger äußerst bedenkliche Gesetze in den USA, wie etwa der Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), der den US-Behörden ein hohes Maß an Überwachung ermöglicht. Darüber hinaus können US-Behörden mit dem sogenannten Subpoena-Verfahren Unternehmen zwingen, Daten herauszugeben, wobei der Schutz europäischer Bürger nicht klar geregelt ist. Die US-Administration scheint offenbar auch auf Twitter-Profile und Ähnliches zugreifen zu wollen. In Anbetracht der Tatsache, dass die Nutzung des Internets in immer weiteren Bereichen des alltäglichen Lebens eine zentrale Rolle spielt und oftmals mehrere Unternehmen an den Diensten beteiligt sind, würde es in einem transatlantischen Binnenmarkt noch schwieriger werden als bisher, europäische Datenschutzstandards zu wahren. Wie gedenkt die Kommission hier vorzugehen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(8. April 2013)

Die Kommission ist sich bewusst, wie wichtig die Gewährleistung eines gleichmäßig hohen Schutzes der personenbezogenen Daten natürlicher Personen ist; auch dann, wenn diese Daten in Länder außerhalb der EU transferiert werden.

Sie kennt die Bedenken angesichts der extraterritorialen Anwendung fremden Rechts auf Datenverarbeitungsvorgänge im Hoheitsgebiet der Mitgliedstaaten. Dieses Recht kann gegen Völkerrecht verstoßen und Bürger in der Union in ihren Grundrechten beeinträchtigen. Die Kommission steht auf dem Standpunkt, dass amerikanische Strafverfolgungsbehörden, nach deren Erkenntnissen sich von ihnen benötigte Informationen an einem Ort außerhalb ihrer Hoheitsgewalt befinden, die vorhandenen Kooperationsmechanismen zwischen den USA und der EU nutzen oder sich an die EU-Mitgliedstaaten wenden sollten, in denen sich diese Daten befinden.

Bei der umfassenden Datenschutzreform wurde diesen Bedenken Rechnung getragen. Der Vorschlag für eine Datenschutz-Grundverordnung ([1]) verschärft und vereinfacht gleichzeitig die Vorschriften für die Datenübermittlung in Länder, für die kein Angemessenheitsbeschluss gilt. Darin wird auch klargestellt, dass Datenübermittlungen nur dann erlaubt sein sollen, wenn die Bedingungen für eine internationale Datenübermittlung vorliegen.

Die Frage wird regelmäßig mit den US-Behörden diskutiert, so auch bei den Verhandlungen über ein Abkommen zwischen der EU und den USA über den Austausch personenbezogener Daten zwischen den Justiz- und Polizeibehörden, das allen Personen ein hohes Datenschutzniveau garantieren soll.

([1]) Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr (Datenschutz-Grundverordnung), KOM(2012)11 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001347/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: EU-USA free trade area — data protection

For several decades now the idea of a transatlantic single market between the USA and the EU has been mooted. Since then there have been a number of resolutions from the EU on this issue, so far without appreciable success. However, the project now seems to be gathering momentum again. As recently as the end of last year, President Barack Obama of the USA and EU Council President Herman van Rompuy set up a joint working party to reconsider the idea. The Irish Presidency of the EU has also backed the project. In many respects, however, the USA and Europe have very different approaches to important issues of economic and social policy. That being so, I should like to ask the following question.

In the area of data protection, the European and American approaches could hardly be more different, whether regarding access to bank data or to data in 'clouds'. Furthermore there are some laws in the USA which appear very dubious to Europeans, such as the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) which allows the US authorities to exercise a high degree of surveillance. There is also the subpoena procedure, whereby US authorities can force businesses to release data, and in which the protection of EU citizens is not clearly regulated. The US administration is also evidently keen to access Twitter profiles and similar data. Given that the use of the Internet plays a key role in an increasing number of areas of daily life, and that frequently several undertakings are involved in providing a given service, in a transatlantic internal market it would become even harder to guarantee European data protection standards. What measures does the Commission propose to take in this area?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The Commission is sensitive to the importance of guaranteeing a consistent and high level of protection of individuals' personal data, including when it is transferred outside the EU.

The Commission is aware of the concerns related to the extraterritorial application of laws of third countries regulating data processing activities that fall under the jurisdiction of Member States. These laws may be in breach of international law and affect the fundamental rights of individuals in the Union. The Commission considers that when a law enforcement authority in the US realises that necessary information lies outside its jurisdiction, it should ask for it via the existing cooperation mechanisms between the US and the EU or its Member States where that data are located.

These concerns have been taken into account in the comprehensive reform package of data protection rules. The proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([1]) reinforces and simplifies rules on international transfers to countries not covered by adequacy decisions. The proposed Regulation also makes clear that data transfers should only be allowed where the conditions of the regulation for an international transfer are met.

This issue is also regularly raised with the US authorities, notably in the context of the negotiation of an EU-US agreement on the exchange of personal data between judicial and police authorities that should provide a high level of protection for all individuals.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation) [COM(2012) 11 final].

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001348/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(8. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Freihandelszone EU/USA — Lebensmittel

Seit Jahrzehnten wird die Idee eines transatlantischen Binnenmarktes zwischen den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika und der Europäischen Union diskutiert. Seither gab es einige diesbezügliche Entschließungen seitens der EU, bisher ohne nennenswerte Ergebnisse. Nun aber scheint das Projekt wieder Fahrt aufnehmen. So setzten US-Präsident Barack Obama und EU-Ratspräsident Herman van Rompuy bereits Ende des vorigen Jahres eine Arbeitsgruppe ein, die die Idee erneut prüfen soll. Auch die irische EU-Ratspräsidentschaft steht hinter dem Projekt. In vielerlei Hinsicht pflegen die USA und Europa jedoch einen sehr unterschiedlichen Zugang zu wichtigen wirtschafts- und sozialpolitischen Themen. Daraus ergibt sich folgende Frage:

Während die Europäer gentechnisch veränderten Nahrungs- und Futtermitteln extrem skeptisch gegenüberstehen, gibt es in den USA nicht einmal diesbezügliche Warnhinweise auf Lebensmittelverpackungen. Ähnliches gilt für Massentierhaltung und den Einsatz von Antibiotika (siehe WTO-Streit um hormonbehandeltes Rindfleisch). Wie gedenkt die Kommission in einem gemeinsamen Binnenmarkt mit den USA europäische Standards und Wertvorstellungen in der Lebensmittelherstellung zu wahren?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(19. März 2013)

In künftigen Verhandlungen über ein Handels- und Investitionsabkommen zwischen der EU und den USA wird die Gesundheit der europäischen Verbraucher nicht für wirtschaftliche Gewinne aufs Spiel gesetzt werden. Grundlegende Rechtsvorschriften zum Verbraucherschutz stehen nicht zur Debatte.

Die Kommission verlangt, dass Produkte aus Drittstaaten (einschließlich den USA) Standards erfüllen müssen, die denen der EU-Rechtsvorschriften gleichwertig sind.

Die Kommission wird weiterhin ihr Möglichstes tun, um zu garantieren, dass die europäischen Standards und Werte in der Lebensmittelherstellung geschützt werden. Dabei bedient sie sich der in den einschlägigen EU-Rechtsvorschriften vorgesehenen Mittel. Dazu zählen z. B. die Audits durch den Inspektionsdienst der Generaldirektion Gesundheit und Verbraucher, die aktuell und auch in Zukunft sowohl in Drittstaaten als auch in Mitgliedstaaten stattfinden werden.

Dies wird in dem Abschlussbericht der Hochrangigen Arbeitsgruppe anerkannt, in dem deutlich gemacht wird, dass im Bereich des Gesundheits-, Sicherheits- und Umweltschutzes das Niveau zu erreichen ist, welches von jeder Seite als angemessen erachtet wird oder ansonsten legitime Regelungsziele einzuhalten sind.

Ziel der Kommission ist es, die Handelsbarrieren, die aufgrund der Funktionsweise unserer Systeme entstanden sind, abzubauen und neue Möglichkeiten für Beschäftigung und Wachstum zu schaffen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001348/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: EU-USA free trade area — food

For several decades now the idea of a transatlantic single market between the USA and the EU has been mooted. Since then there have been a number of resolutions from the EU on this issue, so far without appreciable success. However, the project now seems to be gathering momentum again. As recently as the end of last year, President Barack Obama of the USA and EU Council President Herman van Rompuy set up a joint working party to reconsider the idea. The Irish Presidency of the EU has also backed the project. In many respects, however, the USA and Europe have very different approaches to important issues of economic and social policy. That being so, I should like to ask the following question:

While Europeans are extremely sceptical about genetically modified foods and feedstuffs, in the USA there are not even GMO warnings on food packaging. The same is true of factory farming and the use of antibiotics (see the WTO dispute on hormone-treated beef). How does the Commission propose, in a common single market with the USA, to protect European standards and values in food production?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2013)

Any future negotiations of an EU-US trade and investment agreement would not be about compromising the health of European consumers for commercial gain. Basic legislation protecting consumers will not be up for negotiation.

The Commission requires that products from third countries (included US) must comply with standards equivalent to those laid down in the EU legislation.

The Commission will continue to do its outmost to guarantee the protection of European standards and value in food production by means of the tools provided for by the relevant EU legislation, i.e. the audits of the inspection service of the Health and Consumers Directorate General, which are and will be carried out both in third countries and in Member States.

This is recognised by the Final Report of the High Level Working Group which clearly states: '…while achieving the levels of health, safety, and environmental protection that each side deems appropriate, or otherwise meeting legitimate regulatory objectives.'

What the Commission hopes to achieve is to minimise trade barriers resulting from the operation of our systems and create new opportunities for jobs and growth.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001349/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(8. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Freihandelszone EU/USA — Lobbyismus

Seit Jahrzehnten wird die Idee eines transatlantischen Binnenmarktes zwischen den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika und der Europäischen Union diskutiert. Seither gab es einige diesbezügliche Entschließungen seitens der EU, bisher ohne nennenswerte Ergebnisse. Nun aber scheint das Projekt wieder Fahrt aufnehmen. So setzten US-Präsident Barack Obama und EU-Ratspräsident Herman van Rompuy bereits Ende des vorigen Jahres eine Arbeitsgruppe ein, die die Idee erneut prüfen soll. Auch die die irische EU-Ratspräsidentschaft steht hinter dem Projekt. In vielerlei Hinsicht pflegen die USA und Europa jedoch einen sehr unterschiedlichen Zugang zu wichtigen wirtschafts- und sozialpolitischen Themen. Daraus ergibt sich folgende Frage:

In den USA gibt es eine lange und bedeutende Lobbying-Tradition. Während das Lobbying in Brüssel traditionell konsensorientiert ist, wird Lobbying in den USA auf recht aggressive und äußerst professionalisierte Weise betrieben. In der amerikanischen Bevölkerung sind Lobbying-Praktiken weitgehend akzeptiert. Dagegen stehen europäische Bürger dem sehr viel skeptischer gegenüber. Obschon sie in den letzten Jahren spürbar zugenommen haben, sind Lobbying-Aktivitäten in Brüssel nicht ebenso ausgeprägt wie auf der anderen Seite des Atlantiks. Schätzungen zu Folge arbeiten 20 000 Lobbyisten in Washington, in Brüssel nur halb so viele. Wie gedenkt die Kommission in einem transatlantischen Binnenmarkt einen übermäßigen Einfluss von Lobbyisten auf die gemeinsamen Binnenmarktregeln zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(5. April 2013)

Nach Ansicht der Kommission lässt sich eine übermäßige oder unausgewogene Einflussnahme von Interessengruppen auf die Politik am besten dadurch vermeiden, dass während des Entscheidungsprozesses allen Interessengruppen umfassend die Möglichkeit gegeben wird, ihre Standpunkte darzulegen, so dass alle Interessen Gehör finden können. Von den Dienststellen der Kommission wird deshalb erwartet, dass sie gemäß den demokratischen Grundsätzen, insbesondere Artikel 11 EUV, allen Gruppen Gelegenheit geben, ihre Ansichten zu äußern. Zu diesem Zweck werden die Arbeitsprogramme und Fahrpläne („Roadmaps“) der Kommission, die die Interessengruppen geraume Zeit vor Vorlage geplanter Initiativen über diese informieren, veröffentlicht und verbreitet und verschiedene Konsultationsverfahren durchgeführt, darunter über öffentliche Internetinstrumente wie „Ihre Stimme in Europa“. Weitere umfassende Möglichkeiten, an Konsultationen teilzunehmen, bietet als zusätzliche Gewähr das Transparenzregister, da alle registrierten Organisationen und Einzelpersonen (5 500) direkt über Fahrpläne und Konsultationen informiert werden.

Die Mitarbeiter der Kommission erhalten im Rahmen ihrer Einarbeitung und während ihres Berufslebens regelmäßig Schulungen über die berufsethischen Regeln, um sie über ihre Pflichten in Bezug auf Unabhängigkeit, Unparteilichkeit und Objektivität aufzuklären. Zudem haben sie die Möglichkeit, an Ausbildungsmaßnahmen zu Konsultationsstandards teilzunehmen und sich durch einschlägige Leitlinien darüber zu informieren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001349/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: EU-USA free trade area — lobbying

For several decades now the idea of a transatlantic single market between the USA and the EU has been mooted. Since then there have been a number of resolutions from the EU on this issue, so far without appreciable success. However, the project now seems to be gathering momentum again. As recently as the end of last year, President Barack Obama of the USA and EU Council President Herman van Rompuy set up a joint working party to reconsider the idea. The Irish Presidency of the EU has also backed the project. In many respects, however, the USA and Europe have very different approaches to important issues of economic and social policy. That being so, I should like to ask the following question:

In the USA there is a long and important tradition of lobbying. Whereas in Brussels lobbying is traditionally geared to consensus, in the USA it is carried out in a very aggressive and extremely professional manner. While lobbying practices are widely accepted among the American public, European citizens are much more sceptical about them. Although they have increased perceptibly in recent years, lobbying activities in Brussels are not as pronounced as on the other side of the Atlantic. It is estimated that 20 000 lobbyists work in Washington, whereas the figure is only half that in Brussels. In a transatlantic single market, how does the Commission propose to prevent lobbyists having an excessive influence on the common rules of the single market?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission considers that the best way to avoid an excessive or unbalanced influence on policy making from particular interests is to ensure that during the process, the widest opportunity is given to all stakeholders to channel their views so that all interests can be heard. Commission services are therefore expected to ensure that an opportunity is given to all parties, to make their views known, in the full spirit of the provisions on democratic principles and in particular Article 11 TEU. Publicity and dissemination of the Commission working programmes, roadmaps informing stakeholders well in advance about planned initiatives as well as a broad set of consultation processes, including through open Internet instruments such as 'your voice in Europe', are contributing to this objective. The Transparency Register offers an additional guarantee enabling a wide range of input to consultations, as all registrants (over 5 500) are directly informed about road maps and consultations.

Trainings on professional ethics are provided to Commission staff on taking up their post and on a regular basis during their careers to raise awareness about their obligations of independence, impartiality and objectivity. In addition, specific training on standards and guidance on consultations to be followed in practice are also offered to the staff.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-001350/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(8 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Cadrul de evaluare a aspectelor legate de mediu, climă și energie care să permită extracția de hidrocarburi neconvenționale în condiții de siguranță și securitate

În septembrie 2012, Comisia a publicat 3 studii cu privire la hidrocarburile neconvenționale, accentul punându-se pe gazele de șist. Totuși, concluziile acestor studii nu reprezintă punctul de vedere al Comisiei în problema gazelor de șist.

În programul anual de lucru al Comisiei pentru anul 2013, este prevăzută adoptarea unui Cadru de evaluare a aspectelor legate de mediu, climă și energie care să permită extracția de hidrocarburi neconvenționale în condiții de siguranță și securitate. Însă în programul de lucru al Comisiei nu este specificat dacă inițiativa va fi una legislativă sau fără caracter legislativ.

1. Când este prevăzută adoptarea acestui cadru și care va fi natura sa juridică?

2. De asemenea, intenționează Comisia să propună modificări ale legislației în vigoare, în special în ceea ce privește Directiva 94/22/CE privind condițiile de acordare și folosire a autorizațiilor de prospectare, explorare și extracție a hidrocarburilor?

3. Dacă da, dorește Comisia să introducă noi reglementări care să abordeze exclusiv problema exploatării gazelor de șist, ținând cont de faptul că statele membre își pot alege mixul energetic?

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(27 martie 2013)

Comisia nu poate răspunde în momentul de față întrebărilor ridicate de distinsa membră deoarece acest lucru ar împiedica rezultatele exercițiului de evaluare a impactului aflat în curs și desfășurat în contextul inițiativei Comisiei privind „Un cadrul de evaluare a aspectelor legate de mediu, climă și energie care să permită extracția de hidrocarburi neconvenționale în condiții de siguranță și securitate”, incluse în programul de lucru al Comisiei pentru 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001350/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Framework provisions for assessment of environmental, climate and energy issues so as to facilitate the safe and secure extraction of non-conventional hydrocarbons

In September 2012, the Commission published three studies regarding non-conventional hydrocarbons, focusing on shale gas. However, the conclusions of these studies do not reflect the Commission's own views regarding shale gas.

In its annual programme of work for 2013 the Commission announces the adoption of framework provisions for the assessment of environmental, climate and energy issues so as to facilitate the safe and secure extraction of non-conventional hydrocarbons but fails to specify whether they will be legislative or non-legislative.

1. When are the framework provisions scheduled for adoption and what legal form will they take?

2. Does the Commission intend to propose amendments to existing legislation, for example Directive 94/22/EC, on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons?

3. If so, does it intend to introduce new rules relating exclusively to the extraction of shale gas, bearing in mind that Member States have a free choice regarding their energy mix?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission can currently not answer the questions raised by the Honourable Member since this would preclude the results of the ongoing Impact Assessment exercise in the context of the Commission initiative included in the Commission Work Programme 2013 for an 'Environmental, Climate and Energy Assessment Framework to Enable Safe and Secure Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction'.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001351/13
a la Comisión
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE), Albert Deß (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Peter Jahr (PPE), Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE), Astrid Lulling (PPE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE), Béla Glattfelder (PPE), Mairead McGuinness (PPE), Christa Klaß (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) y Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(8 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Evaluación por parte de la EFSA de los riesgos de los neonicotinoides

La Comisión Europea encargó a la EFSA que evaluara los riesgos del uso de los neonicotinoides clotianidina, imidacloprid y tiametoxam para el tratamiento de semillas. Los efectos de estos plaguicidas se investigaron en colonias de abejas. El resultado del estudio mostró una serie de riesgos para las abejas pero, en algunos casos, por falta de datos o de tiempo, no se pudo concluir la evaluación. Ante estos resultados, la Comisión reaccionó poniendo inmediatamente a debate la prohibición de estas sustancias. Teniendo en cuenta las enormes consecuencias económicas y ecológicas de esta decisión, desearíamos formular las siguientes preguntas a la Comisión:

1. ¿Cómo evalúa la Comisión la falta de datos, como consecuencia de la cual las investigaciones de la EFSA no son representativas para toda la UE?

2. ¿Se ha tenido en cuenta el hecho de que no se han incluido en esta evaluación estudios científicos, previos y concluidos, sobre las sustancias activas, en los que figuraban resultados concretos y recomendaciones de actuación?

3. En algunos Estados miembros, gracias a una estrecha cooperación entre los sectores de la apicultura y la agricultura, se han aplicado medidas que han dado resultados muy positivos. ¿Se han tenido en cuenta estos ejemplos?

4. En muchos Estados miembros, la presencia de parásitos invasores, como la *Diabrotica virgifera* (gusano de la raíz del maíz) ocasiona cada vez más pérdidas de cosechas. ¿Se evalúan y recomiendan métodos alternativos de lucha contra los parásitos?

5. En relación con las recomendaciones sobre métodos alternativos, ¿podría asegurar la Comisión que en el futuro se siga garantizando a los agricultores libertad de elección con respecto a los cultivos no modificados genéticamente?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de marzo de 2013)

1. La evaluación efectuada por la Autoridad Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria (EFSA) es la mejor evaluación científica de vanguardia actualmente posible con los datos experimentales disponibles. La falta de datos señalada por la EFSA plantea un problema, en la medida en que pone de manifiesto que en determinados ámbitos de la evaluación de los riesgos existen numerosos factores de incertidumbre que impiden concluir que exista un bajo riesgo.

2. Atendiendo a la petición de la Comisión, la EFSA tuvo en cuenta todos los estudios disponibles evaluados previamente a nivel nacional que sirvieron de base para las autorizaciones existentes de productos fitosanitarios.

3. La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de que falte información que hubiera debido integrarse en la evaluación. Se hizo una amplia petición de datos, y en la evaluación se tuvieron en cuenta todos los datos presentados, los estudios y la información.

4. La Comisión es consciente de la importancia de métodos alternativos, como la rotación de cultivos, en los casos en que en el futuro no sean posibles algunos usos de los neonicotinoides.

5. La utilización de OMG en la EU está regulada por la Directiva 2001/18/CE y el Reglamento (CE) n° 1829/2003. Los agricultores pueden cultivar OMG —por ejemplo, cultivos modificados genéticamente resistentes a los insectos —, siempre que se les haya concedido una autorización de comercialización en la EU, después de una rigurosa evaluación de los riesgos en la que se demuestre que no tienen efectos nocivos para la salud humana y animal ni para el medio ambiente. La legislación sobre OMG establece que los Estados miembros pueden aplicar medidas específicas para garantizar la coexistencia de los cultivos modificados genéticamente, los cultivos convencionales y los cultivos ecológicos en su territorio.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001351/13
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE), Albert Deß (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Peter Jahr (PPE), Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE), Astrid Lulling (PPE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE), Béla Glattfelder (PPE), Mairead McGuinness (PPE), Christa Klaß (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) und Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(8. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Risikobewertung von Neonicotinoiden durch die EFSA

Die EFSA wurde von der Europäischen Kommission mit der Bewertung der Risiken im Zusammenhang mit der Verwendung der Neonicotinoide Clothianidin, Imidacloprid und Thiamethoxam zur Saatgutbehandlung beauftragt. Ermittelt wurden die Auswirkungen auf Bienenvölker. Das Ergebnis der EFSA identifizierte eine Reihe von Risiken für Bienen, in einigen Fällen konnte aufgrund von mangelnden Dateninformationen sowie aufgrund des Zeitdrucks die Risikobewertung nicht abgeschlossen werden. In Reaktion auf diese Erkenntnisse stellte die Kommission rasch ein Verbot dieser Wirkstoffe zur Diskussion. Angesichts der enormen ökonomischen und ökologischen Breitenwirkung einer derartigen Entscheidung stellen sich folgende Fragen an die Kommission:

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die vorhandene Datenlücke, aufgrund derer die Untersuchungen der EFSA nicht repräsentativ für die gesamte EU sind?

2. Wird die Tatsache berücksichtigt, dass vorangegangene und abgeschlossene wissenschaftliche Studien in Zusammenhang mit der Wirkstoffprüfung mit konkreten Ergebnissen und Maßnahmenempfehlungen in diese Bewertung nicht einbezogen wurden?

3. In einigen Mitgliedstaaten wurden in enger Zusammenarbeit zwischen Imkerei und Landwirtschaft Maßnahmen umgesetzt, die zu deutlichen Ergebnissen führten. Wurden diese Beispiele berücksichtigt?

4. In vielen Mitgliedstaaten verursacht das Vorkommen invasiver Schädlinge wie z. B. von Diabrotica virgifera (Maiswurzelbohrer) zunehmende Ernteausfälle. Wird eine Beurteilung sowie Empfehlung alternativer Anwendungen in der Bekämpfung von Schadinsekten erstellt?

5. Kann die Kommission in Zusammenhang mit der Empfehlung alternativer Anwendungen sicherstellen, dass den Landwirten auch in Zukunft Wahlfreiheit in Bezug auf gentechnikfreien Anbau garantiert bleibt?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(27. März 2013)

1. Die Bewertung durch die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) stellt nach dem aktuellen wissenschaftlichen Forschungsstand die bestmögliche Bewertung anhand der derzeit verfügbaren Versuchsdaten dar. Die von der EFSA angeführten Datenlücken geben insofern Anlass zu Besorgnis, als sie auf zahlreiche Unsicherheitsfaktoren in bestimmten Bereichen der Risikobewertung hinweisen, wodurch es nicht möglich ist, auf ein geringes Risiko zu schließen.

2. Entsprechend dem Ersuchen der Kommission hat die EFSA alle Studien berücksichtigt, die zur Stützung bestehender Zulassungen für Pflanzenschutzmittel vorliegen und bereits auf nationaler Ebene bewertet wurden.

3. Der Kommission ist nicht bekannt, dass Informationen fehlen, die bei der Bewertung hätten berücksichtigt werden sollen. Es hat ein breit angelegter Aufruf zur Vorlage von Daten stattgefunden, und alle übermittelten Daten, Studien und sonstigen Informationen sind in die Bewertung eingeflossen.

4. Der Kommission ist bewusst, dass für den Fall, dass bestimmte Verwendungen von Neonicotinoiden künftig nicht mehr zur Verfügung stehen sollten, Alternativlösungen erarbeitet werden müssen (z. B. Fruchtwechsel).

5. Die Verwendung genetisch veränderter Kulturen in der EU ist in der Richtlinie 2001/18/EG und in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1829/2003 geregelt. Landwirte dürfen genetisch veränderte Kulturen anbauen (z. B. insektenresistente genetisch veränderte Kulturen), wenn in einer gründlichen Risikobewertung nachgewiesen wurde, dass sie keine nachteiligen Auswirkungen auf die Gesundheit von Mensch und Tier oder die Umwelt haben und von der EU zugelassen wurden. Gemäß den Rechtsvorschriften über genetisch veränderte Organismen können die Mitgliedstaaten besondere Maßnahmen ergreifen, um die Koexistenz genetisch veränderter, konventioneller und organischer Kulturen auf ihrem Hoheitsgebiet zu gewährleisten.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001351/13
à la Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE), Albert Deß (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Peter Jahr (PPE), Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE), Astrid Lulling (PPE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE), Béla Glattfelder (PPE), Mairead McGuinness (PPE), Christa Klaß (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) et Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(8 février 2013)

Objet: Analyse par l'EFSA des risques que présentent les néonicotinoïdes

La Commission européenne a chargé l'EFSA d'analyser les risques que recèlent la clothianidine, l'imidaclopride et le thiaméthoxame, néonicotinoïdes utilisés dans le traitement des semences. L'Autorité a étudié les effets de ces substances sur des colonies d'abeilles. Elle a identifié plusieurs types de risques pour les abeilles, mais une insuffisance des données et le manque de temps ont empêché, dans certains cas, de mener à bien le travail d'analyse. Ces constatations ont conduit la Commission à proposer de débattre sans tarder d'une interdiction de ces substances. Étant donné la portée considérable d'une telle décision des points de vue économique et écologique, il convient de poser à la Commission les questions suivantes:

1. Quelle appréciation la Commission porte-t-elle sur un manque de données ayant pour conséquence que les études de l'EFSA ne sont pas représentatives de la situation sur tout le territoire de l'Union européenne?

2. Est-elle au courant que cette analyse ignore des études scientifiques précédentes conduites à leur terme sur des substances actives alors qu'elles sont assorties de résultats concrets et de recommandations d'action?

3. Une étroite concertation, dans certains États membres, entre les professionnels de l'apiculture et de l'agriculture a abouti à la mise en œuvre de mesures qui ont eu des résultats tangibles. Ces exemples ont-ils été pris en compte?

4. L'apparition dans de nombreux États membres de ravageurs invasifs, comme *Diabrotica virgifera* (chrysomèle des racines du maïs), provoque des pertes de récoltes qui vont croissant. D'autres méthodes de lutte contre les insectes nuisibles sont-elles étudiées et recommandées?

5. Dès lors que le recours à des méthodes différentes serait conseillé, la Commission peut-elle garantir que les agriculteurs demeureront libres, dans l'avenir, à l'égard des modes culturaux sans OGM?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(27 mars 2013)

1. L'étude réalisée par l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) est l'analyse scientifique la plus avancée qu'il soit possible de réaliser sur la base des données expérimentales disponibles. Les lacunes mises en évidence par l'EFSA sont préoccupantes, dans la mesure où elles font apparaître dans certaines parties de l'évaluation des risques de nombreux facteurs d'incertitude qui ne permettent pas de conclure que ces risques sont faibles.

2. Conformément à la requête de la Commission, l'EFSA a pris en considération toutes les études disponibles menées au niveau national pour appuyer des autorisations en cours de produits phytosanitaires.

3. La Commission n'a pas connaissance de l'existence de données qui auraient dû être intégrées dans l'évaluation. Une demande de renseignements a été largement diffusée et l'EFSA a tenu compte de toutes les données, études et informations soumises.

4. La Commission est consciente de l'importance de solutions de substitution, telle que l'assolement, dans l'hypothèse où certaines utilisations des néonicotinoïdes ne seraient plus envisageables.

5. L'utilisation des OGM dans l'Union européenne est régie par la directive 2001/18/CE et le règlement (CE) n°1829/2003. Les agriculteurs peuvent cultiver des OGM — résistants aux insectes, par exemple — si les OGM en question ont reçu une autorisation de mise sur le marché de l'Union sur la foi d'une évaluation approfondie des risques démontrant qu'ils n'ont d'effets néfastes ni sur la santé humaine et animale ni sur l'environnement. La législation relative aux OGM autorise les États membres à appliquer des mesures spécifiques pour assurer la coexistence sur leur territoire de cultures génétiquement modifiées, conventionnelles et organiques.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001351/13
alla Commissione
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE), Albert Deß (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Peter Jahr (PPE), Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE), Astrid Lulling (PPE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE), Béla Glattfelder (PPE), Mairead McGuinness (PPE), Christa Klaß (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(8 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Valutazione da parte dell'EFSA dei rischi dei neonicotinoidi

La Commissione ha incaricato l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) di effettuare una valutazione dei rischi connessi all'utilizzo di clothianidin, imidacloprid e thiamethoxam, della famiglia dei neonicotinoidi, nel trattamento delle sementi. Nel corso dello studio sono stati esaminati gli effetti di tali sostanze sulle colonie di api. I risultati hanno evidenziato una serie di rischi per le api, ma in alcuni casi l'EFSA non ha potuto portare a termine la valutazione dei rischi a causa della mancanza di dati nonché dei vincoli temporali. Sulla base di tali informazioni, la Commissione ha avviato immediatamente un dibattito circa il divieto di queste sostanze. Considerando l'enorme portata delle conseguenze, a livello economico e ambientale, di una simile decisione, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Come valuta la Commissione le lacune presenti nei dati forniti, in ragione delle quali gli studi dell'EFSA non risultano rappresentativi per tutta l'Unione europea?

2. Si tiene conto del fatto che nel corso di questa valutazione non sono stati considerati gli studi scientifici precedentemente conclusi relativi all'esame di queste sostanze, corredati da risultati concreti e proposte di azione?

3. In alcuni Stati membri il settore dell'apicoltura e quello agricolo hanno intrapreso una stretta collaborazione, attuando misure che hanno condotto a chiari risultati. Si è tenuto conto di tali esempi?

4. In molti Stati membri la presenza di parassiti invasivi, come la *diabrotica virgifera* (diabrotica del mais), provoca perdite di raccolto di entità crescente. Intende la Commissione valutare misure alternative di lotta contro gli insetti nocivi ed elaborare altresì raccomandazioni a questo riguardo?

5. Può la Commissione assicurare, con riferimento alle raccomandazioni circa misurealternative, che anche in futuro sarà garantita agli agricoltori la libertà di decisione perquanto riguarda le coltivazioni libere da organismi geneticamente modificati?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2013)

1. La valutazione effettuata dall'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) rappresenta la migliore valutazione scientifica attualmente possibile in base alle conoscenze e ai dati sperimentali disponibili. La mancanza di dati messa in luce dall'EFSA solleva preoccupazioni nella misura in cui evidenzia diversi fattori di incertezza in certi ambiti della valutazione del rischio che non consentono di concludere che il rischio sia basso.

2. Coerentemente con la richiesta della Commissione l'EFSA ha tenuto conto di tutti gli studi disponibili precedentemente valutati a livello nazionale a sostegno delle autorizzazioni esistenti di prodotti fitosanitari.

3. La Commissione non è a conoscenza di informazioni mancanti che avrebbero dovuto essere integrate nella valutazione. È stato indetto un ampio invito a fornire dati e tutti i dati, gli studi e le informazioni presentati sono stati presi in considerazione nella valutazione.

4. La Commissione è consapevole dell'importanza di soluzioni alternative come ad esempio la rotazione delle colture qualora certi usi dei neonicotinoidi non siano più ammessi in futuro.

5. L'uso delle colture OGM nell'UE è disciplinato dalla direttiva 2001/18/CE e dal regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003. Gli agricoltori possono coltivare colture GM, ad esempio colture GM resistenti agli insetti, a patto che queste abbiano ricevuto un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione UE previa attenta valutazione del rischio che dimostri che essi non hanno effetti nocivi per la salute umana e animale e per l'ambiente. La legislazione sugli OGM stabilisce che gli Stati membri possono implementare misure specifiche per assicurare la coesistenza di colture GM, convenzionali e biologiche sul loro territorio.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-001351/13
a Bizottság számára
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE), Albert Deß (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Peter Jahr (PPE), Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE), Astrid Lulling (PPE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE), Glattfelder Béla (PPE), Mairead McGuinness (PPE), Christa Klaß (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) és Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(2013. február 8.)

Tárgy: Az EFSA által a neonikotinoidokról készített kockázatértékelés

Az Európai Bizottság megbízta az Európai Élelmiszerbiztonsági Hatóságot (EFSA), hogy értékelje a klotianidin, imidakloprid és tiametoxám neonikotinoidok vetőmagkezeléshez történő használatával összefüggésben felmerülő kockázatokat. A vizsgálat során a méhcsaládokra gyakorolt hatásokat tanulmányozták. Az EFSA által közölt eredmények egy sor kockázatot tártak fel a méhek tekintetében; a kockázatértékelést néhány esetben a hiányzó adatok, valamint az idő szorítása miatt nem tudták lezárni. Ezekre a felismerésekre reagálva a Bizottság haladéktalanul vitára bocsátotta e hatóanyagok betiltását. Az erre irányuló döntés jelentős gazdasági és ökológiai következményeire tekintettel kérjük a Bizottságot az alábbi kérdések megválaszolására:

1. Mi a véleménye a Bizottságnak az adatok hiányos voltáról, amiből adódóan az EFSA vizsgálatai nem reprezentatívak az Unió egészére nézve?

2. Figyelembe veszik-e, hogy a szóban forgó értékelésbe nem vonták be a hatóanyagok vizsgálatával foglalkozó korábbi, lezárt tudományos kutatásokat, amelyek konkrét eredményekkel jártak és intézkedéseket javasoltak?

3. Egyes tagállamokban a méhészek és a mezőgazdaság szoros együttműködésével egyértelmű eredményekhez vezető intézkedéseket hoztak. Tekintetbe vették-e ezeket a példákat?

4. Sok tagállamban egyre jelentősebb termésveszteségeket okoz az olyan invazív kártevők előfordulása, mint például a Diabrotica virgifgera (amerikai kukoricabogár). Értékelik-e a kártevő rovarok elleni küzdelem alternatív módszereit, és tesznek-e erre vonatkozó ajánlásokat?

5. Tudja-e a Bizottság az alternatív módszerek ajánlásával kapcsolatban biztosítani, hogy a mezőgazdasági termelők a jövőben is szabadon dönthessenek a géntechnológiától mentes termelés mellett?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. március 27.)

1. Az Európai Élelmiszerbiztonsági Hatóság (EFSA) által készített értékelés a jelenleg rendelkezésre álló kísérleti adatokkal elkészíthető legkorszerűbb tudományos értékelés. Az adatok hiányos volta, amelyet az EFSA kiemelt, aggodalomra ad okot, amennyiben a kockázatértékelés bizonyos területein számos bizonytalansági tényezőre világít rá, amelyek nem teszik lehetővé az alacsony kockázat megállapítását.

2. A Bizottság kérésének megfelelően az EFSA figyelembe vett minden olyan, a növényvédő szerekre már kiadott engedélyeket megerősítő, elérhető tanulmányt, amelyet korábban nemzeti szinten már értékeltek.

3. A Bizottságnak nincs tudomása olyan hiányzó információról, amelynek az értékelés részét kellett volna képeznie. Az adatok beszerzésére széleskörű felhívás indult, és az értékelés elkészítésekor minden beérkezett adat, tanulmány és információ megfontolásra került.

4. A Bizottság tisztában van annak fontosságával, hogy alternatív megoldásokra (például vetésforgó) van szükség arra az esetre, ha a jövőben a neonikotinoidok bizonyos felhasználási formái nem lennének elérhetők.

5. A géntechnológiával módosított növényi kultúrák (GMO-termények) használatát az Európai Unióban a 2001/18/EK irányelv és az 1829/2003/EK rendelet szabályozza. A mezőgazdasági termelők termeszthetnek GMO-terményeket (például rovarrezisztens GM-terményeket), amennyiben – azt követően, hogy alapos kockázatértékelés kimutatta, hogy nincsenek káros hatással sem az emberi és állati egészségre, sem a környezetre – ezek a termények uniós forgalombahozatali engedélyt kaptak. A géntechnológiával módosított növényi kultúrákra vonatkozó jogszabályok engedélyezik a tagállamok számára, hogy a területükön egyedi intézkedéseket hajtsanak végre a génmódosított növényeknek a hagyományos és a biogazdaságok melletti termesztésének biztosítására.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001351/13
do Komisji
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE), Albert Deß (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Peter Jahr (PPE), Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE), Astrid Lulling (PPE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE), Béla Glattfelder (PPE), Mairead McGuinness (PPE), Christa Klaß (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) oraz Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(8 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Ocena EFSA dotycząca ryzyka związanego z neonikotynoidami

Komisja Europejska zleciła Europejskiemu Urzędowi ds. Bezpieczeństwa Żywności (EFSA) ocenę ryzyka w związku z zaprawianiem materiału siewnego neonikotynoidami – chlotianidyną, imidachloprydem i tiametoksamem. Stwierdzono oddziaływanie tych substancji na populacje pszczół. W rezultatach uzyskanych przez EFSA zidentyfikowano wielorakie ryzyko dla pszczół, a w niektórych przypadkach oceny ryzyka nie udało się sfinalizować ze względu na brak danych, a także presję czasu. W reakcji na te wyniki Komisja niezwłocznie poddała pod dyskusję zakaz stosowania tych substancji. Ze względu na ogromny gospodarczy i ekologiczny zasięg oddziaływania tego rodzaju decyzji nasuwają się następujące pytania do Komisji:

1. Jak Komisja ocenia obecny niedobór danych, który sprawia, że analizy EFSA nie są reprezentatywne dla całej UE?

2. Czy uwzględnia się fakt, że do tej oceny nie włączono wcześniejszych zakończonych badań naukowych nad substancjami czynnymi, które to badania zaowocowały konkretnymi rezultatami i zaleceniami dotyczącymi środków?

3. W niektórych państwach członkowskich wprowadzono – przy ścisłej współpracy między sektorami pszczelarstwa i rolnictwa – środki, które doprowadziły do konkretnych rezultatów. Czy te przykłady zostały uwzględnione?

4. W wielu państwach członkowskich występowanie inwazyjnych szkodników, np. *Diabrotica virgifera* (stonka kukurydziana), powoduje rosnące straty w zbiorach. Czy sporządzono ocenę, a także zalecenie dotyczące alternatywnych metod walki ze szkodnikami?

5. Czy w związku z zaleceniem dotyczącym alternatywnych metod Komisja może zapewnić, że również w przyszłości rolnikom nadal gwarantować się będzie swobodę wyboru w odniesieniu do upraw wolnych od modyfikacji genetycznych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(27 marca 2013 r.)

1. Ocena przeprowadzona przez Europejski Urząd ds. Bezpieczeństwa Żywności (EFSA) stanowi ocenę, która z naukowego punktu widzenia jest na najwyższym poziomie aktualności przy uwzględnieniu obecnie dostępnych danych doświadczalnych. Braki w danych, na które wskazała EFSA, stanowią powód do obaw, jako że uwypuklają one liczne czynniki niepewności w określonych obszarach oceny ryzyka, które to czynniki uniemożliwiają stwierdzenie niskiego ryzyka.

2. Zgodnie z wnioskiem Komisji EFSA uwzględniła wszystkie dostępne badania, które zostały uprzednio poddane ocenie na szczeblu krajowym, wspierające dotychczasowe pozwolenia na stosowanie środków ochrony roślin.

3. Komisji nie są znane żadne brakujące dane, które należało włączyć do oceny. O przekazanie danych zwrócono się do szerokiego grona podmiotów, a wszystkie przedłożone dane, badania i informacje zostały uwzględnione w ocenie.

4. Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę z tego, jak ważne są alternatywne rozwiązania, takie jak płodozmian, na wypadek, gdyby niektóre zastosowania neonikotynoidów nie były dostępne w przyszłości.

5. Wykorzystywanie w UE upraw genetycznie zmodyfikowanych regulowane jest dyrektywą 2001/18/WE i rozporządzeniem (WE) nr 1829/2003. Rolnicy mogą uprawiać genetycznie zmodyfikowane uprawy – np. genetycznie zmodyfikowane uprawy odporne na szkodniki owadzie – o ile otrzymały one unijne pozwolenie na dopuszczenie do obrotu, którego wydanie poprzedzone jest kompleksową oceną ryzyka wykazującą brak jakichkolwiek niepożądanych skutków dla zdrowia ludzi i zwierząt oraz dla środowiska. W przepisach dotyczących GMO przewiduje się, że państwa członkowskie mogą wprowadzić szczególne środki dla zapewnienia współistnienia na swoim terytorium upraw genetycznie zmodyfikowanych, konwencjonalnych oraz ekologicznych.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001351/13
adresată Comisiei
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE), Albert Deß (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Peter Jahr (PPE), Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE), Astrid Lulling (PPE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE), Béla Glattfelder (PPE), Mairead McGuinness (PPE), Christa Klaß (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) şi Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(8 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Evaluarea de către EFSA a riscului prezentat de neonicotinoide

Autoritatea Europeană pentru Siguranța Alimentară a fost mandatată de către Comisia Europeană să evalueze riscurile legate de utilizarea neonicotinoidelor clothianidin, imidacloprid și thiamethoxam în tratarea semințelor. Au fost identificate consecințele acestor substanțe active asupra coloniilor de albine. Rezultatul EFSA relevă o serie de riscuri pentru populațiile de albine, în anumite cazuri evaluarea riscului neputând fi finalizată atât din cauza informațiilor incomplete, cât și datorită presiunii timpului. Ca urmare a acestor concluzii, Comisia Europeană a pus în discuție neîntârziat interzicerea acestor substanțe active. Având în vedere impactul major al unei astfel de decizii la nivel economic și ecologic, se adresează Comisiei următoarele întrebări:

1. Care este părerea Comisiei în ceea ce privește aceste lacune, în urma cărora cercetările efectuate de EFSA nu pot fi considerate reprezentative pentru întreaga Uniune Europeană?

2. Se va lua în considerare faptul că studii științifice anterioare, finalizate, referitoare la testarea acestor substanțe active și care conțin rezultate concrete și o serie de recomandări privind măsurile care ar trebui luate, nu au fost incluse în această evaluare?

3. Ca urmare a strânsei colaborări dintre domeniul apicol și cel agricol, în anumite state membre au fost implementate măsuri care au condus la rezultate semnificative. Au fost luate în considerare și exemplele acestor state membre?

4. Apariția insectelor dăunătoare, precum Diabrotica virgifera (viermi vestici ai rădăcinilor porumbului) are ca rezultat un număr în continuă creștere de culturi distruse în multe dintre statele membre. Va fi întocmită atât o evaluare, cât și o recomandare cu privire la metode alternative de combatere a insectelor dăunătoare?

5. În ceea ce privește recomandarea cu privire la metodele alternative, poate Comisia să le garanteze agricultorilor faptul că aceștia vor avea și în viitor libertate de alegere în ceea ce privește culturile fără OMG-uri?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei

(27 martie 2013)

1. Evaluarea efectuată de Autoritatea Europeană pentru Siguranța Alimentară (EFSA) reprezintă cea mai bună evaluare științifică posibilă în prezent, având în vedere datele experimentale disponibile. Lipsa anumitor informații semnalată de EFSA reprezintă un motiv de îngrijorare întrucât acest lucru scoate în evidență mai mulți factori de incertitudine în anumite domenii din evaluarea riscului, care nu permit formularea unor concluzii care să confirme prezența unui risc scăzut.

2. În urma cererii Comisiei, EFSA a luat în considerare toate studiile disponibile evaluate anterior la nivel național în sprijinul autorizațiilor existente privind produsele de protecție a plantelor.

3. Comisia nu are cunoștință de lipsa unor informații care ar fi trebuit să fie integrate în evaluare. A fost lansată o cerere amplă de informații și toate datele, studiile și informațiile au fost luate în considerare în cadrul evaluării.

4. Comisia este conștientă de importanța unor soluții alternative precum rotația culturilor, în cazul în care anumite utilizări ale neonicotinoidelor nu ar mai fi posibile în viitor.

5. Utilizarea culturilor modificate genetic în UE este reglementată de Directiva 2001/18/CE și Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1829/2003. Agricultorii pot cultiva culturi modificate genetic (de exemplu, cele rezistente la insecte) cu condiția ca acestea să fi primit o autorizație de comercializare în UE, în urma unei evaluări detaliate a riscului, care să demonstreze că nu au efecte adverse asupra sănătății umane și animale și asupra mediului. Legislația privind OMG-urile prevede că statele membre pot să pună în aplicare măsuri specifice pentru a asigura coexistența între culturile modificate genetic, culturile convenționale și culturile ecologice pe teritoriul lor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001351/13
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE), Albert Deß (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Peter Jahr (PPE), Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE), Astrid Lulling (PPE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE), Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE), Béla Glattfelder (PPE), Mairead McGuinness (PPE), Christa Klaß (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: EFSA risk assessment of neonicotinoids

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) was given the task by the Commission of assessing the risks linked to the use of the neonicotinoids Clothianidin, Imidacloprid and Thiamethoxam in treating seeds. The effects of these on bee populations have been established and the results obtained identified a number of risks for bees. In some cases the risk assessment could not be completed, owing to a lack of data and because of time pressure. In response, the Commission raised the question of a ban on these active substances. The wide-ranging economic and environmental impact of such a decision gives rise to the following questions:

1. What is the Commission's view of the data gap, as a result of which the EFSA's investigations are not representative of the EU as a whole?

2. Is account being taken of the fact that earlier, completed scientific studies concerned with evaluating active substances and which contain specific results and recommendations for action were not included in this assessment?

3. Measures have been taken in some Member States with close cooperation between beekeepers and the agricultural sector which have produced clear results. Have these been taken into account?

4. In many Member States the incidence of invasive pests such as Diabrotica virgifera (Western corn rootworm) is causing an increasing number of failed harvests. Will there be an assessment and a recommendation for alternative methods in the fight against harmful insects?

5. With regard to recommending alternative methods, can the Commission ensure that farmers will continue to be able to exercise free choice in the matter of GMO crops?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

1. The assessment done by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) represents the best state-of-the-art scientific assessment currently possible with the available experimental data. The data gaps highlighted by EFSA raise a concern insofar as they highlight numerous uncertainty factors in certain areas of the risk assessment, which do not allow concluding on a low risk.

2. Consistently with the request of the Commission, EFSA took into account all available studies previously evaluated at national level in support of existing authorisations on plant protection products.

3. The Commission is not aware of any missing information that should have been integrated in the assessment. A wide call for data was launched and all submitted data, studies and information were considered in the assessment.

4. The Commission is aware of the importance of alternative solutions such as crop rotation, in case certain uses of neonicotinoids would not be available in the future.

5. The use of GMO crops in the EU is regulated by Directive 2001/18/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003. Farmers can grow GMO crops — e.g. insect-resistant GM crops — provided that these have been granted an EU marketing authorisation, after a thorough risk assessment, demonstrating that they have no adverse effects on human and animal health and on the environment. The GMO legislation provides that Member States can implement specific measures for ensuring the coexistence of GM, conventional and organic crops cultivations on their territory.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001352/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(8 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Disoccupazione giovanile in aumento nell'area dell'euro

Il Presidente della Commissione Barroso, con il suo discorso tenuto in Plenaria a Strasburgo il giorno 5 febbraio 2013, pone l'accento sull'aumento della disoccupazione giovanile nell'area dell'euro, precisando come la disoccupazione giovanile sia superiore al 25 % in dodici dei ventisette Stati membri.

Secondo il Presidente della Commissione Barroso, la gravità della situazione è ormai palese in gran parte dell'Unione e a tal proposito indica azioni specifiche:

— nei singoli Stati membri, attraverso riforme strutturali volte a bilanciare i conti e a promuovere la competitività delle imprese;

— nell'area dell'euro, con misure specifiche per migliorare governance, azione ed efficacia delle politiche monetarie;

— rinforzando i meccanismi di solidarietà e responsabilità per una migliore unione economica e monetaria e per un'unione politica che abbia un controllo maggiore e più democratico delle funzioni a livello dell'UE.

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere:

— come reputa siano attuabili queste politiche per la diminuzione della disoccupazione giovanile nell'area dell'euro in relazione ai tagli proposti nell'ultimo bilancio europeo?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(2 aprile 2013)

La proposta della Commissione relativa al Quadro finanziario pluriennale prevedeva un bilancio leggermente maggiore di quello concordato in sede di Consiglio europeo del 7-8 febbraio. Tuttavia, il Consiglio europeo ha anche riconosciuto che l'accento posto dalla Commissione sulla necessità di affrontare la disoccupazione giovanile era giustificato. Pertanto il Consiglio europeo ha deciso altresì di varare una Iniziativa a favore dell'occupazione giovanile (Youth Employment Initiative) a sostegno delle misure enunciate nel Pacchetto per l'occupazione giovanile ([1]), in particolare la Garanzia per i giovani, con un finanziamento di 6 miliardi di EUR. Inoltre, il Fondo sociale europeo ([2]) prevede, per il periodo 2014-2020, diverse altre possibili attività per i giovani e l'occupazione giovanile. È essenziale pertanto che una quota minima del 25 % del bilancio destinato alla politica di coesione sia consacrata al FSE come proposto dalla Commissione e in proposito è fondamentale il sostegno del Parlamento.

Al di là di ciò, l'Analisi annuale della crescita 2013 ([3]) evidenzia che si dovrebbe attribuire priorità all'investimento nell'istruzione e che si dovrebbe mantenere o rafforzare la copertura e l'efficacia dei servizi per l'occupazione e delle politiche attive del mercato del lavoro.

Nell'ambito del Semestre europeo vengono anche promosse riforme strutturali per affrontare la segregazione del mercato del lavoro e ridurre la disoccupazione giovanile. La Commissione europea valuterà le misure adottate dagli Stati membri per incentivare la crescita e l'occupazione e proporrà, se del caso, raccomandazioni specifiche per paese in tema di disoccupazione giovanile.

La Commissione europea sta attualmente raccogliendo idee per realizzare un'autentica UEM ([4]), ad esempio valorizzando le potenzialità di coordinamento della politica occupazionale e sociale nell'ambito dell'UEM. Il Presidente Van Rompuy, in stretta cooperazione con il Presidente Barroso, presenterà entro giugno 2013 un ruolino di marcia specifico corredato di scadenze precise per il completamento dell'UEM.

([1]) COM(2012)727-728-729 final del 5 dicembre 2012.
([2]) FSE.
([3]) COM(2012)750 del 28 novembre 2012.
([4]) Unione economica e monetaria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001352/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment on the rise in the euro area

In his address to Parliament in plenary sitting in Strasbourg on 5 February 2013, the Commission President, Mr Barroso, focused on the growing youth unemployment in the euro area, pointing out that the youth unemployment rate was now higher than 25% in 12 of the 27 Member States.

According to Commission President Barroso, the gravity of the situation is now clear in most of the EU and, in this regard, he mentioned the following specific measures:

— structural reforms should be carried out in individual Member States, in order to balance the accounts and promote business competitiveness;

— in the euro area, specific measures should be taken to enhance governance and the action and effectiveness of monetary policies;

— solidarity and responsibility mechanisms should be strengthened for a better economic and monetary union and a political union that has greater and more democratic control over EU functions.

— In the light of the above, can the Commission say how it thinks these policies concerning the reduction of youth unemployment in the euro area can be implemented in relation to the proposed cuts to the latest European budget?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

The Commission's proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework foresaw a slightly higher budget than what the European Council of 7-8 February has agreed to. Nevertheless, the European Council also recognised that the emphasis put by the Commission on the critical need to address youth unemployment was right. Hence, the European Council also decided to create a Youth Employment Initiative in support of measures set out in the Youth Employment Package ([1]), in particular the Youth Guarantee, with a funding of EUR 6 billion. Furthermore, the European Social Fund ([2]) for the period 2014-2020 foresees a number of other possible activities targeting youth and youth employment. Hence, it is critical that a minimum share of 25% of the budget allocated to the Cohesion policy is dedicated to the ESF as proposed by the Commission and the Parliament's support is essential in this regard.

Besides, the 2013 Annual Growth Survey ([3]) points out that investments in education should be prioritised and the coverage and effectiveness of employment services and active labour market policies maintained or reinforced.

Through the European Semester, structural reforms are also promoted to address labour market segregation and reduce youth unemployment. The European Commission will assess Member States' measures to boost growth and jobs and propose, where needed, country-specific recommendations regarding youth unemployment.

The European Commission is currently elaborating ideas regarding the genuine EMU ([4]), e.g. reinforcing the scope for employment and social policy coordination in the EMU. President Van Rompuy, in close cooperation with President Barroso, will present a specific and time-bound roadmap for the completion of the EMU by June 2013.

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final of 5 December 2012.
([2]) ESF.
([3]) COM(2012) 750 of 28 November 2012.
([4]) Economic Monetary Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001353/13
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Invoking the precautionary principle for the health impacts of wind turbines

The precautionary principle is detailed in Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and 'may be invoked when a phenomenon, product or process may have a dangerous effect, identified by a scientific and objective evaluation, if this evaluation does not allow the risk to be determined with sufficient certainty.'

Accordingly, the Commission states that the precautionary principle may only be invoked when the following three preliminary conditions have been met:

1. identification of potentially adverse effects;

2. evaluation of the scientific data available;

3. the extent of scientific uncertainty.

In its answer to Written Question E-010250/2012, the Commission highlighted that uncertainty still exists over the impacts of industrial wind turbines on human health. The Commission also stated that it was evaluating the potentially adverse effects in conjunction with the WHO, with a particular focus on a recent peer-reviewed report, which found that wind turbines do have a negative impact on human health. Therefore, all three of the preliminary conditions needed to invoke the precautionary principle have been met.

However, the Commission website states that 'in most cases, European consumers and the associations which represent them must demonstrate the danger associated with a procedure or a product placed on the market, except for medicines, pesticides and food additives.'

1. In the light of this information, can the Commission clarify how European consumers can demonstrate the danger associated with a procedure or product?

2. Given that those citizens whose health is affected by living close to industrial wind turbines are rarely, if ever, represented by associations, how does an individual inform the Commission that the product is having a negative impact on their health?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

Every citizen has the right to write to and get a direct answer from the Commission.

As explained in the Commission's previous response to Written Question E-010250/2012, the wind turbine noise issue is being considered by the Commission in the broader context of the noise policy review ([1]). Citizens' views were collected in the context of the recent public consultation ([2]). Noise from individual wind turbines and defining local measures that might be required is in the competence of the national or local authority concerned.

([1]) Noise Directive 2002/49/EC, OJ L 189, 18.7.2002, p. 12, see: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/noise/home.htm
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/noise_en.htm

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001354/13
Komisijai
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(2013 m. vasario 8 d.)

Tema: Vyresnio amžiaus žmonių diskriminavimas darbo rinkoje

Vyresnių nei 55 metų žmonių užimtumas, ypač ekonominei krizei krečiant Europą, tapo rimta problema Europos Sąjungoje. Kaip matyti iš naujausio „Eurobarometro“ tyrimo, daugiau nei pusė (54 %) europiečių įsitikinę, kad 55 metų ir vyresnis amžius – trūkumas ieškant darbo. Apie 45 % europiečių mano, jog diskriminavimas dėl vyresnio amžiaus paplitęs jų šalyje. Tačiau esama didelių skirtumų tarp ES šalių narių: diskriminavimas dėl vyresnio amžiaus, apklaustųjų nuomone, labiausiai paplitęs Vengrijoje (75 %), Čekijoje (68 %), Slovakijoje (66 %) ir kitose naujosiose ES šalyse, o mažiausiai Airijoje (19 %), Liuksemburge ir Danijoje (32 %).

Suprantama, dabar pagrindinė problema yra aukštas nedarbo lygis beveik visose ES šalyse ir ypač jaunimo nedarbas. Bet neturėtų būti pamiršti ir vyresnio amžiaus žmonės. Kokių priemonių imasi ar ketina imtis Komisija, kad šalys, kuriose aukštas diskriminavimo dėl amžiaus lygis, sudarytų geresnes sąlygas įsidarbinti vyresniems žmonėms?

V. Reding atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. balandžio 8 d.)

Komisija pagal turimus įgaliojimus visapusiškai siekia užkirsti kelią diskriminacijai dėl amžiaus užimtumo srityje, tuo tikslu vykdo įvairius veiksmus, pvz., informavimo apie kovą su stereotipais kampanijas ([1]), ir visose ES politikos srityse (įskaitant užimtumo ir socialinės įtraukties politiką) taiko nediskriminavimo principą, ypatingą dėmesį skirdama šalims, kuriose, kaip manoma, diskriminavimas dėl amžiaus paplitęs labiau. Be to, siekdama kovoti su diskriminavimu dėl amžiaus darbe Komisija nacionalinėms valdžios institucijoms ir pilietinei visuomenei teikia finansinę paramą pagal programą PROGRESS.

Direktyva 2007/78/EB saugoma nuo diskriminavimo dėl amžiaus užimtumo ir profesinėje srityje. Dėl amžiaus diskriminuoti asmenys gali imtis teisės gynimo priemonių savo valstybėje narėje. Komisija atidžiai stebi, kad direktyva nustatytas diskriminavimo dėl amžiaus draudimas būtų tinkamai perkeltas į valstybių narių teisę ir teisingai taikomas, ir nedvejodama imsis reikiamų veiksmų, kad užtikrintų, kad direktyva būtų tinkamai perkelta ir taikoma nacionaliniu lygiu.

([1]) Kampanija „Už įvairovę. Prieš diskriminaciją“ (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fdad) vykdoma nuo 2003 m.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001354/13
to the Commission
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Discrimination against older people in the job market

Employing people over the age of 55 has become a serious problem in the European Union, particularly as the economic crisis affects Europe. The most recent Eurobarometer survey shows that, for over half of Europeans (54%), being 55 or older is a disadvantage when looking for a job. Some 45% of Europeans believe that discrimination on the grounds of age is widespread in their country. However, there are considerable discrepancies between the Member States: in the opinion of the people surveyed, discrimination because of age is most widespread in Hungary (75%), the Czech Republic (68%), Slovakia (66%) and the other new Member States, and least common in Ireland (19%), Luxembourg and Denmark (32%).

It is obvious that the main problem now is the high level of unemployment in almost all EU Member States and in particular, youth unemployment. However, we should also not forget older people. What steps is the Commission taking or intending to take to ensure that those countries, where discrimination on the grounds of age is most widespread, create conditions which are more favourable to employing older people?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The Commission is fully committed within the boundaries of its competences to prevent age discrimination in employment through different actions such as awareness raising campaigns to fight against stereotypes ([1]) and mainstreaming non-discrimination in all EU policies, (including employment and social inclusion policies) with special focus on the countries where age discrimination is perceived as more widespread. The Commission also provides financial support to national authorities and civil society to combat age discrimination at work through PROGRESS programme.

Directive 2000/78/EC protects against age discrimination in employment and occupation. If people have been discriminated on grounds of age they may take the legal remedies available in their national Member State. The Commission is closely monitoring the correct transposition and application of the prohibition of age discrimination as laid down in directive in the Member States and will not hesitate to take the necessary steps to ensure that the directive is correctly transposed and applied at national level.

([1]) The 'For Diversity, Against Discrimination' campaign (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fdad) has been running since 2003.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001355/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(8 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έννομη προστασία καταχωρισμένων ΠΟΠ/ΠΓΕ σε τρίτες χώρες

Στις 3.1.13 τέθηκε σε ισχύ το αναθεωρημένο ρυθμιστικό πλαίσιο της ΕΕ για τα συστήματα ποιότητος των γεωργικών προϊόντων (Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1151/2012 της 21.11.2012, ΕΕ L 343 της 14.12.2012), το οποίο στοχεύει, μεταξύ άλλων, στην ενδυνάμωση του καθεστώτος προστασίας των Προστατευομένων Ονομασιών Προέλευσης (ΠΟΠ) και Γεωγραφικών Ενδείξεων (ΠΓΕ). Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή Γεωργίας του ΕΚ ενέκρινε νομοθετικό ψήφισμα Έκθεση Βονέ A7-0279/2012, 21.9.2012 επί της πρότασης τροποποίησης του Κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 3/2008 σχετικά με ενέργειες ενημέρωσης και προώθησης υπέρ των γεωργικών προϊόντων στην εσωτερική αγορά και στις τρίτες χώρες COM(2011)0663. Βάσει εγκριθείσης τροπολογίας μου, ως προς τα ενωσιακά προϊόντα ΠΟΠ/ΠΓΕ και ΕΠΙΠ, προστίθενται στις επιλέξιμες ενέργειες η παρακολούθηση της συμμόρφωσης τρίτων χωρών και η υποστήριξη των ενδιαφερομένων μερών για την κατοχύρωση της έννομης προστασίας σε τρίτες χώρες και την αντιμετώπιση ζητημάτων σφετερισμού.

Ζητούμενο παραμένει η αποτελεσματικότερη προστασία των προϊόντων που υπάγονται σε συστήματα ποιότητας έναντι των εμπορικών εταίρων της ΕΕ, στο πλαίσιο των διμερών και διαπεριφερειακών εμπορικών συμφωνιών, καθώς και σε επίπεδο Παγκοσμίου Οργανισμού Εμπορίου (συμφωνία TRIPs).

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία ελληνικών αντιπροσωπευτικών φορέων, σε αγορές εκτός ΕΕ καταγράφονται ανησυχητικά φαινόμενα άμεσης ή έμμεσης χρήσης, ή παραποίησης καταχωρισμένων ονομασιών ελληνικών προϊόντων (π.χ. φέτα), καθώς και χρήσης σημάτων και άλλων διακριτικών στην ετικέτα, τα οποία παραπέμπουν στη δήθεν ελληνική προέλευση των προϊόντων (π.χ. γιαούρτι).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιες πρωτοβουλίες προτίθεται να αναλάβει εντός του ρυθμιστικού, χρηματοδοτικού και συμβατικού πλαισίου της ΕΕ, για την αποτελεσματική έννομη προστασία των υπαγομένων σε ενωσιακά συστήματα ποιότητας γεωργικών προϊόντων στις αγορές τρίτων χωρών;

— Πώς θα διασφαλίσει ότι τα κράτη μέλη αποτρέπουν, όχι μόνο την εντός ΕΕ εμπορία, αλλά και την εξαγωγή σε τρίτες χώρες προϊόντων που προσκρούουν σε καταχωρισμένα ΠΟΠ/ΠΓΕ;

— Μπορεί να μου παραθέσει συγκριτικά στοιχεία ως προς την αξία της παραγωγής προϊόντων ΠΟΠ/ΠΓΕ και ΕΠΙΠ στα επιμέρους κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Μαρτίου 2013)

Την ευθύνη για τη διασφάλιση, στο έδαφος της ΕΕ, της προστασίας των γεωγραφικών ενδείξεων και των ονομασιών προέλευσης, που καταχωρίζονται βάσει του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1151/2012 φέρουν τα κράτη μέλη, τα οποία οφείλουν να ορίσουν την αρμόδια αρχή ή τις αρμόδιες αρχές που είναι υπεύθυνες για τους ελέγχους τόσο στο επίπεδο παραγωγής όσο και στο επίπεδο της εμπορίας. Οι γεωγραφικές ενδείξεις που καταχωρίζονται δυνάμει του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1151/2012 υπόκεινται σε σύστημα ελέγχου σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό (ΕΕ) αριθ. 882/2004 ([1]).

Η προστασία μιας ονομασίας στην ΕΕ δεν οδηγεί αυτομάτως στην προστασία της ονομασίας σε τρίτες χώρες. Για τον λόγο αυτό, η Επιτροπή καταβάλλει προσπάθειες, επί σειρά ετών, προκειμένου να βελτιώσει την προστασία των Προστατευόμενων Ονομασιών Προέλευσης (ΠΟΠ) και των Προστατευόμενων Γεωγραφικών Ενδείξεων (ΠΓΕ) στις τρίτες χώρες μέσω πολυμερών διαπραγματεύσεων και μέσω ενός διαρκώς αυξανόμενου αριθμού διμερών συμφωνιών με τους εμπορικούς εταίρους μας, είτε μέσω αυτοτελών συμφωνιών είτε στο πλαίσιο ευρύτερων συμφωνιών ελεύθερων συναλλαγών.

([1]) ΕΕ L 165 της 3.4.2004.

Στο πλαίσιο των διαπραγματεύσεων του ΠΟΕ, η ΕΕ επιδιώκει τη βελτίωση της προστασίας των γεωγραφικών ενδείξεων μέσω της δημιουργίας ενός δεσμευτικού πολυμερούς μητρώου που θα διευκολύνει τη προστασία των γεωγραφικών ενδείξεων και μέσω της επέκτασης της επιπρόσθετης προστασίας, η οποία επί του παρόντος παρέχεται μόνο για τις γεωγραφικές ενδείξεις οίνων και οινοπνευματωδών ποτών βάσει του άρθρου 23 της συμφωνίας TRIPS προστασία ανεξάρτητα από το εάν το κοινό παραπλανάται όσον αφορά τη γεωγραφική καταγωγή του προϊόντος), στις γεωγραφικές ενδείξεις όλων των προϊόντων.

Πληροφορίες σχετικά με την αξία των γεωργικών προϊόντων και των τροφίμων που καλύπτονται από ΠΟΠ και ΠΓΕ, από μεμονωμένα κράτη μέλη και φορείς, είναι διαθέσιμες στον δικτυακό τόπο της Επιτροπής

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/schemes/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001355/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Legal protection in third countries of registered designations of origin (PDO) and geographical indications (PGI)

On 3 January 2013, the amended EU regulatory framework provisions on quality schemes for agricultural products designed to ensure more effective protection for designations of origin (PDO) and geographical indications (PGI) entered into force (Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of 21 November 2012, OJ L 343, 14.12.2012). In addition, the EP Committee on Agriculture adopted a draft legislative resolution drawn up by José Bové (A7-0279/2012 of 21 September 2012) on the proposal for a regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 3/2008 on information provision and promotion measures for agricultural products on the internal market and in third countries (COM(2011)0663). Following the adoption of my amendments regarding PDO/PGI and TSG products in the EU, the scope of the provisions was extended to include the monitoring of compliance by third countries, assistance in registering protected designations in third countries and preventing any misuse thereof.

There still remains open the question of more effective protection for products governed by quality systems vis-à-vis EU trading partners under bilateral and interregional trade agreements and within the framework of the World Trade Organisation (TRIPS agreements).

According to the Greek organisations representing those concerned, the direct or indirect use or misuse of registered Greek designations (for example, feta) and the use of trademarks or other insignia on labels, implying that the products in question (for example, yoghurts) are of Greek origin, is assuming alarming proportions on third country markets.

In view of this:

— What action will the Commission take within the EU's regulatory financial and contractual framework to step up legal protection on third country markets for agricultural products governed by EU quality systems?

— How will it ensure that, for the purposes of trade within the Union and export to third countries, Member States will refrain from dealing in products which encroach on registered PDOs or PGIs?

— Can it give comparative data concerning the value of PDO, PGI and TSG products in the individual EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

Responsibility for ensuring protection within the territory of the EU of geographical indications and designations of origin registered through Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 lies with Member States who have to designate the competent authority or authorities responsible for controls both at the level of production and marketing. Geographical indications registered by virtue of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 are subject to a monitoring system in line with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([1]).

Protection of a name in the EU does not automatically lead to protection in third countries. For many years, the Commission has therefore striven to improve the protection of Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) in third countries through multilateral negotiations and through an increasing number of bilateral agreements with our trade partners, either through stand-alone agreements or as part of wider Free Trade Agreements.

([1]) OJ L 165, 3.4.2004.

In the WTO negotiations, the EU seeks to improve protection of geographical indications through the creation of a binding multilateral register facilitating protection of geographical indications and the extension of the additional protection currently only available for geographical indications for wines and spirits under Article 23 of the TRIPS Agreement (i.e. protection notably independent of whether the public is misled as to the geographical origin of the good) to geographical indications for all products.

Data on the value of PDO and PGI agricultural products and foodstuffs, by individual Member States and by sectors, are available on the Commission website http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/schemes/index_en.htm.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001356/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(8. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Frauenrechte in Afghanistan

Die Rechte der Frauen in Afghanistan haben sich seit dem Sturz der Taliban deutlich verbessert. Viele Mädchen und Frauen haben Zugang zu Bildung bekommen, welches für uns Europäer das höchste Gut und gleichzeitig selbstverständlich ist.

Viele afghanische Frauen haben große Angst vor der Zeit nach dem Abzug der Nato-Truppen im nächsten Jahr. Die Organisation Human Rights Watch stellt in ihrem Jahresbericht 2013 in seiner Zusammenfassung zu Afghanistan fest:

Afghans feel enormous anxiety as the 2014 deadline for withdrawing international combat forces from Afghanistan looms and powerbrokers jockey for position. The Afghan government's failure to respond effectively to violence against women undermines the already-perilous state of women's rights. President Hamid Karzai's endorsement in March of a statement by a national religious council calling women „secondary," prohibiting violence against women only for „un-Islamic" reasons, and calling for segregating women and girls in education, employment, and in public, raises questions about the government's commitment to protecting women

1. Was gedenken die Mitgliedstaaten der EU zu unternehmen, wenn die Nato-Truppen Ende 2014 aus Afghanistan abziehen? Wie sollen die Rechte der jungen Mädchen und Frauen weiterhin gestärkt und geschützt werden? Wie soll weiterhin der Zugang zu Bildung aber auch Chancengleichheit gesichert werden?

2. Welche Schritte werden die Mitgliedstaaten der EU nach dem Truppenabzug unternehmen, um sicher zu gehen, dass EU-Gelder auch in den Bereich Bildung fließen?

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

Die Schlussfolgerungen der Bonner Konferenz und der im Juli 2012 in Tokio vereinbarte Rahmen für gegenseitige Rechenschaftspflicht bilden den Rahmen für unsere Zusammenarbeit in den kommenden Jahren. Die künftige Hilfe wird sich an den eigenen nationalen Prioritätsprogrammen Afghanistans, darunter dem Programm in Bildungsbereich, ausrichten. Afghanistan muss selbst Verantwortung für die eigene Entwicklung und Sicherheit übernehmen.

Die EU wird weiterhin die afghanischen Behörden dazu drängen, ihren Verpflichtungen nachzukommen. Diese gilt insbesondere für den Bereich der Menschenrechte, einschließlich der Rechte von Frauen und Mädchen, für die der Zugang zu Bildung eine wichtige Rolle spielen wird. In dem Kooperationsabkommen zwischen der EU und Afghanistan, über das derzeit verhandelt wird, wird die Menschenrechtsdimension ein wesentliches Element bilden. Darüber hinaus wird das Abkommen eine Reihe grundlegender Bestimmungen zu Frauen und Kindern enthalten.

Die EU ist entschlossen, die Entwicklung Afghanistans während der Transformationsdekade zu unterstützen. Dies umfasst auch den Bildungssektor, in dem eine Reihe von EU-Mitgliedstaaten bereits aktiv ist. Afghanistan profitiert auch von der Globalen Partnerschaft für Bildung, die im Falle Afghanistans von Dänemark koordiniert wird. Für den Zeitraum 2011-2013 hat die EU einen Beitrag in Höhe 31,8 Mio. EUR zu diesem globalen Fonds geleistet.

Wie in der Agenda für den Wandel und dem Aktionsplan zur Stärkung der Präsenz der EU in Afghanistan (2009) vorgesehen, wird die EU sich zunehmend an den Grundsätzen der Arbeitsteilung orientieren, damit die Gelder dorthin fließen, wo sie am meisten gebraucht werden und die größtmögliche Wirkung erzielen. Die allgemeine Sicherheitslage wird jedoch ein Schlüsselfaktor bei der Entscheidung darüber sein, wie die EU-Hilfe durchgeführt werden kann.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001356/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Women's rights in Afghanistan

There has been a significant improvement in Afghan women's rights since the fall of the Taliban. Many girls and women have gained access to education, which we Europeans both regard as the greatest asset and take as a matter of course.

Many Afghan women are very afraid about what will happen after NATO troops are withdrawn next year. In its 2013 report, the organisation Human Rights Watch summarises the situation for Afghanistan as follows:

'Afghans feel enormous anxiety as the 2014 deadline for withdrawing international combat forces from Afghanistan looms and powerbrokers jockey for position. The Afghan government's failure to respond effectively to violence against women undermines the already-perilous state of women's rights. President Hamid Karzai's endorsement in March of a statement by a national religious council calling women "secondary", prohibiting violence against women only for "un-Islamic" reasons, and calling for segregating women and girls in education, employment, and in public, raises questions about the government's commitment to protecting women.'

1. What action will the EU Member States take when NATO troops are withdrawn from Afghanistan at the end of 2014? How will the rights of young girls and women continue to be strengthened and protected? How will access to education and equal opportunities continue to be guaranteed in the future?

2. What steps will the EU Member States take following the withdrawal of troops to ensure that EU funds also go to education?

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

The conclusions of the Bonn conference and the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework of July 2012 set the framework for our cooperation in the coming years. The future assistance will be oriented towards Afghanistan's own National Priority Programmes, including the one on Education. Afghanistan must take its own responsibilities both for development and for security.

The EU will continue to press the Afghan authorities to implement their commitments in full, in particular in the field of human rights, including the rights of women and girls, for whom access to education will be an important element. In the EU-Afghanistan Cooperation Agreement currently being negotiated, the human rights dimension will be an essential element and the Agreement will contain a number of core provisions on women and children.

The EU is committed to support Afghanistan's development throughout the coming 'decade of transformation'. This includes the education sector where a number of EU Member States are actively involved. Afghanistan also benefits from the Global Partnership for Education, coordinated by Denmark in case of Afghanistan. For the period 2011-2013 the EU has contributed EUR 31.8m to this Global Fund.

The EU will increasingly follow the principles of division of labour as foreseen in the Agenda for Change and the 2009 Action Plan on strengthening the EU's presence in Afghanistan, so as to target funds where they are most needed and with the greatest possible impact. The overall security situation will, however, be a key factor in determining how EU assistance can be implemented.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001357/13
to the Commission
Marta Andreasen (EFD)
(8 February 2013)

Subject: Payments by the Commission to lobbyists

On 31 January 2013 I received in my pigeon-hole (as did other MEPs) a document from the director of an organisation called 'Transport and Environment', lobbying for a vote in plenary in favour of a report by the Committee on the Environment on measures on vehicle noise.

The document did not reveal what 'Transport and Environment' was, but I discovered it is a Brussels-based NGO, whose website discreetly acknowledges funding support from the Commission.

A link to the EU Transparency Register reveals that in 2010, of this organisation's total budget of EUR 1 345 662, the Commission's contribution was EUR 245 079 (over 18 %) and that the total public-sector contribution was in excess of 33 %. Astonishingly, only EUR 35 175 (2.6 %) came from the organisation's membership. The Commission's own transparency information for 2010 confirms this amount as being an operating grant from Commission budget line 07 03 07: LIFE+ (Financial Instrument for the Environment 2007 to 2013).

1. Does the Commission believe that an organisation which receives such a large proportion of its funding from public-sector sources can be accurately described as an NGO?

2. Does the Commission agree that it would have been better if the leaflet distributed by 'Transport and Environment' had been open about who these people are and how they are funded?

3. Could the Commission explain how the operating grant paid to 'Transport and Environment' is compliant with the stated aims of the budget line from which it was paid?

4. Does the Commission consider it a good use of taxpayers' money for the European institutions to pay NGOs to lobby them to do things that they wish to do anyway?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

1. There is no single legal definition of an NGO in the EU. For its work, the European Commission has identified a few characteristics normally shared by these entities, such as independence of government. EU funding is allocated on the basis of the applicable legal base and the financial regulation without any condition which would limit the beneficiaries' independence. Thus the Commission considers that the registration of 'Transport and Environment' as an NGO in the Transparency register is acceptable.

2. The Commission and the European Parliament have set up the transparency register to respond to such concern and offer a data base with all this information as it is the case for 'Transport and Environment', a registered organisation. The Honourable Member is thus invited to use this instrument when she wishes to check on an organisation engaged in lobbying activities.

3. Financial support to co-finance the operation and functioning of European environmental NGOs is provided for by the LIFE+ Regulation 2007-2013 Annex I of the regulation provides for support of 'operational activities of NGOs primarily active in protecting and enhancing the environment at European level and involved in the development and implementation of Community policy and legislation'. In implementation of this regulation, the Commission organises yearly open calls for proposals in which Transport and Environment has been selected for co-funding of its activities. (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ngos/index_en.htm).

4. Funding allocated from the EU budget is allocated according to the legal basis provided by the legislator, for the purposes and the eligible activities set out in these legal basis, as it is the case in particular for the LIFE+ financial instrument for the environment.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001358/13
an die Kommission
Anja Weisgerber (PPE)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Beihilferechtliche Genehmigung der Steuerentlastung für Energieerzeugnisse

Auf Grundlage und unter den Bedingungen der Richtlinie 2003/96/EG können Mitgliedstaaten bestimmte Energieträger steuerlich privilegieren. Um eine Verzerrung des Wettbewerbs im Binnenmarkt zu verhindern, bedarf dies jedoch einer Genehmigung seitens der Europäischen Kommission. Zum 31. März 2012 ist die beihilferechtliche Genehmigung der Steuerentlastung für Energieerzeugnisse, die in Anlagen zur gekoppelten Erzeugung von Kraft und Wärme eingesetzt werden, ausgelaufen. Die Steuerbegünstigung für KWK-Anlagen ist daher im nationalen Recht neu geregelt worden, in Deutschland findet sich diese Regelung in den §§ 53a und 53b Energiesteuergesetz.

Die Neuregelung im nationalen Recht tritt jedoch erst nach der Erteilung der erforderlichen beihilferechtlichen Genehmigung durch die Europäische Kommission in Kraft. Diese Genehmigung hat die Kommission derzeit noch nicht erteilt, obwohl die alte Fassung seit dem 1. April 2012 außer Kraft ist.

Daher fordere ich die Kommission zur Stellungnahme bezüglich folgender Punkte auf:

1. Hat sich die beihilferechtliche Beurteilung der Steuerentlastung für Energieerzeugnisse, die in Anlagen zur Kraft-Wärme-Kopplung eingesetzt werden, im Vergleich zur Rechtslage bis zum 31. März 2012 geändert? Falls ja, mit welchen Änderungen ist zu rechnen?

2. Sollte es aus der Sicht der Europäischen Kommission keine Änderung der beihilferechtlichen Beurteilung geben, wann wird die Genehmigung voraussichtlich erteilt?

3. Um die seit dem 1. April 2012 bestehende Rechtsunsicherheit zu beseitigen, erscheint eine zeitnahe Genehmigung seitens der Europäischen Kommission angezeigt, damit nationale Vorschriften rückwirkend in Kraft treten können.

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(18. März 2013)

Die deutsche Steuerentlastung für Energieerzeugnisse, die in Anlagen zur gekoppelten Erzeugung von Kraft und Wärme eingesetzt werden (insbesondere die §§ 53a und 53b EnergieStG) ist seit ihrer Anmeldung bei der Kommission im Jahre 2001 (N449/2001) geändert worden. Ferner haben sich die Kriterien zur Bewertung von Beihilfen für die Kraft-Wärme-Kopplung gegenüber jenen geändert, die galten, als die Kommission die Steuerentlastung am 13. Februar 2002 genehmigte (jetzt Abschnitt 3.1.7.2 der Leitlinien der Gemeinschaft für staatliche Umweltschutzbeihilfen, ABl. C 82 vom 1.4.2008, S. 1). Folglich musste die Kommission die deutsche Steuerentlastung für Energieerzeugnisse, die in Anlagen zur gekoppelten Erzeugung von Kraft und Wärme eingesetzt werden, einer ganz neuen Prüfung nach den aktuellen EU-Beihilfevorschriften unterziehen.

Der Beschluss der Kommission zur Genehmigung der Steuerentlastung nach § 53a EnergieStG wurde am 21. Februar 2013 angenommen. Deutschland macht geltend, dass § 53b EnergieStG in den Anwendungsbereich des Artikels 25 der Allgemeinen Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung (AGVO — Verordnung (EG) Nr. 800/2008 der Kommission vom 6. August 2008, ABl. L 214 vom 9.8.2008, S. 3) fällt. Sollte dies der Fall sein, dann kann Deutschland im Einklang mit Artikel 3 der AGVO den § 53b EnergieStG direkt ohne vorherige Anmeldung bei der Kommission anwenden.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001358/13
to the Commission
Anja Weisgerber (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Approval under state aid rules for tax relief on energy products

Under Directive 2003/96/EC, and subject to its conditions, Member States may grant tax relief for specific sources of energy. However, in order to prevent distortions of competition in the internal market, this requires approval from the Commission. The approval under state aid rules for tax relief on energy products used in cogeneration plants expired on 31 March 2012. New rules on tax relief for cogeneration plants have therefore been adopted in domestic law; in Germany these rules are to be found in Sections 53a and 53b of the Energy Taxation Act.

However, the new domestic law rules will only enter into force after the necessary approval under state aid rules has been granted by the Commission. The Commission has not yet granted such approval, even though the old approval has been invalid since 1 April 2012.

I should therefore like to ask the Commission:

1. Has the legal position as regards the assessment under state aid rules of tax relief for energy products used in cogeneration plants changed since 31 March 2012? If so, what changes may be expected?

2. If, in the Commission's view, there is to be no change to this assessment, when is approval likely to be granted?

3. In order to eliminate the legal uncertainty which has prevailed since 1 April 2012, does it not seem appropriate for the Commission to grant approval sooner rather than later, so that domestic rules can enter into force with retroactive effect?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

The German tax relief for energy products used in cogeneration plants (in particular Articles 53a and 53b of the Energy Taxation Act) has been amended since it was notified to the Commisison in 2001 (N449/2001). Also, the assessment criteria for aid to the production of energy from cogeneration plants have changed (now Section 3.1.7.2. of the Community Guidelines on State Aid for Environmental Protection, OJ C 82, 1.4.2008, p. 1) compared with those applicable when the Commisison approved the tax relief on 13 February 2002. As a consequence, the Commisison had to make a new, complete assessment of the German tax relief for energy products used in cogeneration plants under the current state aid rules.

As far as Article 53a of the Energy Taxation Act is concerned, the decision approving the tax relief was adopted on 21 February 2013. As far as Article 53b of the Energy Taxation Act is concerned, Germany has indicated that this article falls within the scope of Article 25 of the General Block Exemption Regulation (Commission Regulation 800/2008 of 6 August 2008, OJ L 214 of 9.8.2008, p. 3). If the measure is covered by the General Block Exemption Regulation, Germany has the possibility, in line with Article 3 of the General Block Exemption Regulation, to apply Article 53b of the Energy Taxation Act directly without having to notify it to the Commission.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001359/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Europäische Umweltagentur (EUA), insbesondere der Fall ihrer Exekutivdirektorin

Beim Entlastungsverfahren 2010 sind Schwächen im Management der Europäischen Umweltagentur zu Tage getreten. Hierzu zählen die Verletzungen von Vorschriften über die öffentliche Auftragsvergabe sowie nicht belegte Dienstreise- und Reisekosten. Wegen dieser Befunde hat das Parlament im Mai 2012 die Entlastung der EUA für das Haushaltsjahr 2010 aufgeschoben, der Haushaltskontrollausschuss hat die Entlastung im September 2012 verweigert; sie wurde im Oktober 2012 allerdings lediglich mit einer sehr knappen Mehrheit angenommen.

Die Stelle des Exekutivdirektors der EUA war 2013 neu zu besetzen. Im Dezember 2012 wählte der EUA-Verwaltungsrat einen neuen Exekutivdirektor der EUA mit Wirkung zum 1. Juni 2013. Allerdings hat die amtierende Exekutivdirektorin trotz ihres zweifelhaften Managements der Agentur ihre Position behalten, statt vorübergehend durch den stellvertretenden Direktor ersetzt zu werden.

1. Zu welchem Zeitpunkt wurde die amtierende Exekutivdirektorin eingestellt?

2. Auf welchen Betrag wird sich ihr Ruhegehalt belaufen, nachdem ihr derzeitiger Vertrag als Exekutivdirektorin bei der Europäischen Umweltagentur ausgelaufen ist?

3. Wären andere Ruhegehaltsregelungen anwendbar, wenn sie die Agentur vor Ablauf ihres Vertrags verlässt?

4. Aus welchem Grund wurde die Exekutivdirektorin nicht bis zur Ernennung eines neuen Exekutivdirektors durch den stellvertretenden Direktor ersetzt?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(5. April 2013)

1. Die amtierende Exekutivdirektorin wurde am 1. Juni 2003 ernannt. Im Jahr 2008 hat der Verwaltungsrat ihr Mandat bis zum 31. Mai 2013 verlängert.

2./3. Die Vorschriften für die Berechnung und Festsetzung des Ruhegehalts sind im Statut festgelegt. Für Zeitbedienstete, die bei oder vor Ablauf ihres Vertrags aus dem Dienst ausscheiden, gelten dieselben Bestimmungen.

4. Die Befugnis zur Ernennung des Exekutivdirektors der Agentur liegt beim Verwaltungsrat. Dieser hat nicht beschlossen, den Vertrag der Exekutivdirektorin vor dem Ende ihrer regulären Amtszeit zu beenden. Somit bestand kein Grund für eine Ersetzung der Exekutivdirektorin durch den stellvertretenden Direktor.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001359/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: European Environment Agency (EEA) — the case of the Executive Director

The 2010 discharge procedure revealed managerial weaknesses in the European Environment Agency (EEA). They included breaches of public procurement rules, and missions and travel expenses not accounted for. In May 2012, on the basis of the findings of the procedure, the European Parliament postponed the EEA's discharge for the financial year 2010. Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control refused to grant discharge to the EEA in September 2012. The discharge was, however, granted by a very slight majority in October 2012.

The position of the EEA's Executive Director was due for renewal in 2013. In December 2012, the EEA Management Board selected a new Executive Director, to take office from 1 June 2013. However, the current Executive Director has remained in charge, despite her questionable management of the agency, instead of being provisionally replaced by the Deputy Director.

1. When was the current Executive Director first hired?

2. How much will her pension be upon completion of her current contract as Executive Director of the European Environment Agency?

3. Would other pension rules apply if she were to leave before the end of her contract?

4. Why was the current Executive Director not replaced by the Deputy Director until a new Executive Director had been appointed?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

1. The current Executive Director was appointed on 1st June 2003, renewed by the Management Board in 2008 until 31 May 2013.

2-3. The rules governing the calculation and settlement of the retirement pension are set out in the Staff regulations. The same rules apply to temporary staff who leave at the end of their contract and those who leave before the end of that contract.

4. The Management board, who is entrusted with the power to appoint the Executive Director of the Agency, did not decide to terminate the contract of the Executive Director before the natural term of office. Therefore, there was no justification for the Deputy Director to replace the Executive Director in her functions.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001360/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Food labelling and horsemeat

Following the recent ingredients scandals affecting Ireland, the UK, Poland, France and probably other Member States, does the Commission intend to take action?

With the free movement of goods and services — brought about by the Maastricht Treaty — easier than ever before, is the Commission of the view that better traceability is needed, as well as minimum sentences for those involved in food crimes?

Does the Commission think that minimum pricing and profit returns for farmers would eliminate the race to the bottom, in terms of quality, by large supermarket chains such as Tesco, Dunnes and Aldi, which demand low-cost goods from suppliers?

Does the Commission feel that more should be done to let hard-pressed consumers know that what is packaged as nice healthy food can actually be full of unhealthy ingredients?

Does the Commission feel that, as a general rule, the public needs to be better informed about the risks of eating processed foods?

What will the Commission do to ensure that regular DNA testing is carried out on food products?

Can the Commission confirm that DNA testing is not a requirement in all EU Member States at present?

Can the Commission state what obligations Member States are under in terms of testing?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

Following the recent findings of mislabelled food, the Commission adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([1]) calling for EU-wide controls on foods marketed as containing beef to detect, through DNA testing, fraudulent labelling, and on horse meat intended for human consumption to detect phenylbutazone.

There is an extensive body of Union rules to ensure that food is safe. Traceability is compulsory for food business operators at all stages of the food chain. These existing traceability systems made possible that the extent and origin of the recent fraud has been revealed. The Union food safety and labelling requirements ([2]), when correctly enforced, are sufficient to ensure consumer safety and information.

Member States are responsible for the enforcement of Union law and shall verify, through official controls, compliance by the operators. The requirements for mandatory official testing vary according to the species from which meat is obtained ([3]). However, no mandatory DNA testing of meat is required by Union legislation. Member States are also entitled to determine the level and type of penalties to be imposed for infringements of food legislation.

Following its Green paper, the Commission will launch an impact assessment on best options to tackle unfair trading practices ([4]). However, minimum pricing and profit returns for farmers would not avoid fraud.

([1]) Commission Recommendation on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices, (2013/99/EU) of 19 February 2013, OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

([2]) 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.

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 854/2004, Annex I of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption.

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0037:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001361/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Schutz von Computerdaten europäischer Bürger vor Zugriff aus den USA

Ein Großteil der weltweit tätigen Internetfirmen kommt aus den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika.

Medienberichten zufolge unterschrieb der amerikanische Präsident Barack Obama im Januar 2013 die Verlängerung eines Rechtsakts („Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act“) und einen Zusatz („FISAAA 1881a“) dazu. Dieses Gesetz berechtigt die US-Sicherheitsbehörden auf Daten von Nicht-US-Bürgern zuzugreifen, die bei amerikanischen Unternehmen gespeichert sind. Diese Regelung gilt selbst dann, wenn sich der Serverstandort außerhalb der USA befindet.

Dies bedeutet Analysten zufolge, dass US-Behörden ohne gerichtliche Anordnung auf private Daten europäischer Bürger zugreifen dürfen, selbst wenn sich diese Daten physisch in der EU befinden.

1. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass dies der Fall ist? Wenn ja, sieht die Kommission dies als Verletzung (a) derzeit bestehender bilateraler Verträge mit den USA, (b) bestehender EU-Gesetzgebung und/oder (c) der Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention?

2. Werden europäische Sicherheitsbehörden informiert, wenn auf solche Daten zugegriffen wird?

3. Können Unternehmen, die in der EU gelagerte Daten von EU-Bürgern aufgrund dieses Rechtsaktes an amerikanische Sicherheitsbehörden weitergeben, belangt werden?

4. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission einsetzen, um das Recht von EU-Bürgern auf Privatsphäre sowie auf rechtsstaatliche Verfahren zu schützen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(12. April 2013)

Die Kommission kennt die Bedenken angesichts der extraterritorialen Anwendung fremden Rechts auf Datenverarbeitungsvorgänge im Hoheitsgebiet der Mitgliedstaaten. Dieses Recht kann gegen Völkerrecht verstoßen und Bürger in der Union in ihren Grundrechten beeinträchtigen.

Die Kommission steht auf dem Standpunkt, dass amerikanische Strafverfolgungsbehörden, nach deren Erkenntnissen sich von ihnen benötigte Informationen an einem Ort außerhalb ihrer Hoheitsgewalt befinden, die vorhandenen Kooperationsmechanismen mit EU-Mitgliedstaaten, in denen sich diese Daten befinden, nutzen sollten, damit ihnen die betreffenden Daten übermittelt werden. Hierzu gehören unter anderem die Rechtshilfeabkommen zwischen den Vereinigten Staaten und der EU bzw. ihren Mitgliedstaaten.

Unternehmen, die außerhalb der etablierten Kanäle direkt auf Anfragen von Behörden aus Drittländern antworten, verstoßen gegebenenfalls gegen nationales Recht, das die Richtlinie 95/46/EG umsetzt. Es ist in erster Linie Sache der nationalen Behörden, vor allem der unabhängigen Datenschutzbehörden, die Einhaltung des Datenschutzrechts zu überwachen und etwaige Verstöße zu untersuchen.

Die Kommission hat diesen Bedenken bei der umfassenden Datenschutzreform ebenfalls Rechnung getragen. Der Vorschlag für eine Datenschutz-Grundverordnung ([1]) bezieht sich insbesondere auf die Frage der extraterritorialen Anwendung fremden Rechts und stellt klar, dass Datenübermittlungen nur zulässig sein sollten, wenn die in dieser Verordnung festgelegten Bedingungen für Datenübermittlungen in Drittländer eingehalten werden. Diese Frage wird ferner regelmäßig mit den US-Behörden diskutiert, so auch bei den Verhandlungen über ein Abkommen zwischen der EU und den USA über den Austausch personenbezogener Daten zwischen den Justiz- und Polizeibehörden, das allen Personen ein hohes Datenschutzniveau garantieren soll.

([1]) Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr (Datenschutz-Grundverordnung), KOM(2012)11 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001361/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Protecting of European citizens' computer data against attempts to access them from the USA

A large proportion of global Internet companies are from the USA.

According to media reports, in January 2013 President Barack Obama signed an extension to the term of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and an Annex thereto entitled 'FISAAA 1881a'. This law authorises the US security services to access data belonging to non-US citizens that are stored by US companies, even they are stored on servers located outside the USA.

Analysts claim that the US authorities may access the private data of European citizens without a court order, even if this data is physically located in the EU.

1. Can the Commission confirm that this is true? If so, does the Commission consider it to be a violation of (a) existing bilateral agreements with the USA, (b) existing EC law and/or (c) of the European Convention on Human Rights?

2. Are the European security services informed when such data are accessed?

3. Can companies be prosecuted for providing data belonging to EU citizens to the US security services under this act?

4. What measures will the Commission take safeguard EU citizens' rights to privacy and to due process of law?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the concerns related to the extraterritorial application of laws of third countries regulating data processing activities that fall under the jurisdiction of Member States. These laws may be in breach of international law and may affect the fundamental rights of individuals in the Union.

The Commission considers that when a law enforcement authority in the US realises that necessary information lies outside its jurisdiction, it should ask for it via the cooperation mechanisms that are in place with EU Member States where that data are located. Such instruments are, among others, the Mutual Legal Assistance agreements between the US and the EU or its Member States.

Outside the currently established channels, when replying directly to requests originating by US authorities, companies may be in breach of national rules implementing the directive 95/46/EC. It is primarily for national authorities, in particular the independent data protection authorities, to monitor compliance with data protection rules and investigate any violation thereof.

The Commission also duly took into account these concerns in the comprehensive reform package of data protection rules. In particular, the proposed General Data Protection Regulation ([1]) refers to the issue of foreign extraterritorial legislation and makes clear that data transfers should only be allowed where the conditions of the regulation for an international transfer are met. This issue is also regularly raised with the US authorities, notably in the context of the negotiation of an EU-US agreement on the exchange of personal data between judicial and police authorities that should provide a high level of privacy protection for all individuals.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation by the European Parliament and the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation), COM(2012) 11 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001362/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten der Pensionierung von EU-Beamten

1. Wie hoch war das durchschnittliche Ruhegehalt, netto und brutto, eines nach Anhang XIII Artikel 22 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften in den Ruhestand getretenen Beamten in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012, und wie viele EU-Beamte sind insgesamt in diesem Zeitraum in den Ruhestand getreten?

2. Wie hoch war das durchschnittliche Ruhegehalt, netto und brutto, eines nach Anhang XIII Artikel 23 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften in den Ruhestand getretenen Beamten in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012, und wie viele EU-Beamte sind insgesamt in diesem Zeitraum in den Ruhestand getreten?

3. Wie viele ehemalige EU-Beamte aus Deutschland und Österreich sind derzeit im Ruhestand?

4. Wie viele EU-Beamte sind nach Artikel 41 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 in den einstweiligen Ruhestand versetzt worden und wie hoch ist deren durchschnittliches Ruhegehalt netto und brutto?

5. Wie hat sich das Durchschnittsalter der pensionierten EU-Beamten in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 entwickelt?

6. Wie haben sich die gesamten Versorgungskosten der pensionierten Beamten der Kommission in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 entwickelt?

7. Die Verbindlichkeiten im Rahmen des Versorgungssystems der Gemeinschaften lagen im Jahr 2009 bei 33,3 Mrd. EUR. Wie entwickelten sich diese Verbindlichkeiten in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012?

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

Bezüglich der Zahlen zu den durchschnittlichen Ruhegehältern möchte die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf die Antworten zu den Anfragen E-177/2013, E-11106/12 und E-6860/2010 verweisen. Im Zeitraum 2010-2012 sind 2379 Bedienstete in den Ruhestand getreten. Das durchschnittliche Ruhegehalt der 57 EU-Beamten, die nach Artikel 23 des Anhangs XIII zum Statut der Beamten zwischen 2010 und 2012 in den Ruhestand getreten sind, betrug ungefähr 2 300 EUR.

Derzeit befinden sich 1955 ehemalige Bedienstete mit deutscher Staatsangehörigkeit und 47 ehemalige Bedienstete mit österreichischer Staatsangehörigkeit im Ruhestand.

Im Zeitraum 2010-2012 haben die EU-Organe das Verfahren gemäß Artikel 41 des Statuts der Beamten nicht angewendet.

Das Durchschnittsalter der in Ruhestand getretenen EU-Bediensteten blieb mit 71,5 Jahren stabil.

Die Gesamtkosten des Versorgungssystems für die Jahre 2010, 2011 und 2012 sind den jeweiligen jährlichen EU-Haushaltsplänen zu entnehmen.

Die Nettoverbindlichkeit im Rahmen des Versorgungssystems der EU ist, wie aus der Jahresrechnung der EU hervorgeht, vom 31.12.2010 bis zum 31.12.2011 von 32,8 Mrd. EUR auf 30,6 Mrd. EUR gesunken. Dieser Rückgang ist, wie der Jahresrechnung der EU von 2011 zu entnehmen ist (Erläuterung 2.14.1), vorrangig auf den höheren Abzinsungssatz zurückzuführen. Der Wert der Verbindlichkeit zum 31.12.2012 wurde noch nicht berechnet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001362/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Pension costs for EU officials

1. What was the average retirement pension — net and gross — of an EU official who retired in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in accordance with Article 22 of Annex XIII of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities, and how many in total have retired during this period?

2. What was the average retirement pension — net and gross — of an EU official who retired in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in accordance with Article 23 of Annex XIII of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities, and how many in total have retired during this period?

3. How many former EU officials from Germany and Austria are currently in retirement?

4. How many EU officials have been assigned non-active status in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in accordance with Article 41 of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities, and what is their average retirement pension (net and gross)?

5. How did the average age of EU officials in retirement change in 2010, 2011 and 2012?

6. How did the overall costs relating to retired Commission officials change in 2010, 2011 and 2012?

7. In 2009 the liabilities under the Communities' pension scheme amounted to EUR 33.3 billion. How did these liabilities change in 2010, 2011 and 2012?

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

For figures on average pensions, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the replies to Questions E-177/2013, E-11106/12, E-6860/2010. 2379 staff members retired in 2010-2012. The average pension of 57 EU civil servants who retired in 2010-2012 in accordance with Article 23 of Annex XIII to the Staff Regulations was around 2 300 Euros.

Currently there are 1 955 former staff members with German nationality and 47 former staff members with Austrian nationality in retirement.

In 2010-2012 the EU institutions did not apply the procedure laid down in Article 41 of the Staff Regulations.

The average age of retired EU staff remained stable at 71.5.

The overall costs related to the EU staff pension scheme for 2010, 2011 and 2012 are included in the annual EU budget of the corresponding years.

The net liability relating to the EU staff pension scheme, as included in the EU annual accounts, decreased from EUR 32.8 billion at 31.12.2010 to EUR 30.6 billion at 31.12.2011. As noted in the 2011 EU annual accounts (note 2.14.1), this decrease is due primarily to an increase in the discount rate applied. The value of the liability at 31.12.2012 has not yet been calculated.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001363/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Ruhestand von EU-Beamten

Wie viele Beamte sind im Jahr 2010, 2011 und 2012 nach Anhang XIII Artikel 23 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften mit 50 Jahren, 51 Jahren, 52 Jahren, 53 Jahren, 54 Jahren und wie viele mit 55 Jahren in den Ruhestand getreten?

Wie viele österreichische und wie viele deutsche Beamte sind nach Anhang XIII Artikel 23 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften im Jahr 2010, 2011 und 2012 in den Ruhestand getreten?

Wie viele deutsche und wie viele österreichische Beamte sind im Jahr 2010, 2011 und 2012 nach Anhang XIII Artikel 23 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften mit 50 Jahren, 51 Jahren, 52 Jahren, 53 Jahren, 54 Jahren und wie viele mit 55 Jahren in den Ruhestand getreten?

Wie viele EU-Beamte sind im Jahr 2010, 2011 und 2012 im Alter zwischen 50 und 55 Jahren, 56 und 60 Jahren, 61 und 65 Jahren bzw. älter als 65 Jahre in den Ruhestand getreten?

Wie hoch war im Jahr 2010, 2011 und 2012 das durchschnittliche Pensionsalter aller Beamten, die nach Anhang XIII Artikel 23 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften vorzeitig in den Ruhestand getreten sind?

Wie hoch war im Jahr 2010, 2011 und 2012 das durchschnittliche Pensionsalter aller EU-Beamten?

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

Während des Dreijahreszeitraums (2010-2012) sind 57 Bedienstete nach Anhang XIII Artikel 23 des Statuts der Beamten in den Ruhestand getreten. Fünf von ihnen besaßen die deutsche und einer die österreichische Staatsbürgschaft.

Im gleichen Zeitraum sind 563 Bedienstete im Alter zwischen 55 und 60, 2 067 Bedienstete im Alter zwischen 60 und 65 und 99 Bedienstete im Alter von über 65 Jahren in den Ruhestand getreten.

Das Durchschnittsalter einer kleinen Zahl von Bediensteten, die die Bestimmungen des Artikels 23 des Anhangs XIII in Anspruch genommen haben, war höher als 53 Jahre. Das durchschnittliche Renteneintrittsalter aller Bediensteten, die im Zeitraum zwischen 2010 und 2012 in den Ruhestand getreten sind, betrug 62 Jahre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001363/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Retirement of EU officials

How many EU officials aged 50, 51, 52, 53, 54 and 55 retired in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in accordance with Article 23 of Annex XIII of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities?

How many Austrian and how many German officials retired in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in accordance with Article 23 of Annex XIII of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities?

How many German and how many Austrian officials aged 50, 51, 52, 53, 54 and 55 retired in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in accordance with Article 23 of Annex XIII of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities?

How many EU officials aged between 50 and 55, 56 and 60, 61 and 65 and over 65 retired in 2010, 2011 and 2012?

What was the average retirement age of all officials who took early retirement in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in accordance with Article 23 of Annex XIII of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities?

What was the average retirement age of all EU officials in 2010, 2011 and 2012?

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

Over the three-year period (2010-2012), 57 staff members retired in accordance with Article 23 of Annex XIII to the Staff Regulations. Five of them had German nationality and one had Austrian nationality.

Over the same period, 563 staff members retired at the age between 55 and 60, 2 067 staff members retired at the age between 60 and 65 and 99 staff members at the age above 65.

The average age of the small number of staff members who used the provisions of Article 23 of Annex XIII was above 53. The average retirement age of all officials who retired in 2010-2012 was 62.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001364/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Pensionierung von EU-Beamten aufgrund von Dienstunfähigkeit

Wie viele Beamte sind in den Jahren 2009 bis 2012 wegen Dienstunfähigkeit vorzeitig in den Ruhestand versetzt worden?

Wie haben sich die Versorgungskosten für die wegen Dienstunfähigkeit vorzeitig pensionierten EU-Beamten von 2009 bis 2012 entwickelt?

Wie hat sich das Durchschnittsalter der wegen Dienstunfähigkeit vorzeitig pensionierten EU-Beamten von 2009 bis 2012 entwickelt?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(10. April 2013)

Zwischen 2009 und 2012 wurde 412 Bediensteten aus allen Organen ein Invalidengeld gewährt.

Die Gesamtmittel für Invalidengelder sind von 25,6 Millionen EUR im Jahr 2009 auf 35,9 Millionen EUR im Jahr 2012 gestiegen. Das entspricht einem in den letzten zwei Jahren stabil gebliebenem Anteil von 2,7 % an den Gesamtmitteln für das Versorgungssystem.

Das Durchschnittsalter der Bediensteten zum Zeitpunkt der Gewährung des Invalidengelds ist von 52 im Jahr 2009 auf 53 im Jahr 2012 gestiegen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001364/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Retirement of EU officials due to invalidity

How many officials were granted early retirement due to invalidity between 2009 and 2012?

How have the costs relating to EU officials granted early retirement due to invalidity changed between 2009 and 2012?

How has the average age of EU officials granted early retirement due to invalidity changed between 2009 and 2012?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

412 staff members in all Institutions were granted invalidity allowance between 2009 and 2012.

The total cost for invalidity allowances increased from EUR 25.6 million in 2009 to EUR 35.9 million in 2012. This represents an amount which is stable at 2.7% over the last two years compared to total costs linked to the pension regime.

The average age of staff members at the moment when they were granted the invalidity allowance has increased from 52 in 2009 to 53 in 2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001365/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Untersuchungen gegen Beamte oder Bedienstete der Kommission

In der ergänzenden Antwort auf die Anfrage E-008486/2010 von Hans-Peter Martin gibt Kommissionsmitglied Šemeta an, dass OLAF zwischen 2004 und 2010 in 35 Fällen Untersuchungen gegen Beamte und Bedienstete der Kommission wegen möglicher Korruption eingeleitet hat. In der Antwort auf Anfrage E-010709/2011 gibt Kommissar Šemeta an, dass im Februar 2012 noch für 12 der verbleibenden 23 Fälle Untersuchungen liefen, zu 9 Untersuchungen Folgemaßnahmen im Gang waren und in 2 Fällen die disziplinarischen Folgemaßnahmen abgeschlossen waren.

1. Sind die verbleibenden 12 Untersuchungen inzwischen abgeschlossen? Wenn ja, welche Ergebnisse ergaben die Untersuchungen? Wenn nein, wie viele Untersuchungen sind mittlerweile abgeschlossen, und welche Ergebnisse gab es bei den bereits abgeschlossenen Untersuchungen?

2. Wurden die verbleibenden Folgemaßnahmen inzwischen abgeschlossen?

3. Für alle seit Anfang des Jahres 2012 abgeschlossenen Fälle: Welche Folgemaßnahmen erfolgten?

4. Hat OLAF seit Anfang des Jahres 2011 weitere Untersuchungen wegen Korruption gegen Beamte oder Bedienstete der Kommission eingeleitet? Wenn ja, wie viele und gibt es dazu bereits Ergebnisse?

5. Wurden von den betroffenen Beamten oder Bediensteten verfasste Richtlinien oder von ihnen getroffene Entscheidungen überprüft und gegebenenfalls neu bewertet, um den Korruptionseinfluss zu untersuchen oder zu korrigieren?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

1.-3. Das OLAF hat neun der verbleibenden zwölf Untersuchungen, auf die der Herr Abgeordnete Bezug nimmt, abgeschlossen. Bei den neun abgeschlossen Untersuchungen gab das OLAF in zwei Fällen keine Empfehlung ab, in den verbleibenden sieben Fällen empfahl es disziplinarische Maßnahmen und eine gerichtliche Aufarbeitung. In einem Fall wurde der betreffende Beamte zurückgestuft, die anderen Fälle sind noch nicht abgeschlossen, d. h. die entsprechenden Disziplinar- und Strafverfahren laufen noch.

4. Eigenen Angaben zufolge hat das OLAF 2011 keine neue Untersuchung zu Korruptionsvorwürfen gegen Kommissionsbeamte und -bedienstete eingeleitet; 2012 wurde das OLAF in einem Koordinierungsfall ([1]) tätig.

5. Ja. Die Folgenbewertung festgestellter Unregelmäßigkeiten ist generell Teil einer Untersuchung. Stellt sich bei einer Untersuchung heraus, dass das Fehlverhalten weiterhin Konsequenzen hat, kann das OLAF dem betreffenden Dienst noch während der laufenden Untersuchungen vorbeugende Maßnahmen empfehlen.

Im Anschluss an eine Untersuchung kann das OLAF nicht nur eine strafrechtliche oder disziplinarische Folgemaßnahme empfehlen, sondern auch Maßnahmen finanzieller Art, d. h. die Einziehung unrechtmäßig gezahlter Beträge. Darüber hinaus kann das OLAF einem Dienst nach einer Untersuchung auch verwaltungstechnische Maßnahmen empfehlen, um sicherzustellen, dass die bei einer Untersuchung ermittelten Schwachstellen im System behoben und so weitere Unregelmäßigkeiten vermieden und die finanziellen Interessen der Union geschützt werden.

([1]) Koordinierungsfälle beziehen sich auf Sachverhalte, bei denen eine externe Untersuchung eingeleitet werden könnte, aber die Rolle des OLAF darin besteht, zu Untersuchungen anderer nationaler Stellen oder Gemeinschaftsdienste beizutragen, indem es beispielsweise die Sammlung und den Austausch von Informationen erleichtert und für operative Synergieeffekte der Zusammenarbeit zwischen nationalen Stellen und Gemeinschaftsdiensten sorgt. Die Ermittlungsressourcen werden mehrheitlich von anderen Behörden gestellt. Aufgabe des OLAF ist es dabei auch, Kontakte zu erleichtern und eine Zusammenarbeit zwischen den zuständigen Behörden anzuregen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001365/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Investigations concerning officials or other staff members of the Commission

In the supplementary answer to my Question E-008486/2010, Commissioner Šemeta stated that between 2004 and 2010 there had been 35 cases in which OLAF had opened investigations concerning officials and other staff members of the Commission on account of possible corruption. In the response to Question E-010709/2011, the Commissioner stated that in February 2012, investigations were still in progress in 12 of the remaining 23 cases; follow-up measures were under way in nine investigations, and disciplinary follow-up measures had been completed in two cases.

1. Have the remaining 12 investigations now been completed? If so, what were the findings? If not, how many investigations have been completed and what were the findings in those cases?

2. Have the remaining follow-up measures now been taken?

3. What follow-up measures have been taken in the cases completed since the beginning of 2012?

4. Has OLAF opened any more investigations into officials or other staff members of the Commission for corruption since the beginning of 2011? If so, how many? Are the results available?

5. Have the guidelines drawn up by the officials or other staff members concerned and the decisions that they have taken been subjected to scrutiny and, where applicable, reassessed in order to ascertain or correct the influence of corruption?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

1-3. OLAF has completed 9 out the 12 outstanding investigations to which the Honourable Member refers. In relation to the 9 investigations that OLAF has concluded, for 2 no recommendations were issued while for the remaining 7 cases both disciplinary and judicial recommendations were adopted. In one case the official concerned was retrograded, the other cases are still ongoing both from the disciplinary and criminal sides.

4. According to the information given by OLAF, OLAF has opened no new investigation concerning allegations of corruption of Commission officials and agents in 2011 and one coordination ([1]) case in 2012.

5. Yes. Assessing the impact of any irregularities identified is generally part of an investigation. Even during an investigation, where OLAF finds that the misconduct being investigated might continue to produce effect, it may recommend precautionary measures to the service concerned to avoid this.

Following an investigation, OLAF may recommend not only a penal or disciplinary follow-up, but also a financial follow-up, namely the recovery of monies unduly paid Finally, OLAF may also make administrative recommendations to a service following an investigation, to ensure that any systemic weaknesses identified in the course of an investigation are addressed, in order to avoid a recurrence of the irregularities and to protect the financial interests of the Union.

([1]) Coordination cases are cases that could be the subject of an external investigation, but where OLAF's role is to contribute to investigations being carried out by other national or Community Services by, among other thing, facilitating the gathering and exchange of information and ensuring operational synergy among the relevant national and Community Services; the main investigative input is provided by other authorities. OLAF's role includes facilitating contacts and encouraging the responsible authorities to work together.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001366/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Beamte mit Hauptwohnsitz in Luxemburg

1. Wie viele Beamte der Europäischen Kommission hatten in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 den Hauptwohnsitz in Luxemburg?

2. Wie viele dieser Beamten reisten dienstlich (a) einmal oder (b) mehr als einmal nach Brüssel?

3. Welche Kosten entstanden in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 durch Dienstreisen von Luxemburg nach Brüssel?

4. Welche Kosten entstanden in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 durch Dienstreisen von Brüssel nach Luxemburg?

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

Die Kommission teilt dem Herrn Abgeordneten mit, dass sich die Zahl der Statutsbediensteten der Kommission mit Dienstort Luxemburg in den letzten vier Jahren wie folgt entwickelt hat: 2009: 3 881; 2010: 3 885; 2011: 3 903 und 2012: 3 862. Die Kommission verfügt über keine Angaben zur Zahl der Beamten mit Dienstort Luxemburg, die dienstlich von Luxemburg nach Brüssel gereist sind, oder zu den Kosten für Dienstreisen zwischen Luxemburg und Brüssel. Solche Berechnungen wären sehr aufwändig. Im Jahr 2011 betrugen die Gesamtausgaben der Kommission für alle Dienstreisen nach Belgien ungefähr 4,9 Mio. EUR und nach Luxemburg ungefähr 1,9 Mio. EUR.

Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen für andere Organe und Einrichtungen vor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001366/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Officials having their main residence in Luxembourg

1. How many Commission officials had their main residence in Luxembourg in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. Of these, how many travelled to Brussels on mission (a) once or (b) more than once?

3. What was the cost of missions from Luxembourg to Brussels in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

4. What was the cost of missions from Brussels to Luxembourg in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

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

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that the number of statutory Commission staff based in Luxembourg had evolved over last four years as follows: in 2009 — 3881, in 2010 — 3885, in 2011 — 3903 and in 2012 — 3862. The Commission is not in the possession of calculations of how many of Luxembourg-based officials travelled to Brussels on mission once or more than once, and what is the cost of missions from Luxembourg to Brussels and vice versa. Production of such calculations would require extensive resources. In 2011, however, the total Commission expenditure on all missions to Belgium was around EUR 4.9 million while to Luxembourg around EUR 1.9 million.

The Commission has no information either on other institutions and bodies.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001367/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Zugang von Dienstleistern zu den Gebäuden der Kommission

Am 7. Juni 2010 hatten laut der Antwort der Kommission auf Anfrage E-006499/2009 die Beschäftigen von 237 verschiedenen Unternehmen zur Erfüllung von Dienstleistungsverträgen Zugang zu den Gebäuden der Kommission.

1. Die Beschäftigten wie vieler Unternehmen haben zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt jeweils Zugang zu den Gebäuden der Kommission in (a) Brüssel, (b) Luxemburg, (c) an anderen Standorten?

2. Wie viele individuelle Beschäftigte dieser Unternehmen haben zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt jeweils Zugang zu den Gebäuden der Kommission in (a) Brüssel, (b) Luxemburg, (c) an anderen Standorten?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

Hinsichtlich der Kommissionsgebäude in Brüssel stellt sich die Situation wie folgt dar:

Zu 1 (a): Im März 2013 hatten Mitarbeiter 196 öffentlicher und privater Einrichtungen Zugang zu den Kommissionsgebäuden in Brüssel.

Zu 2 (a): Die Zahl der bei diesen Einrichtungen beschäftigten Personen, die Zugang zu Kommissionsgebäuden in Brüssel hatten, belief sich im gleichen Zeitraum auf insgesamt 6 389.

Hinsichtlich der Anfrage zu Luxemburg und den anderen Standorten, an denen die Kommission Büros unterhält, muss die Kommission erst noch die entsprechenden Informationen einholen. Die Zugangsberechtigungen für die Kommissionsgebäude außerhalb Brüssels werden dezentral von verschiedenen Kommissionsdienststellen erteilt. Die Kommission wird die betreffenden Auskünfte sobald wie möglich übermitteln.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001367/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Access for service providers to the Commission's premises

According to the answer given by the Commission to Written Question E-006499/2009, on 7 June 2010 the employees of 237 different firms had access to the Commission's premises in order to perform service contracts.

1. Employees of how many firms currently have access to the Commission's premises in (a) Brussels, (b) Luxembourg, and (c) other places where the Commission has offices?

2. How many individuals employed by these firms currently have access to the Commission's premises in (a) Brussels, (b) Luxembourg, and (c) other places where the Commission has offices?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The Commission can provide the following information as regards the data requested for Commission premises in Brussels.

1(a). In March 2013, employees of 196 public and private entities have access to Commission premises in Brussels.

2(a). In March 2013, 6 389 individuals in total employed by these entities have access to Commission premises in Brussels.

As regards the data requested for Luxembourg and other places where the Commission has offices, the Commission needs more time to collect the information it needs to answer the question, as the responsibility for granting access to Commission premises outside of Brussels is decentralised over different Commission services. The Commission will communicate its findings as soon as possible.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001368/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Büros von Dienstleistern in den Gebäuden der Kommission

Am 16. November 2010 verfügten laut der Antwort der Kommission auf Anfrage E-008483/2010 2 660 Dienstleister über ein Büro in den Gebäuden der Kommission.

1. Wie viele Dienstleister verfügen derzeit über ein Büro in den Gebäuden der Kommission?

2. Welche Fläche belegen diese Dienstleister in den Gebäuden der Kommission?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2013)

1. Im März 2013 verfügten rund 2 700 Dienstleister über Büros in den Gebäuden der Kommission in Brüssel und Luxemburg.

2. In Brüssel und Luxemburg belegen die Dienstleister eine Nettofläche von maximal rund 32 000 m^2. Diese Bürofläche fällt in der Tat geringer aus, weil immer häufiger Gemeinschafts- oder Großraumbüros genutzt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001368/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Offices for service providers on the Commission's premises

According to the answer given by the Commission to Written Question E-008483/2010, on 16 November 2010, 2 660 service providers had offices on the Commission's premises.

1. How many service providers currently have offices on the Commission's premises?

2. What floor area do these offices cover?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

1. In March 2013, approximately 2 700 service providers had offices in the Commission's premises in Brussels and Luxembourg.

2. Service providers occupy a net surface area of an estimated 32 000 m^2 maximum in Brussels and Luxembourg. This surface area is in fact reduced by the increased use of shared offices and open space offices.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001369/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten für externe Beratungsfirmen

Wie hoch waren die Gesamtkosten der Europäischen Kommission für die Beratung durch externe Firmen in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011?

Wie hoch waren die Gesamtkosten der Europäischen Kommission für die Beratung durch externe Firmen je Generaldirektion in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011?

Wie heißen jeweils diejenigen zehn Beratungsfirmen, die in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011 die höchsten Beratungshonorare von der Europäischen Kommission erhalten haben?

Wie hoch waren die Gesamtkosten der Europäischen Kommission für die Beratung durch externe Firmen je Unternehmen im Jahr 2009, 2010 und 2011?

Antwort von Herrn Lewandowski im Namen der Kommission
(25. März 2013)

Die Kommission ist dabei, die zur Beantwortung der Frage benötigten Informationen zusammenzutragen. Sie wird ihre Erkenntnisse so schnell wie möglich übermitteln.

Ergänzende Antwort von Herrn Lewandowski im Namen der Kommission
(9. Juli 2013)

Der Antwort liegen detaillierte Übersichten über die Zahlungen für externe Beratungsleistungen bei, die in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011 insgesamt, je Generaldirektion und Unternehmen geleistet wurden; ebenfalls aufgeführt werden die Namen und Beträge der zehn Unternehmen, die die höchsten Beratungshonorare erhalten haben.

Die Kommission bedauert, dass die Beantwortung der Anfrage mehr Zeit als geplant in Anspruch genommen hat. Aus Gründen der Kohärenz wurde Beratung als Dienstleistung definiert, die von externen Unternehmen hauptsächlich zur fachlichen Beratung erbracht wird. Kosten, die in Zusammenhang mit der Auslagerung operativer Tätigkeiten, der Entwicklung von EDV-Systemen usw. entstehen, wurden nicht in die Liste einbezogen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001369/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Cost of employing external consultancies

How much did the Commission pay for the provision of consultancy services by external firms in 2009, 2010 and 2011?

How much did the Commission pay per directorate-general for the provision of consultancy services by external firms in 2009, 2010 and 2011?

What are the names of the 10 firms which received the highest consultancy fees from the Commission in 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively?

How much did the Commission pay per firm for the provision of consultancy services by external firms in 2009, 2010 and 2011?

Preliminary answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

The Commission is collecting the information it needs to answer the question. It will communicate its findings as soon as possible.

Supplementary answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2013)

A set of detailed breakdowns of payments made to external consultancy services in 2009, 2010 and 2011 in total, per directorate-general and per firm, as well as the names and amounts of the 10 firms which received the highest consultancy fees, is provided in Annex to this reply.

The Commission regrets that the compilation of the reply has taken longer than foreseen. For the sake of coherence, consultancy was defined as services provided by external firms with a primary purpose of giving expert advice. Cost items such as those related to outsourcing of operational activities, IT development, etc. were not included in the list.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001370/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Krankenstände der Ratsbeamten

1. Wie viele Beamte des Europäischen Rats gingen in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 in den Krankenstand?

2. Wie hoch waren die Kosten, die durch den Krankenstand von Beamten des Rates in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 entstanden?

3. Wie viele Tage befand sich ein Beamter des Rates durchschnittlich in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 im Krankenstand?

Antwort
(15. April 2013)

2009 gingen 2 780 Beamte, Bedienstete auf Zeit und Vertragsbedienstete des Rates in den Krankenstand. Im Jahr 2010 belief sich diese Zahl auf 2 841, im Jahr 2011 auf 2 615 und im Jahr 2012 auf 2 661.

Die durchschnittliche Zahl der Krankenstandstage (Kalendertage, d. h. einschließlich der durch ärztliche Atteste abgedeckten Wochenenden und Feiertage) der Beamten, Bediensteten auf Zeit und Vertragsbediensteten des Rates betrug 15,2 Kalendertage im Jahr 2009, 14,8 Kalendertage im Jahr 2010, 13,7 Kalendertage im Jahr 2011 und 14,0 Kalendertage im Jahr 2012.

Zu den Kosten, die durch den Krankenstand von Mitarbeitern des Rates entstanden, liegen keine konkreten Daten vor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001370/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Sick leave among Council officials

1. How many Council officials took sick leave in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. What was the cost of sick leave taken by Council officials in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

3. How many days' sick leave were taken on average by a Council official in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Reply
(15 April 2013)

In 2009, 2 780 Council officials, temporary agents and contractual agents took sick leave. In 2010, this number was 2 841; in 2011, it was 2 615, and in 2012, 2 661 staff members took sick leave.

The average number of days of sick leave (calendar days, i.e. including weekends and public holidays covered by medical certificates) taken by Council officials, temporary agents and contractual agents was 15.2 calendar days in 2009, 14.8 days in 2010, 13.7 days in 2011 and 14.0 days in 2012.

There are no specific data available concerning the cost of sick leave taken by Council staff.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001371/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Krankenstände der Kommissionsbeamten

1. Wie viele Beamte der Europäischen Kommission gingen in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 in den Krankenstand?

2. Wie hoch waren die Kosten, die durch den Krankenstand von Beamten der Kommission in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 entstanden?

3. Wie viele Tage befand sich ein Beamter der Kommission durchschnittlich in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 im Krankenstand?

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

1. Im Jahr 2009 nahmen sich 17 787 Beamte mindestens einen halben Tag Krankheitsurlaub. In den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 waren es jeweils 17 860, 17 325 und 17 599.

2. Es gibt keine Berechnungen der durch Krankheitsurlaub entstandenen Kosten.

3. Die Fehlzeiten sind mit 3,8 % während des gesamten Zeitraums stabil geblieben und beliefen sich durchschnittlich auf 14 Tage Krankheitsurlaub, einschließlich Wochenenden und dienstfreier Tage der Kommission, wenn für den jeweiligen Zeitraum ein ärztliches Attest vorlag. Auch langfristige Krankheitsurlaube sind in diesen Angaben enthalten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001371/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Sick leave among Commission officials

1. How many Commission officials took sick leave in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. What was the cost of sick leave taken by Commission officials in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

3. How many days' sick leave were taken on average by a Commission official in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

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

1. In 2009, 17 787 officials took at least half a day sick leave. They were respectively17 860, 17 325 and 17 599 in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

2. They are no calculation as regard the cost of sick leave.

3. The absence rate remained stable through out the period at 3.8% i.e. on average 14 days sick leave including week-ends and days off of the Commission when such period is covered by a medical certificate. Long term sick leaves are included in these figures.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001372/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Von Energiesparlampen ausgehende Gefahren

In meiner Anfrage E-006358/2012 ging es grundsätzlich um die Problematik des Quecksilbers in Energiesparlampen und um deren unzureichende Entsorgung, da die meisten Energiesparlampen im Hausmüll landen, statt im Sondermüll. Eine neuerliche Untersuchung in einem zertifizierten Labor hat jetzt gezeigt, dass eingeschaltete Energiesparlampen einiger namhafter Hersteller während des Betriebes giftige Dämpfe freisetzen, die im Verdacht stehen, krebserregend zu sein. Experten meinen, dass viele der gefunden Stoffe, wie Phenol, in Innenräumen möglichst vermieden werden sollten. Die dazu befragten Lampenhersteller verweisen nur auf die niedrigen Konzentrationen dieser schädlichen Stoffe und beschwichtigen ([1]).

Daraus ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Die „alte abgelöste Glühbirne“ holt angesichts der zusätzlich auftauchenden gesundheitlichen Probleme mit Energiesparlampen auf. Zusätzlich zum Quecksilber und den Schwierigkeiten bei der Entsorgung sind Energiesparlampen nun auch als zusätzliche mögliche Schadstoffquelle in Innenräumen enttarnt. Wie beurteilt die Kommission diese neuerlichen erschreckenden Ergebnisse?

2. Haben nicht solche Stoffe, die im Verdacht stehen, Krebs zu erzeugen, in Energiesparlampen nichts zu suchen? Wie beurteilt die Kommission dies?

3. Wird durch diese neuerlichen Erkenntnisse das Vertrauen beim Verbraucher in Energiesparlampen nicht weiter gestört?

4. Welche wissenschaftliche Gutachten unter Einbeziehung der anfallenden Quecksilberdämpfe, gibt es, die die Ungefährlichkeit der Energiesparlampen belegen? Wenn der Kommission solche Gutachten nicht bekannt sind, gäbe es die Möglichkeit, ein Gutachten seitens der Kommission in die Wege zu leiten?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(9. April 2013)

1. Die Kommission hat keine Kenntnis von neuen Informationen, wonach Energiesparlampen krebserregende Stoffe freisetzen. Im Jahr 2011 ist das deutsche Umweltbundesamt (UBA) Medienberichten nachgegangen, denen zufolge Energiesparlampen gefährliche Mengen flüchtiger organischer Verbindungen (VOC), darunter Phenol, emittieren. Das UBA kam zu dem Schluss, dass die gemessenen Werte nicht realistisch waren und durch einen Faktor 1000 geteilt werden müssten. Die Schlussfolgerung des UBA lautete, dass die VOC-Emissionen von Energiesparlampen vernachlässigbar sind und keine Gefahr für die menschliche Gesundheit darstellen ([2]).

2. Der Kommission ist es ein Anliegen, das im EU-Vertrag geforderte höchste Gesundheitsschutz- und Sicherheitsniveau für die Verbraucher, auch im Hinblick auf karzinogene Chemikalien, zu gewährleisten. Die Emissionen von Energiesparlampen werden jedoch, wie vorstehend ausgeführt, nicht als Gefahr für die menschliche Gesundheit betrachtet.

3. Da die Emissionen von Energiesparlampen kein Risiko darstellen, rechnet die Kommission nicht mit negativen Auswirkungen auf das Vertrauen der Verbraucher.

4. Die Kommission hat in der Tat mehrere Gutachten zu diesem Thema in Auftrag gegeben. Sie verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auch auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage 6340/2012 von Frau Werthmann.

([1]) Quelle: http://www.ndr.de/ratgeber/verbraucher/haushalt_wohnen/energiesparlampen125.html
([2]) http://www.umweltdaten.de/gesundheit/stellungnahme_uba_phenoldaempfe_energiesparlampen.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001372/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Dangers of energy-saving lightbulbs

My previous Question E-006358/2012 was essential concerned with the problem of mercury in energy-saving lightbulbs and the inadequate arrangements for the disposal of such lightbulbs, most of which end up in ordinary landfills rather than separate waste facilities. Now, fresh research by an approved laboratory has shown that energy-saving lightbulbs made by a well-known manufacturer release, when in use, toxic vapours that are suspected of being carcinogenic. Expert opinion is that many of the substances identified, such as phenol, should be scrupulously avoided in indoor spaces. The lightbulb manufacturer's response has consisted merely of noting the low concentrations of these harmful substances and offering reassurance ([1]).

Several questions therefore arise.

1. 'Old-style' lightbulbs are making a comeback as health problems with energy-saving bulbs continue to be uncovered. Apart from the issue of mercury and the problems of disposal, it now turns out that energy-saving lightbulbs may also be a source of harmful indoor emissions. What is the Commission's opinion of these latest alarming findings?

2. Surely, substances suspected of being carcinogenic have no place in energy-saving lightbulbs? What is the Commission's opinion?

3. Do the latest findings not further undermine consumer confidence in energy-saving lightbulbs?

4. What scientific opinion is available, including on the presence of mercury vapour, to prove that energy-saving lightbulbs are not harmful? If the Commission is unaware of any such scientific opinion, could it commission an expert report on the subject?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

1. The Commission is not aware of any new information indicating that energy saving lamps emit carcinogenic emissions. In 2011, the German Federal Environmental Agency (UBA) explored media reports according to which energy saving lamps would emit dangerous quantities of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), amongst which phenol. The UBA came to the conclusion that the measured values were not realistic and would have needed to be divided by a factor 1000. The UBA concluded that the VOC-emissions from energy saving lamps were negligible and did not represent any risk to human health ([2]).

2. The Commission is committed to ensuring the highest level of protection of consumer health and safety required by the Treaty, including with regard to carcinogenic chemicals. The emissions from energy savings lamps were however considered not to present a risk to human health, as referred to above.

3. Since the emissions from energy-saving lightbulbs do not represent a risk, the Commission does not expect any negative impact on consumer confidence.

4. The Commission has indeed commissioned several expert reports on the subject. It would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply to written question 6340/2012 submitted by Ms Werthmann.

([1]) *Source:* http://www.ndr.de/ratgeber/verbraucher/haushalt_wohnen/energiesparlampen125.html
([2]) http://www.umweltdaten.de/gesundheit/stellungnahme_uba_phenoldaempfe_energiesparlampen.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001373/13
an die Kommission
Daniel Caspary (PPE), Thomas Ulmer (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Burkhard Balz (PPE), Axel Voss (PPE), Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE), Markus Pieper (PPE) und Renate Sommer (PPE)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Zollfreigrenze für Feldpostsendungen der im Ausland stationierten Soldaten

Aus Artikel 26 Absatz 1 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1186/2009 ergibt sich eine Zollfreigrenze von 45 EUR für Waren, die von einer Privatperson aus einem Drittland an eine andere Privatperson im Zollgebiet der EU versandt werden, sofern es sich um Einfuhren handelt, denen keine kommerziellen Erwägungen zugrunde liegen. Für Soldaten aus Mitgliedstaaten, die außerhalb der europäischen Zollunion stationiert sind, stellt diese geringe Zollfreigrenze in der Praxis, insbesondere im Vorfeld von Feier-, Geburts- oder sonstigen Jahrestagen, eine hohe Hürde dar, um Geschenke aus dem Marketenderladen in das Heimatland zu übermitteln. Für Angehörige der Streitkräfte der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika gibt es eine Regelung, wonach im Marketenderladen gekaufte Waren von Zöllen befreit sind.

Kann die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Gibt es seitens der Kommission Gründe, die gegen die Einführung einer Sonderregelung bezüglich der Zollfreigrenze von Waren, die von Soldaten im Auslandseinsatz im Marketenderladen erworben wurden, sprechen? Wenn ja, welche?

2. Wäre die Einführung einer Sonderregelung zur Zollbefreiung von Waren, die von im Ausland stationierten Soldaten im Marketenderladen erworben wurden, ähnlich wie die in den USA, auch für die EU praktikabel? Wenn nein, warum nicht, und wie könnte eine alternative Sonderregelung für die EU aussehen?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(5. April 2013)

Zusätzlich zu dem in Ihrer Anfrage genannten Zollfreibetrag von 45 EUR sind gemäß den EU-Rechtsvorschriften ([1]) Waren (ausgenommen alkoholische Erzeugnisse, Tabak und Tabakwaren sowie Parfums und Toilettewasser), deren Gesamtwert je Sendung 150 EUR nicht übersteigt, von den Eingangsabgaben befreit.

Zudem wird gemäß den besonderen Bestimmungen des Anhangs I der Verordnung (EWG) Nr. 2658/87 des Rates über die zolltarifliche und statistische Nomenklatur sowie den Gemeinsamen Zolltarif auf Waren mit einem Wert von bis zu 700 EUR, die in Sendungen einer Privatperson an eine andere Privatperson enthalten sind (sofern solchen Sendungen keine kommerziellen Erwägungen zugrunde liegen und es sich nicht um Tabak handelt), ein pauschaler Zollsatz von 2,5 v. H. angewandt.

Die EU sieht keine Sonderregelung vor, nach der in Marketenderläden erworbene Waren von Eingangsabgaben befreit wären. Es finden jedoch die obengenannten Bestimmungen für Sendungen mit geringem Wert und Sendungen zwischen Privatpersonen Anwendung.

([1]) Artikel 23 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1186/2009 des Rates über das gemeinschaftliche System der Zollbefreiungen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001373/13
to the Commission
Daniel Caspary (PPE), Thomas Ulmer (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Burkhard Balz (PPE), Axel Voss (PPE), Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE), Markus Pieper (PPE) and Renate Sommer (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Duty-free limit on goods sent through the forces' post by soldiers stationed abroad

Under Article 26(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1186/2009, there is a EUR 45 duty-free allowance on goods sent from a third country by a private individual to another private individual living in the customs territory of the EU, provided that such imports are not of a commercial nature. For soldiers from the Member States who are stationed outside the EU customs territory, this low duty-free allowance is, in practice, a significant impediment when they want to send home presents that they have purchased in army stores (especially for festivals, birthdays etc.). For members of the US armed forces, by contrast, there is a rule whereby goods purchased in army stores are not subject to import duty.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of any grounds for not introducing a special rule whereby goods purchased in army stores by soldiers serving abroad are exempt from import duty and, if so, what those grounds are; and

2. whether it would be feasible for the EU to introduce such a rule, along the lines of that applicable to US soldiers, and, if not, why not and what alternative special arrangements for the EU might be feasible?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

In addition to the EUR 45 duty-free allowance referred to in the question, the EU legislation ([1]) also allows goods (other than alcoholic, tobacco or perfume products) which do not exceed a total value of EUR 150 per consignment to be imported free of customs duties.

Furthermore in accordance with the Special Provisions of Annex I to Council Regulation (EEC) No 2658/87 on the tariff and statistical nomenclature and on the Common Customs Tariff, customs duties for goods of a value up to EUR 700, contained in consignments sent by one private individual to another (provided that it is not of a commercial nature and except tobacco) are charged a flat rate of 2.5%.

The EU does not have a specific rule whereby goods purchased in army stores are not subject to import duty; however the rules above-referred for consignments of negligible value and consignments sent between private individuals apply.

([1]) Article 23 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1186/2009 setting up a Community system of reliefs for customs duties.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001374/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Illegale Hölzer

Der Handel mit illegal geschlagenem Holz ist weltweit ein Milliardengeschäft, bei dem sich China immer mehr zur Drehscheibe entwickelt hat. Die Hölzer und fertigen Holzprodukte werden „gewaschen", indem die aus dem Kongobecken, Indonesien und Co. nach China importierten Hölzer wieder exportiert werden. Einem Endabnehmer ist es kaum möglich, eine Illegalität festzustellen. Produkte wie Bodenbeläge oder Massenmöbel finden vermehrt ihren Weg auf westliche Märkte.

1. Gibt es schon Zwischenberichte, ob bzw. inwiefern die auf EU-Ebene gesetzten Maßnahmen zur Reduzierung der illegalen Abschlagung von Holz gefruchtet haben?

2. Unterstützt die EU (Forschungs-)Programme zur lückenlosen Rückverfolgung von Holzprodukten?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(2. April 2013)

Seit Inkrafttreten der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 995/2010 am 3. März 2013 ist das Inverkehrbringen von Holz und Holzerzeugnissen aus illegalem Einschlag verboten. Darüber hinaus müssen alle EU-Wirtschaftsbeteiligten einschließlich derjenigen, die Holzerzeugnisse aus China einführen, der „Sorgfaltspflicht" genügen, um das Risiko, dass Holz aus illegalem Einschlag in ihre Lieferkette gelangt, weitestgehend zu begrenzen. Chinesische Holzverarbeiter kommen Ersuchen ihrer Kunden in der EU um Informationen über die Herkunft des Holzes in ihren Erzeugnissen und die Legalität von dessen Einschlag in China oder in Drittländern bereits nach.

Der jüngste unabhängige Bericht über die Auswirkungen der Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung des illegalen Holzeinschlags wurde 2010 vom Thinktank Chatham House im Vereinigten Königreich veröffentlicht. Dem Bericht zufolge zeitigen die von der EU und anderen Märkten sowie den Erzeugerländern selbst getroffenen Maßnahmen offenbar positive Ergebnisse, wenngleich kein Grund zur Selbstzufriedenheit besteht.

Die Systeme zur Rückverfolgung von Holzerzeugnissen sind recht weit entwickelt und bauen auf der Forschung in verschiedenen Bereichen auf, darunter Informationstechnologie, Landwirtschaft/Lebensmittelsicherheit und Genetik. Ein Beispiel für diese forstspezifische Forschung ist das „Indisputable Key"-Programm: www.indisputablekey.com. Ein Überblick über Technologien für die Rückverfolgung von Holz wurde kürzlich von der Internationalen Tropenholzorganisation veröffentlicht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001374/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Illegally sourced timber

The worldwide trade in illegally sourced timber, which is increasingly centred on China, is worth billions of dollars. Timber and finished wood products are 'laundered' by being first imported into China, from regions such as the Congo Basin and Indonesia, and then re-exported. It is virtually impossible for end-purchasers to determine whether wood has been illegally sourced. Products such as floor coverings and mass-produced furniture are increasingly making their way onto markets in the West.

1. Are interim reports available on the impact, if any, of the measures taken at EU level to curb the illegal sourcing of timber?

2. Is the EU supporting any research programmes on comprehensive traceability for wood products?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

With the entry into application of Regulation (EU) 995/2010 ([1]) on 3rd March 2013 the placing on the market of timber and timber products derived from illegally harvested timber is prohibited. Furthermore all EU operators, including those importing timber products from China, are required to exercise 'due diligence' to minimise the risk of illegal timber in their supply chain. Chinese timber processors are already responding to requests from their clients in the EU for information on the source of timber in their products and about the legality of harvest of such timber, whether the timber is harvested in China or in third countries.

The most recent independent report on the impact of measures taken to combat illegal logging was published by the UK think tank Chatham House in 2010 ([2]). The report concludes that measures taken by the EU and by other markets as well as by producer countries themselves appear to be having positive results, though there is no room for complacency.

Systems for tracing wood products are relatively well developed and build on research carried out in different fields, including information technology, agriculture/food safety and genetics. An example of such research specific to the forest sector is the 'Indisputable Key' programme: www.indisputablekey.com. A review of timber tracking technologies was recently published by the International Tropical Timber Organisation ([3]).

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010.
laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market, OJ L 295, 12.11.2010.
([2]) See http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/109398
([3]) ITTO Technical Series No 40: Tracking Sustainability — review of electronic and semi-electronic timber tracking technologies (2012).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001375/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Nachfragerückgang bei rollenden Landstraßen

Die EU hat es sich zum Ziel gesetzt, das seit Jahren kontinuierlich steigende Güterverkehrsaufkommen wegen negativer Auswirkungen (wie Stau, Lärm, Umweltverschmutzung und Feinstaubbelastung) von der Straße hin zur Bahn zu verlagern. In dem 2011 veröffentlichten Weißbuch „Fahrplan zu einem einheitlichen europäischen Verkehrsraum — Hin zu einem wettbewerbsorientierten und ressourcenschonenden Verkehrssystem“ wurde das ambitionierte Ziel gesetzt, bis 2050 50 % des Güterverkehrs über 300 km von der Straße auf andere Verkehrsträger zu verlagern.

Ende 2012 wurden indes in Österreich im Zuge einer ÖBB-Restrukturierung 41 Verladestellen geschlossen. Als Ursachen dafür wird ein Nachfragerückgang bei der „rollenden Landstraße“ (Rola) genannt. Diese sei eine Folge der Aufhebung des sektoralen Fahrverbots durch den EuGH und die schwere Wirtschaftskrise in Italien und Südeuropa.

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob auch in anderen EU-Staaten ein Nachfragerückgang bei den rollenden Landstraßen oder gar die Schließung von Verladestellen zu verzeichnen ist?

2. Falls ja, gibt es eine Anpassung der im Weißbuch gesetzten Ziele oder wird hier gar auf EU-Ebene gegengesteuert?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(25. März 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass die Aufhebung des sektoralen Fahrverbots im österreichischen Bundesland Tirol zu einem Nachfragerückgang bei der „rollenden Landstraße“ auf dem betreffenden Korridor geführt hat. Ähnliche Auswirkungen auf andere Korridore aufgrund von Änderungen nationaler politischer Maßnahmen sind ihr derzeit nicht bekannt, sie verfolgt die Entwicklungen in diesem Bereich aber sehr aufmerksam.

Auf die rollende Landstraße entfällt lediglich ein sehr geringer Anteil des Gesamtmarktes für den kombinierten Verkehr in Europa.

Die Kommission versucht, die verschiedenen strukturellen Probleme des Schienengüterverkehrs mit einem Maßnahmenpaket zu beheben, das unter anderem folgende Bestandteile umfasst: die Verbesserung zentraler Elemente des Netzes im Rahmen des TEN-V-Programms, regulatorische Verbesserungen wie die Einrichtung von Güterverkehrskorridoren, ein besserer Zugang zu Eisenbahninfrastrukturen im Rahmen der 2012 angenommenen Richtlinie über einen einheitlichen Eisenbahnraum und die im Januar angenommenen Vorschläge für ein viertes Eisenbahnpaket, das Aspekte wie die Zertifizierung und Interoperabilität von Eisenbahnausrüstung und die Verwaltungsstrukturen im Eisenbahnbereich behandelt.

Vor diesem Hintergrund zieht die Kommission eine Änderung der Ziele des Weißbuchs zur Verkehrspolitik ([1]) derzeit nicht in Betracht. Zudem wird für jede neue politische Initiative, die Auswirkungen auf die Organisation des Güterverkehrs in der EU haben könnte, unter Berücksichtigung nationaler Entwicklungen eine detaillierte Folgenabschätzung vorgenommen.

([1]) „Fahrplan zu einem einheitlichen europäischen Verkehrsraum — Hin zu einem wettbewerbsorientierten und ressourcenschonenden Verkehrssystem“, http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/strategies/2011_white_paper_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001375/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Decline in demand for RoLa

In response to the negative effects of increasingly heavy traffic (including dust, noise, pollution and particle emissions), the EU set itself the goal of moving freight traffic — the volume of which has been steadily rising for years — off the roads and onto the rails. The transport white paper published in 2011 entitled 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area' included the ambitious target of shifting 50% of freight journeys of more than 300 km off the roads and onto other forms of transport by 2050.

Meanwhile, in late 2012, as part of a restructuring, ÖBB (Austrian Federal Railways) closed 41 freight loading yards. The stated reason for the closures was a decline in demand for rolling highway (RoLa) services, apparently as a result of the repeal by the European Court of Justice of the Austrian authorities' sectoral ban on freight vehicles and of the severe economic crisis in Italy and Southern Europe.

1. Is the Commission aware of a decline in demand for RoLa, or of the closure of loading yards, in other Member States?

2. If so, are there moves to adjust the targets set in the white paper — perhaps even to reflect a change of approach at EU level?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

The Commission is aware that the lifting of the 'sectoral freight vehicle ban' in the Austrian province of Tirol has led to a decrease of accompanied combined transport (or RoLa) on the relevant corridor. It is currently not aware of similar effects on other corridors due to changes in national policies, but follows possible developments very closely.

The accompanied combined transport accounts only for a very small fraction of the total combined transport market in Europe.

The Commission is attempting to address the various structural issues facing rail freight with a package of measures, including improvement of core elements of the network via the TEN-T programme, regulatory improvements such as the creation of freight corridors, improved access to rail related facilities under the Single European Rail Area directive adopted in 2012, and the recently adopted proposals for a 4th railway package, adopted in January and addressing issues concerning certification and interoperability of rail equipment and the governance structure of railways.

Having this in mind, the Commission is not currently considering adjusting the targets set in the White Paper on transport ([1]). At the same time, for any new policy initiative that could have an impact on the organisation of freight transport in the EU, a detailed impact assessment will be undertaken, taking into account national developments.

([1]) Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system, http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/strategies/2011_white_paper_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001376/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Selektive Geburtenkontrolle

Vor allem in Asien und Afrika ist aufgrund von pränataler Diagnostik die Abtreibung weiblicher Föten in den vergangenen 15 Jahren kontinuierlich gestiegen. Leider ist diese fatale, brandgefährliche gesellschaftliche Entwicklung über Georgien, Aserbeidschan, Armenien und Albanien auf dem Vormarsch in Richtung EU. Vor allem dort, wo die Geburtenrate gesunken ist, die Menschen also statt sechs Kinder nur noch eines oder zwei bekommen, sorgt der technologische Fortschritt für eine galoppierende demografische Maskulinisierung der Gesellschaft.

Bislang ging man davon aus, dass der Status von Frauen sich in der Gesellschaft bei einer Verknappung erhöhen würde. Wenn es schwer ist, eine Frau zu bekommen, unternehmen allerdings Männer alles um eine zu erhalten. Es hat de facto dazu geführt, dass Frauen noch öfter gekidnappt bzw. zu Heirat oder Prostitution gezwungen werden. Auch auf den Menschenhandel wirkt sich dies aus, da Frauen aus ärmeren Nachbarländern „importiert" werden.

Wenn im Jahr 2020 die vielen Buben in Asien erwachsen sind, werden in manchen Regionen der Welt fast 20 % der heiratsfähigen Männer keine Frau bekommen. Männerdominierte Gesellschaften haben grundsätzlich mehr Probleme mit Kriminalität. Bereits jetzt gibt es durch die männlich dominierten Heerscharen an Einwanderern, Asylanten und illegalen Migranten auch in der EU immer wieder Probleme mit sexueller Belästigung bis hin zu Vergewaltigung, Zwangsheiraten und Ehrenmorde. Mit zunehmender Maskulinisierung vieler Regionen steht via Migration auch in der EU — geschlechtsspezifisches Abtreibungsverbot hin oder her — eine Verschärfung der genannten Problematik zu erwarten.

1. Ist sich die Kommission dieser problematischen Entwicklung bewusst?

2. In welchem Ausmaß findet geschlechtsspezifische Abtreibung in der EU-Entwicklungspolitik Berücksichtigung?

3. In wie weit wird diese brandgefährliche gesellschaftliche Entwicklung im Rahmen der Vorbeitrittsgespräche (z. B. mit Albanien) thematisiert?

4. Und welche Rolle spielt sie in der EU-Nachbarschaftspolitik?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(17. April 2013)

Das Thema Abtreibung zählt nicht zu den Zuständigkeiten der EU, allerdings stehen die vollständige Achtung der Menschen- und Frauenrechte sowie die Geschlechtergleichstellung im Mittelpunkt der EU-Entwicklungspolitik, der Nachbarschaftspolitik und im Beitrittsprozess. Dies gilt sowohl für die Dialoge mit den betreffenden Ländern und die Beitrittsverhandlungen als auch für die finanzielle und technische Hilfe für Drittländer. Die Kommission wird ihre Anstrengungen weiterhin entschlossen fortsetzen, u. a. in Form von Sensibilisierungskampagnen, um die vollständige Achtung der Grundrechte im Allgemeinen und der Frauenrechte und der Geschlechtergleichstellung im Besonderen zu gewährleisten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001376/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Selective birth control

Thanks to prenatal diagnosis, there has been a steady rise in the number of female foetuses aborted in the past 15 years, particularly in Asia and Africa. Regrettably, this disastrous and extremely dangerous social trend is now advancing towards the EU, via Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Albania. Technological progress is resulting in the rapid demographic masculinisation of society, particularly in areas where the birth rate has fallen and people are now having only one or two children instead of six.

It has previously been assumed that women's status in society would improve if women were scarce. However, if it is hard to find a woman, men will do anything to get one. In practice, this has led to even more women being kidnapped or forced into marriage or prostitution. This is also having an impact on human trafficking, since women from poorer neighbouring countries are being 'imported'.

By 2020, when the large number of boys in Asia have grown up, almost 20% of men of marriageable age in some regions of the world will not be able to find a wife. As a rule, male-dominated societies have more problems with crime. Even now, the EU is facing recurring problems ranging from sexual harassment to rape, forced marriages and honour killings committed by the overwhelmingly male hordes of immigrants, refugees and illegal migrants. The growing masculinisation of many regions as a result of migration means that this issue is likely to become more serious in the EU as well, regardless of whether or not gender-specific abortion is banned.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problematic trend?

2. To what extent does EU development policy take account of gender-specific abortion?

3. To what extent is this highly dangerous social trend being addressed in pre-accession talks (e.g. with Albania)?

4. What role does this issue play in EU neighbourhood policy?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

While the EU has no competence on the issue of abortion, the full respect for human rights, women's rights and gender equality is at the heart of the EU's development policy, the Neighbourhood policy and the accession process, both as part of the dialogues with the countries concerned and the accession negotiations, as well as in terms of financial and technical assistance provided to third countries. The Commission is committed to pursuing its efforts, including through awareness raising campaigns, to ensure full respect for fundamental rights in general and women's rights and gender equality in particular.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001377/13
an die Kommission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Flaschenabfüllung von Grappa

Italien hat ein Dekret erlassen, wonach Grappa künftig in Italien ausschließlich in Flaschen abgefüllt werden darf. Bislang exportierte Italien Grappa als Tank- und Fassware u. a. nach Deutschland, wo die Spirituose von spezialisierten Unternehmen für den Verzehr fertig gestellt und vermarktet wird. Eine obligatorische Flaschenabfüllung in Italien hätte aufgrund des erhöhten Transportgewichts der Flaschenware auch erhebliche ökologische Auswirkungen durch erhöhte CO_2-Emissionen.

Ich frage die Kommission:

1. Welchen Stand haben die laufenden juristischen Überprüfungen der Kommission?

2. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Verhältnismäßigkeit des Dekrets?

3. Welche Gründe werden von Italien für ein solches Vorgehen angeführt?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(26. März 2013)

Nach einer ersten Analyse der technischen Unterlagen der italienischen geografischen Angabe (g. A.) „Grappa“ sahen es die Dienststellen der Kommission als notwendig an, Italien um einige klärende Angaben hinsichtlich der ausschließlichen Flaschenabfüllung der von der geschützten Angabe abgedeckten Spirituose im Erzeugungsgebiet (in diesem Fall das gesamte italienische Hoheitsgebiet) zu bitten. Die Kommission forderte insbesondere eine Beschreibung der Gründe, die dazu geführt haben, dass Italien eine solche Maßnahme ergriffen hat, und den Nachweis, dass eine derartige Maßnahme erforderlich ist, um die Qualität und das Ansehen der geografischen Angabe zu schützen, und auf objektiven und nicht diskriminierenden Kriterien beruht.

Italien hat vor kurzem eine Antwort übermittelt, die derzeit übersetzt wird. Die rechtliche Analyse dieser Frage durch die Dienststellen der Kommission wird nur anhand der eingegangenen Klarstellungen möglich sein.

Sie können sicher sein, dass die Dienststellen der Kommission bei der Prüfung der technischen Unterlagen zu geografischen Angaben wachsam bleiben, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Einbeziehung etwaiger unnötig restriktiver Maßnahmen, die den freien Warenverkehr in der EU behindern.

Nach Prüfung der Antwort Italiens steht die Kommission dem Herrn Abgeordneten für weitere Auskünfte zur Verfügung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001377/13
to the Commission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Bottling of grappa

Italy has issued a decree to the effect that, in future, grappa must be filled into bottles in Italy. Up to now, Italy has exported grappa in tanks and barrels to countries such as Germany, where the spirit is made ready for consumption and marketed by specialised firms. Mandatory bottling in Italy would also have significant ecological consequences, because the increased weight of bottles would result in higher CO_2 emissions in transport.

1. What stage has been reached in the legal checks being carried out by the Commission?

2. Does the Commission consider the decree to be proportional?

3. What reasons has Italy given for its action?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

Following a first analysis of the technical file of the Italian geographical indication (GI) 'Grappa', the Commission services considered necessary to ask for some clarifications to Italy in relation to the obligation to bottle the spirit drinks covered by that GI only in the area of production (in this case, the entire Italian territory). The Commission asked in particular to outline the reasons that led Italy to the establishment of such measure and to provide evidence that such measure is necessary to protect the quality and reputation of the geographical indication and based on objective and non-discriminating criteria.

Italy sent recently a reply, which is currently being translated. The legal analysis of this issue, by the Commission services, will only be possible in the light of the clarifications received.

You can be assured that the Commission services remain vigilant when examining the technical files of geographical indications, in particular as regards the inclusion of any unjustified restrictive measure that could undermine the free movement of goods in the EU.

The Commission remains at the disposal of the Honourable member for any additional information following the examination of the Italian reply.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001379/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Παραβίαση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στην Τουρκία: η υπόθεση της Pinar Selek

Για μία ακόμη φορά αναφερόμαστε στις πενιχρές επιδόσεις της Τουρκίας όσον αφορά τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, καθώς και στην παραβίαση των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων και ελευθεριών, εφιστώντας την προσοχή σας στην περίπτωση της κοινωνιολόγου ακτιβίστριας Pinar Selek. Η Selek είναι γνωστή για το πλούσιο έργο της όσον αφορά τα δικαιώματα των ευάλωτων κοινοτήτων στην Τουρκία (γυναίκες, Κούρδοι, φτωχοί, παιδιά του δρόμου, κ.λπ.). Έχουν περάσει δύο χρόνια (6 Φεβρουαρίου 2011) από τότε που το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο απηύθυνε έκκληση να στηριχθεί ο αγώνας της για δικαιοσύνη. Ωστόσο, ύστερα από 15ετή δίκη, οι τουρκικές αρχές την καταδίκασαν τον Ιανουάριο του 2013 σε ισόβια κάθειρξη με βάση πληροφορίες αμφιβόλου κύρους και χωρίς κανένα άλλο αξιόπιστο αποδεικτικό στοιχείο. Σύμφωνα με την Pinar Selek, «Επελέγην ως παράδειγμα προκειμένου να φοβηθούν άλλοι να υποστηρίξουν θέσεις παρόμοιες με τις δικές μου».

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι αυτή η συμπεριφορά της Τουρκίας αποδεκτή από την ΕΕ;

2. Η Επιτροπή δήλωσε το 2011 ότι είναι «πλήρως ενήμερη για τη συγκεκριμένη υπόθεση και βρίσκεται σε τακτική επαφή με τους δικηγόρους της».

α) Ποια είναι η θέση της Επιτροπής για την πρόσφατη άδικη καταδίκη της Pinar Selek σε ισόβια κάθειρξη;

β) Ποια άλλα άμεσα μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει για να διερευνήσει με τους Τούρκους δικηγόρους εάν υπήρξε όντως αμεροληψία και αποτελεσματικότητα από την τουρκική δικαιοσύνη;

γ) Γιατί η Επιτροπή δεν πιέζει την Τουρκική Κυβέρνηση να ελευθερώσει τους χιλιάδες κρατούμενους ειρηνικούς Κούρδους πολιτικούς ακτιβιστές, δημοσιογράφους, υπερασπιστές των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, συνδικαλιστές και φοιτητές, και να σταματήσει τις περαιτέρω άδικες καταδίκες;

3. Στην έκθεση προόδου της Επιτροπής για την Τουρκία το 2012, γίνεται αναφορά στην καθιέρωση Διαμεσολαβητή και ενός Τουρκικού Εθνικού Ιδρύματος Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων. Είναι εφικτό να ληφθεί ένα τέτοιο μέτρο σε μια χώρα που πρωτοστατεί στις παραβιάσεις των άρθρων της Ευρωπαϊκής Σύμβασης Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαρτίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να ενημερώνεται λεπτομερώς για τη συγκεκριμένη υπόθεση και την καταδίκη της Pinar Selek σε ισόβια κάθειρξη. Η Επιτροπή υπογραμμίζει τη σημασία που έχει ο σεβασμός του δικαιώματος για δίκαιη δίκη εντός ευλόγου χρονικού διαστήματος, το οποίο κατοχυρώνεται στην Ευρωπαϊκή Σύμβαση Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου. Όλες οι διαδικασίες των δικαστηρίων οφείλουν να ανταποκρίνονται στα διεθνή πρότυπα τα οποία ορίζονται στην Ευρωπαϊκή Σύμβαση Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου, την οποία έχει υπογράψει η Τουρκία. Κάθε περίπτωση μη τήρησης των εν λόγω προτύπων αποτελεί αιτία σοβαρής ανησυχίας. Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί στενά την υπόθεση αυτή και να τονίζει την σημασία για σεβασμό του δικαιώματος για δίκαιη δίκη.

Η σύσταση Εθνικού Ιδρύματος Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων και η καθιέρωση του θεσμού του Διαμεσολαβητή συνιστούν σημαντικά βήματα προς την βελτίωση του θεσμικού πλαισίου της Τουρκίας όσον αφορά τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, καθώς και στο πλαίσιο του κεφαλαίου 23 «Δικαιοσύνη και Θεμελιώδη Δικαιώματα», για το οποίο η αναλυτική έκθεση εκκρεμεί ακόμη στο Συμβούλιο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001379/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Human rights violations in Turkey: the case of Pinar Selek

Once again we draw attention to Turkey's poor human rights record and violations of fundamental rights and freedoms, this time with the case of the sociologist and activist Pinar Selek. Selek is known for her prolific work on the rights of vulnerable groups in Turkey (women, Kurds, the poor, street children, etc). Two years have passed since Parliament, on 6 February 2011, made an appeal in support of her battle for justice. However, in January 2013, following a 15-year trial, the Turkish authorities sentenced her to life imprisonment on the grounds of dubious reports and without any other believable evidence. According to Pinar Selek, 'I was chosen out as an example in order to frighten others from advocating similar positions to my own'.

In this context, the Commission is asked:

1. Does the EU accept this behaviour on the part of Turkey?

2. The Commission stated in 2011 that it was 'fully informed about the specific court case' and was 'in regular contact with [Pinar Selek's] attorneys'.

(a) What is the Commission's position on the recent unjust sentencing of Pinar Selek to life imprisonment?

(b) What further immediate measures does it intend to take in order to investigate, together with the Turkish attorneys, whether the Turkish judiciary can be considered to have acted with impartiality and efficiency?

(c) Why does the Commission not press the Turkish Government to free the thousands of detainees in the country — peaceful Kurdish political activists, journalists, human rights defenders, trade unionists and students — and to ensure that an end is put to such unfair sentences?

3. In the Commission's 2012 progress report on Turkey, reference is made to the establishment of the office of Ombudsman and of a Turkish national human rights institution. Is this a feasible measure to take in a country that is top of the list in terms of violations of articles of the European Convention on Human Rights?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission continues to be fully informed about the specific case and the sentencing of Pinar Selek to life imprisonment. The Commission underlines the importance to respect the right to a fair trial within a reasonable period of time, enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights. All court proceedings must be in line with the international standards set out by the European Convention of Human Rights, to which Turkey is a signatory. Any instance in which these standards are not met is a cause for serious concern. The Commission will continue to monitor the case closely and to reiterate the importance of respect of the right to a fair trial.

The establishment of a National Human Rights Institution and of an Ombudsman Institution are important steps to improve Turkey's institutional framework regarding human rights, as well as under Chapter 23 — Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, for which the screening report is still pending in the Council.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001380/13
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(11 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Limitele de dioxid de azot

Dioxidul de azot este o substanță poluantă importantă, asociată în special cu afecțiunile respiratorii.

Date publicate recent de Organizația Mondială a Sănătății sugerează că nivelurile de dioxid de azot care corespund limitelor actuale ale UE sau se situează sub aceste limite pot fi asociate cu un risc crescut de mortalitate și morbiditate, ceea ce înseamnă că nivelurile de dioxid de azot care erau considerate sigure în trecut, pot prezenta, de fapt, un risc pentru sănătatea publică ([1]).

Va lua Comisia în considerare această informație actualizată din partea OMS și va revizui limitele de NO_2 în consecință?

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(10 aprilie 2013)

Raportul la care se referă distinsa membră face parte din activitatea desfășurată de Organizația Mondială a Sănătății pentru a sprijini revizuirea din 2013 a politicii UE în domeniul calității aerului. Rezultatele din partea OMS vor fi luate în considerare în revizuirea realizată de către UE. De asemenea, recent a fost efectuată o consultare publică cu privire la o gamă largă de opțiuni politice pentru a reduce impacturile asupra poluării aerului. Pe baza răspunsurilor și a rezultatului evaluării impactului aflate în curs, Comisia va stabili care sunt cele mai adecvate opțiuni politice în vederea propunerii înainte de sfârșitul anului 2013.

([1]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/182432/e96762-final.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001380/13
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Nitrogen dioxide limits

Nitrogen dioxide is a significant pollutant and is especially associated with respiratory problems.

Data recently published by the World Health Organisation suggests that levels of nitrogen dioxide at or below the current EU limits can be associated with increased mortality and morbidity, thus implying that levels of nitrogen dioxide previously thought to be safe may in fact pose a threat to public health ([1]).

Will the Commission act on this up-to-date information from the WHO and revise the NO_2 limits accordingly?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The report the Honourable Member is referring to is part of the work the World Health Organisation is doing to assist the 2013 review of EU Air Quality Policy. The results from the WHO will be considered in the EU review. Also, a public consultation on a broad range of policy options to reduce the impacts on air pollution has been recently carried out. Based on the responses, and on the outcome of an on-going impact assessment, the Commission will determine the most appropriate for proposal before the end of 2013.

([1]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/182432/e96762-final.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001381/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Directive 86/653/EEC

Directive 86/653/EEC serves to protect self-employed commercial agents. This directive defines a commercial agent as 'a self-employed intermediary who has continuing authority to negotiate the sale or the purchase of goods on behalf of another person, hereinafter called the "principal", or to negotiate and conclude such transactions on behalf of and in the name of that principal.'

As this definition shows, the directive applies to the sale and purchase of goods by an agent but not to the sale and purchase of services.

1. What is the Commission doing to protect similar agents who negotiate the sale and/or the purchase of services on behalf of a 'principal'?

2. Does the Commission recognise the importance of protecting agents specialising in the sale and purchase of services as well as those involved in the sale and purchase of goods?

3. Given the current economic climate and the fact that in Ireland, for example, many such workers have lost their jobs, does the Commission believe that more needs to be done to offer these workers protection, for instance by ensuring that they receive redundancy pay if they are laid off from work as a commercial agent? If so, what does the Commission intend to do in this regard?

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

Directive 86/653/EEC on commercial agents was adopted in 1986 on the basis of Articles 57(2) and 100 of the Treaty establishing the EEC for the approximation of the legal systems of the Member States to the extent required for the proper functioning of the internal market.

At present, the Commission is not aware of any reasons which would plead in favour of extending the directive to self-employed sale and purchase of services. The Commission does not therefore plan to propose an amendment of Directive 86/653 extending its application to commercial agents other than those currently covered by the directive in order to ensure that these agents might benefit from redundancy payments.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001382/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to Written Question E-011191/2012 on the Package Travel Directive

Following the response to Written Question E-011191/2012, in which the Commission states that 'the Honourable Member should be made aware that the Commission is currently assessing its response to the mentioned developments in the travel market,' could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What is it doing to assess 'the developments'?

2. How long has it been assessing 'the developments'?

3. When will it finish assessing 'the developments'?

4. What can be expected when the Commission decides it has finished assessing 'the developments'?

5. Could the Commission clarify what these 'developments' are?

6. In what year did the Commission begin to realise that many consumers book their holidays themselves online?

Question for written answer E-001386/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Revision of the timeline of the Package Travel Directive

Since this information was not contained in its answer to Written Question E-011191/2012, can the Commission indicate the timeline for the revision of the Package Travel Directive? Is there a timeline?

Joint answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The Commission is aware ([1]) of developments in the travel market. Two of the most significant changes since the adoption of the existing directive in 1990 are the introduction and expansion of Internet as a distribution channel and the emergence of low cost air carriers which both have contributed to a change in the way consumers organise their holidays. In order to address these changes, the Commission has assessed the package travel market thoroughly, including potential policy options for a response to these changes. In 2007, it organised a public consultation in the form of a working document ([2]). In January 2009, it launched a study to measure the detriment consumers suffer in relation to new travel products, so-called dynamic packages ([3]). A workshop with Member States was organised in October 2009 to discuss existing problems and potential policy options. A second public consultation was conducted in early 2010. Furthermore, a stakeholders' workshop was organised in April 2010 to discuss the impacts of the identified policy options. In 2012 the Commission carried out a study to test a Package Travel Label and consumer behaviour when purchasing dynamic packages. In June 2012, the Commission organised a workshop for Member States and a stakeholders' conference on the main pending issues. Recently, there have been discussions with consumer organisations and the Commission also debated the issue with business leaders. A formal impact assessment process is under way and includes different options for the way forward, for instance a repeal of the directive, keeping the status quo or a modernisation of the directive. This would be expected to enable the Commission to announce its decision for the way forward in the course of this year.

([1]) For see the Commission Working Document of 26.7.2007 on http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/rights/travel_en.htm as well as the summary of responses published the same place.
([2]) The Commission Working Document of 26.7.2007, see http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/rights/travel_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/strategy/docs/study_consumer_detriment.pdf (Consumer Detriment Study). The study covered 17 EU countries and was based on interviews with a sample of 500 consumers.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001383/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Closure of travel agencies in Europe

Does the Commission know how many travel agencies closed down in Ireland and each of the Member States last year (2012), and between 2007 and 2011 inclusive?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The access to the profession of travel agent through registration or licensing is a decentralised competence of the Member States or their regions. The relevant legislation differs from one country to the other and makes the compilation of data on closure of travel agencies very difficult. Moreover it is difficult to distinguish between closure due to bankruptcy, consolidation, or to regular business closure. The Commission does not therefore have a centralised overview of travel agencies' closures throughout the EU.

According to data ([1]) collected by ECTAA, the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations, in Ireland, over the period 2001-2009, the number of travel agencies dropped by 30%, 17 agencies having failed and 37 not having renewed their license. At the end of 2011, Ireland was recorded to have 223 travel agents. In Austria, over the period 2007-2011, a steady increase in the number of travel agencies was registered from 2 127 travel agencies in 2007 to 2 308 in 2011. On the contrary, in Germany, over the same reference period, the number of travel agencies has slightly decreased, mainly due to consolidation, from 11 404 travel agencies in 2007 to 10 240 in 2011.

([1]) The data does not only reflect bankruptcy, since the closure can also be related to a regular closure of business or the result of consolidation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001384/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Online holiday bookings

Is the Commission aware that many people book their holidays online?

Can the Commission provide data as to how many consumers are involved in this practice?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the growing popularity of the Internet booking of holidays by consumers.

According to the Flash Eurobarometer 370, Attitudes of Europeans towards Tourism 2013 ([1]), similarly to 2011, a majority (53%) of those who took a holiday lasting at least four nights in 2012, used the Internet to make their holiday arrangements.

In addition, according to the 2012 Edition of the Eurostat's Community Survey on the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) by households and individuals ([2]), 24% of all the consumers (and 54% of those who made Internet purchases in the previous 12 months) booked travel and holiday accommodations over the Internet in the previous 12 months, with a slight increase with respect to the figures seen in the previous two years' editions of the surveys (22% in the 2011,21% in the 2010). This represents almost the double of what was seen in 2008 (14%) and four times of what was observed in 2004 (6%).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_370_en.pdf
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/information_society/data/comprehensive_databases.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001385/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Private health insurance packages in Ireland

Is the Commission aware that males in Ireland who buy private health insurance are often forced to buy packages which include items such as maternity benefits?

Is this matter discriminatory, since insurance companies charging for such 'benefits' in a policy know that a male cannot claim maternity benefits?

Is the Competition Commissioner concerned about such practices?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The Commission does not have specific information on the private health insurance packages offered in Ireland.

The information given in the Honourable Member's questions indicates that he is referring to private health insurance under Directive 2004/113/EC ([1]) on equal treatment between men and women in access to goods and services, not to occupational social security schemes under Directive 2006/54/EC ([2]).

As far as private health insurance schemes are concerned, Article 5(3) of Directive 2004/113/EC states that costs related to pregnancy and maternity shall not result in differences in individuals' premiums and benefits. As stated in Recital 20 of Directive 2004/113/EC, 'less favourable treatment of women for reasons of pregnancy and maternity should be considered a form of direct discrimination based on sex and therefore prohibited in insurance and related financial services. Costs related to risks of pregnancy and maternity should therefore not be attributed to the members of one sex only.'

The fact that Irish insurance companies offer private health insurance packages that make no distinction between men and women on the costs related to pregnancy and maternity is therefore in line with the requirements of Directive 2004/113/EC and the solidarity mechanism it lays down.

([1]) Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services.

([2]) Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001387/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Labelling of organic products

Can the Commission state what EU labels exist for organic products?

Who enforces standards on any such labels?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2013)

There is only one EU organic logo. It is often named 'Euro-leaf'. It symbolises the marriage of Europe (the stars derived from the European flag) and Nature (the stylised leaf and the green colour). This logo is registered as a collective mark.

The use of the EU organic logo is compulsory for organic pre-packaged food produced within the European Union where the terms referring to organic production are used (e.g.: organic, bio, eco…). However, the organic logo is not exclusive on the packaging: subject to the respect of the EU legislation, national and private labels may be used and can be displayed on organic products next to the Euro-leaf.

It is also possible to use the EU logo on a voluntary basis for non-pre-packaged organic products produced within the Union and which satisfy the requirements set out under the EU legislation or any organic products imported from third countries and recognised as equivalent.

EU organic logo cannot be used for a product which does not satisfy the requirements set out under the EU legislation.

The use of the logo and all the terms indicating organic products is subject to control systems set up by Member States in accordance with Title V of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 ([1]). All operators are in particular subject to controls at least once a year by specialised inspectors from the nationally appointed control bodies and control authorities. Consequently, each operator in the organic chain — the farmer, the processor, the distributor — has to be certified as complying with the EU organic rules established by the organic legislation.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 (OJ L 189, 20.7.2007, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001388/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Detection of food fraud

Given the recent findings of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) and the fact that many other national food authorities across the EU seem to have failed to detect food fraud, what is the Commission doing to ensure best practice is shared across the continent?

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

The recent findings confirm that the systems of official controls and enforcement established in the Member States are capable of identifying and handling food concerns arising along the food chain.

The Commission has been active — at both the political and technical levels — in coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned to identify the prevalence of the fraud at issue as soon as possible. To this end, the Commission has recently adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([1]) calling for EU-wide controls on foods marketed as containing beef to detect fraudulent labelling, and on horse meat destined for human consumption to detect phenylbutazone. Phenylbutazone is a veterinary drug which is banned for use in food-producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013. The plan is being co-financed by the Union at a rate of 75%.

The Commission agrees that best practice sharing among Member States is very important, also in cases like the present one, where close cooperation among Member States and the Commission is being deployed to tackle the issue at hand. The forthcoming proposal to review Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 will aim to further strengthen the legal framework for the organisation and performance of official controls along the agri-food chain and the mechanisms for administrative cooperation between Member States in cases of non-compliance with agri-food chain rules.

([1]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001389/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Sulphites in wine

Can the Commission confirm that when sulphites are present in wine, this must be stated on the label?

Can the Commission state whether or not wine producers have to provide information as to the levels of sulphites present in a particular wine? If not, why not?

Has the Commission any plans to introduce changes?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2013)

Under the existing EU food labelling legislation ([1]), the presence of ingredients known for their ability to trigger allergic reactions or intolerances must always be indicated on the label of foods, including wine. The EU list of such substances also comprises sulphites present at concentrations of more than 10mg/kg or 10 mg/litre.

Allergens must be labelled in the list of ingredients of the food, with a clear reference to the name of the allergic substance. In the absence of a list of ingredients, this indication must include the word 'contains' followed by the name of the allergenic ingredient concerned.

The level at which allergens are present in foods is not required to be indicated on the label. There is currently no consensus on the threshold doses for food allergens eliciting adverse reactions and analytical methods for detecting and quantifying the presence of allergens have not been agreed at Union level. For those reasons, the indication of a level of allergens present in foods could be misleading.

For the time being, the Commission is not considering to change existing legislation on the matter.

([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.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001390/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Disturbi del comportamento alimentare

Il dilagare dei disturbi del comportamento alimentare (DCA) è allarmante.

Si è abbassata l'età di esordio di queste patologie, con un numero sempre maggiore di bambini e giovani in età pre-adolescenziale che presentano alterazioni del comportamento alimentare.

La salute dei giovani dovrebbe essere una delle principali priorità per la Commissione.

Pur riconoscendo che i disordini alimentari sono una vera e propria patologia, tuttavia la Commissione non organizza attualmente campagne di informazione e prevenzione a livello dell'UE.

Può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se e attraverso quali canali sostiene campagne di sensibilizzazione sui disordini alimentari a livello nazionale;

2. se ritiene in futuro di poter intraprendere campagne di prevenzione e informazione a livello europeo su questo fenomeno, vista la necessità crescente di un approccio interdisciplinare e integrato, nel rispetto dell'articolo 168 TFUE?

Nell'ambito del Programma «Salute», la Commissione europea attualmente cofinanzia «Pro-Youth», un'iniziativa europea che mira a promuovere la salute mentale e la prevenzione dei disordini alimentari tra i giovani di età compresa tra i 15 e i 25 anni.

3. Può la Commissione chiarire se in futuro ci saranno altre fonti di finanziamento per progetti in materia di DCA?

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

I disturbi del comportamento alimentare possono causare gravi problemi sanitari e affondano le radici spesso nella giovane età. L'obiettivo del progetto «ProYouth», cofinanziato dal programma Salute dell'UE, è promuovere l'assistenza in tema di salute mentale collegata ai disordini alimentari negli otto Stati membri partecipanti.

I disturbi del comportamento alimentare sono trattati anche nell'ambito di diversi progetti passati e presenti sostenuti dal Programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico dell'UE. Tramite il Settimo programma quadro la Commissione ha finanziato finora 10 progetti legati ai disturbi del comportamento alimentare per un totale di circa 18 milioni di EUR. Il progetto NEUROFAST ([1]) ad esempio studia la neurobiologia dell'assunzione alimentare, la cibodipendenza e lo stress, mentre il progetto FULL4HEALTH ([2]) esplora i meccanismi della fame e della sazietà lungo l'intero arco della vita; il progetto ET4AN ([3]) condotto nell'ambito dell'iniziativa Marie Curie studia i biomarcatori clinici, psicologici e neuronali associati all'anoressia acuta.

Al di là di questi progetti mirati la Commissione non sostiene campagne di sensibilizzazione a livello nazionale sui disturbi del comportamento alimentare. Attualmente essa non prevede di condurre campagne di prevenzione e d'informazione su tale tematica.

La proposta della Commissione relativa a Orizzonte 2020, il Programma quadro per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-2020) ([4]), identifica in «Salute, evoluzione demografica e benessere» e in «Sicurezza alimentare, agricoltura sostenibile, ricerca marina e marittima» due delle sei sfide societali da affrontare. Ciò fornirà probabilmente opportunità di ricerca sulle malattie legate all'alimentazione e sul diabete. È troppo presto per accertare quali saranno le specifiche tematiche di ricerca affrontate.

([1]) http://www.neurofast.eu/.
([2]) http://www.full4health.eu/.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=12702717.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001390/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Eating disorders

The spread of eating disorders is alarming.

The age of onset of these diseases has lowered, with an increasing number of children and pre-adolescents showing abnormal eating behaviour.

Young people's health should be a top priority for the Commission.

While recognising that eating disorders are a true disease, the Commission is not currently organising any information campaigns or prevention at EU level.

Can the Commission say:

1. whether, and through what channels, it is supporting awareness-raising campaigns on eating disorders at the national level;

2. whether it thinks that in the future it will be able to conduct EU prevention and information campaigns on this problem, given the growing need for an interdisciplinary and integrated approach in accordance with Article 168 TFEU?

Under its 'Health' programme, the Commission is currently co-financing 'Pro-Youth', an EU initiative that aims to promote mental health and the prevention of eating disorders among young people between the ages of 15 and 25.

3. Can the Commission clarify whether there will be any other sources of funding for projects concerning eating disorders in the future?

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

Eating disorders can lead to serious health problems, often having their onset in young age. The objective of the 'ProYouth'-project, co-funded from the EU-Health Programme, is to enhance mental healthcare for eating disorders in the participating eight Member States.

Eating disorders are also addressed by a number of past and present projects supported by EU Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development. Through the 7th Framework Programme, the Commission has funded so far 10 projects related to eating disorders for a total of about 18 million euro. For example, the NEUROFAST ([1]) project studies the neurobiology of food intake, addiction and stress, while the project FULL4HEALTH ([2]) explores the mechanisms of hunger and satiety across the lifespan; the Marie-Curie project ET4AN ([3]) further investigates clinical, psychological and neural biomarkers associated with acute anorexia.

Apart from these targeted projects, the Commission does not support awareness raising campaigns on eating disorders at the national level. At present, it has no plans to conduct prevention and information campaigns on this issue.

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]) identifies 'Health, demographic change and well-being' and 'Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research' as two of the six societal challenges to be tackled. This is likely to provide opportunities for research on food related diseases and diabetes. It is too early to ascertain the specific research issues addressed.

([1]) http://www.neurofast.eu/.
([2]) http://www.full4health.eu/.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=12702717.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001391/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Incidente aereo ATR 72 Alitalia/Carpatair a Fiumicino — Problemi di trasparenza sui vettori che realizzano i collegamenti aerei

Il 3 febbraio 2013 l'aereo ATR 72 Alitalia decollato da Pisa, di proprietà della compagnia aerea romena Carpatair, durante la fase di atterraggio nell'aeroporto di Fiumicino è finito fuori pista, causando il ferimento di 16 persone, di cui 2 in modo grave. I passeggeri di quel volo erano convinti di viaggiare su un aereo dell'Alitalia e non erano stati informati (fino a quel momento) di essere a bordo di un aeromobile Carpatair. Sui biglietti compariva solo un codice alfanumerico che non ha garantito ai passeggeri la completa trasparenza circa la natura del servizio acquistato, mentre il velivolo, sebbene di proprietà della Carpatair, esponeva il logo Alitalia. La Procura di Civitavecchia ha aperto due inchieste: una a carico dei piloti romeni per disastro colposo e l'altra contro Alitalia per frode in commercio.

Questo incidente ha fatto luce su un fenomeno che si sta pericolosamente diffondendo tra le compagnie aeree europee. Spesso, infatti, le compagnie aeree appaltano una determinata tratta a società terze (che operano a basso costo), senza indicare con la dovuta chiarezza sui biglietti il nome del vettore che eseguirà materialmente il collegamento aereo.

La Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza dell'episodio sopra citato?

2. è a conoscenza di altre compagnie aeree che utilizzano vettori terzi per effettuare i collegamenti aerei, senza evidenziarlo al momento della prenotazione del volo?

3. ritiene che tale pratica possa mettere a rischio la sicurezza dei passeggeri?

4. ritiene urgente sollecitare le autorità nazionali dell'aviazione civile affinché intervengano per regolare questo fenomeno, assicurando informazioni precise agli utenti circa il nome del vettore che eseguirà materialmente il collegamento aereo?

5. ritiene che Alitalia abbia frodato i propri clienti limitando la trasparenza del proprio servizio e traendoli in inganno, giacché un velivolo e un equipaggio romeno operavano un collegamento aereo sotto le insegne e indossando le uniformi Alitalia, e che per questo tali clienti debbano dunque essere risarciti?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(22 marzo 2013)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'uscita di pista accidentale avvenuta presso l'aeroporto di Roma Fiumicino il 3 febbraio 2013.

2. Le compagnie aeree dell'Unione europea si avvalgono di contratti commerciali di noleggio con equipaggio, siglati con altre compagnie aeree dell'UE, per le normali prassi operative. Tali contratti di noleggio, autorizzati dalla normativa europea a determinate condizioni, sono soggetti all'approvazione delle due autorità competenti responsabili del controllo della sicurezza dei due vettori.

3. Poiché l'operatore responsabile del volo in questione (ovvero il locatore, in questo caso Carpatair) è soggetto al controllo dell'autorità competente di un altro Stato membro, in ottemperanza alla medesima normativa unionale, non si ravvedono rischi supplementari.

4. L'articolo 11 del regolamento (CE) n. 2111/2005 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio ([1]) obbliga il contraente del trasporto aereo a informare i passeggeri sull'identità del vettore aereo effettivo del volo.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 2111/2005 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 14 dicembre 2005, relativo all'istituzione di un elenco comunitario di vettori aerei soggetti a un divieto operativo all'interno della Comunità e alle informazioni da fornire ai passeggeri del trasporto aereo sull'identità del vettore aereo effettivo e che abroga l'articolo 9 della direttiva 2004/36/CE, GU L 344 del 27.12.2005.

5. Come spiegato nel precedente paragrafo 2, tali contratti commerciali sono di uso corrente e sono consentiti dalla vigente normativa unionale. Spetta al locatario (in questo caso, Alitalia) decidere il marchio commerciale dei servizi offerti. Nel settore aereo è prassi comune, per la fornitura di servizi, ricorrere a terzi che operino sotto le insegne di un determinato marchio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001391/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Incident involving Alitalia/Carpatair ATR 72 aircraft at Fiumicino — transparency issues regarding the identity of carriers

On 3 February 2013 an Alitalia ATR 72 aircraft owned by the Romanian airline Carpatair, arriving from Pisa, veered off the runway while landing at Rome's Fiumicino airport, injuring 16 people, two of them seriously. The passengers had believed they were travelling on an Alitalia aircraft and were not informed (until after the event) that the aircraft was in fact owned by Carpatair. The only information contained on their tickets was an alphanumeric code, which failed to provide clear information regarding the service, while the aircraft, although it belonged to Carpatair, bore Alitalia insignia. The Civitavecchia prosecution authorities have opened two inquiries, placing the Romanian pilots under investigation for criminal negligence and Alitalia for commercial fraud.

This incident has brought to light what is becoming an alarmingly common practice among airlines, which frequently contract out certain routes to (low-cost) carriers without clearly identifying them on the tickets.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the above incident?

2. Does it know whether any other airlines make use of outside carriers without this being made clear to passengers when they book their flights?

3. Does it consider that such practices could place passengers at risk?

4. Does it consider that the national civil aviation authorities should be called on to resolve this problem without delay, ensuring that passengers on any given flight are clearly informed as to the identity of the carrier?

5. Does it consider that in this case Alitalia effectively defrauded its passengers by failing to provide them with sufficient information, given that the aircraft, bearing Alitalia insignia, and its crew, wearing Alitalia uniforms, were in fact Romanian? Does it consider that the passengers are accordingly entitled to compensation?

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

1. Yes, the Commission was aware of a runway excursion incident at Rome (Fiumicino) airport on 3 February 2013.

2. EU airlines use commercial wet lease arrangements with other EU airlines as part of their normal operating practices. Such lease arrangements, which are permitted under EC law under certain conditions, are subject to approval by the two competent authorities responsible for the safety oversight of the two air carriers.

3. Because the operator conducting the actual flight (i.e. the Lessor — in this case Carpatair) is subject to the oversight of another EU state's competent authority in accordance with the same EU rules there is no additional risk involved.

4. Article 11 of Regulation 2111/2005 of the European Parliament and the Council ([1]) obliges the air carriage contractor to inform passengers of the identity of the operating air carrier.

5. As explained in paragraph 2 above, such commercial arrangements are common and are permitted under current EU legislation. The commercial branding of the services provided is for the lesee to decide (in this case Alitalia). The use of third parties to provide services under the umbrella of a particular brand is common practice in the aviation sector.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2005 on the establishment of a Community list of air carriers subject to an operating ban within the Community and on informing air transport passengers of the identity of the operating air carrier, and repealing Article 9 of Directive 2004/36/EC, OJ L 344, 27.12.2005.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001392/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Ritardi di pagamento: informazioni circa la corretta trasposizione della direttiva 2011/7/UE

La direttiva 2011/7/UE, del 16 febbraio 2011, relativa alla lotta contro i ritardi di pagamento nelle transazioni commerciali mira, tra le altre cose, a garantire che le imprese possano essere pagate in tempi certi dalle pubbliche amministrazioni, evitando così numerosi casi di fallimento dovuti a mancanza di liquidità per fatture non pagate. Infatti, il 57 % delle imprese europee ha avuto problemi di liquidità a causa dei ritardi di pagamento, e tali insolvenze hanno portato alla perdita di 450 mila posti di lavoro in Europa.

La direttiva, che si applica a tutte le transazioni commerciali e a tutti i settori produttivi, obbliga la pubblica amministrazione a pagare i propri fornitori entro 30 giorni, che possono diventare 60 per le Asl, gli ospedali e le imprese pubbliche, dopodiché scatterebbero gli interessi di mora. Il termine di recepimento per gli Stati membri è quello del marzo 2013.

Il decreto di recepimento italiano n. 192/2012 sembrerebbe invece introdurre come regola generalizzata quella dei 60 giorni oltre al fatto di non specificare che i termini debbano essere computati in giorni di calendario (domeniche comprese).

Va ricordato che sono 180 i giorni con cui in media lo Stato italiano paga i fornitori (con punti di oltre 600 giorni in alcune regioni italiane) a fronte di una media UE di 65 giorni, con alcuni paesi nordici che arrivano anche a 32. Inoltre, i debiti pregressi in Italia ammontano a circa 90 miliardi di euro.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione:

1. fare un quadro del recepimento a livello europeo della direttiva?

2. fornire un quadro aggiornato circa i tempi di pagamento delle aziende fornitrici da parte delle pubbliche amministrazioni in Europa?

3. verificare se la nota del ministero dello Sviluppo economico del 22 gennaio 2013 n. 1293 abbia contemplato tutte le indicazioni della direttiva 2011/7/UE relative al suo campo di applicazione?

4. fornire un quadro degli esempi più virtuosi adottati dagli Stati membri (compensazione con le tasse dovute in Spagna, cartolarizzazione per permettere l'anticipo da parte delle banche, ecc)?

5. verificare la possibilità di introdurre un meccanismo che permetta di escludere il debito arretrato degli Stati verso le imprese dal calcolo del debito pubblico, e quindi dai vincoli dei parametri di stabilità?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2013)

1. A tutt'oggi 17 Stati membri hanno notificato le loro misure nazionali di recepimento:

Cipro, Malta, Italia, Paesi Bassi, Slovacchia, Irlanda, Spagna, Svezia, Bulgaria, Lituania, Finlandia, Polonia, Slovenia, Francia, Austria, Lussemburgo ed Estonia. È in corso la verifica di dette misure.

2. Stando all'ultima indagine 2012 European Payment Index Survey ([1]), il settore pubblico paga in media le proprie fatture dopo 65 giorni, con un ritardo di circa tredici giorni rispetto al settore privato. La situazione varia però notevolmente da paese a paese (ad esempio, 24 giorni in Finlandia e 180 giorni in Italia).

3. La Commissione prende atto della nota n. 1293 del ministero italiano dello Sviluppo economico e ne terrà conto al momento di esaminare la legislazione italiana notificata a recepimento della direttiva.

([1]) http://www.intrum.com/Press-and-publications/European-Payment-Index.

4. Gli Stati membri che presentano ritardi di pagamento stanno affrontando il problema a seconda della loro situazione particolare ([2]).

5. La liquidazione del debito commerciale si tradurrà in un aumento corrispondente del debito di Maastricht. Ciò può entrare in conflitto con il benchmark di riduzione del debito recentemente introdotto nel PSC ([3]) per rafforzare il criterio del debito del PDE ([4]). Si dovrebbe evitare una violazione del benchmark, ma il PSC lascia un certo spazio di manovra per tener conto di «fattori significativi» all'atto di valutare l'ottemperanza alle nuove regole. Il rimborso degli arretrati commerciali inciderebbe anche sul deficit pubblico per la proporzione legata alla spesa per gli investimenti.

([2]) La Spagna sta regolarizzando gli arretrati delle amministrazioni regionali e locali e ha costituito un fondo per fornire prestiti al fine di pagare gli arretrati. Finora sono stati pagati alle imprese 28 miliardi di euro di fatture in sofferenza. In Portogallo sono stati regolati quasi 3 miliardi di euro di arretrati, soprattutto nel settore sanitario e delle amministrazioni locali, e nel 2012 è stata varata una legge sul controllo degli impegni. La soluzione posta in atto dal governo italiano, consistente nel certificare il debito commerciale in modo che questo possa essere usato quale garanzia per ottenere crediti dalle banche, non pesa sul debito delle amministrazioni pubbliche (debito di Maastricht). Unitamente alla possibilità di usare il credito certificato a valere sulle tasse da pagare, il sistema può contribuire ad alleviare la stretta della liquidità.

([3]) Patto di stabilità e crescita.

([4]) Procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001392/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Delays in payment — information about the correct transposition of Directive 2011/7/EU

One of the aims of Directive 2011/7/EU of 16 February 2011 on combating late payment in commercial transactions is to ensure that businesses can receive payments from public authorities within a definite time-frame, thus preventing numerous bankruptcies occasioned by a lack of liquidity because of unpaid invoices. 57% of European businesses have encountered liquidity problems because of delays in payment, and such bankruptcies have resulted in the loss of 450 000 jobs in Europe.

The directive, which applies to all commercial transactions and all production sectors, requires public authorities to pay their suppliers within 30 days, a time limit which may be increased to 60 days for health authorities, hospitals and public undertakings, after which interest for late payment becomes payable. The deadline for transposition by the Member States is March 2013.

However, the Italian transposing decree, No 192/2012, would appear to establish a general time limit of 60 days, as well as failing to specify that time limits must be calculated in calendar days (including Sundays).

It may be noted that, on average, the Italian State takes 180 days to pay suppliers (with peaks of more than 600 days in some regions of the country), as against an EU average of 65 days, while some Nordic countries even achieve 32. Moreover, in Italy, debt arrears amount to some EUR 90 billion.

1. Can the Commission provide an overview of the transposition of the directive in the Member States?

2. Can the Commission provide an up-to-date overview of how long it takes public bodies to pay suppliers in Europe?

3. Can the Commission check whether Memorandum No 1293 of 22 January 2013 from the Ministry of Economic Development covered all the provisions of Directive 2011/7/EU concerning its scope?

4. Can the Commission provide an overview of the most virtuous examples of action by the Member States in this context (offsetting against any tax due in Spain, securitisation to permit advance payment by banks, etc.)?

5. Can the Commission investigate the possibility of establishing a system which would make it possible for debt arrears owed to businesses by States to be excluded from the calculation of public debt, and thus from the constraints imposed by stability parameters?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

1. As for today, 17 Member States have notified their national transposition measures: Cyprus, Malta, Italy, The Netherlands, Slovakia, Ireland, Spain, Sweden, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Finland, Poland, Slovenia, France, Austria, Luxembourg and Estonia. The verification of these measures is ongoing.

2. According to the latest 2012 European Payment Index Survey ([1]), the public sector on average paid its invoices after 65 days, approximately 13 days later than in the private sector. The situation, however, varies significantly from country to country (e.g. 24 days in Finland and 180 days in Italy).

3. The Commission takes note of the Memorandum No 1293 of the Italian Ministry of Economic Development and will take it into account when further examining the Italian legislation notified as a transposition of the directive.

([1]) http://www.intrum.com/Press-and-publications/European-Payment-Index

4. The Member States that have payment arrears are dealing with them according to their own situations ([2]).

5. The liquidation of commercial debt will be reflected in a corresponding increase in the Maastricht debt. This may conflict with the debt reduction benchmark recently introduced in the SGP ([3]) to strengthen the debt criterion of the EDP ([4]). A breach of such benchmark should be avoided, but the SGP allows some leeway to take account of 'relevant factors' in the assessment of compliance to the new rules. The repayment of commercial arrears would also impact on the government deficit for the proportion related to investment expenditure.

([2]) Spain is regularising the arrears of regional and local governments and has created a fund to provide loans to pay them. So far, EUR 28bn of arrears has been paid to enterprises. In Portugal nearly EUR 3 billion arrears have been settled, particularly in the health sector and in the local administration, and a law on commitment control was approved in 2012. The solution put in place by the Italian Government, of certifying commercial debt and allowing it to be used as guarantee to obtain credit from the banking sector, does not weigh on the Maastricht debt. Coupled with the possibility to offset certified credit against tax payables, it can provide some relief to liquidity constraints.

([3]) Stability and Growth Pact.

([4]) Excessive Deficit Procedure.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001393/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Roma, impianto AMA-Salaria: possibile delocalizzazione dell'impianto e tutela dell'ambiente e della salute pubblica

Nel 1996 l'AMA S.p.A. di Roma, Azienda Municipale Ambiente, acquistò l'area a ridosso della via Salaria per realizzare un autoparco ed un'officina per la manutenzione. Solo successivamente l'area fu trasformata in un impianto per la selezione ed il trattamento dei rifiuti indifferenziati raccolti nella città di Roma, nonostante l'area si trovasse a ridosso di centri abitati densamente popolati.

La magistratura italiana ha aperto un'inchiesta in seguito ai rilievi effettuati dall'Arpa Lazio che, dopo aver ispezionato i carichi dei rifiuti dello stabilimento di via Salaria, stabilì che vi erano delle anomalie.

Negli anni il volume dei rifiuti trattati è andato costantemente aumentando, fino a trattare 750 tonnellate di rifiuti indifferenziati al giorno. Vale la pena ricordare che da questo trattamento viene separata la frazione secca, che viene trasformata in CDR (combustibile derivato dai rifiuti), dalla parte umida, che viene trattata per produrre FOS (frazione organica stabilizzata).

Tutto ciò ha fatto sì che i miasmi provenienti dallo stabilimento sono diventati sempre più forti e persistenti causando enorme disagio e rischi per la salute sia per i residenti sia per i lavoratori dell'area interessata.

Il Municipio IV e il suo Consiglio municipale hanno più volte dedicato sessioni consiliari al caso AMA (da ultimo la riunione del 6 dicembre 2012) approvando atti ufficiali con cui è stata ottenuta l'integrazione del piano industriale AMA 2013-2015, in cui si prevede la possibilità di attivare le procedure di delocalizzazione dell'impianto stesso.

La stessa commissione per le petizioni nella sua recente visita all'impianto (ottobre 2012) ha rilevato l'inidoneità dell'ubicazione del sito.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione verificare:

1. se è stata correttamente esperita la procedura di valutazione d'impatto ambientale preventiva e se esistono o meno le condizioni previste dalla direttiva 2011/92/UE;

2. se siano state rispettate le disposizioni della direttiva 2008/1/CE sulla prevenzione e la riduzione integrate dell'inquinamento e della direttiva 2008/50/CE relativa alla qualità dell'aria;

3. se siano state prese in considerazione le disposizioni della direttiva 2008/98/CE sulla gerarchia del trattamento dei rifiuti;

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(8 aprile 2013)

La Commissione chiederà alle autorità italiane di fornire informazioni riguardanti l'applicazione della direttiva 2011/92/UE (direttiva VIA) ([1]) nella realizzazione dell'impianto AMA-Salaria e i provvedimenti adottati o previsti per garantire che i miasmi provenienti da tale impianto non siano causa di disagi, conformemente alla direttiva 2008/98/CE (direttiva quadro sui rifiuti) ([2]).

La direttiva 2008/50/CE relativa alla qualità dell'aria ambiente e per un'aria più pulita in Europa ([3]) e la direttiva 2008/1/CE sulla prevenzione e la riduzione integrate dell'inquinamento ([4]) non si applicano nel caso di impianti di trattamento meccanico-biologico (MBT) ([5]), come l'AMA-Salaria, che trattano rifiuti non pericolosi. Gli impianti di questo tipo riducono la quantità di rifiuti da smaltire e, pertanto, rispettano la gerarchia dei rifiuti.

([1]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.
([2]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.
([3]) GU L 152 dell'11.6.2008.
([4]) GU L 24 del 29.1.2008.
([5]) Poiché gli impianti MBT riducono la quantità di rifiuti da smaltire, essi rispettano la gerarchia dei rifiuti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001393/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Rome, AMA-Salaria plant: possible relocation and protection of the environment and public health

In 1996 Rome's municipal environmental company AMA S.p.A. purchased land backing onto Via Salaria for the construction of a car park and a maintenance office. But the site was then converted into a sorting and treatment plant for waste from non-segregated waste collections in Rome, even though it lies behind heavily populated built-up areas.

The Italian judiciary opened an inquiry after the regional environmental protection agency Arpa Lazio carried out tests, inspected the piles of refuse at the Via Salaria site and determined that all was not as it should be.

The volume of waste treated has risen constantly over the years to the point where 750 tonnes of non-segregated waste are now being treated. It is worth noting that the treatment involves separating dry waste from wet waste and then converting the former into RDF (refuse derived fuel) and the latter into SOF (stabilised organic fraction).

The stench emanating from the plant has grown even stronger and become more persistent, causing enormous inconvenience and health risks for both local residents and workers on the site itself.

Rome's Municipality IV and its City Council have repeatedly held council meetings to resolve the problem of AMA S.p.A. (6 December 2012 being the most recent one) and they have approved official documents securing the integration of AMA's industrial plan for 2013-2015, which provide for the possibility of instigating procedures to relocate the plant.

The Committee on Petitions visited the plant recently in October 2012 and noted the unsuitability of the current site.

Can the Commission confirm:

1. Whether the prior environmental impact assessment procedure was properly carried out and whether or not the conditions envisaged by Directive 2011/92/EU exist?

2. Whether Directive 2008/1/EC on integrated pollution prevention and control and Directive 2008/50/EC on air quality have been complied with?

3. Whether consideration has been given to the provisions on waste hierarchy in Directive 2008/98/EC?

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

The Commission will ask the Italian authorities to provide information regarding the application of EIA Directive ([1]) 2011/92/EU to the AMA-Salaria plant and the measures taken or planned in order to ensure that the abovementioned plant does not cause a nuisance through odours, in accordance with Directive 2008/98/EC (Waste Framework Directive ([2])).

Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe ([3]) and Directive 2008/1/EC concerning integrated pollution prevention and control ([4]) do not apply to mechanical-biological treatment (MBT) ([5]) plants, like the AMA-Salaria, treating non-hazardous waste. Such plants reduce the amount of waste to be landfilled and thus implement the waste hierarchy.

([1]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([3]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.
([4]) OJ L 24, 29.1.2008.
([5]) Since MBT plants reduce the amount of waste to be landfilled, they implement the waste hierarchy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001395/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Utilizzo dei fondi dell'UE diretti ed indiretti da parte del Comune di Pisa (Toscana)

In Italia la spesa certificata al 31 dicembre 2012 relativa all'utilizzo dei fondi dell'UE per il periodo 2007-2013 si attesta al 37 %, relativamente al comune di Pisa (Toscana). Alla luce di tale dato, può la Commissione:

1. fornire i dati e le percentuali relativi ai fondi dell'UE, diretti e non, disponibili per Pisa e il loro relativo utilizzo?

2. fornire un quadro dei finanziamenti a cui il comune di Pisa potrebbe accedere per promuovere attività e progetti che rientrano nel settore del turismo, della cultura e dello sport?

3. fornire un quadro dei finanziamenti a cui il comune di Pisa potrebbe accedere per promuovere attività agricole e iniziative imprenditoriali legate all'agricoltura?

4. affermare se e in che modo il comune di Pisa potrebbe usufruire dei fondi attualmente in corso di discussione relativamente alle Linee Guida TEN-T?

5. affermare se, e in che modo, il comune di Pisa potrebbe usufruire dei fondi attualmente in corso di discussione relativi ai nuovi regolamenti che rientrano nella politica di coesione, destinati allo sviluppo e alla riqualificazione delle aree urbane?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2013)

1. La Commissione non dispone di dati aggregati sull'uso dei fondi gestiti secondo la modalità condivisa o centralizzata (diretta e indiretta) a livello comunale.

2. I progetti relativi al turismo sono cofinanziati dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) nel quadro di un Piano integrato di sviluppo urbano sostenibile nel rispettivo comune. Pisa ha partecipato a progetti di cooperazione culturale supportati dal programma Cultura ([1]) cui si sostituirà il programma «Europa creativa» che presenterà analoghe opportunità di cofinanziamento ([2]). Per quanto concerne le opportunità di finanziamento dello sport, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputata alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-1946/12.

3. Gli agricoltori e altri beneficiari dal comune di Pisa (classificato quale «Area A») possono avere accesso ad alcune misure incluse nell'asse 1 e 2 del Programma di sviluppo rurale (ad esempio, quelle relative agli investimenti /alle infrastrutture rurali o a misure agro-ambientali e forestali specifiche).

4. Per il 2014-2020 il «Meccanismo per collegare l'Europa» propone di concentrare i finanziamenti sulla rete centrale. Pisa si trova per l'appunto sulla rete ferroviaria e stradale centrale e sarà quindi ammissibile a detti finanziamenti. Il suo aeroporto non rientra in questo ambito, ma potrebbe beneficiare della fase di attuazione del programma per la modernizzazione dell'infrastruttura europea di controllo del traffico aereo. ([3])

5. Il quadro legislativo proposto offre diverse possibilità di sostegno dello sviluppo urbano integrato facendo leva sui Fondi strutturali europei e sui Fondi di investimento. Un minimo di 5 % dello stanziamento FESR per Stato membro deve essere speso per lo sviluppo urbano integrato sostenibile con la partecipazione delle autorità urbane.

([1]) Che arriverà a scadenza nel 2013.
([2]) Ulteriori informazioni sono reperibili al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm http://www.regione.toscana.it/por-creo/piani-urbani-piuss.
([3]) (SESAR).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001395/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Use of direct and indirect funds by the municipality of Pisa (Tuscany)

In Italy, certified expenditure as at 31 December 2012 with regard to the use of EU funds for the period 2007-2013 stood at 37% for the municipality of Pisa (Tuscany). In the light of this, can the Commission:

1. Provide the data and percentages for the direct and indirect EU funds available to Pisa and how they have been used?

2. Give an overview of the funding to which the municipality of Pisa could have access to promote activities and projects in the field of tourism, culture and sport?

3. Give an overview of the funding to which the municipality of Pisa could have access to promote agricultural activities and farming-related business ventures?

4. State whether and how the municipality of Pisa could make use of the funds currently being discussed in relation to the TEN-T Guidelines?

5. State whether, and how, the municipality of Pisa could use the funds currently being discussed with regard to the new regulations that fall under the cohesion policy, for the development and revitalisation of urban areas?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

1. The Commission does not have aggregate data on the use of funds managed under either the shared or centralised management modes (direct and indirect) at the municipal level.

2. Tourism related projects are co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the framework of an Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Plan of the municipality. Pisa was involved in cultural cooperation projects supported by the Culture programme ([1]) to be replaced by the Creative Europe programme, with similar co-funding opportunities ([2]). On Sport funding opportunities, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-1946/12.

3. Farmers and other beneficiaries from the Pisa area (classified as 'Area A') can have access to some measures included in axis 1 and 2 of the Rural Development Programme, (e.g. such as for rural investments/infrastructure or agro-environment and specific forestry measures).

4. For 2014-2020, the Connecting Europe Facility Regulation proposes to concentrate funding on the core network. Pisa is situated along the core rail and road network, which will be eligible for such funding. Its airport is not part of this but could possibly benefit from the deployment phase of the European air traffic control infrastructure modernisation programme ([3]).

5. The proposed legislative framework is offering several possibilities to support integrated urban development using European Structural and Investment Funds. A minimum 5% of a Member State's ERDF allocation is to be spent on integrated sustainable urban development with the involvement of urban authorities.

([1]) Which will end in 2013.
([2]) Further information can be found on the following websites: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm, http://www.regione.toscana.it/por-creo/piani-urbani-piuss.
([3]) (SESAR).

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001397/13
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(11. februar 2013)

Om: Regler om stikkontakter i Danmark

I den danske »Bekendtgørelse om stærkstrømsbekendtgørelsen, afsnit 6C, særlige krav til anvendelse af stikpropper og stikkontakter i installationer« udgivet af Sikkerhedsstyrelsen, november 2011 er der anført bestemmelse om tvungen brug af den danske standard DS 60884-2-D1:2011 i forbindelse med stikkontakter. Det betyder, at virksomheder skal følge de danske bestemmelser om stikkontakter for at kunne sælge stikkontakter på det danske marked. De danske bestemmelser betyder, at stikkontakter med sidejord skal være tilsluttet en virksom beskyttelsesleder og være omfattet af automatisk afbrydelse af forsyningen ved hjælp af en HPFI-afbryder. Alternativt kan der sikres beskyttelse ved separat strømkreds.

Ifølge Sikkerhedsstyrelsen har markedet for stikkontakter været under liberaliseringen siden 2006 for at sikre et fald i de danske stikkontaktpriser, så priserne ikke længere er 15-50 % dyrere i Danmark i forhold til vores nabolande ([1]).

Kan Kommissionen oplyse, om de danske priser på stikkontakter er på samme prisniveau som andre EU-lande?

Da den nye stærkstrømsbekendtgørelse blev indført, blev den forhåndsgodkendt i EU for at sikre, at loven ikke rummede nogen handelshindringer, som kunne forvride konkurrencen mellem EU-landene. EU afgjorde, at det ikke var i modstrid med EU-regulering, da de danske særregler var udformet af hensyn til sikkerheden.

Kommissionen bedes oplyse, om der findes færre skader/ulykker med stikkontakter i Danmark i forhold til andre EU-lande?

Hvis der ikke finder færre skader/ulykker med stikkontakter sted i Danmark, bedes Kommissionen oplyse, om de danske særregler fortsat er i overensstemmelse med princippet om lige konkurrenceevne landene imellem?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(9. april 2013)

I overensstemmelse med direktiv 98/34/EF ([2]) notificerede de danske myndigheder den 10. maj 2011 et udkast til bekendtgørelse om stærkstrømsbekendtgørelsen, afsnit 6C, hvori det kræves at stikpropper og stikkontakter er i overensstemmelse med sikkerhedsstandarderne DS/IEC 60884-1:2004 og DS/IEC 60884-1 tillæg 1:2007 ([3]).

Under vurderingen indtog Kommissionen det standpunkt, at udkastet var uforeneligt med artikel 34 i TEUF ([4]). De danske myndigheder reagerede ved at indarbejde en bestemmelse, som tillader installering af stikpropper og stikkontakter, der er i overensstemmelse med sikkerhedsnormer, der er ækvivalente med de nationale sikkerhedsnormer. Kommissionen mener, at denne bestemmelse sikrer overholdelsen af det grundlæggende princip om gensidig anerkendelse i henhold til artikel 34 i TEUF ([5]).

Med hensyn til de specifikke spørgsmål vedrørende de potentielle virkninger af standarden DS 60884-2-D1:2011 i Danmark har Kommissionen ikke tilstrækkelige oplysninger til at muliggøre en meningsfuld sammenligning af de ønskede pris- og sikkerhedsniveauer.

([1]) http://mobil.ing.dk/artikel/124804.
([2]) Notifikation 2011/218/DK.
([3]) Punkt 817.133.1 af den endelige tekst henviser også til standard DS 60884-2-D1:2011.
([4]) Jf. sag C-254/05, Kommissionen mod Belgien, Sml. 2007 I, s. 4269, præmis 32.
([5]) Se afsnit 6C, kapitel 817, Særlige krav til anvendelse af stikpropper og stikkontakter i installationer, Introduktion, hvori det hedder: »Stikkontakter, som er fremstillet eller bragt i omsætning i en anden EU-medlemsstat eller Tyrkiet, eller som er lovligt fremstillet i en EFTA-stat, der er en kontraherende part i EØS-aftalen, og som opfylder tilsvarende krav til konstruktion og funktion som angivet i denne bekendtgørelse, kan lovligt og frit indføres og anvendes i Danmark«.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001397/13
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Rules on plug and socket systems in Denmark

The Danish 'Regulation on Section 6C of the Heavy Current Regulation, special requirements for use of plugs and socket-outlets in installations', published by the Danish Safety Technology Authority in November 2011, contains provisions requiring plugs and socket-outlets to comply with Danish standard DS 60884-2-D1:2011. This means that businesses have to comply with the Danish rules on plugs and sockets in order to sell plugs and sockets on the Danish market. The Danish rules require socket-outlets with side-earth to be connected to an effective protective conductor and covered by automatic disconnection of supply using an HPFI circuit breaker. Alternatively they may be protected by a separate circuit.

The Danish Safety Technology Authority maintains that liberalisation has been taking place in the plug-and-socket market since 2006 to bring down the prices of Danish plugs and sockets, so that they are no longer 15-50% more expensive than in our neighbouring countries.

Can the Commission state whether Danish plug-and-socket prices are at the same level as in other EU countries?

When the new heavy current regulation was introduced, it was notified to the EU in advance to ensure that it did not contain any obstacles to trade which might distort competition between the EU Member States. The EU decided that it did not conflict with EU legislation, since the Danish special rules were designed with safety interests in mind.

Can the Commission state whether there are fewer injuries and accidents involving plugs and sockets in Denmark than in other EU countries?

If there are no fewer injuries and accidents involving plugs and sockets in Denmark, can the Commission state whether the Danish special rules still comply with the principle of fair competition between the Member States?

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

Pursuant to Directive 98/34/EC ([1]), the Danish authorities notified on 10 May 2011 a draft Order on the Publication of the Heavy Current Order, Section 6C, requiring the mandatory conformity of plugs and socket-outlets to safety standards DS/IEC 60884-1:2004 and DS/IEC 60884-1 Supplement 1:2007 ([2]).

During the assessment, the Commission took the view that the draft was incompatible with Article 34 TFEU ([3]). The Danish authorities reacted by incorporating a clause allowing installations of plugs and socket-outlets complying with safety standards equivalent to the national ones. The Commission considers that this ensures compliance with the fundamental principle of mutual recognition under Article 34 TFEU ([4]).

With regard to the specific questions related to the potential effects of the standard DS 60884-2-D1:2011 in Denmark, the Commission does not have information sufficient to enable a meaningful comparison of the requested price and safety levels.

([1]) Notification 2011/218/DK.
([2]) Point 817.133.1 of the final text refers also to standard DS 60884-2-D1:2011.
([3]) See paragraph 32 of Case C-254/05 Commission v Belgium [2007] ECR I-4269.
([4]) See Afsnit 6C, Kapitel 817, Særlige krav til anvendelse af stikpropper og stikkontakter i installationer, Introduktion which reads "Stikkontakter, som er fremstillet eller bragt i omsætning i en anden EU-medlemsstat eller Tyrkiet, eller som er lovligt fremstillet i en EFTA-stat, der er en kontraherende part i EØS-aftalen, og som opfylder tilsvarende krav til konstruktion og funktion som angivet i denne bekendtgørelse, kan lovligt og frit indføres og anvendes i Danmark".

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001398/13
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(11. februar 2013)

Om: Vandrammedirektivet, interkalibrering

Vandrammedirektivet (2000/60/EF) forpligter EU's medlemsstater til at opstille metoder til at vurdere vandområders økologiske tilstand.

For at sikre, at medlemsstaternes vurderingsmetoder giver ensartede resultater i forhold til at opfylde direktivets miljømål om god tilstand, er medlemsstaterne forpligtet til at deltage i en interkalibrering af værdierne for grænselinjerne mellem klasserne »høj og god« tilstand og mellem klasserne »god og moderat« tilstand.

Kommissionen skriver i sit svar på spørgsmål E-003251/12: »*Kommissionen vurderer i øjeblikket de vandområdeplaner, som er indberettet af medlemsstaterne, og den vil offentliggøre resultaterne i november 2012 som en del af strategien for beskyttelse af EU's vandressourcer. Vurderingen omfatter bl.a. hvordan medlemsstaterne har opfyldt forpligtelsen til at overvåge og vurdere vandområdernes økologiske tilstand, samt hvordan de har omsat resultaterne af interkalibreringen i deres vurderingsmetoder*«.

Kommissionens omtalte rapport er nu offentliggjort.

Kommissionen bedes svare på, om den har vurderet, at Danmarks interkalibrering er foretaget korrekt?

Kommissionen bedes herunder kommentere, om den mener, det er rimeligt, at der er store forskelle i udpegningen af vandløb mellem de indmeldte vandløbsklassificeringer nord og syd for den dansk-tyske grænse, som skal opfylde målet om god økologisk tilstand. Således er der i Nordtyskland 15-20 % målsatte vandløb, mens der i Danmark er 70-80 % målsatte vandløb på arealer, som topografisk og hydrologisk er sammenlignelige med de nordtyske arealer?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(9. april 2013)

Kommissionens vurdering af vandområdeplanerne i medfør af vandrammedirektivet blev offentliggjort i november 2012. Vurderingen viste, at det er nødvendigt at lukke huller hvad angår biologisk overvågning og klassificering — der vil blive fulgt op på dette og andre emner på bilateralt plan med de danske myndigheder.

Desuden blev det i løbet af den anden fase af interkalibreringen i medfør af vandrammedirektivet ([1]), der for nylig er blevet afsluttet, fastslået, at andelen af de danske vandområder, der opfylder de miljømæssige mål, er langt mindre end det tidligere er blevet konstateret. Følgelig vil det højst sandsynligt blive nødvendigt at træffe yderligere foranstaltninger — ud over dem, der på nuværende tidspunkt findes i vandområdeplanerne — for at opnå en god tilstand i alle vandområder.

Hvad angår sammenligninger mellem Danmark og Tyskland, kan arten og omfanget af de foranstaltninger, som er blevet iværksat for at nå målene i direktivet, være forskellige på grund af varierende belastninger og afhænge af de omkostningseffektive foranstaltninger, der er til rådighed for at opnå vandrammedirektivets mål.

([1]) Direktiv 2000/60/EF, EUT L 327 af 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001398/13
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Intercalibration under the Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive (2006/60/EC) obliges Member States to establish methods for assessing the ecological status of bodies of water.

To ensure that the Member States' assessment methods yield uniform results with a view to meeting the environmental targets of the directive, the Member States are required to participate in an intercalibration exercise to set the values for the boundaries between 'high' and 'good' and between 'good' and 'moderate' status.

In its answer to my Question E-003251/2012, the Commission states: 'The Commission is currently assessing the River Basin Management Plans reported by the Member States and will publish its findings in November 2012 as part of the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources. The assessment covers, inter alia, how the Member States have implemented the obligations to monitor and assess the ecological status of water bodies and how they have translated the results of the intercalibration exercise into their assessment methods'.

The Commission's findings have now been published.

Did the Commission find that Denmark's intercalibration exercise was performed correctly?

Does the Commission consider it reasonable that there are major differences in the designation of watercourses between the submitted watercourse classifications north and south of the Danish-German border that have to meet the objective of good ecological status? Thus, in northern Germany, 15-20% of watercourses are designated, while in Denmark, 70-80% of water courses are designated in areas that are topographically and hydrologically comparable with the northern German areas

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The Commission's assessment of River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) under the Water Framework Directive (WDF) was published in November, 2012. The assessment showed that there are gaps to be closed on biological monitoring and classification — these and other issues will be followed up bilaterally with the Danish Authorities.

Furthermore, it has become apparent under the second phase of the intercalibration exercise under the Water Framework Directive ([1]), which has been recently concluded, that the proportion of Danish water bodies meeting the environmental objectives is significantly smaller than previously identified. Consequently further measures — than the ones currently included in the RBMPs — will likely be needed to achieve good status of all water bodies.

In terms of comparison between Denmark and Germany, there may be differences in the type and scale of measures put in place to meet the objectives of the directive, due to differences in pressures and the availability of cost effective measures to achieve the objectives of the WFD.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001399/13
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(11. februar 2013)

Om: Vandrammedirektivet

Ifølge vandrammedirektivets vejledning 2 skal vandplanerne omfatte alle betydelige vandområder. Vejledningen foreskriver, at vandløb skal medtages i vandplanerne, hvis vandløbet har et opland, der føder vandløbet, som overstiger 10 km^2.

Ved at følge Naturstyrelsens GIS-kort ses det, at Ca. 60 % af vandløbene i de danske vandplaner har under 10 km^2 opland ([1]).

Kommissionen bedes svare på, om denne klassificering er i overensstemmelse med direktivet?

I de danske vandplaner jf. Miljøstyrelsen: »Vejledning fra Miljøstyrelsen. Biologisk bedømmelse af vandløbskvalitet«. Miljøstyrelsen. 1998, s. 23, er mange relativt flade vandløb med ringe fald, langsom strøm, blød og dyndet bund klassificeret som naturlige, blødbund vandløb 1 med en målsætning DVFI 5 (Dansk Vandløbs Fauna Indeks). Dette miljømål er et rent dansk fænomen, der ikke kan genfindes i EU-vandrammedirektivet eller f.eks. i Tysklands vandplaner.

Kommissionen bedes oplyse, om den mener, at den danske interkalibrering er sket korrekt, herunder om faunaen i blødbundsvandløb kan opnå miljømålet DVFI 5?

Kommissionen bedes oplyse, om det danske faunamål DVFI 5 er EU-interkalibreret i små vandløb under 3 meters bredde?

Ifølge vandrammedirektivets vejledning 2, figur 5, står der, at et udrettet vandløb skal klassificeres som stærkt modificeret. For eksempel på et udrettet vandløb, der er en del af de danske vandplaner, se venligst følgende link s. 17 ([2]).

Kommissionen bedes svare på, om landene er forpligtet til at følge denne vejledning, og derfor skal klassificere udrettede vandløb som stærkt modificerede?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(26. april 2013)

Den danske fremgangsmåde, heri medregnet små vandområder, er i fuld overensstemmelse med vandrammedirektivet[3]. Alle vandområder er omfattet af vandrammedirektivet, og medlemsstaterne har råderum til at bestemme, hvordan små vandområder skal håndteres i vandområdeplanerne.

Danmark har udviklet et nationalt klassificeringssystem for de biologiske kvalitetselementer. Dansk Vandløbs Faunaindeks er den danske metode til det biologiske kvalitetselement »bentisk fauna«, og DVFI 5 er i overensstemmelse med EU's interkalibrering.

Klassifikationen af floder bør dog baseres på fire biologiske kvalitetselementer (bentisk fauna, makrofyter, bundvegetation og fiskefauna) efter princippet »én ude, alle ude«. For floder har Danmark kun fuldført interkalibreringen for bentisk fauna og makrofyter og ikke for fiskefauna og makrofyter. Danmark har forpligtet sig til at udføre den resterende interkalibrering inden 2016.

Medlemsstaterne kan frit vælge, om de vil benytte vandrammedirektivets vejledninger, så længe de gennemfører direktivet til fulde. Definitionen på stærkt modificerede vandløb bør følge artikel 2, stk. 9, og artikel 4, stk. 3, i vandrammedirektivet.

([1]) http://miljoegis.mim.dk/cbkort?profile=miljoegis_vandrammedirektiv_ekstrahoering
([2]) http://www.ft.dk/Folketinget/udvalg_delegationer_kommissioner/Udvalg/Udvalget_for_foedevarer_landbrug_og_fiskeri/ElektroniskDebat/~/media/F0B5BE6375A74257A8E72E6EB66F9872.ashx
([3]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2000/60/EF, EFT L 327af 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001399/13
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Water Framework Directive

Water Framework Directive Guidance Document 2 states that river basin management plans should cover all significant bodies of water. It also stipulates that watercourses should be included in the river basin management plans if they have a catchment area greater than 10 km^2.

The Danish Nature Agency's GIS map shows that some 60% of watercourses in the Danish river basin management plans have a catchment area of less than 10 km^2 ([1]).

Can the Commission state whether this classification is in accordance with the directive?

The Danish river basin management plans (see 'Guidelines from the Danish Nature Agency. Biological assessment of watercourse quality', Danish Nature Agency 1998, p. 23) include many relatively slow-flowing watercourses with shallow gradients and soft silt beds which are classified as Category C natural soft-bed watercourses with a Danish Watercourse Fauna Index target of DVFI 5. This environmental target is a purely Danish phenomenon with no counterpart in the Water Framework Directive or, for example, the German river basin plans.

Does the Commission think that the Danish intercalibration exercise was carried out correctly, and in particular does it consider that the fauna in soft-bed watercourses are capable of achieving the DVFI 5 environmental target?

Can the Commission state whether the Danish fauna target DVFI 5 is in line with the EU intercalibration exercise when applied to small watercourses less than 3m wide?

Water Directive Guidance Document 2, figure 5, states that straightened watercourses are to be classified as 'heavily modified'. For an example of a straightened watercourse included in the Danish river basin management plans, see p. 17 of the link below ([2]).

Can the Commission state whether Member States are required to follow this guidance and thus to classify straightened watercourses as heavily modified?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Danish approach including small water bodies is fully compliant with the Water Framework Directive ([3]). All water bodies are covered by the WFD and Member States have flexibility in how to deal with small water bodies in the River Basin Management Plans.

Denmark has developed national classification methods for the biological quality elements. The Danish Watercourse Fauna Index is the Danish national method for the biological quality element 'benthic fauna' and DVFI 5 is in line with the EU intercalibration exercise.

However, river classification should be based on four biological quality elements (benthic fauna, macrophytes, phytobenthos, and fish fauna), using the 'one out-all out' principle. For rivers, Denmark has only completed the intercalibration for benthic fauna and macrophytes, not for fish fauna and macrophytes. Denmark, has committed to filling the remaining intercalibration gaps by 2016.

Guidance documents are to guide Member States, but there is freedom to use them provided Member States fully implement the directive. The definition of Heavily Modified Water Bodies should follow Article 2.9 and 4.3 of the WFD.

([1]) http://miljoegis.mim.dk/cbkort?profile=miljoegis_vandrammedirektiv_ekstrahoering
([2]) http://www.ft.dk/Folketinget/udvalg_delegationer_kommissioner/Udvalg/Udvalget_for_foedevarer_landbrug_og_fiskeri/ElektroniskDebat/~/media/F0B5BE6375A74257A8E72E6EB66F9872.ashx
([3]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001400/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Besteuerung für Personenbeförderung in Polen bei grenzüberschreitenden Fahrten

Die polnischen und deutschen Umsatzsteuerregelungen für grenzüberschreitende Fahrten zur Personenbeförderung für Unternehmen, welche jeweils im Ausland nicht niedergelassen sind, unterscheiden sich deutlich zwischen Deutschland und Polen.

Während es in Deutschland offensichtlich eine Ausnahmeregelung für einen Korridor von 10 km im Grenzraum gibt, ist das Umsatzsteuerverfahren in Polen selbst für gelegentliche Fahrten von in Deutschland angemeldeten Taxiunternehmen sehr umständlich. Voraussetzung für eine steuerrechtlich legale Taxifahrt in den Grenzraum sind nach meinen Informationen u. a. eine Registrierung beim Finanzamt Warschau, das Führen eines polnischen Bankkontos, die Verpflichtung eines polnischen Steuerbüros.

Gerade angesichts der intensiven Bemühungen Sachsens um eine grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit mit Polen wie beispielsweise in der Europastadt Görlitz/Zgorzelec, beispielsweise mit Großveranstaltungen, müssen hier einheitliche Lösungen geschaffen werden. Die Frage nach der Glaubwürdigkeit der Idee der Europäischen Integration beginnt mit solchen praktischen Alltagsfragen. Bereits seit vielen Monaten laufen Versuche, dies bilateral zu klären. Sie blieben bisher aber offensichtlich ohne Ergebnis.

Welche Vorgaben für diese Frage macht hier die EU konkret?

Sind die EU-Mehrwertsteuerregeln an dieser Stelle in Polen richtig umgesetzt?

Welchen Spielraum zur Befreiung bzw. Vereinfachung haben die Mitgliedstaaten in diesem Punkt?

Könnte sich hier im Sinne der „better regulation"-Kampagne der EU nicht ein Ansatzpunkt für eine Verbesserung bieten? Eine einheitliche Ausnahmeregelung in Grenzgebieten mit leicht anzuwendenden Vorschriften für Unternehmer würde sicherlich erheblich zur europäischen Integration vor Ort beitragen.

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(25. März 2013)

Nach Artikel 48 der MwSt-Richtlinie ([1]) gilt als Ort einer Personenbeförderungsleistung der Ort, an dem die Beförderung nach Maßgabe der zurückgelegten Beförderungsstrecke jeweils stattfindet. In Titel XI der MwSt-Richtlinie sind die Pflichten der Steuerpflichtigen geregelt.

Ein Taxiunternehmen mit deutscher Umsatzsteuernummer, das zwischen Deutschland und Polen Fahrgäste befördert, schuldet grundsätzlich sowohl deutsche als auch polnische Mehrwertsteuer und muss sich in der Regel auch in Polen zu mehrwertsteuerlichen Zwecken identifizieren, um dort die Mehrwertsteuer für die in Polen zurückgelegte Beförderungsstrecke zu entrichten und seine mehrwertsteuerlichen Pflichten zu erfüllen. Hinsichtlich der konkreten Anwendung dieser Bestimmungen lässt die MwSt-Richtlinie den Mitgliedstaaten jedoch einen gewissen Spielraum, insbesondere für den Fall, dass der Steuerpflichtige in einem anderen Land ansässig ist oder in dem Mitgliedstaat nur gelegentlich Beförderungsleistungen erbringt.

Die polnischen Rechtsvorschriften, die der Herr Abgeordnete anführt, dürften mit der MwSt-Richtlinie in Einklang stehen. Polen kann selbst entscheiden, ob bestimmte durch die MwSt-Richtlinie auferlegte Pflichten zweckmäßig sind und diese Pflichten in den durch die Richtlinie auferlegten Grenzen gegebenenfalls lockern.

([1]) Richtlinie 2006/112/EG des Rates vom 28. November 2006 über das gemeinsame Mehrwertsteuersystem.

Die Kommission ist sich bewusst, dass die derzeitige Vorschrift für die Bestimmung des Ortes einer Personenbeförderung in der Praxis Schwierigkeiten bereitet und hat bereits 1992 vorgeschlagen, sie zu ändern ([2]). Die Problematik wurde von der Kommission auch in ihrem Grünbuch ([3]) und in ihrer Mitteilung über die Zukunft der Mehrwertsteuer ([4]) geprüft. In dieser Mitteilung kündigte die Kommission an, für die Personenbeförderung neutralere und einfachere Mehrwertsteuerbestimmungen vorzuschlagen.

([2]) KOM(92)416 endg.
([3]) KOM(2010)695 endg.
([4]) KOM(2011)851 endg. (insbesondere Punkt 9).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001400/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Taxation of cross-border passenger transport services in Poland

Polish and German VAT rules on cross-border passenger transport services provided by foreign companies differ significantly.

Whereas in Germany a derogation evidently applies in a 10 km-wide corridor running along the border, Polish VAT arrangements are very cumbersome, even for occasional services provided by taxi companies registered in Germany. According to my information, in order to comply with tax law when providing services in areas near the Polish-German border taxi companies are required, *inter alia*, to be registered with the tax authorities in Warsaw, to have a Polish bank account and to have secured authorisation from a Polish tax office.

Given the major efforts Saxony is making to engage in cross-border cooperation with Poland, for example in the European City of Görlitz-Zgorzelec or by organising large-scale events, uniform rules are needed here. The very credibility of the idea of European integration hinges on such practical everyday issues. Bilateral talks have been under way for many months now in an effort to resolve this matter, but clearly no headway has been made.

What specific EU rules apply in situations such as this?

Is Poland currently implementing VAT rules correctly here?

What scope do Member States have to grant derogations or simplify arrangements in respect of such services?

Could the EU's 'better regulation' campaign not point the way to a solution here? Uniform arrangements for granting derogations in border areas combined with simplified provisions for firms would certainly contribute significantly to European integration on the ground.

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

Under Article 48 of the VAT Directive ([1]), the place of supply of passenger transport services is the place where the transport takes place, proportionate to the distances covered. Title XI of the VAT Directive lays down the obligations applying to persons subject to VAT.

When a taxi company registered in Germany for VAT purposes carries passengers from Germany to Poland, it is, in principle, liable for both German and Polish VAT. As a general rule, it should also register for VAT purposes in Poland in order to pay the VAT relating to the part of the service performed in Poland and thereby comply with its VAT obligations in that country. The VAT Directive does, however, leave some room for manoeuvre for Member States concerning the detailed rules for putting these provisions into practice, in particular when a taxable person is not established within their territory or in the event of the occasional supply of services there.

The Polish legislation applicable to the situation raised by the Honourable Member seems to be in accordance with the VAT Directive. 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 directive.

The Commission is aware of the fact that the existing rule on the location of passenger transport services gives rises to practical difficulties and notes that it proposed an amendment in 1992 ([2]). This issue was also examined by the Commission in its Green Paper ([3]) and in its communication on the future of VAT ([4]). In the communication, the Commission stated its intention of proposing a more neutral and simpler VAT framework for passenger transport activities.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax.
([2]) COM(92) 416 final.
([3]) COM(2010) 695 final.
([4]) COM(2011) 851 final (see in particular point 9).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001401/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Cyberangriffe gegen EU-Institutionen durch „Roter Oktober"

Die russische Sicherheitsfirma Kapersky veröffentlichte im Januar 2013 Informationen über ein weltweit agierendes, russischsprachiges Spionagenetzwerk. Dieses, so Kapersky, habe seit dem Jahr 2007 wirtschaftlich oder sicherheitspolitisch kritische Einrichtungen wie Regierungseinrichtungen und Forschungsinstitute ausspioniert. Erfolgreich war die Spionage laut dem Unternehmen unter anderem bei deutschen und amerikanischen Botschaften.

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob auch EU-Institutionen Ziele der Spionageaktivitäten waren?

2. Wenn ja, ist der Kommission bekannt, ob die Spionage bei EU-Einrichtungen oder EU-Personal gelang?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(2. April 2013)

Nach der Veröffentlichung des Kaspersky-Berichts zum „Roten Oktober" hat CERT-EU eine Warnung an alle Organe, Einrichtungen und sonstigen Stellen der EU herausgegeben und ihnen die technischen Informationen zur Verfügung gestellt, mit deren Hilfe sie überprüfen konnten, ob ihre Infrastruktur betroffen war. Die zuständigen Dienststellen der Kommission analysierten den Kaspersky-Bericht und die darin bereitgestellten Informationen. Dabei ergaben sich keinerlei Hinweise darauf, dass die IT-Infrastruktur der Kommission betroffen gewesen sein könnte. CERT-EU bat auch die Sicherheitsfirma Kaspersky um zusätzliche Informationen. Das Unternehmen bestätigte daraufhin, dass ihm keine Beweise dafür vorlägen, dass die IT-Infrastruktur der EU-Institutionen von dem Cyperangriff „Roter Oktober" betroffen war. Nach dem derzeitigen Kenntnisstand liegen der Kommission und CERT-EU auch keine Informationen über einen Angriff einer Malware auf andere Organe, Einrichtungen und sonstige Stellen der EU vor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001401/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Cyber attacks by 'Red October' against EU institutions

In January 2013, the Russian security firm Kapersky published information about a global, Russian-language spying network. According to Kapersky, since 2007 it had been spying on key economic or security facilities, such as government agencies and research institutes. According to Kapersky, it has successfully spied on German and US embassies, *inter alia*.

1. Does the Commission know whether EU institutions have also been targeted by these espionage activities?

2. If so, does it know whether this spying on EU institutions or EU staff has been successful?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

Following the publication of the Kaspersky report on Red October, CERT-EU issued an alert to all the EU institutions, agencies and bodies with the technical information allowing them to check if their infrastructure had been affected. The competent Commission services analysed the Kaspersky report and the information provided therein. This analysis did not show that the Commission IT had been affected. CERT-EU also contacted the Kaspersky company for further information and they confirmed that they have no evidence that the information technology infrastructure of the European institutions was affected by the 'Red October' attack With the information available at the moment, the Commission and CERT-EU have no knowledge that malware would have impacted other EU institutions, agencies and bodies.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001402/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Gefahren von pestizidverseuchtem Grundwasser in der Donau

Am 29.11.2012 wurde bekannt, dass die österreichische Bezirkshauptmannschaft Korneuburg seit mehreren Tagen pestizidverseuchtes Grundwasser in die Donau pumpte. Die vorhergehende Verseuchung des Grundwassers mit den Pestiziden Clopyralid und Thiamethoxam erfolgte durch die Firma Kwizda Agro Austria. Nach Angaben der Umweltorganisation Global 2000 wurde die Verseuchung von den zuständigen Behörden über einen Zeitraum von zwei Jahren nicht festgestellt. Nachdem die Verseuchung bekannt wurde, wurde die Bevölkerung unzureichend über mögliche Risiken informiert.

1. Welche Effekte für die Flora und Fauna, die Agrarwirtschaft und die Gesundheit der lokalen Bevölkerung erwartet die Kommission durch die Einleitung des verseuchten Grundwassers in Gebieten flussabwärts von Korneuburg, (a) in Österreich und (b) in anderen Staaten, insbesondere der Slowakei, Ungarn, Rumänien und Bulgarien?

2. Welche Effekte erwartet die Kommission für die Wasserversorgung und Gesundheitssituation in den an der Donau gelegenen Städten Wien, Bratislava, Budapest und Belgrad?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001486/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Verseuchung von Korneuburger Grundwasser

Am 29.11.2012 wurde bekannt, dass die österreichische Bezirkshauptmannschaft Korneuburg seit mehreren Tagen pestizidverseuchtes Grundwasser in die Donau pumpt. Die vorhergehende Verseuchung des Grundwassers mit den Pestiziden Clopyralid und Thiamethoxam erfolgte durch die Firma Kwizda Agro Austria. Nach Angaben der Umweltorganisation Global 2000 wurde die Verseuchung von den zuständigen Behörden über einen Zeitraum von zwei Jahren nicht festgestellt. Nachdem die Verseuchung bekannt wurde, wurde die Bevölkerung unzureichend über mögliche Risiken informiert.

1. Wie hoch schätzt die Kommission die Gefahr für Bürger durch mit Clopyralid und Thiamethoxam verseuchtes Grundwasser in Korneuburg?

2. Wie hoch schätzt die Kommission die Gefahr für Korneuburger Flora und Fauna durch mit Clopyralid und Thiamethoxam verseuchtes Grundwasser?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(19. April 2013)

Die österreichische Agentur für Gesundheit und Ernährungssicherheit (AGES) hat ein Sachverständigengutachten zur Bewertung potenzieller Auswirkungen der Kontaminierung erstellt.

Die humantoxikologische Evaluierung der Auswirkungen des mit Pflanzenschutzmitteln kontaminierten Wassers hat kein nachweisbares Risiko für den Menschen ergeben. Aus Gründen der Vorsorge sollte die Verwendung von kontaminiertem Wasser als Trinkwasser jedoch vermieden werden. Die Risikobewertung der AGES ergab, dass ein potenzielles Risiko für empfindliche Flora und Fauna nicht ausgeschlossen werden kann, d. h. ein potenzielles Risiko für Bienen und empfindliche Wasserorganismen wie Makrophyten, Algen und Insekten in kleinen stehenden Gewässern wie Gartenteichen. Bei den Analysen von Ernteerzeugnissen wurden keine Rückstände der betreffenden Stoffe gefunden.

Um eine weitere Ausdehnung der Kontaminationsfahne zu verhindern, wird Grundwasser aus der Fahne in die Donau gepumpt. Aufgrund des sehr hohen Mischungsverhältnisses zwischen dem eingepumpten Wasser und der Donauströmung kann in dem in der Donau eingerichteten Überwachungssystem keines der Pestizide nachgewiesen werden. Infolgedessen lassen sich keine grenzübergreifenden Auswirkungen ermitteln.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001402/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Risk posed by groundwater contaminated with pesticides in the Danube

On 29 November 2012 it was revealed that groundwater contaminated with pesticides had for several days been pumped into the Danube in the Austrian administrative district of Korneuburg. The contamination involved the pesticides clopyralid and thiamethoxam and was caused by the Kwizda Agro Austria company. The Global 2000 environmental organisation reports that the authorities responsible failed over a period of two years to identify the contamination; then, when news of the incident became known, local people were given insufficient information about possible risks.

1. What impact does the Commission expect the discharge of the contaminated groundwater will have on the flora and fauna, the agricultural economy and the health of the local population in areas downstream from Korneuburg (a) in Austria and (b) in other countries, especially Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria?

2. What impact does the Commission expect this will have on the water supply and health situation in cities along the Danube, namely Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest and Belgrade?

Question for written answer E-001486/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Contamination of groundwater in Korneuburg

On 29 November 2012 it was revealed that groundwater contaminated with pesticides had for several days been pumped into the Danube in the Austrian administrative district of Korneuburg. The contamination involved the pesticides clopyralid and thiamethoxam and was caused by the Kwizda Agro Austria company. The Global 2000 environmental organisation reports that the authorities responsible failed over a period of two years to identify the contamination; then, when news of the incident became known, local people were given insufficient information about possible risks.

1. In the Commission's view, how big a risk does groundwater contaminated with clopyralid and thiamethoxam in Korneuburg pose for the public?

2. In the Commission's view, how big a risk does groundwater contaminated with clopyralid and thiamethoxam pose for flora and fauna in Korneuburg?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2013)

The Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES) elaborated an expert opinion to assess potential impacts of the contamination.

The human toxicological evaluation of the impact of water contaminated with plant protection products did not indicate any verifiable risk to humans. However, for precautionary reasons the use of the contaminated water as drinking water should be avoided.

The AGES risk assessment showed that potential risk to sensitive flora and fauna cannot be excluded, meaning potential risk to bees and to sensitive aquatic organisms like macrophytes, algae and insects in small stagnant water bodies, like garden ponds. In the analyses of harvesting products no residues of the substances in question were found.

In order to prevent a further expansion of the pollution plume, groundwater is pumped from the plume into the Danube, but due to the very high mixing ratio between the pumped water and the flow of the Danube, none of the pesticides can be detected in the monitoring system established in the Danube. Therefore there are no transboundary impacts identified.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001403/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL) και Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Καταγγελία Συνδέσμου Παραγωγών Ενέργειας από Φωτοβολταϊκά προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή

Ο Σύνδεσμος Παραγωγών Ενέργειας από Φωτοβολταϊκά (ΣΠΕΦ) προσέφυγε στη Γενική Διεύθυνση Ανταγωνισμού της ΕΕ για το Μηχανισμό ανάκτησης Μεταβλητού Κόστους (ΜΜΚ), ο οποίος, σύμφωνα με την καταγγελία, λειτουργεί «μονομερώς επ' ωφελεία των ηλεκτροπαραγωγών από φυσικό αέριο και διατηρεί καθ' υπέρβαση του Ημερήσιου Ενεργειακού Προγραμματισμού όλες τις μονάδες αυτές ενταγμένες στο σύστημα, ακόμα και όταν δεν υπάρχει ανάγκη εκτοπίζοντας έτσι τις έως και δύο φορές φθηνότερες λιγνιτικές» και «εξασφαλίζει σταθερό εισόδημα σε 24ωρη βάση, ίσο με το μεταβλητό τους κόστους, πλέον περιθωρίου 10%, πέραν κάθε έννοιας μεταξύ τους ανταγωνισμού στην βάση της θεσμοθετημένης ανταγωνιστικής Οριακής Τιμής Συστήματος». Κατά τον ΣΠΕΦ, η πρακτική αυτή αποτελεί παράνομη κρατική ενίσχυση, αποτέλεσμα της οποίας είναι η τεχνητή επιβάρυνση του λογαριασμού αποζημίωσης των ανανεώσιμων πηγών, οι οποίες οδηγούνται σε οικονομικό αφανισμό.

Βάσει των ανωτέρω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς σχολιάζει την ανωτέρω καταγγελία;

2. Προτίθεται να λάβει σχετικά μέτρα;

3. Αν ναι, ποια;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έλαβε, στις 20 Νοεμβρίου 2012, καταγγελία σχετικά με εικαζόμενη κρατική ενίσχυση που χορηγήθηκε σε ιδιώτες παραγωγούς ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας από φυσικό αέριο στην Ελλάδα, με βάση τον Μηχανισμό ανάκτησης Μεταβλητού Κόστους τον οποίο εισήγαγε η ελληνική κυβέρνηση στον Κώδικα Συναλλαγών Ηλεκτρικής Ενέργειας.

Η εν λόγω καταγγελία εξετάζεται προσεκτικά από τις υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής. Έχουν ζητηθεί περισσότερα στοιχεία από τον καταγγέλλοντα, δεδομένου ότι τα στοιχεία που υποβλήθηκαν δεν ήταν επαρκή ώστε να τεκμηριωθεί ο ισχυρισμός ότι ο Μηχανισμός ανάκτησης Μεταβλητού Κόστους περιέχει μέτρο κρατικής ενίσχυσης, κατά την έννοια του άρθρου 107 παράγραφος 1 της ΣΛΕΕ. Μόλις παρασχεθούν επιπρόσθετα στοιχεία που να στηρίζουν τους ισχυρισμούς, θα δοθεί η ευκαιρία στην Ελλάδα να υποβάλει τις παρατηρήσεις της σχετικά με τους ισχυρισμούς και να προβάλει τα επιχειρήματά της.

Στη βάση αυτή, είναι πολύ νωρίς να ληφθεί οριστική θέση όσον αφορά την εφαρμογή των κανόνων περί κρατικών ενισχύσεων στην περίπτωση του Μηχανισμού ανάκτησης Μεταβλητού Κόστους.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001403/13
aan de Commissie
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL) en Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(11 februari 2013)

Betreft: Klacht van het verbond van zonne-energieproducenten bij de Commissie

Het verbond van zonne-energieproducenten heeft bij het Directoraat-generaal Concurrentie van de Commissie een klacht ingediend inzake het mechanisme voor de terugbetaling van variabele kosten. Dit mechanisme zou luidens de klacht uitsluitend de producenten van stroom uit aardgas begunstigen en zou ervoor zorgen dat al deze eenheden in het systeem opgenomen blijven, ook al is er geen behoefte aan, waarbij zij de plaats innemen van de tot twee keer toe goedkopere bruinkoolcentrales. Het zou zorgen voor een vast inkomen voor deze producenten 24 uur per dag, gelijk aan hun variabele kosten, plus een marge van 10 % en elke vorm van onderlinge concurrentie op basis van de geïnstitutionaliseerde concurrentiële minimumprijzen onmogelijk maken. Het verbond van zonne-energieproducenten beschouwt deze praktijk als onwettige staatssteun, die resulteert in een artificiële verhoging van de rekening voor de terugbetaling van hernieuwbare energie, wat deze financieel onleefbaar maakt.

Kan de Commissie in het licht hiervan antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. Wat is haar standpunt over deze klacht?

2. Is zij voornemens maatregelen te nemen?

3. Indien ja, welke?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(24 april 2013)

De Commissie heeft op 20 november 2012 een klacht ontvangen over vermeende staatssteun aan particuliere producenten van stroom uit aardgas in Griekenland op basis van een mechanisme voor de terugbetaling van variabele kosten dat door de Griekse regering bij de wetgeving inzake elektriciteitsuitwisseling is ingevoerd.

Deze klacht wordt zorgvuldig onderzocht door de diensten van de Commissie. Aangezien de verstrekte informatie niet voldoende was om de bewering dat het mechanisme voor de terugbetaling van variabele kosten een regeling voor staatssteun in de zin van artikel 107, lid 7, van het VWEU is, met bewijzen te staven, is de klager om extra informatie gevraagd. Zodra aanvullende feiten worden aangevoerd die de beweringen staven, krijgt Griekenland de kans om te reageren op de beschuldigingen en zijn argumenten uiteen te zetten.

Op basis hiervan is het te vroeg om een definitief standpunt in the nemen over de toepassing van de regels inzake staatssteun op het mechanisme voor de terugbetaling van variabele kosten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001403/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL) and Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Complaint filed with the Commission by the Hellenic Association of Photovoltaic Energy Producers (SPEF)

The Hellenic Association of Photovoltaic Energy Producers (SPEF) has complained to the Commission's Directorate-General for Competition about the Variable Cost Recovery Mechanism (VCRM), on the grounds that it operates unilaterally for the benefit of electricity produced from natural gas and maintains all such units in excess of the requirements of the Daily Electricity Auctions integrated into the system, even where there is no need for this, thereby taking the place of lignite units which cost up to half as much. It has also complained that the VCRM ensures a stable revenue 24 hours a day, equal to their variable cost plus a 10% margin, in defiance of any notion of competition between them on the basis of the competitive System Marginal Price. According to SPEF, this practice constitutes unlawful state aid, the result of which is an artificial deficit for the compensation account of RES, which have been driven to the brink of bankruptcy.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How does it view the above complaint?

2. Does it intend to take any measures to address the situation?

3. If so, which measures?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The Commission received on 20 November 2012 a complaint concerning alleged state aid granted to private natural gas-fired electricity producers in Greece on the basis of a Variable Cost Recovery Mechanism introduced by the Greek Government in the Electricity Exchange Code.

This complaint is being examined carefully by the Commission services. More information has been requested from the complainant, because the information provided was not sufficient to substantiate the allegation that the Variable Cost Recovery Mechanism contains a state aid measure within the meaning of Article 107(1) TFEU. Once additional facts supporting the allegations are provided, Greece will be given the opportunity to comment on the allegations and put forward its arguments.

On that basis, it is too early to take a definitive view as regards the application of state aid rules to the Variable Cost Recovery Mechanism.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001404/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συγχρηματοδοτούμενα προγράμματα για την ανεργία των νέων στην Ελλάδα

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ανακοίνωσε στις 10.1.2013 την εφαρμογή 20 προγραμμάτων, για τον περιορισμό της ανεργίας των νέων, ύψους 600 εκατ. ευρώ, παράλληλα με 13 προγράμματα, που σύμφωνα με την ίδια βρίσκονται ήδη σε ισχύ, με 350 000 ωφελούμενους. Τα επτά νέα προγράμματα απευθύνονται σε νέους κάτω των 29 ετών, έχουν προϋπολογισμό 390 εκατ. ευρώ και θα ωφελήσουν 63 000 άνεργους νέους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι τα προγράμματα του ΕΣΠΑ που έχουν στόχο την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας των νέων στην Ελλάδα; Τι ύψος έχουν; Ποια η απορρόφησή τους; Είναι τα ίδια με τα 13 που ανακοίνωσε η κυβέρνηση ότι ήδη υλοποιούνται;

Ποια είναι τα νέα προγράμματα που, κατά τις δηλώσεις της κυβέρνησης, θα τεθούν σε ισχύ; Έχουν κατατεθεί; Από πού προβλέπεται η χρηματοδότησή τους;

Τι πρόσθετα προγράμματα επεξεργάζεται η Επιτροπή σε συνεργασία με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για τον περιορισμό της ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Αναλυτικές πληροφορίες σχετικά με τον πληθυσμό-στόχο και την πηγή της χρηματοδότησης περιέχονται στο «Σχέδιο Δράσης για την ενίσχυση της Απασχόλησης και Επιχειρηματικότητας των Νέων», το οποίο ενέκρινε η ελληνική κυβέρνηση τον Ιανουάριο του 2013.

Για την υλοποίησή του έχουν διατεθεί κονδύλια της ΕΕ ύψους περίπου 517 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ. Το σχέδιο απαρτίζεται από ένα σύνολο τρεχόντων και νέων προγραμμάτων, από τα οποία θα μπορούσαν να επωφεληθούν περίπου 350 000 νέοι κατά την περίοδο 2013-2015. Σύμφωνα με το σχέδιο δράσης, κονδύλια της ΕΕ ύψους περίπου 633 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ είχαν ήδη δεσμευθεί έως το τέλος του 2012 και διατίθενται για πρωτοβουλίες από τις οποίες επωφελούνται σχεδόν 183 000 νέοι.

Την ευθύνη για την επιλογή, το σχεδιασμό και τη διαχείριση των συγχρηματοδοτούμενων από κονδύλια της ΕΕ μεμονωμένων έργων φέρουν τα κράτη μέλη ([1]). Ως εκ τούτου, για περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα μεμονωμένα προγράμματα, τον προϋπολογισμό, τον βαθμό απορρόφησης, την υλοποίηση και την πηγή χρηματοδότησής τους, η Επιτροπή συνιστά στον αξιότιμο κύριο βουλευτή να απευθυνθεί στην ΕΥΣΕΚΤ ([2]).

Στο πλαίσιο του ΜΣ ([3]), το οποίο υπεγράφη τον Νοέμβριο του 2012, οι ελληνικές αρχές δεσμεύθηκαν να υιοθετήσουν έως τον Μάρτιο του 2013 σχέδιο δράσης για την ενίσχυση των ανέργων, με έμφαση στα εξής σημεία:

1. Εύρεση κατάλληλων θέσεων εργασίας και ενεργοποίηση των ανέργων,

2. Μέτρα για την επανακατάρτιση των ανέργων,

3. Μειωμένο χρόνο απασχόλησης σε συνδυασμό με κατάρτιση σε περίπτωση προσωρινής μείωσης δραστηριότητας,

4. Ενίσχυση των επιδομάτων ανεργίας για την υποστήριξη των επί μακρόν ανέργων και των εργαζομένων που δεν δικαιούνται ασφάλιση ανεργίας.

Οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής είναι έτοιμες να στηρίξουν την Ελλάδα στη χάραξη και υλοποίηση του σχεδίου δράσης για την ενίσχυση των ανέργων και την επιτάχυνση της δημιουργίας θέσεων εργασίας.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006 του Συμβουλίου, της 11ης Ιουλίου 2006, περί καθορισμού γενικών διατάξεων για το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο και το Ταμείο Συνοχής και την κατάργηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1260/1999, ΕΕ L 210 της 31.7.2006, άρθρο 58.

([2]) Υπουργείο Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων, Γενική Γραμματεία Διαχείρισης Κοινοτικών και άλλων Πόρων, Επικεφαλής της Ειδικής Υπηρεσίας Συντονισμού και Παρακολούθησης Δράσεων ΕΚΤ, Κοραή 4, 105 64, Αθήνα, τηλ.: 210 52 71 400, url: http://www.esfhellas.gr

([3]) Μνημόνιο συμφωνίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001404/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Co-funded programmes for youth unemployment in Greece

On 10 January 2013, the Greek Government unveiled a total of twenty programmes worth EUR 600 million aimed at reducing youth unemployment; thirteen of these programmes are already in place, according to the Greek Government, with 350 000 beneficiaries. The seven new programmes are directed at young people under 29 years of age, have a budget of EUR 390 million and will benefit 63 000 unemployed young people.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What are the NSRF programmes aimed at combating youth unemployment in Greece? What is their budget and take-up rate? Are they the same as the thirteen programmes mentioned above, which, according to the Greek Government, are already being implemented?

What are the new programmes which, according to the government, will soon be implemented? Have they been submitted? How are they to be funded?

What additional programmes are being developed by the Commission in cooperation with the Greek Government to reduce unemployment in Greece?

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

Detailed information on the targeted population and the source of financing is provided with the 'Action Plan to support Youth employment and Entrepreneurship' as endorsed by the Greek Government in January 2013.

A budget of around EUR 517 million EU funds has been allocated for its implementation. The Plan comprises a set of ongoing and new programmes which should benefit around 350 000 young people over the period 2013-2015. According to the action plan, up until the end of 2012, around EUR 633 million EU funds have already been committed and are being spent on initiatives benefiting around 183 000 young people.

The responsibility for the selection, design and management of individual projects co-financed by the EU funds lies with the Member States ([1]). Therefore, for further information on individual programmes, their budget, take-up rates, implementation and source of financing, the Commission recommends that the Honourable Member contacts EYSEKT ([2]).

In the context of the MoU ([3]) signed in November 2012, the Greek authorities have committed to adopt by March 2013 an Action Plan on support to the unemployed focusing on:

1. Job matching and activation of the unemployed;

2. Measures for re-skilling the unemployed;

3. Reduced working time combined with training in case of temporary reductions in activity;

4. Enhancing unemployment benefits to support the long-term unemployed and workers without entitlement to unemployment insurance.

The Commission services are ready to support Greece in drawing up and implementing the action plan to support the unemployed and to spur job creation.

([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, Article 58.

([2]) Ministry of Employment and Social Insurance, General Secretariat of Management of European Funds, Head of ESF Actions Coordination and Monitoring Authority, 4 Korai str, 105 64 Athens, tel: 210 52 71 400, url: www.esfhellas.gr

([3]) Memorandum of Understanding.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001405/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κατάργηση παράνομων προνομίων της Αγροτικής Τράπεζας

Μετά από καταγγελία, το θέμα των προνομίων της Αγροτικής Τράπεζας της Ελλάδας είχε απασχολήσει την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στο παρελθόν, η οποία όμως είχε κλείσει το θέμα, όταν έλαβε τη διαβεβαίωση της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης ότι τα σχετικά προνόμια είχαν καταργηθεί.

Παρά τις διαβεβαιώσεις όμως, και μετά από τις ερμηνευτικές αποφάσεις του Αρείου Πάγου 25/2006 και 24/2006, το άρθρο 12 του Νόμου 4332/1929, σύμφωνα με το οποίο η ΑΤΕ διατηρούσε το προνόμιο να εγγράφει υποθήκες χωρίς δικαστική απόφαση ή ειδικό πληρεξούσιο έγγραφο, χωρίς τη συναίνεση του κυρίου του ακινήτου και χωρίς καν ενημέρωσή του, εξακολουθεί να ισχύει. Επισημαίνεται ότι τέτοιο προνόμιο δεν έχει καμμία άλλη τράπεζα στην Ελλάδα.

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση έχει υιοθετήσει πλήρως τις ανωτέρω αποφάσεις του Δικαστηρίου, όπως προκύπτει από τις απαντήσεις της σε ερωτήματα σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Σε ποιες άμεσες ενέργειες προτίθεται επιτέλους, να προβεί για την κατάργηση των απαράδεκτων προνομίων, που έχουν οδηγήσει χιλιάδες αγρότες στα δικαστήρια, οι οποίοι έχουν χάσει ήδη σημαντικό μέρος της περιουσίας τους;

Με ποιο τρόπο όσοι έχασαν περιουσιακά τους στοιχεία, εξ αιτίας αυτών των προνομίων, μπορούν να διεκδικήσουν την επιστροφή της περιουσίας τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Απριλίου 2013)

Σε απάντηση στην ερώτηση του Αξιότιμου Μέλους, η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί να καταστεί σαφές ότι οι κανόνες για τις διαδικασίες εγγραφής πράξεων υποθήκευσης αποφασίζονται σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Η Επιτροπή, τον Μάρτιο του 2011, ενέκρινε πρόταση για την οδηγία για την ενυπόθηκη πίστη (ΟΕΠ) ([1]). Η εν λόγω πρόταση, η οποία αποτελεί επί του παρόντος αντικείμενο διαπραγματεύσεων στο Συμβούλιο και το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, δεν καλύπτει το θέμα της εγγραφής των υποθηκών.

([1]) COM/2011/0142 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001405/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Abrogation of illegal privileges enjoyed by the Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE)

Acting in response to a complaint, the Commission has, in the past, examined the issue of the privileges enjoyed by the Agricultural Bank of Greece; however, it concluded its investigation upon receiving assurances from the Greek Government that these privileges had been abolished.

Despite these assurances, however, and the interpretive decisions handed down by the Greek Supreme Court (Nos. 25/2006 and 24/2006), Article 12 of Law 4332/1929, in accordance with which the ATE has retained the privilege of registering mortgages without a court decision or special document conferring power of attorney, without the consent of the owner of the property and without the owner even being informed, remains in force. It should be pointed out that no other bank in Greece has this privilege.

The Greek Government fully endorses these Court decisions, as its answers to questions on this issue indicate.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What immediate action will it take finally to abolish this unacceptable privilege, which has meant that thousands of farmers have faced court proceedings and have already lost a significant part of their assets?

How can those who have lost their assets, on account of the exercise of this privilege, sue for the restitution of these assets?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

In reply to the Honourable Member's question, the Commission wants to clarify that the rules for the registration processes of mortgage deeds are decided upon at national level. The Commission adopted in March 2011 a proposal for a Mortgage Credit Directive (MCD) ([1]). This proposal, which is currently negotiated in the Council and the European Parliament, does not address the registration issue.

([1]) COM/2011/0142 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001406/13
to the Council
Julie Girling (ECR)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Follow-up: dispute between French and British fishermen over the 12-nautical-mile limit

In follow-up to its response to Written Question E-010316/2012, can the Council confirm that no discussions have taken place and that no action has been taken with regard to this dispute?

Reply
(15 April 2013)

Further to the written question from the Honourable Member, the Council can confirm that no discussions have taken place in Council on this issue. Furthermore, no action has been taken by the Council with regard to this dispute.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001407/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Science education and the environment

2013 is the European Year of Citizens, designed to raise awareness and knowledge of the rights and responsibilities attached to Union citizenship, including the core values of the Union as enshrined in the TEU and TFEU and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Article 37 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights covers the need to ensure a high level of environmental protection and the need to integrate this with the principle of sustainable development in Union policymaking.

What initiatives and projects is the Commission undertaking to ensure that European citizens can increase their knowledge and understanding of environmental issues through science-based education?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The Commission is undertaking a number of initiatives to raise awareness and provide better information to citizens about environment issues based on the latest available scientific data, for examples. Science for environment online service ([1]), the Environment for Europeans newsletter ([2]) and multi annual communication campaigns, such as Generation Awake ([3]).

Training and education is also an important element of the majority of the environmental research supported under the EU RTD Framework Programmes. For example, several multidisciplinary summer schools and training courses have been organised and online teaching material has been developed.

In 2013, support will be provided to the European Year of Citizens notably through the EURAXESS ([4]) activities that aim at removing obstacles to researchers' mobility and crossborder cooperation. The Marie Curie Actions ([5]) for research career development includes the Researchers' Night, a Europe-wide event that brings together the public at large and researchers every year. In addition, 54 Initial Training Networks provide doctoral-level education and training in environmental fields and include dissemination initiatives directed at the general public.

2013 Science-in-Society activities ([6]) aim to raise youth awareness about Responsible Research and Innovation using Inquiry Based Science Education. It is about better equipping future citizens with the skills and knowledge they need to engage in Research and Innovation in a responsible manner.

It is expected that training and education will be further supported under Horizon 2020, the 2014-2020 EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/news/efe/index_en.htm
([3]) http://www.generationawake.eu
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess
([5]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013).
([6]) Under the topic SiS.2013.2.2.1-1 'Raising youth awareness to Responsible Research and Innovation through Inquiry Based Science Education'

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001408/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — New settlements between Jerusalem and Bethlehem

The Israeli authorities have authorised the construction of around 2 000 homes in Givat Hamatos, which is beyond the pre-1967 Green Line between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. This will be the first new major settlement that has been created since 1997. In addition, the Israelis have recently announced that a further 1 500 homes will be built in the settlement of Ramat Shlomo.

A number of Member State governments have condemned the decision: for instance, the British Government summoned the Israeli Ambassador in order to express its concerns directly.

1. What representations have been made on behalf of the European Union regarding these specific developments?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that the decision to build new settlements beyond the pre-1967 Green Line threatens the viability of a two-state solution?

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

On 10 December 2012, the Foreign Affairs Council adopted Council Conclusions which, among other things, addressed the latest Israeli plans for settlement constructions. The European Union expressed its deep dismay and strong opposition to Israeli plans to expand settlements in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, and in particular plans to develop the so-called E1 area. The Conclusions underlined that the E1 plan, if implemented, would seriously undermine the prospects of a negotiated resolution of the conflict by jeopardising the possibility of a contiguous and viable Palestinian state and of Jerusalem as the future capital of two states. The EU stated that it would closely monitor the situation and its broader implications, and act accordingly.

The Conclusions expressed the EU's commitment to ensure that — in line with international law — all agreements between the State of Israel and the European Union had to unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967. They also reiterated the EU's commitment to ensure continued, full and effective implementation of existing EU legislation and bilateral arrangements applicable to settlement products.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001410/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(11 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Indagine europea sui prodotti a base di carne di cavallo

Lo scandalo delle lasagne «Findus» di cui è stata verificata la composizione a base di carne di cavallo non indicata nell'etichettatura fa emergere una realtà europea caratterizzata non solo da mancanza di regole adeguate sui prodotti alimentari carnei, ma anche da traffici e triangolazioni di questi prodotti fra vari Paesi — fra cui sono stati finora accertati Cipro, Olanda, Romania e Gran Bretagna — senza reali controlli.

Ad oggi non è infatti previsto dall'UE l'obbligo dell'indicazione della provenienza della carne di cavallo cosi come di quella di maiale e di coniglio, ma solo della carne bovina.

Ritiene la Commissione di dovere attivare con urgenza un'inchiesta europea sulla commercializzazione dei prodotti carnei, in particolare quelli a base di carne di cavallo?

Ritiene che l'attuale disciplina relativa alla commercializzazione consenta ai trafficanti sia di ingannare i consumatori circa la composizione dei prodotti sia di infrangere le norme igienico-sanitarie, anche per la mancanza di un'Autorità europea di coordinamento delle relative indagini?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2013)

A tutt'oggi non vi sono indicazioni che facciano pensare a un problema per la sicurezza; il fatto però di falsificare le etichette degli alimenti configura una frode. In forza delle regole vigenti ([1]) l'etichettatura degli alimenti non deve trarre in inganno i consumatori quanto alla loro natura e al loro contenuto, tutti gli ingredienti devono essere indicati sull'etichetta e le etichette degli alimenti contenenti carni devono anche indicare la specie animale in questione.

L'etichettatura d'origine geografica non va confusa con le frodi nell'etichettatura degli alimenti e non può essere considerata quale strumento per prevenirle. La frode in questione avrebbe potuto essere commessa anche se sugli alimenti fosse stata apposta un'etichettatura d'origine obbligatoria.

A livello dell'Unione è già in atto un sistema esaustivo di regole in tema di sicurezza alimentare comprendenti i requisiti in tema di tracciabilità degli alimenti di origine animale ([2]); è grazie a questo sistema che l'origine e l'entità degli atti fraudolenti in questione sono state rapidamente identificate.

Le autorità competenti nazionali hanno la responsabilità di far rispettare la normativa dell'Unione in tema di prodotti alimentari. La Commissione ha adottato una raccomandazione volta a istituire un piano coordinato di controllo ([3]) con cui sollecita controlli su scala UE degli alimenti commercializzati quali contenenti carni bovine per individuare le etichettature fraudolente e controlli delle carni equine destinate al consumo umano per individuare la presenza di fenilbutazone, un farmaco veterinario il cui uso è consentito soltanto sugli animali non destinati alla produzione alimentare. Entro l'aprile 2013 sarà disponibile una sintesi con tutte le risultanze. I risultati del piano potranno far capire se e quali misure di controllo specifiche addizionali siano necessarie.

La Commissione sta inoltre preparando una proposta sui controlli ufficiali volta a rafforzare ulteriormente il sistema attuale, comprese le disposizioni in tema di sanzioni.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 marzo 2000, relativa al ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri concernenti l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità, GU L 109 del 6.5.2000, pag. 29.

([2]) Regolamento di esecuzione (UE) n. 931/2011 della Commissione, del 19 settembre 2011, relativo ai requisiti di rintracciabilità fissati dal regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio per gli alimenti di origine animale, GU L 242 del 20.9.2011, pag. 2.

([3]) 2013/99/UE: raccomandazione della Commissione, del 19 febbraio 2013, relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo volto a stabilire la prevalenza di pratiche fraudolente nella commercializzazione di determinati prodotti alimentari, GU L 48 del 21.2.2013, pag. 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001410/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: European investigation into products containing horsemeat

The scandal involving Findus-brand lasagne, which has been shown to contain horsemeat, even though the product label made no mention of this fact, has highlighted the lack of proper rules governing the inspection of meat products and the existence of legally dubious practices which involve such products being shipped back and forth between various countries, which thus far are known to include Cyprus, the Netherlands, Romania and the United Kingdom, without undergoing proper checks.

As things stand, EC law lays down no requirement to indicate the origin of horsemeat, pigmeat and rabbit meat; only beef and veal are covered by such a stipulation.

Does the Commission not agree that there is a pressing need for a European investigation into the marketing of meat products, in particular those containing horsemeat?

Does it agree that the current marketing rules give traffickers complete freedom to mislead consumers as to the composition of meat products and to disregard public health standards, and that this problem is being compounded by the lack of a European authority with responsibility for coordinating investigations in this area?

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

To date, there is no indication of safety concern; however, falsifying food labels constitutes fraud in food labelling. Under existing rules ([1]), the labelling of foods must not mislead the consumer as to their nature and content, all food ingredients must be indicated on the label and the labelling of foods containing meat must also indicate the animal species concerned.

The geographical origin labelling should not be confused with fraud in food labelling and cannot be considered as a tool to prevent it. This fraud could have occurred, even if there was mandatory origin labelling on the foods concerned.

A comprehensive system of food safety rules is already in place at Union level, including traceability requirements for foods of animal origin ([2]); it is because of this system that the origin and extent of the fraudulent actions in question were quickly identified.

National competent authorities are responsible for enforcing Union food law. The Commission adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([3]) calling for EU-wide controls on foods marketed as containing beef to detect fraudulent labelling and on horse meat destined for human consumption to detect phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013. The result of the plan may indicate if and which additional specific control measures will be necessary.

The Commission is also preparing a proposal on official controls which will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and 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]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 931/2011 on the traceability requirements set by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council for food of animal origin, OJ L 242, 20.9.2011, p. 2.

([3]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001411/13
à la Commission
Brice Hortefeux (PPE)
(11 février 2013)

Objet: Scandale de la viande de cheval — transparence dans l'étiquetage des produits alimentaires et mise au point sur les systèmes de contrôle

Début février, l'Agence britannique de sécurité alimentaire (FSA) détectait de la viande de cheval dans des produits surgelés de la marque Findus. Ces plats proviennent de l'entreprise Comigel qui fournit de nombreuses marques en France et dans 15 autres pays européens.

D'après les premiers éléments d'information, la viande incriminée était achetée en Roumanie et transitait par des intermédiaires chypriotes et néerlandais. Il s'agit donc d'un phénomène qui appelle un traitement tant national qu'européen.

Ce scandale préoccupe, à juste titre, les consommateurs trompés sur les produits qu'ils consomment. Aussi:

1. La Commission peut-elle garantir qu'il n'existe aucun risque sanitaire pour l'ensemble des produits surgelés concernés par ce scandale?

2. Peut-elle faire une mise au point sur le système de contrôle des circuits d'approvisionnement et de production de ces produits alimentaires?

3. Estime-t-elle que ce scandale puisse être qualifié de fraude?

4. Peut-elle nous informer des mesures qu'elle entend prendre à l'égard des entreprises concernées par ce scandale et des mesures de prévention à l'avenir?

5. Entend-elle présenter une proposition visant à renforcer la transparence dans l'étiquetage des produits alimentaires, notamment sur la composition des produits, la provenance et la traçabilité de la viande dans tous ces types de produits?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(20 mars 2013)

La Commission tient à rassurer l'auteur de la question: à ce jour, aucun élément ne donne à penser que la santé publique soit menacée. Toutefois, le fait de falsifier les étiquettes des produits alimentaires et de tromper ainsi le consommateur sur le contenu de ces produits constitue une fraude et une pratique commerciale déloyale.

Le contrôle de l'application des prescriptions définies par la législation alimentaire de l'Union européenne et l'évaluation du caractère trompeur des informations sur les aliments doivent être effectués par les autorités compétentes des États membres. Grâce à des contrôles officiels fondés — en principe — sur les risques, celles-ci vérifient que les exploitants du secteur alimentaire respectent les règles de l'Union à tous les stades de la production, de la transformation et de la distribution.

Les actions intentées contre les entreprises concernées doivent être engagées par les autorités (sanitaires et judiciaires) des États membres. L'unité de coordination d'Europol joue également un rôle dans l'enquête. Les règles européennes actuelles et leur application sont suffisantes pour garantir une très bonne protection des consommateurs.

L'étiquetage de produits à base de viande contenant de la viande de cheval contrevient à la réglementation de l'Union si la présence de ladite viande de cheval n'est pas mentionnée dans la liste des ingrédients. La traçabilité a été rendue obligatoire pour les exploitants du secteur alimentaire, et ce à chaque étape de la chaîne d'approvisionnement. Elle a été conçue comme un outil dont peuvent se servir les autorités pour vérifier la sûreté des aliments. Le système de contrôle officiel en place a permis de réagir rapidement pour déterminer l'origine et l'ampleur des actes frauduleux.

Si l'indication obligatoire du pays d'origine répond à des demandes légitimes des consommateurs, elle ne constitue pas un outil permettant de prévenir les pratiques frauduleuses en matière d'étiquetage. La fraude en question aurait pu être commise même si le lieu d'origine avait été clairement indiqué sur l'étiquette des produits alimentaires concernés.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001411/13
to the Commission
Brice Hortefeux (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Horsemeat scandal: need for clearer food labelling and clarification of food inspection arrangements

In early February 2013, the UK Food Standards Agency (FSA) found horsemeat in Findus-brand frozen beef products. The ready meals were made by a food processing firm called Comigel, which also supplies companies in France and 15 other EU Member States.

From what we know at the moment, it seems that the meat in question was bought in Romania and then sold on by Cypriot and Dutch companies. This calls for action at both national and EU level.

Consumers conned into eating products tainted with horsemeat are up in arms, and justifiably so.

1. Do the frozen beef products in question pose a health risk?

2. What inspection arrangements are employed at each stage of the supply chain and during the manufacture of frozen food?

3. Does the horsemeat scandal constitute fraud?

4. What action is the Commission planning to take against the companies involved and to prevent any repeat of this scandal?

5. Is the Commission planning to submit a proposal calling for clearer food labelling, i.e. a complete list of ingredients and information on the country of origin and traceability of the meat content in frozen food?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2013)

The Commission would like to reassure the Honourable Member that, to date, there is no indication on the subject which raises a safety issue. However, falsifying labels on foods, thereby misleading consumers on their content, constitutes fraud in food labelling and breaches the trust in fair commercial transactions.

The enforcement of the EU food requirements as well as the evaluation of the misleading character of the food information is to be carried out by the competent authorities of the Member States. They shall verify, through the organisation of official controls which are in principle risk based, that the EU rules are fulfilled by food business operators at all stages of production, processing and distribution.

Actions against the companies involved must be taken by the authorities (sanitary and judiciary) in the Member States. Europol coordination is also involved in the enquiry. The current EU rules and their enforcement are sufficient to grant a very high level of protection for the EU consumers.

Labelling of meat products containing horse meat infringes EU rules, if its presence is not mentioned in the list of ingredients. Traceability is already compulsory for food business operators at each stage of the food chain and it is designed as a food safety control tool for the authorities. The official control system in place allowed a quick reaction to identify the origin and extent of the fraudulent actions

Compulsory country of origin indication, while answering legitimate consumers demands is not a tool to prevent fraudulent practices in food labelling. This fraud could have occurred, even if there was a mandatory indication of origin on the foods concerned.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-001412/13
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(11 februari 2013)

Betreft: Voedselveiligheid in tijden van economische crisis

De Europese Unie werd gedurende de afgelopen jaren geconfronteerd met enkele grote voedselschandalen (strooizout in voedsel, eierpoeder in snoepjes, paardenvlees in hamburgers) waarbij producenten bewust fraudeerden om goedkoper te kunnen produceren. De voedselveiligheid en de gezondheid van mensen komen door deze ontwikkelingen ernstig onder druk te staan.

Het Europese waarschuwingssysteem op dit gebied — het systeem voor snelle waarschuwingen voor levensmiddelen en diervoeders (RASFF: Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed) — geeft al enkele jaren een stijgend aantal notificaties van voedsel- en voederrisico's.

Hoe verklaart de Commissie het groeiende aantal notificaties?

Is de Commissie van mening dat er een verband bestaat tussen de economische crisis en het toenemende aantal meldingen?

Is de Commissie van mening dat er een toenemend risico bestaat voor voedselproductie waarbij vanwege financiële motieven bewust fraude gepleegd wordt met daarbij ernstige risico's voor de volksgezondheid?

Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van alle zaken binnen de Europese Unie die bij haar bekend zijn, waarbij de laatste drie jaar fraude is gepleegd door de voedselproducent om goedkoper te kunnen produceren?

Welke maatregelen neemt de Commissie om fraude bij voedselproductie op te sporen en te verminderen?

Is de Commissie het met het CDA eens dat het tegengaan van het groeiende aantal fraudezaken bij voedselproductie waarbij de volksgezondheid gevaar loopt, tot prioriteit dient te worden verklaard?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(21 maart 2013)

1. en 2. De Commissie is van mening dat een toename van het aantal meldingen via het systeem voor snelle waarschuwingen voor levensmiddelen en diervoeders (RASFF: *Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed*) verschillende oorzaken kan hebben, zoals de verbeterde werking van de officiële controlesystemen in de lidstaten, de toename van dergelijke controles en de efficiëntie van het RASFF als een doeltreffend middel voor de snelle uitwisseling van de informatie die de bevoegde autoriteiten nodig hebben om snel en doeltreffend maatregelen te nemen bij ernstige risico's. Pogingen om financieel gewin te behalen door opzettelijke overtreding van de regels (fraude) komen niet alleen in crisistijd voor. Het lijkt op basis van de beschikbare informatie niet redelijk de toename van het aantal meldingen via het RASFF aan de huidige economische crisis toe te schrijven.

3. Er zijn geen aanwijzingen om te concluderen dat het risico op fraude toeneemt om financiële motieven (uit gegevens van het RASFF blijkt dat het percentage meldingen in verband met fraude 2 % bedroeg in 2012, terwijl dat cijfer in 2010 en 2011 op 3 % lag).

4. Er wordt niet systematisch gedetailleerde informatie verzameld over de motieven achter de via het RASFF gerapporteerde fraude, aangezien de belangrijkste doelstelling van het systeem de uitwisseling van informatie over ernstige gezondheidsrisico's is.

5. en 6. De Commissie deelt de mening van het geachte Parlementslid dat voedselfraude zorgwekkend is. Het komende voorstel om de EU-regelgeving over de officiële controles van de voedselketen en de sancties te beoordelen wil daarom de nationale handhavingsinstanties een doeltreffender juridisch kader en krachtigere handhavingsinstrumenten verschaffen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001412/13
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Food safety in times of economic crisis

On a number of occasions in recent years, major food scandals have occurred in the European Union (road salt in food, powdered egg in sweets, horsemeat in hamburgers) which have arisen because producers have deliberately committed fraud in order to be able to produce food more cheaply. These developments pose serious dangers to food safety and human health.

For several years, the European warning system in this field — the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) — has been generating a growing number of notifications of food and feed risks.

How does the Commission explain the growing number of notifications?

Does the Commission consider there to be any link between the economic crisis and the growing number of notifications?

Does the Commission consider that there is a growing risk of food production in which fraud is deliberately committed out of financial motives, giving rise to serious risks to public health?

Can the Commission provide an overview of all the cases in the past three years within the European Union of which it is aware in which fraud has been committed by food producers in order to be able to produce food more cheaply?

What measures will the Commission take to detect and reduce fraud in food production?

Does the Commission agree with the CDA that countering the growing number of cases of fraud in food production which constitute a public health risk should be assigned priority?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission takes the view that different factors might be at the origin of an increased number of notifications to the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), including the improved performance of official control systems in the Member States, the increase of such controls and the efficiency of the RASFF as an effective tool to rapidly exchange information which the competent authorities need to take swift and effective action in cases of serious risks. The prospect of financial gain to be obtained through an intentional violation of the rules (fraud) is not only present in times of crisis. On the basis of the information available, it would not appear to be reasonable to link the increase of the number of RASFF notifications to the present economic crisis.

3. There are no elements that permit the conclusion that the risk of fraudulent behaviour for financial motives is growing (data from the RASFF system indicates that while in 2010 and 2011 3% of all notification relate to a fraud, in 2012 that figure is 2%).

4. No detailed information is systematically collected about the motives behind fraudulent behaviour reported through the RASFF system, as the latter's main purpose is to share information about serious risks to health.

5 and 6. The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that food fraud is a matter of concern. That is why the forthcoming proposal to review Union rules applicable to official controls over the food chain and penalties will aim to provide national enforcers with a more efficient legal framework and stronger enforcement tools.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001413/13
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(11 februari 2013)

Betreft: Paardenvlees verkocht als rundvlees

De afgelopen dagen werd bekend dat in onder andere Groot-Brittannië en Frankrijk diepvriesproducten uit de schappen zijn gehaald omdat deze producten met paardenvlees in plaats van rundvlees waren vervaardigd. Deze diepvriesproducten zijn afkomstig van een bedrijf dat zijn producten in heel Europa verkoopt.

Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de situatie van het als rundvlees verkochte paardenvlees?

Is bij de Commissie bekend in welke producten dit paardenvlees terecht is gekomen? In hoeveel landen zijn deze producten vervolgens op de markt gebracht? Via welke route is het paardenvlees in de uiteindelijke producten terechtgekomen?

Is bij de Commissie bekend of in dit paardenvlees sporen gevonden zijn van pijnstillers die soms bij paarden gebruikt worden, zoals fenylbutazon? Is hierop gescreend door de bevoegde autoriteiten in de betreffende lidstaten?

Zijn er meldingen gedaan over deze situatie via het systeem voor snelle waarschuwingen voor levensmiddelen en diervoeders (RASFF: Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed)? Zo ja, welke meldingen zijn er wanneer gedaan en door wie? Welke actie heeft de Commissie naar aanleiding van deze meldingen genomen? Heeft het controlesysteem RASFF volgens de Commissie naar behoren gewerkt?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(16 april 2013)

De Commissie volgt de situatie met betrekking tot de mogelijke aanwezigheid van paardenvlees in rundvleesproducten op de voet. Volgens de kennisgevingen van het systeem voor snelle waarschuwingen voor levensmiddelen en diervoeders (RASFF) is er in een groot aantal lidstaten paardenvlees gevonden in verschillende vleesproducten (lasagne, goulash, tortellini, kebab enz.), zonder dat dit vermeld stond op de lijst van ingrediënten zoals voorgeschreven door de EU-levensmiddelenwetgeving. Deze vorm van fraude wordt onderzocht door de bevoegde autoriteiten in de lidstaten, in samenwerking met de politiediensten en Europol.

De residubewakingsplannen van de lidstaten omvatten controles op residuen van fenylbutazon in paardenvlees. De resultaten van de nationale residubewakingsplannen worden elk jaar gepubliceerd. De gegevens uit 2012 moeten uiterlijk op 31 maart 2013 bij de Commissie worden ingediend; geen van de tot dusver gecommuniceerde resultaten (9 lidstaten) blijkt positief te zijn.

In aanvulling op het bovengenoemde residubewakingsplan wordt in Aanbeveling 2013/99/EU van de Commissie een specifiek actieplan voorgesteld voor verdere controles op residuen van fenylbutazon in paardenvlees. De volledige resultaten van het residubewakingsplan zullen op 15 april beschikbaar zijn. De Commissie zal een volledig rapport publiceren direct na ontvangst van de resultaten van de betrokken lidstaten.

RASFF ontvangt regelmatig informatie van de nationale contactpersonen in de lidstaten over de ontwikkeling van de situatie. Deze informatie is te vinden op de volgende website: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/rasff-window/portal/.

De Commissie onderhoudt nauwe contacten met de handhavingsautorieiten in de lidstaten en wordt op de hoogte gehouden van de lopende onderzoeken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001413/13
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(11 February 2013)

Subject: Horsemeat sold as beef

In the past few days it has been revealed that in Britain, France and elsewhere, deep-frozen products have been taken off the shelves because these products had been manufactured from horsemeat instead of beef. These deep-frozen products came from a company which sells its products throughout Europe.

Is the Commission aware of the situation with regard to horsemeat sold as beef?

Does the Commission know in what products this horsemeat was incorporated? In how many countries were these products then marketed? By what route did the horsemeat come to be incorporated in the end-products?

Does the Commission know whether traces of analgesics which are sometimes administered to horses, such as phenylbutazone, have been found in this horsemeat? Have the competent authorities in the Member States concerned ordered analyses to check for them?

Were any reports concerning this situation sent via the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)? If so, what reports, when, and by whom were they made? What action did the Commission take in response to them? Did the RASFF work as it should do?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The Commission is closely following the situation with regard to the undeclared presence of horsemeat in beef-based products. According to the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) notifications, horsemeat has been found in several meat products (lasagne, goulash, tortellini, kebab etc.), in a large number of Member States, without it being declared in the list of ingredients as required by EU food law. The competent authorities in the Member States together with police authorities and Europol are investigating this fraud.

The Member States' residue monitoring plans include checks for Phenylbutazone residues in horsemeat. The results of the national control plans are published every year. Data on 2012 must be submitted to the Commission by 31 March 2013; however preliminary results communicated so far (9 Member States) show no positive results.

In addition to the above residue monitoring plan, Commission Recommendation 2013/99/EU put in place a specific action plan for further checks on phenylbutazone residues in horsemeat. The complete results of the control plan are expected by 15 April. The Commission will publish a full report immediately after the reception of the results by the Member States.

RASFF receives on regular basis information from the national contact points in the Member States on the evolution of the situation, the information can be found at the following web address https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/rasff-window/portal/.

The Commission is in close contact with the enforcement authorities in the Member States and is kept informed about the ongoing investigations.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-001414/13
till kommissionen
Olle Schmidt (ALDE)
(12 februari 2013)

Angående: Mänskliga rättigheter i Vitryssland

Alexander Lukasjenkos regering utövar alltmer förtryck och fortsätter att slå ner politiskt oliktänkande i Vitryssland. Människorättsförsvarare, medborgarrättsaktivister och oberoende journalister förföljs rutinmässigt om de uttrycker någon form av missnöje mot myndigheterna. Hundratals människor som demonstrerat för demokratin har straffats med administrativa eller straffrättsliga påföljder, ofta utan tillräckliga bevis på att något brott har begåtts.

Hur tänker Vice-ordföranden/Höga representanten följa upp sina slutsatser av den 15 oktober 2012 om Vitryssland? Går det att tillämpa mer restriktiva åtgärder? Vad kan göras för att garantera att politiska fångar släpps fria?

Ställer sig Vice-ordföranden/Höga representanten bakom parlamentets resolution av den 29 mars 2012 ([1]) om situationen i Vitryssland, i vilken ledamöterna kräver att EU:s medlemsstater uppmanar Internationella ishockeyförbundet att låta ett annat land än Vitryssland stå som värd för 2014 års världsmästerskap i ishockey fram till dess att samtliga politiska fångar, som betecknas som samvetsfångar av internationella människorättsorganisationer, släpps fria och regimen visar tydliga tecken på att vilja uppfylla sitt åtagande om att respektera mänskliga rättigheter och rättsstatsprincipen? Om så är fallet, hur kan Vice-ordföranden/Höga representanten garantera att regimen inte kommer att stå som värd för mästerskapet?

Svar från den höga representanten/vice ordföranden Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar
(20 mars 2013)

Såsom anges i rådets slutsatser från oktober 2012 håller EU fast vid sitt åtagande om ifrågasättande politisk dialog gentemot Vitryssland. I denna ingår samarbete genom det multilaterala spåret i det östliga partnerskapet och tekniska dialoger samt starkt stöd till det civila samhället. Samtidigt uttalar sig EU fortfarande mycket kraftigt om sin oro för landet och har infört restriktiva åtgärder mot dem som är ansvariga för allvarliga kränkningar av de mänskliga rättigheterna, förtrycket av det civila samhället och den demokratiska oppositionen, eller dem vars verksamhet allvarligt undergräver demokratin eller rättsstatsprincipen i Vitryssland och dem som drar fördel av eller stöder Lukasjenko-regimen. Dessa restriktiva åtgärder är fortfarande öppna och under kontinuerlig översyn.

Den ovillkorliga frigivningen och återupprättelsen av alla politiska fångar är fortfarande prioriterat bland EU:s förväntningar på Vitryssland. EU tar varje tillfälle i akt för att ta upp frågan om politiska fångar med de vitryska myndigheterna och arbeta för deras frigivning. EU noterar det beslut som de internationella och nationella ishockeyförbunden fattade i maj 2012 och som bekräftar Vitryssland som plats för världsmästerskapet i ishockey 2014. Mot bakgrund av det kommande världsmästerskapet kommer EU att hålla de internationella och nationella ishockeyförbunden informerade om dess djupa oro vad gäller Vitrysslands bristande respekt för mänskliga rättigheter, rättsstatsprincipen och de demokratiska principerna.

([1]) Antagna texter, P7_TA(2012)0112.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001414/13
to the Commission
Olle Schmidt (ALDE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Human rights in Belarus

The increasingly repressive government of Alexander Lukashenko continues to clamp down on dissidents in Belarus. Human rights defenders, civil society activists and independent journalists are routinely persecuted for expressing any signs of discontent with the authorities. Hundreds of pro-democracy demonstrators have been punished with administrative or criminal sanctions, frequently without sufficient evidence of an offence having been committed.

How will the Vice-President/High Representative follow up its conclusions on Belarus of 15 October 2012? Can more restrictive measures be applied, and what can be done to ensure that political prisoners are released?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree with Parliament's resolution of 29 March 2012 on the situation in Belarus ([1]), in which Members called for EU Member States to urge the International Ice Hockey Federation to relocate the 2014 Ice Hockey World Championship from Belarus to another host country until all political prisoners, recognised by international human rights organisations as 'prisoners of conscience', are released and until the regime shows clear signs of its commitment to respect human rights and the rule of law? If so, what can the Vice-President/High Representative do to ensure that the regime will not host the Championship?

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

As stated in the October 2012 Council Conclusions, the EU remains committed to a policy of critical engagement towards Belarus. This includes cooperation through the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership initiative and technical dialogues, as well as strong support to civil society. At the same time, the EU remains very vocal about its concern in the country and has imposed restrictive measures against those responsible for serious violations of human rights, the repression of civil society and democratic opposition, or whose activities otherwise seriously undermine democracy or the rule of law in Belarus, and those who are benefiting from or supporting the Lukashenka regime. These restrictive measures remains open and under constant review.

The unconditional release and rehabilitation of all political prisoners remains at the top of the EU's expectations vis-à-vis Belarus. Every opportunity is taken by the EU to raise with Belarusian authorities the issue of political prisoners and to work for their liberation. The EU takes note of the decision by the International and National Ice Hockey Federations in May 2012 confirming Belarus as the venue for the 2014 International Ice Hockey Championship. In the context of the upcoming Championship, the EU will keep International and National Ice Hockey Federations informed about its deep concerns as regards the lack of respect by Belarus for human rights, the rule of law and democratic principles.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0112.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001415/13
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(12 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Revisión de las normas relativas a las ayudas estatales de finalidad regional

El pasado 24 de enero se inició la Consulta pública sobre la revisión de las normas de la Unión Europea relativas a las ayudas estatales de finalidad regional. Para lograr una mayor eficiencia del gasto es necesario armonizar la revisión de estas normas con arreglo a la nueva política de cohesión que se está negociando actualmente y a las circunstancias económicas actuales. Además, y como consecuencia de la grave crisis económica que atraviesa Europa, algunos países de la UE, como España, sufren altas tasas de desempleo, por lo que es necesario reforzar las ayudas con el objetivo de no perder la cohesión alcanzada en los últimos años.

¿Cómo tiene previsto la Comisión dar cumplimiento a lo establecido en el artículo 107, apartado 3, letra a), del TFUE en el sentido de dar cobertura a las zonas en las que exista una grave situación de subempleo?

¿Qué medidas baraja la Comisión, ya sea en el ámbito de las ayudas regionales o ya sea como categoría exenta de ayuda, para los proyectos de infraestructuras públicas cofinanciados por los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos al objeto de dotar de seguridad jurídica tanto a las administraciones públicas como a los ciudadanos y empresas tras la situación generada por la sentencia Leipzig-Halle (Asunto C-288/11)?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de abril de 2013)

En respuesta a la primera pregunta de Su Señoría, de conformidad con el artículo 107, apartado 3, letra a), del TFUE, la Comisión considera que la tasa de PIB per cápita es un útil indicador indirecto del desarrollo económico de una región que tiene en cuenta la tasa de desempleo. Se trata también de un indicador respecto al cual se puede disponer fácilmente de datos comparables. La Comisión tiene la intención de utilizar la tasa de PIB medio per cápita correspondiente al período 2008-2010 para crear mapas de ayuda regional, porque estos datos reflejan la incidencia de la crisis económica y el desempleo en distintas zonas de la UE.

Respondiendo a la segunda pregunta, la Comisión señala que la normativa vigente ([1]) exime a determinados proyectos de infraestructura (por ejemplo, en los sectores de la energía y el transporte) de la notificación obligatoria con arreglo a las normas sobre ayudas estatales. En la próxima revisión del Reglamento general de exención por categorías (RGEC), la Comisión tiene previsto ampliar estas exenciones a otros ámbitos, tales como la banda ancha y la I+D.

La Comisión ha adoptado medidas para determinar más fácilmente los proyectos cofinanciados por los fondos de la UE sujetos a las normas de la UE en materia de ayudas estatales y ha proporcionado a los Estados miembros modelos analíticos para ayudarles a determinar si un proyecto se ha acogido a ayudas estatales y, por lo tanto, está sujeto a la normativa de la UE, o a asistirles en la estructuración de su apoyo, inclusive a proyectos de infraestructura, de forma que no sea constitutivo de ayuda estatal.

Los servicios de la Comisión han participado en varias reuniones con el Comité de Coordinación de los Fondos (COCOF), han celebrado sesiones de formación para las autoridades de gestión sobre las implicaciones en materia de ayudas estatales de los proyectos cofinanciados por los fondos de la UE y pueden aportar aclaraciones.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 800/2008 de la Comisión, de 6 de agosto de 2008, por el que se declaran determinadas categorías de ayuda compatibles con el mercado común en aplicación de los artículos 87 y 88 del Tratado (Reglamento general de exención por categorías) (DO L 214 de 9.8.2008, p. 3); Directrices comunitarias sobre ayudas estatales en favor del medio ambiente (DO C 85 de 1.4.2008).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001415/13
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Review of guidelines applied to national regional aid

On 24 January 2013 a public consultation was launched on the review of the EU guidelines on national regional aid. In order to make spending more efficient, the review of these guidelines needs to be in line with the new cohesion policy which is currently under negotiation and with the current economic circumstances. Furthermore, the serious economic crisis in Europe has caused high levels of unemployment in some countries, such as Spain, making it necessary to strengthen aid so that the cohesion achieved over recent years is not lost.

How does the Commission intend to ensure compliance with the terms of Article 107(3a) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in terms of providing aid to areas where there is serious underemployment?

What measures is the Commission considering, whether in the sphere of regional aid or as an aid-exempt category, for public infrastructure projects which are co-financed by European structural or investment funds, in order to provide legal certainty to public administrations, citizens and enterprises in light of the situation created by the Leipzig-Halle judgment (Case C-288/11)?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

In answer to the Honourable Member's first question, on the basis of Articles 107(3)(a) TFEU, the Commission considers that the GDP per capita rate is a helpful proxy indicator of the economic development of a region, which takes into account its unemployment rate. It is an indicator for which comparable data is readily available. The Commission intends to use the average GDP per capita rate for the period 2008-2010 to create regional aid maps, as this data reflects the impact of both the economic crisis and unemployment in different parts of the EU.

In reply to the second question, the Commission points out that current rule ([1]) exempt certain infrastructure projects (e.g. in energy and transport) from notification obligation under state aid rules. In the forthcoming revised General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) it intends to extend these exemptions to other areas, such as broadband and R&D.

The Commission has introduced measures to facilitate the identification of projects co-financed by EU Funds which are subject to the EU State aid rules. It has provided Member States with 'analytical grids' to help them identify if a project is a recipient of state aid, and therefore subject to EU rules, or to help them structure support, including for infrastructure projects, as free of state aid.

The Commission services have participated in various meetings with the Coordination Committee of the Funds (COCOF) and have conducted training sessions for managing authorities on state aid implication of projects co-financed by EU Funds and remain available for clarifications.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008 specifies certain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty (General Block Exemption Regulation), OJ L 214, 9/8/2008, p.3 ; Community Guidelines on state aid for environmental protection . OJ C 85, 1.4.2008.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001416/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(12 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Problemele UE

Criticile la adresa Uniunii Europene se intensifică și iau forme tot mai coerente. Ideea de o Europă unită este contrazisă din ce în ce mai mult de către mulți dintre cetățenii statelor membre.

Uniunea Europeană este privită de mulți ca o structură lipsită de transparență, hiper-birocratică, care folosește măsuri diferite între vechile și noile state membre, ceea ce ridică noi bariere între cetățeni și instituțiile Uniunii Europene.

Ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru aprofundarea încrederii în instituțiile europene, dar și pentru reducerea euroscepticismului în rândul cetățenilor săi?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(2 aprilie 2013)

Rezultatele celui mai recent sondaj Eurobarometru standard, desfășurat în noiembrie 2012 arată că 33 % dintre europeni declară că au încredere în UE. În raport cu fiecare dintre instituțiile UE, 44 % dintre europeni au încredere în Parlamentul European și 40 % în Comisia Europeană. Prin comparație, numai 27 % dintre respondenți au afirmat că au încredere în guvernele lor naționale.

Recâștigarea încrederii în UE necesită un efort colectiv din partea statelor membre și a instituțiilor europene pentru a explica acțiunile întreprinse la nivel european, inclusiv motivul pentru care acestea sunt considerate benefice pentru cetățeni.

Comisia fructifică pe deplin oportunitățile oferite de Anul European al Cetățenilor 2013, un instrument care contribuie, într-un moment foarte potrivit, la promovarea drepturilor cetățenilor Uniunii Europene și la demonstrarea faptului că cetățenia UE nu este un concept lipsit de sens, ci aduce drepturi și beneficii concrete pentru cetățeni.

În scopul sporirii transparenței și vizibilității democratice, Comisia a adoptat o recomandare către partidele politice de a desemna un candidat pentru președinția Comisiei Europene și de a își declara afilierea la unul dintre partidele politice europene în cadrul alegerilor din 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001416/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: EU and its problems

The criticisms being made of the EU are intensifying and becoming more and more coherent. The idea of a united Europe is being contested by a growing number of citizens in the Member States.

Many people see the European Union as an extremely bureaucratic structure that lacks transparency and applies different standards to the old and the new Member States, thereby creating new barriers between the European Union's citizens and institutions.

What action will the Commission take to boost confidence in the European institutions and reduce Euroscepticism among EU citizens?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

Results from the latest Standard Eurobarometer survey conducted in November 2012 show that 33% of Europeans say they trust the EU. Looking specifically to the EU institutions, 44% of Europeans trust the European Parliament and 40% of Europeans trust the European Commission. By comparison, only 27% said that they trust their national government.

Regaining trust in the EU requires a collective effort from Member States as well as European institutions, explaining the actions taken at European level including why they believe these are beneficial for their citizens.

The Commission is fully exploiting the opportunities afforded by the European Year of Citizens 2013 as a timely vehicle for promoting the rights of the citizens of the European Union and demonstrating that EU citizenship is not an empty concept, but is bringing tangible rights and benefits to the citizens.

To enhance transparency and democratic visibility, the Commission adopted a recommendation that political parties should nominate a candidate for European Commission President and that they should display their European political party affiliation in the 2014 elections.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001417/13
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(12 février 2013)

Objet: Fonds européens pour la recherche médicale sur les maladies contagieuses

La recherche médicale sur les maladies contagieuses est un axe prioritaire de l'Europe. Ces maladies exposent de part le monde des centaines de millions de personnes à des virus parfois très virulents et dangereux. Pour certaines d'entre elles, la recherche est très avancée, mais des besoins en financement cruciaux viennent ternir l'éclosion de résultats.

Les chercheurs européens sont pourtant parmi les meilleurs dans ce domaine. Mais il est primordial que l'Union européenne les accompagne encore mieux.

1. Dans le cadre du 7e PCRD et de l'IMI, y a-t-il ou y aura-t-il des appels d'offres dans ce domaine?

2. Existe-t-il d'autres sources de financements européens mobilisables rapidement (courant 2013) pour cette recherche?

3. Dans le cas d'une réponse affirmative à l'une de ces questions, la Commission pourrait-elle détailler les procédures et le calendrier applicables?

4. D'une manière générale, quels sont les principaux critères que retient la Commission pour octroyer une subvention à ce type de recherche médicale (coopération, viabilité, avancement)?

Réponse donnée par Mme Geoghegan-Quinn au nom de la Commission
(13 mars 2013)

1. La Commission a contribué de manière substantielle, à hauteur d'environ un milliard d'euros, à la recherche sur les maladies contagieuses, principalement par l'intermédiaire du thème «Santé» du programme spécifique de recherche collaborative du septième programme-cadre de recherche et de développement technologique (7e PC, 2007-2013) et de l'initiative en matière de médicaments innovants (IMI), dont le budget a été consacré en partie à des projets de recherche sur les maladies contagieuses, et notamment les infections bactériennes, la tuberculose et la mise au point de vaccins.

2. Les derniers appels à propositions du 7e PC relatifs aux maladies transmissibles ont été publiés en juillet 2012. Le dernier appel du thème «Santé» prévoit un budget d'environ 170 millions d'euros pour les maladies transmissibles. En ce qui concerne l'IMI, un appel ouvert à propositions, avec deux thèmes consacrés à la lutte contre la résistance aux antimicrobiens, est en cours ([1]). Un autre appel, concernant la mise au point de nouvelles méthodes de contrôle de l'efficacité des vaccins contre la grippe, devrait être lancé dans le courant de cette année. Il sera annoncé sur le site web de l'IMI ([2]) et sur le portail des participants à la recherche ([3]). La lutte contre les maladies infectieuses devrait rester un engagement ferme de la Commission dans le programme Horizon 2020 (2014-2020).

3. Des informations détaillées sur les procédures et le calendrier de tous ces appels à propositions (7e PC et IMI) sont publiées sur les pages consacrées à chaque appel.

4. Les règles relatives à la sélection de propositions au titre du 7e PC suivent celles prévues dans la décision de la Commission du 28 février 2011, modifiant la décision C(2008) 4617 ([4]).

([1]) http://www.imi.europa.eu/content/8th-call-2012
([2]) http://www.imi.europa.eu
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal
([4]) 2011/161/UE, Euratom, JO L 75 du 22.3.2011, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001417/13
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: European fund for medical research on contagious diseases

Medical research on contagious diseases is one of Europe's key priorities. These diseases expose hundreds of millions of people the world over to viruses that can be virulent and dangerous. Research into some of these diseases is very advanced, but vital funding is needed in order to produce results.

European researchers are among the best in this field, but it is vital for the EU to provide more support for them.

1. Are there, or will there be, any invitations to tender in this field under the Seventh Framework Programme and the Initiative on Innovative Medicines?

2. Are there any other sources of European funding that can be mobilised at short notice (during 2013) for this kind of research?

3. If the answer to either of these questions is 'yes', could the Commission provide details of the procedures and timetables involved?

4. In general, what are the Commission's main criteria for granting funding to this kind of medical research (e.g. cooperation, viability, advancement)?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2013)

1. The Commission has contributed substantially with around one billion EURO to research on contagious diseases, mainly through the Health Theme within the collaborative research specific programme of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) and through the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) that has also dedicated a part of its budget to research projects on contagious diseases, especially on bacterial infections, tuberculosis, and vaccine development.

2. The last FP7 calls for proposals on communicable diseases were published in July 2012. The last FP7 call in the Health theme foresees a budget of around EUR 170 million earmarked for communicable diseases. IMI currently has an open call for proposals with two topics to fight antimicrobial resistance ([1]). A further call to develop new methods to ascertain the efficacy of vaccines against influenza is foreseen to be launched later this year. It will be announced on the IMI website ([2]) and the research participants portal ([3]) The strong commitment of the Commission to combat infectious diseases is expected to continue in Horizon 2020 (2014-2020).

3. Detailed information about procedures and timelines for FP7 and IMI calls can be found at the call pages.

4. The rules related to the selection of proposals under FP7 follow those laid down in the Commission decision of 28 February 2011, amending Decision C(2008) 4617 ([4]).

([1]) http://www.imi.europa.eu/content/8th-call-2012
([2]) http://www.imi.europa.eu
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal
([4]) 2011/161/EU, Euratom, OJ 22.3.2011, L 75/1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001418/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(12 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Vivisección

Según el artículo 13 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, «[…] la Unión y los Estados miembros tendrán plenamente en cuenta las exigencias en materia de bienestar de los animales como seres sensibles, […]». Con ello se reconocen los derechos fundamentales de los animales, cuyo reconocimiento y conservación deben considerarse una prioridad dentro de la Unión Europea y de los Estados miembros.

Por ello, la experimentación animal debe considerarse una práctica inaceptable. No solo desde el punto de vista ético (compartido por más del 86 % de los ciudadanos de la UE, según un estudio realizado por la Comisión en 2006) sino también desde el punto de vista científico. La comunidad científica considera que el «modelo animal» está desprovisto de capacidad predictiva para los seres humanos y pone en duda su eficacia y fiabilidad. Así pues, la vivisección se considera un peligro para la salud de los seres humanos y para el medio ambiente, así como un obstáculo al posible avance de nuevas técnicas de desarrollo e investigación mucho más seguras, tanto para animales como para seres humanos.

1. ¿Piensa la Comisión hacer caso omiso a la opinión de más de la mitad de los ciudadanos de la Unión Europea?

2. ¿Se plantea la Comisión la posible derogación de la Directiva 2010/63/EU?

3. ¿Se plantea la Comisión la introducción del principio de «las tres erres» en dicha Directiva?

4. ¿Qué medidas propone para el desarrollo, validación y uso de nuevas técnicas alternativas a la experimentación animal?

5. ¿Podría la Comisión incentivar de alguna forma a empresas y centros de investigación para dejar a un lado la vivisección y aplicar nuevas técnicas de desarrollo?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de marzo de 2013)

1. La Directiva 2010/63/UE ([1]) es el resultado de una evaluación de impacto exhaustiva, de aportaciones científicas, de una consulta pública, de negociaciones con todas las partes interesadas, incluidas las ONG dedicadas al bienestar animal, las instituciones académicas y la industria, y, por último, de negociaciones con el Parlamento y el Consejo a lo largo del procedimiento de codecisión.

2. La Comisión no contempla derogar la Directiva 2010/63/UE.

3. Según el artículo 13 del TFUE, el principio de «las tres erres» constituye la piedra angular de la Directiva. Toda cría y utilización de animales en el ámbito científico deben llevarse a cabo de conformidad con dicho principio (artículos 1, 4 y 13, y considerandos 10 a 13).

4. Desde hace muchos años, se está intentando, de forma constante, a escala de la UE, hallar planteamientos alternativos a los ensayos con animales, si es posible. Estos intentos se han reforzado aún más a través de la Directiva 2010/63/UE, la cual, entre otras cosas, requiere la creación de un laboratorio de referencia de la UE para el desarrollo de métodos alternativos y exige que los Estados miembros designen a una persona de contacto para proporcionar asesoramiento sobre la pertinencia normativa de los planteamientos alternativos propuestos para su validación, determinen y nombren laboratorios adecuados y cualificados para llevar a cabo esos estudios de validación y velen por la promoción de los planteamientos alternativos y la difusión de la información a escala nacional. De acuerdo con lo dispuesto en la Directiva 2010/63/UE, deben utilizarse los métodos alternativos reconocidos por la legislación de la Unión.

5. La Directiva obliga a todos los usuarios de animales a aplicar, si es posible, el principio de «las tres erres», el cual es, a todas luces, de obligado cumplimiento desde el punto de vista legal, en caso de que exista un método o planteamiento alternativo reconocido por la legislación de la Unión.

([1]) Directiva 2010/63/UE relativa a la protección de los animales utilizados para fines científicos (texto pertinente a efectos del EEE), DO L 276 de 20.10.2010, pp. 33-79.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001418/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Vivisection

Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union stipulates that, 'since animals are sentient beings, the Union and the Member States must pay full regard to their welfare requirements'. This recognises the fundamental rights of animals, which should be recognised and preserved as a matter of priority within the EU and its Member States.

Animal testing should therefore be regarded as an unacceptable practice, not just from an ethical point of view (shared by over 86% of EU citizens, according to a survey carried out by the Commission in 2006) but also from a scientific one. The scientific community considers that animal research is not able to predict solutions for humans and questions its effectiveness and reliability. Vivisection is therefore seen as a danger to the health of human beings and to the environment, as well as an obstacle to possible advances in new research and development techniques which can be far safer for animals as well as humans.

1. Does the Commission intend to ignore the opinion of over half the EU's citizens?

2. Is the Commission considering repealing Directive 2010/63/EU?

3. Is the Commission considering including the principle of the 3Rs in this directive?

4. What measures does it propose for the development, validation and use of new techniques to provide an alternative to animal testing?

5. Could the Commission provide some form of encouragement to research centres and enterprises to abandon vivisection and use new development techniques?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

1. Directive 2010/63/EU ([1]) is the result of a thorough impact assessment, scientific input, a public survey, negotiations with all concerned stakeholders including animal welfare NGOs, academia and industry, and finally negotiations within the Parliament and the Council during the co-decision procedure.

2. The Commission is not considering repealing Directive 2010/63/EU.

3. In line with Article 13 of the TFEU, the Principle of the 3Rs forms the cornerstone of the directive. All animal breeding and use in the area of science must be carried out in accordance with this Principle (Articles 1, 4, 13 and recitals 10-13).

4. There has been a continuous effort over many years at EU level to find alternative approaches that avoid testing on animals wherever possible. These efforts have been increased under Directive 2010/63/EU which *inter alia* requires the establishment of a EU reference laboratory for the development of alternative methods, and for Member States to appoint a contact person to provide advice on the regulatory relevance of alternative methods proposed for validation, identify and nominate suitable and qualified laboratories for validation studies and ensure the promotion of alternative approaches and the dissemination of information at a national level. Under the directive 2010/63/EU alternative methods recognised by the legislation of the Union must be used.

5. The directive obliges all users of animals to apply the 3Rs where possible, and when an alternative method or approach is recognised by the legislation of the Union this is a clear legal obligation.

([1]) On the protection of animals used for scientific purposes, Text with EEA relevance, OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 33-79.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001421/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(12 février 2013)

Objet: Rationalisation du système de contrôles de la filière agroalimentaire suite à l'affaire de la viande de cheval-boeuf

Le 7 février 2013, l'agence britannique de sécurité alimentaire a découvert de la viande de cheval dans des plats étiquetés comme étant à base de viande de bœuf. En conséquence, plusieurs produits ont été retirés de la vente au Royaume-Uni, en France et en Suède.

Cette affaire met au jour des lacunes dans la traçabilité, la transparence, l'étiquetage et le contrôle de la chaîne agroalimentaire. Certes, des règles strictes en la matière existent au niveau européen et en France. Pourtant, force est de constater qu'elles ne sont pas toujours respectées en raison d'un manque de contrôle.

Or, comme en témoigne ce dossier qui implique au moins six États membres (France, Luxembourg, Pays Bas, Roumanie, Royaume Uni, et Suède), un nombre important d'acteurs (traders, distributeurs, sous traitants, abattoirs, etc.) et de consommateurs, la filière agroalimentaire est d'une complexité croissante. À cette complexité croissante devrait donc correspondre une rationalisation des contrôles effectués dans l'Union européenne.

En effet, l'absence d'un système de contrôle efficace est néfaste tant pour les consommateurs qui sont induits en erreur que pour l'industrie qui subit une perte de confiance des acheteurs. En outre, les acteurs de la filière qui respectent les règles se retrouvent pénalisés face à ceux qui ne les respectent pas.

Afin de rétablir la confiance des consommateurs dans l'étiquetage et la qualité des produits et afin d'éviter les fraudes, la Commission prévoit-elle de prendre des mesures visant à renforcer les contrôles ad hoc effectués dans l'alimentation, et plus particulièrement dans la filière «viande», s'agissant de la production européenne, mais aussi de nos importations?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(2 avril 2013)

C'est aux exploitants du secteur alimentaire qu'il incombe en premier lieu de veiller à ce que les produits mis sur le marché respectent les exigences de la législation de l'Union en matière de denrées alimentaires que les autorités nationales compétentes sont chargées de faire appliquer en effectuant des contrôles appropriés et en imposant des sanctions efficaces et dissuasives. Un système complet de règles en matière de sécurité des denrées alimentaires est déjà en place au niveau de l'Union, y compris des mesures relatives à la traçabilité des denrées alimentaires d'origine animale; c'est ce système qui a permis de révéler rapidement l'origine et l'ampleur des pratiques frauduleuses dont il est question. Enfin, les règles sur l'étiquetage des denrées alimentaires mises en place au niveau de l'Union ([1]) ont également récemment été revues afin de fournir aux consommateurs une base leur permettant de choisir en connaissance de cause et d'utiliser les denrées alimentaires en toute sécurité ([2]).

La Commission a été active tant sur le plan politique que technique en coordonnant les enquêtes en cours dans les États membres concernés. À cette fin, la Commission a récemment adopté une recommandation relative à un plan de contrôle coordonné ([3]) appelant à la réalisation au niveau de l'UE de contrôles officiels des denrées alimentaires commercialisées comme contenant du bœuf afin de détecter tout étiquetage frauduleux et de contrôles sur la viande de cheval destinée à la consommation humaine en vue de détecter la présence de résidus de phénylbutazone, médicament vétérinaire dont l'utilisation n'est autorisée que pour les animaux non producteurs de denrées alimentaires. Un résumé des conclusions sera disponible pour le mois d'avril 2013. En fonction de l'évaluation des résultats, la Commission décidera d'une ligne de conduite appropriée. Le plan est cofinancé par l'Union à hauteur de 75 %.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 mars 2000 relative au rapprochement des législations des États membres concernant l'étiquetage et la présentation des denrées alimentaires ainsi que la publicité faite à leur égard (JO L 109 du 6.5.2000, p. 29).

([2]) Règlement (UE) nº 1169/2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires, modifiant les règlements (CE) nº 1924/2006 et (CE) nº 1925/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil et abrogeant la directive 87/250/CEE de la Commission, la directive 90/496/CEE du Conseil, la directive 1999/10/CE de la Commission, la directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil, les directives 2002/67/CE et 2008/5/CE de la Commission et le règlement (CE) nº 608/2004 de la Commission (JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18).

([3]) Recommandation de la Commission du 19 février 2013 relative à un plan de contrôle coordonné en vue d'établir la prévalence de pratiques frauduleuses (2013/99/UE), JO L 48 du 21.2.2013, p. 28.

La proposition que présentera prochainement la Commission concernant les contrôles officiels visera à renforcer davantage le système existant.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001421/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Improving the system of checks in the food industry in the wake of the horsemeat scandal

On 7 February 2013, the UK's Food Standards Agency discovered horsemeat in products labelled as containing beef. As a result, a number of products have been withdrawn from sale in the UK, France and Sweden.

This scandal has laid bare the shortcomings that exist as regards traceability, transparency, labelling and the supervision of the food chain. There are of course strict rules in place at European level and in France, but it is now obvious that a lack of monitoring means that these rules are not always complied with.

The food industry is becoming increasingly complex, as demonstrated by the recent events, which involve at least six Member States (France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Romania, the UK and Sweden), as well as a host of industry stakeholders (traders, distributors, sub-contractors, abattoirs, etc.) and many consumers. In response to this increasingly complex situation, the EU's system of checks needs to be improved.

The lack of an effective monitoring system is just as damaging for the consumers who are being duped as it is for the industry, which is losing the trust of its customers. Furthermore, those in the industry who comply with the rules are losing out to those who do not.

In order to restore consumer confidence in labelling and product quality and to prevent fraud, does the Commission intend to take steps to tighten up spot checks in the food industry, and particularly in the meat sector, as regards both European and imported products?

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

Food business operators are primarily responsible for ensuring that the products placed on the market comply with Union food law requirements, while the national competent authorities are responsible for enforcing them by conducting appropriate controls and imposing dissuasive and effective penalties. A comprehensive system of food safety rules is already in place at Union level, including traceability requirements for foods of animal origin; it is because of this system that the origin and extent of the fraudulent actions in question were quickly identified. Finally, rules on food labelling are also set up at Union level ([1]) and have recently been revised to provide a basis for consumers to make informed choices and make safe use of foods ([2]).

The Commission has been active both on political and technical levels in coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned. To this end, the Commission has recently adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([3]) calling for EU-wide controls on foods marketed as containing beef to detect fraudulent labelling and on horse meat destined for human consumption to detect phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013. Depending on the assessment of the findings, the Commission will decide on an appropriate course of action. The plan is co-financed by the Union at a rate of 75%.

The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and 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 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

([3]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001422/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Migratory pathways for European eel stock

European eel stock levels should be sustainable and restored to within safe biological limits. Conservation should be at the core of any ongoing review of the Eel Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 or of national management plans. As eels have a very complex life cycle, it is essential that they have access to their natural habitat and that this is protected as part of conservation efforts. One possible long-term solution to the depletion of eel stocks is unblocking migratory pathways by modifying lock gates and putting protective screens on hydroelectric power turbines and water pumps. In the more immediate future, restocking with glass eels and releasing adult eels over dykes are still important measures for helping to boost eel escapement.

Can the Commission comment on the extent to which such measures have been considered?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

According to the Eel Regulation (EC) 1100/2007 ([1]) Member States had the obligation to prepare Eel Management Plans (EMPs) with a view to reducing anthropogenic mortalities.

In line with Article 2(8) of the Eel regulation, these EMPs were supposed to contain measures such as restocking of glass eels and releasing of adult eels as well as measures aiming at unblocking eel migratory pathways by removing or modifying obstacles, including hydroelectric power turbines and water pumps. Indeed, several Member States have included these measures in their EMPs.

All EMPs by the Member States have been scientifically assessed and received confirmation by independent scientists that they are in line with the EU Regulation.

By 31 December 2013, the Commission will report to the European Parliament and the Council with a statistical and scientific evaluation of the outcome of the implementation of the EMPs.

([1]) OJ L 248, 22.9.2007.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001423/13
an den Rat
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(12. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Anzahl von EU-Beamten beim EAD je nach EU-MS und Funktionsgruppe

1. Wie viele Beamte gibt es jeweils in den Funktionsgruppen AST1, AST2, AST3, AST4, AST5, AST6, AST7, AST8, AST9, AST10, AST11, aufgelistet nach den EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

2. Wie viele Beamte gibt es jeweils in den Funktionsgruppen AD5, AD6, AD7, AD8, AD9, AD10, AD11, AD12, AD13, AD14, AD15, AD16, aufgelistet nach den EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

Um Verwaltungslasten zu reduzieren wurden diese Fragen in einer Anfrage zusammengefasst und die einzelnen Fragen mit einer laufenden Nummer versehen. Der Rat wird darum ersucht, die einzelnen Fragen unter Anführung der jeweiligen Nummerierung zu beantworten.

Antwort
(15. April 2013)

Der Herr Abgeordnete erhält in der beigefügten Tabelle die gewünschten Zahlen zu Staatsangehörigkeiten und Besoldungsgruppen des AD- und des AST-Personals beim EAD.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001423/13
to the Council
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Number of EU officials in the EEAS broken down by EU Member State and grade

1. How many officials are there in grade AST1, AST2, AST3, AST4, AST5, AST6, AST7, AST8, AST9, AST10, AST11, respectively, listed by EU Member State?

2. How many officials are there in grade AD5, AD6, AD7, AD8, AD9, AD10, AD11, AD12, AD13, AD14, AD15, AD16, respectively, listed by EU Member State?

In order to reduce the administrative burden, these questions have been collected together into a single written question, and the individual questions have each been given a number. I would therefore kindly request that each of the questions be answered, indicating the corresponding number.

Reply
(15 April 2013)

The Honourable Member will find in the annexed table the requested figures on nationalities and grades of AD and AST staff in the EEAS.

EEAS Officials and Temporary Agents (FO, TA) by grade and nationality
HQ and Delegations
01 March 2013

Category	Grade	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	EE	FI	FR	DE	EL	HU	IE	IT	LV	LT	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SK	SI	ES	SE	UK	Total
AD	5		5	3	1		1	1		4		1	1		2	1	1		3		5		2			2	2	1	36
	6			1	1	3				6	2		2		1	1					11		1	1		2	1		33
	7	4	3	1	1	7		3	4	13	5	1	5	2	5	1	5		2	2	3	2	5	4		3	3	3	87
	8		1			3		2	1	2	5		1		4	3	1				5					3	1		32
	9		5	1	1	3	2	1		8	5	1	2	1	8	1	2		1	2	4	1	1	1	2	6		4	63
	10	1	3				3		5	7	10	6	4	1	9					1		1			1	10	4	7	73
	11	4	4	1			3		3	8	7	3		1	10					4	1	2			1	8	3	6	69
	12	10	13	5		4	3	2	4	36	20	6	4	2	22	2		2	2	5	4	9	3	1	1	18	12	24	214
	13	3	16			3	7	2	2	22	20	6	1	8	29		1	1		8	2	6		1	1	22	4	10	175
	14	4	10				3	1	2	10	7	7	1	6	6	1				7	2	5				4	4	8	88
	15	2					1		1	3	3	2			2					1	1		1			1	1	5	24
	16									1				1								1				2			5
AD Total		28	60	12	4	23	23	12	22	120	84	33	21	22	98	10	10	3	8	30	38	27	13	8	6	81	35	68	899

Category	Grade	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	EE	FI	FR	DE	EL	HU	IE	IT	LV	LT	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SK	SI	ES	SE	UK	Total
AST	1		13	2	1	2		6		6		1	3		4	2	1		2		8	1	7	1	3	3	1		67
	2		10	1		3	2	1	1	2	3	4	3	1	3	1	1		1		7	3	2	1	3	2		2	57
	3		20			5	1	1	1	3	3	1	3	2	5		2		1	4	6		7	1		4	1	3	74
	4		17	1		1			5	8	2	5		2	6		1				2	2		1	2	3	2	3	63
	5	2	30				2		7	11	8	5	1		11					3		1			1	7	5	3	97
	6	4	18				2		2	1	9	3		2	6					7		6				9	7	8	84
	7	1	17				5			7	7	4		3	5					3		9				5	2	6	74
	8	2	15				4			8	6	1			4					1		3				1	5	2	52
	9	1	17							5		2		3	3					5		2				4	4		46
	10	1	5						2	1	2				1					2						3		3	20
	11		4							4	2			1	1							1					1	1	15
AST Total		11	166	4	1	11	16	8	18	56	42	26	10	14	49	3	5		4	25	23	28	16	4	9	41	28	31	649

Grand Total	39	226	16	5	34	39	20	40	176	126	59	31	36	147	13	15	3	12	55	61	55	29	12	15	122	63	99	1548

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001424/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(12. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Anzahl von EU-Beamten beim EAD je nach EU-MS und Funktionsgruppe

1. Wie viele Beamte gibt es jeweils in den Funktionsgruppen AST1, AST2, AST3, AST4, AST5, AST6, AST7, AST8, AST9, AST10, AST11, aufgelistet nach den EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

2. Wie viele Beamte gibt es jeweils in den Funktionsgruppen AD5, AD6, AD7, AD8, AD9, AD10, AD11, AD12, AD13, AD14, AD15, AD16, aufgelistet nach den EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

Um Verwaltungslasten zu reduzieren wurden diese Fragen in einer Anfrage zusammengefasst und die einzelnen Fragen mit einer laufenden Nummer versehen. Die Kommission wird darum ersucht, die einzelnen Fragen unter Anführung der jeweiligen Nummerierung zu beantworten.

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

1. und 2. Die erbetenen Angaben zu Staatsangehörigkeit und Dienstgrad der AD- und AST-Beamten des EAD sind der beigefügten Tabelle zu entnehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001424/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Number of EU officials in the EEAS broken down by EU Member State and grade

1. How many officials are there in grade AST1, AST2, AST3, AST4, AST5, AST6, AST7, AST8, AST9, AST10, AST11, respectively, listed by EU Member State?

2. How many officials are there in grade AD5, AD6, AD7, AD8, AD9, AD10, AD11, AD12, AD13, AD14, AD15, AD16, respectively, listed by EU Member State?

In order to reduce the administrative burden, these questions have been collected together into a single written question, and the individual questions have each been given a number. I would therefore kindly request that each of the questions be answered, indicating the corresponding number.

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

1 and 2: You will find in the annexed table the requested figures on nationalities and grades of AD and AST staff in the EEAS.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001425/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(12 februari 2013)

Betreft: Commissievoorstellen biobrandstoffen

De Commissie heeft vorig jaar voorstellen gedaan om de klimaateffecten van biobrandstoffen zo veel mogelijk te beperken (IP/12/1112). Er is een methode ontwikkeld om de indirecte wijziging van het bodemgebruik (ILUC: indirect land use change) mee te nemen in de vaststelling van de effecten van biobrandstoffen (2012/0288(COD)). Op het gebruik van op voedingsgewassen gebaseerde biobrandstoffen is een plafond van 5 % gesteld. Deze bevriezing juich ik toe.

De formulering laat echter open of deze vijf procent een harde bovengrens is voor iedere lidstaat, of een Europees gemiddelde. Daardoor is het onduidelijk welk groeipad bedrijven en overheden moeten volgen. Ook bestaat er onduidelijkheid over de vaststelling van deze vijf procent.

1. Betreft de vijf procent een bovengrens voor afzonderlijke lidstaten of een Europees gemiddelde?

2. De Commissie heeft een methodologie vastgesteld voor lidstaten om over de ILUC-criteria te rapporteren (2012/0288(COD), bijlage V). Is de Commissie van plan deze voorstellen te koppelen aan de nationale subsidieschema's voor biobrandstoffen? Hoe wordt het maximum van 5 % voor brandstoffen van eerste generatie juridisch afgedwongen?

3. Kan de Commissie garanderen dat de huidige lijst met „goede" brandstoffen intact blijft? Is er met andere woorden investeringszekerheid?

4. Is de productiecapaciteit voldoende om de doelstelling voor biobrandstoffen van de tweede generatie te realiseren? Zijn er nog proefprojecten nodig om de technologie verder te ontwikkelen of is deze reeds inzetbaar? Wat is er in Horizon 2020 hiervoor voorzien? Besteedt de Commissie in de verdere uitwerking van Horizon 2020 aandacht aan de verdere ontwikkeling van biobrandstoffen?

5. Heeft de Commissie voorstellen voor een geharmoniseerde Europese monitoring om tot vaststelling van het aandeel van biobrandstoffen van de eerste generatie te komen?

6. Nederland overweegt de verplichte bijmenging van biobrandstoffen veeleer te verhogen. Zijn er andere lidstaten waar dit ook gebeurt? Zo ja welke, met welk percentage?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(8 april 2013)

1. Het voorstel van de Commissie bevat een beperking voor de bijdrage die biobrandstoffen en vloeibare biomassa geproduceerd uit voedingsgewassen ([1]) kunnen leveren aan de streefcijfers van de lidstaten in het kader van de hernieuwbare-energierichtlijn; deze beperking is vastgesteld op 5 % van de totale energie die in het vervoer wordt verbruikt en geldt voor elke afzonderlijke lidstaat.

2. De beperking van 5 % betekent een vermindering van de stimulansen voor conventionele biobrandstoffen, maar geen strikte bovengrens voor financiële steun of verbruik. De naleving van deze beperking zal tezamen met de streefcijfers van de lidstaten in het kader van de hernieuwbare-energierichtlijn worden gehandhaafd.

3. Met betrekking tot de meervoudig getelde biobrandstoffen zijn er momenteel geen gerelateerde duurzaamheidseffecten voorzien in het licht van de beperkte hoeveelheden die in de periode tot 2020 worden gemobiliseerd. Deze lijst zou naar aanleiding van wetenschappelijke ontdekkingen kunnen worden bijgewerkt.

([1]) Biobrandstoffen en vloeibare biomassa geproduceerd uit oliegewassen, suikers, granen en andere zetmeelrijke gewassen.

4. De Commissie is van mening dat de aanvullende hoeveelheden aan geavanceerde biobrandstoffen, hernieuwbare elektriciteit in het weg- en ander vervoer of de inspanningen op het gebied van energie-efficiëntie die nodig zijn om aan de streefdoelen te voldoen kunnen worden bereikt. Verschillende geavanceerde biobrandstoftechnologieën kunnen al worden gebruikt; de geïnstalleerde capaciteit is echter nog beperkt. Aanvullende technologieën zijn in ontwikkeling. De laatste jaren is er aanzienlijke steun gegeven aan onderzoek en innovatie, met name door middel van KP7 (circa 340 miljoen euro) en de eerste oproep voor „NER300" (circa 600 miljoen euro) ([2]). Dergelijke steun zal in Horizon 2020 worden voortgezet in het kader van het SET-plan, met speciale aandacht voor demonstratie en baanbrekende industriële projecten. Toekomstige steun kan ook worden geleverd door middel van financiële instrumenten als de faciliteit voor de „toegang tot risicokapitaal" in Horizon 2020 en de tweede oproep voor NER300.

5. De Commissie houdt actief toezicht op het verbruik van biobrandstoffen ([3]).

6. De Commissie heeft geen uitgebreide informatie over de geplande bijmengingsvoorschriften in de lidstaten.

([2]) Voor acht demonstratieprojecten op het gebied van biobrandstoffen, zie http://ec.europa.eu/clima/funding/ner300/index_en.htm

([3]) De verslagleggingsverplichtingen zijn opgenomen in de hernieuwbare-energierichtlijn en de richtlijn brandstofkwaliteit.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001425/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Commission proposals on biofuels

Last year the Commission made proposals for limiting the impact of biofuels on climate to the minimum (IP/12/1112). A method was devised by means of which to include indirect land use change (ILUC) in the calculation of the impact of biofuels (2012/0288(COD)). A ceiling of 5% was imposed on the use of biofuels based on food crops, a freeze which I welcome.

However, the formulation does not indicate whether this 5% is a hard-and-fast upper limit for each Member State or a European average. As a result, it is not clear how rapidly businesses and governments should aim to increase the use of biofuels. It is also unclear how the 5% figure is arrived at.

1. Does the 5% figure represent a limit for individual Member States or a European average?

2. The Commission has adopted a methodology for Member States to use in reporting on the ILUC criteria (2012/0288(COD), Annex V). Does the Commission intend to link these proposals to the national subsidy schemes for biofuels? How will the 5% ceiling for first-generation fuels be legally enforced?

3. Can the Commission guarantee that the current list of 'good' fuels will remain intact? In other words, does security of investment exist?

4. Is production capacity sufficient to attain the target for second-generation biofuels? Are trials still required to develop the technology further, or can it already be used? What provisions does Horizon 2020 make in this regard? Does the Commission intend to consider the further development of biofuels during the elaboration of Horizon 2020?

5. Does the Commission have proposals for harmonised European monitoring with a view to deciding the proportion of first-generation biofuels?

6. The Netherlands is considering increasing the mandatory admixture of biofuels much sooner. Are there any other Member States where this is also happening? If so, which, and what is the percentage to be incorporated?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

1. The Commission proposal contains a limit to the contribution of biofuels and bioliquids from food crops ([1]) that can be counted towards Member States' Renewable Energy Directive (RED) targets, set at 5% of the total energy consumed in transport and applicable to all Member States individually.

2. The 5% limit implies a reduction in incentives for conventional biofuels, but no strict upper limit for financial support or consumption. Respect of this limit will be enforced together with Member States' RED-targets.

3. With regards to the multiple counted biofuels, no associated sustainability impacts in the context of the limited quantities to be mobilised in the period to 2020 are currently foreseen. This list could be updated in the light of scientific progress.

4. The Commission believes that the additional amounts of advanced biofuels, renewable electricity in road and non-road transport or energy efficiency efforts required to achieve the targets are achievable. Various advanced biofuel technologies can already be used, although installed capacity is still limited. Further technologies are being developed. Substantial support to R&I has been provided in the last years notably through FP7 (ca. EUR 340 million) and the first 'NER 300' call (ca. EUR 600 million) ([2]). Such support will continue in Horizon 2020 guided by the SET-Plan framework, with a special emphasis on demonstration and first-of-a-kind industrial projects. Future support may also be provided through financial instruments such as the 'Access to risk finance' facility of Horizon 2020 and the second NER 300 call.

([1]) Biofuels and bioliquids produced from oil, sugar, cereal and other starch rich crops.
([2]) For 8 biofuel-related demonstration projects, cf. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/funding/ner300/index_en.htm

5. The Commission actively monitors biofuel consumption ([3]).

6. The Commission does not have comprehensive information on Member States' planned blending obligations.

([3]) Reporting obligations are included in the Renewable Energy and Fuel Quality Directives.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001426/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(12 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Represje wobec dziennikarzy niezależnych mediów w Kazachstanie

6 lutego funkcjonariusze prokuratury rejonowej z Ałmaty wtargnęli do redakcji niezależnej gazety „Republic", aby doręczyć wszystkim pracującym w niej dziennikarzom ostrzeżenia o niedopuszczalności publikowania gazety. Dziennikarze zostali poinformowani, że jeśli nadal będą prowadzić swoją działalność, grozi im odpowiedzialność karna.

Kazachska niezależna gazeta „Republic" jest wydawana od 25 stycznia 2013 r. W redakcji pracują osoby tworzące „Gołos Respubliki", który wraz z szeregiem innych niezależnych mediów, został zamknięty przez władze pod koniec 2012 r. Prokuratura usiłuje zakazać wydawania „Republic" twierdząc, że pracuje tam ten sam zespół redakcyjny.

Wolność słowa i wolność mediów są nieustannie naruszane przez władze Kazachstanu, a niezależni dziennikarze są ścigani przez sądy i pociągani do odpowiedzialności karnej za wykonywanie swojego zawodu. Zwracam się więc z pytaniem, czy Wiceprzewodnicząca posiada informacje na temat prześladowania członków redakcji gazety „Republic" i ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie represjonowania dziennikarzy wolnych mediów w Kazachstanie?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca oraz delegatura UE w Astanie śledzą sytuację w zakresie praw człowieka w Kazachstanie, w tym kwestie dotyczące wolności słowa i sytuacji mediów. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Ashton podniosła kwestię zaniepokojenia UE sytuacją w Kazachstanie w zakresie praw człowieka, wolności słowa, praworządności i reform demokratycznych na spotkaniach podczas jej ostatniej wizyty w listopadzie 2012 r. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca podkreśliła również potrzebę wykazania przez Kazachstan zdecydowanego zaangażowania na rzecz ochrony praw człowieka i wolności mediów. Jeśli chodzi o niedawne wtargnięcie do redakcji gazet oraz zakaz wydawania niektórych gazet opozycyjnych, przedstawiciele delegatury UE w Astanie spotkali się z przedstawicielami Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych Kazachstanu w celu uzyskania bardziej szczegółowych informacji w sprawie oskarżeń oraz wyrażenia zaniepokojenia tymi wydarzeniami. Delegatura UE będzie nadal uważnie śledzić dalszy rozwój wydarzeń we współpracy z lokalnymi i międzynarodowymi organizacjami pozarządowymi oraz w kontaktach z władzami Kazachstanu, a także podniesie tę kwestię podczas następnej rundy rozmów na temat praw człowieka między UE i Kazachstanem.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001426/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Repression against independent journalists in Kazakhstan

On 6 February, officials from the district public prosecutor's office in Almaty forced their way into the offices of the independent newspaper *Republic* to warn all the journalists working there that publication of the newspaper was not permitted. The journalists were informed that if they continued to exercise their activities, they could be held criminally liable.

Republic first rolled off the press in Kazakhstan on 25 January 2013. Those working there include people who were involved in the *Golos Respubliki* newspaper, which, along with a number of other independent media outlets, was closed down by the authorities in late 2012. The public prosecutor's office is attempting to ban the publication of *Republic*, claiming that the same editorial team are working on the newspaper.

Freedom of speech and media freedoms are constantly being stifled by the authorities in Kazakhstan, with journalists being taken to court and subjected to criminal prosecutions for doing their jobs. Does the Vice-President/High Representative have information on the persecution of the editorial team at *Republic*? Does she intend to take any action in response to this repression against independent journalists in Kazakhstan?

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

The HR/VP and the EU Delegation in Astana follow the human rights situation in Kazakhstan, including on freedom of speech and the situation of the media. HR/VP Ashton raised the EU's concerns about human rights, freedom of speech, rule of law and democratic reforms in Kazakhstan in meetings during her last visit in November 2012. The HR/VP also underlined the need for Kazakhstan to demonstrate its strong commitment to protecting human rights and ensuring freedom of media. With regard to the recent raids of the offices media outlets and banning of some opposition newspapers, the EU Delegation in Astana met with the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs, asking for more detailed information behind the accusations and expressing concern about the developments. The EU Delegation will continue to closely follow the developments in collaboration with local and international NGOs and in contact with the Kazakh authorities, and will also bring it up during the next round of human rights dialogue between the EU and Kazakhstan.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001427/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Acordos de Livre Comércio envolvendo produtos da pesca ou aquacultura (II)

Na sequência de pergunta anterior (E-011172/2012) e na ausência de resposta adequada por parte da Comissão Europeia, solicito novamente que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que acordos de livre comércio assinados pela UE ou em fase de negociação envolvem produtos da pesca ou de aquacultura?

2. Quais os «interesses defensivos» identificados em cada um desses acordos, em relação aos produtos da pesca ou da aquacultura?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(15 de março de 2013)

1. Por definição, os acordos de comércio livre assinados pela UE, ou em curso de negociação, abrangem todas as mercadorias e, por conseguinte, também os produtos da pesca ou da aquacultura, quer as negociações resultem ou não na liberalização destes produtos.

No sítio Web da Direção-Geral do Comércio ([1]) podem ser consultadas informações sobre todos os acordos de comércio livre em curso de negociação pela UE.

2. Tal como referido na resposta à anterior pergunta escrita E-011172/2012 ([2]), o caráter sensível dos produtos da pesca ou da aquacultura é avaliado caso a caso. Cada produto da pesca ou da aquacultura é analisado tendo em conta os fluxos comerciais e as estruturas pautais. Os interesses defensivos da UE dependem da produção própria da UE, da capacidade de exportação do país parceiro e da sua competitividade.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/december/tradoc_118238.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001427/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Free trade agreements involving fishery or aquaculture products

Following up on my previous question (E-011172) and the lack of a satisfactory response to it from the Commission, I wish to repeat my request for the following information:

1. Which free trade agreements signed by the EU, or currently being negotiated, involve fishery or aquaculture products?

2. What defensive interests are identified in each of these agreements in relation to fishery or aquaculture products?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2013)

1. By definition, free trade agreements signed by the EU, or currently being negotiated, cover all goods and therefore also fishery or aquaculture products, whether or not the negotiations result in liberalisation of these products.

Information regarding all ongoing free trade agreements being negotiated by the EU can be found in the website of the Directorate General for TRADE ([1]).

2. As stated in the reply to previous Written Question E-011172/2012 ([2]), the sensitivity of fishery or aquaculture products is assessed on a case by case basis. Fishery or aquaculture products are analysed product by product, taking into account trade flows and tariff structures. Defensive EU interests depend on the EU's own production, the partner country's export capacity and its competitiveness.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/december/tradoc_118238.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001428/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios comunitários a equipamentos desportivos e à dinamização da prática desportiva na cidade de Lisboa

Vários equipamentos desportivos da cidade de Lisboa encontram-se em adiantado estado de degradação, o que se tem traduzido num manifesto prejuízo para a população da cidade e para a necessária dinamização da prática desportiva.

Estão nestas condições o Complexo Desportivo dos Olivais, as piscinas do Campo Grande e a piscina do Areeiro. Mais recentemente, foi também encerrada a piscina da Penha de França, sob o pretexto da necessidade de realização de obras urgentes, que entretanto não foram realizadas, não havendo data prevista para que tal venha a suceder.

Encerrado há vários anos e em adiantado estado de degradação está também o emblemático Pavilhão Carlos Lopes — um recinto que faz parte da história do desporto português. Hóquei em patins, ginástica, andebol, boxe, luta livre, entre muitas outras modalidades, fazem parte da história deste pavilhão de que a população da cidade e os desportistas se encontram, há vários anos, privados.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que programas e medidas da UE podem apoiar a recuperação do Pavilhão Carlos Lopes? Quais as taxas de cofinanciamento previstas?

2. Que programas e medidas da UE podem apoiar a recuperação da piscina da Penha de França e outros equipamentos desportivos da cidade de Lisboa? Quais as taxas de cofinanciamento previstas?

3. Que programas da UE podem apoiar a dinamização do desporto em cidades como Lisboa?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(12 de abril de 2013)

A região de Lisboa beneficia de financiamento do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) a título do PO Lisboa. A reabilitação do Pavilhão Carlos Lopes e a renovação da piscina da Penha de França não são, enquanto tais, elegíveis ao abrigo do programa.

No entanto, e com base na regulamentação nacional específica sobre reabilitação urbana, as ações no âmbito da reabilitação urbana podem ser financiadas no âmbito das prioridades 2 e 3 do PO Lisboa, mas unicamente quando constituam parte de uma área de reabilitação urbana. A taxa de cofinanciamento é 66 %.

A política de coesão é aplicada no âmbito do princípio da gestão partilhada pelas autoridades nacionais e regionais designadas pelos Estados-Membros. Por conseguinte, a Comissão sugere que a Senhora Deputada contacte a autoridade de gestão do PO Lisboa do FEDER:

PO Regional Lisboa
Rua de Artilharia Um, n.° 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Telefone: + 351 213 837 100
Fax: + 351 213 847 985
presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
http://www.ccdr-lvt.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001428/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Community support for sports facilities and promotion of sporting activity in Lisbon

A number of sports facilities in Lisbon are in an advanced state of dilapidation, a situation which is prejudicial to the city's population and hinders the much-needed promotion of sporting activity.

The Olivais sports complex, Campo Grande swimming pools and the Areeiro swimming pool are all in poor condition. More recently, the Penha de França swimming pool was also closed on the grounds that urgent renovation work needed to be carried out, although no such work has been done and no date has been set for it to start.

The emblematic Carlos Lopes Pavilion, which forms part of the history of sport in Portugal, was closed several years ago and is now an advanced state of decay. Ice hockey, gymnastics, handball, boxing, wrestling and many other sports are inscribed in the history of this building, which has now been closed to the city's residents for a number of years.

1. What EU programmes and measures can be used to support the rehabilitation of the Carlos Lopes Pavilion? What levels of co-funding are provided for?

2. What EU programmes and measures can be used for the renovation of the Penha de França swimming pool and other sports facilities in Lisbon? What levels of co-funding are provided for?

3. What EU programmes can be used to help promote sport in cities like Lisbon?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The region of Lisbon benefits from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding under the Lisbon programme. The rehabilitation of the Carlos Lopes Pavilion and the renovation of the Penha de França swimming pool as such are not eligible under the Lisbon programme.

However, and on the basis of the national specific regulation on urban rehabilitation, operations in the framework of urban rehabilitation could potentially be financed under priorities 2 and 3 of the Lisbon programme, but only if they constitute part of an urban rehabilitation area. The co-financing rate is 66%.

Cohesion policy is implemented under the shared management principle by national and regional authorities designated by the Member States. The Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member contact the managing authority of the ERDF Lisbon programme:

PO Regional Lisboa
Rua Artilharia Um, 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Tel.: + 351 213 837 100
Fax: + 351 213 847 985
presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
http://www.ccdr-lvt.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001429/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Encerramento da fábrica da empresa alemã Steiff, no concelho de Oleiros — Portugal

O encerramento da fábrica alemã Steiff fez duplicar, num só dia, o número de desempregados do concelho de Oleiros, lançando mais de cem trabalhadores no desemprego. Depois do encerramento de vários serviços públicos, a população queixa-se agora, com mais este encerramento, de que querem retirar do concelho os jovens que restam. Muitos dos trabalhadores lançados no desemprego tiveram o seu primeiro emprego na Steiff, boa parte deixando a pequena agricultura de subsistência ou a vida doméstica. Este é mais um rude golpe num concelho da região do Pinhal Interior, uma das mais desertificadas regiões de Portugal.

As razões apresentadas pela empresa alemã para este encerramento resumem-se à deslocalização da produção para uma outra unidade que funciona na Tunísia, em Sidi Bouzid. A administração alega simplesmente a intenção de diminuição de custos com a mão-de-obra.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. A empresa alemã Steiff alguma vez recebeu apoio de fundos da UE? Em caso afirmativo, em que países, em que circunstâncias e com que condições?

2. Que disposições, ao nível da legislação da UE, impedem procedimentos como o da empresa alemã Steiff, que deslocaliza produção com o único objetivo de garantir melhores condições de exploração dos trabalhadores, procurando custos de mão-de-obra mais baixos e lançando centenas de trabalhadores na angústia, na incerteza e na miséria do desemprego? Em caso de inexistência destas disposições, pensa vir a propô-las no futuro?

3. Que financiamentos da UE poderão ser mobilizados para apoiar estes trabalhadores e para incentivar a fixação de novas empresas no concelho, criando postos de trabalho — pelo menos os mesmos que a empresa alemã Steiff agora destruiu?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(4 de abril de 2013)

De acordo com as autoridades portuguesas, a fábrica Steiff, localizada em Oleiros, recebeu uma quantia negligenciável a título de apoio financeiro (3 287,57 euros) do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) no período de programação de 2000-2006. Não foram atribuídos quaisquer fundos do FEDER a esta empresa em Portugal, nem durante o período de 2000-2006, nem durante o período de programação em curso.

A Comissão não tem poderes para intervir nas decisões de empresas específicas relativas ao encerramento de instalações na Europa. Contudo, insta as empresas e todos as partes interessadas a antecipar a reestruturação tanto quanto possível, e a geri-la de uma forma socialmente responsável. Na sequência do Livro Verde sobre a reestruturação e a adoção do relatório Cercas do Parlamento, a Comissão está a considerar qual a melhor forma de encorajar e assegurar a observância das melhores práticas neste campo.

A Comissão está disposta a ter em conta todas as ferramentas disponíveis, nomeadamente:

— os fundos da Política de Coesão, bem como o Feader e o FEAMP, como fontes de investimento importantes que visam estimular o crescimento sustentável e o emprego.

— o FSE como principal instrumento financeiro da UE para apoiar às politicas de emprego e melhorar as competências dos trabalhadores dos Estados Membros.

— o Fundo Europeu de Ajustamento à Globalização que pode, a pedido de um Estado Membro e se as condições previstas pelo FSE estiverem preenchidas, ajudar os trabalhadores despedidos a encontrar um novo emprego o mais rapidamente possível, nomeadamente através de ações de formação.

— o Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional, que apoia, nomeadamente, o empreendedorismo, a inovação e o desenvolvimento de projetos para tornar as cidades mais atrativas.

As autoridades nacionais, regionais e locais devem usar os recursos disponíveis para desenvolver o seu potencial económico e aumentar o emprego.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001429/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Closure of the factory operated by the German company Steiff in Oleiros (Portugal)

The closure of the factory run by the German company Steiff has instantly doubled the number of unemployed in the municipality of Oleiros by leaving over 100 workers jobless. Following the closure of numerous public services, local people now complain that this latest closure will force the few remaining young people to leave the area. Many of the workers who have now been made jobless found their first employment at Steiff, which for many of them offered an alternative to subsistence agriculture or housework. This is yet another heavy blow to this municipality in the Pinhal Interiorr region, one of the most arid areas of Portugal.

The reason put forward by Steiff for closing this factory is that production is be relocated to another facility owned by the company in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia. The administration maintains that the aim is simply to reduce labour costs.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Has the Germany company Steiff ever received EU funding? If so, in which countries, and under what circumstances and conditions?

2. What EU legislative measures exist to prevent actions such as that being taken by Steiff, which is relocating production for the sole purpose of being better able to exploit its workers and reduce its labour costs, and casting hundreds of workers into the anguish, uncertainty and poverty of unemployment? If no such measures exist, does the Commission intend to propose them in the future?

3. What EU funding can be used to support these workers and to encourage other enterprises to set up business in this municipality and create jobs there — at least to replace those now being destroyed by Steiff?

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

According to the Portuguese authorities the Steiff factory, located in Oleiros has received negligible amount of financial support (EUR 3287.57) from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the programming period 2000-2006. No ERDF funds have been allocated to this company in Portugal neither during the 2000-2006 period, nor during the current programming period.

The Commission has no powers to interfere in specific company decisions leading to closure of plants in Europe. However, it urges companies and all stakeholders to anticipate restructuring as far as possible and to manage it in a socially responsible way. Following the Green Paper on restructuring and the adoption of the Cercas Report by the Parliament, the Commission is considering how best to encourage and ensure wide observance of best practice in this field.

The Commission is willing to consider using all tools available and notably:

— The Cohesion Policy funds as well as EAFRD and EMFF as major sources of investment stimulating sustainable growth and employment.

— the ESF as the EU's main financial instrument to support Member States' employment policies and to improve people's skills.

— the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund which can, upon request of a Member State and if the conditions foreseen in the ESF regulation are fulfilled, help the redundant workers find new jobs as quickly as possible, notably through training measures.

— the European Regional Development Fund, which supports, amongst others, entrepreneurship, innovation and development projects to make cities more attractive.

National, regional and local authorities should use available resources to develop their economic potential and increase employment.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001430/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Investigação da Comissão Europeia a bancos portugueses

Notícias recentes na imprensa portuguesa dão conta de que a Comissão Europeia terá aberto uma investigação sobre o pagamento de dividendos por parte da Caixa Geral de Depósitos (CGD) através de uma sua filial. Para a Comissão, estarão em causa as regras da UE em matéria de auxílios estatais.

A Caixa terá pago através da Finace Limited 405 415 euros a investidores institucionais, quando, de acordo com as normas subjacentes ao «auxílio estatal» recebido, no montante de 1,65 milhões de euros, estava proibida de o fazer.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Confirma a abertura da referida investigação?

2. Dispõe, neste momento, de alguma conclusão dessa investigação?

3. Quem foram os «investidores institucionais» beneficiados com a distribuição de dividendos pela CGD?

4. Tendo em conta que outros bancos receberam injeções semelhantes de capital público, algum outro banco está ou vai ser investigado? Qual(ais)? Com que fundamentos?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2013)

Confirmamos que a Comissão lançou uma investigação; em 18 de dezembro de 2012, a Comissão iniciou a sua investigação (ainda não publicada) nos termos do artigo 108.°, n.° 2, do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia relativamente ao processo de auxílio estatal «SA.35062 (2012/NN) — Portugal — Violação de uma proibição de distribuição de dividendos por parte da Caixa Geral de Depósitos, S.A. — Utilização indevida de auxílio de emergência».

Esta investigação está a decorrer e ainda não foi adotada uma decisão final. Quando tal acontecer, essa decisão será publicada no sítio Web da DG Concorrência, acessível através da seguinte ligação:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/index.cfm

A identificação dos «investidores institucionais» faz parte da investigação ainda em curso.

A Comissão lançou em julho de 2001 um quadro de síntese — o chamado «Painel de Avaliação» — para dar uma fonte de informação transparente e acessível ao público sobre a situação geral dos auxílios estatais em cada Estado-Membro e sobre as atuais atividades de controlo dos auxílios estatais desenvolvidas pela Comissão. Inclui igualmente os casos que envolvam bancos afetados pela crise financeira e que tenham recebido apoio do Estado.

O Painel de Avaliação, que é regularmente atualizado e publicado em todas as línguas oficiais, está disponível no endereço:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/studies_reports.html

Além disso, a Comissão publica regularmente um resumo das decisões e das investigações aprofundadas em curso no contexto da crise financeira. O último destes resumos pode ser consultado no seguinte endereço:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-1018_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001430/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Commission investigation of Portuguese banks

The Portuguese press recently reported that the Commission had opened an investigation into the payment of dividends by the Caixa Geral de Depósitos (CGD) through one of its subsidiaries. The Commission has questioned whether this complies with EU rules on state aid.

The bank is alleged to have paid EUR 405 415 to institutional investors via Finance Limited, when according to the rules under which it received EUR 1.65 million in state aid, it is not allowed to do so.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Can it confirm that it has launched the abovementioned investigation?

2. Has said investigation reached any conclusions to date?

3. Who were the 'institutional investors' who received dividends from the CGD?

4. In view of the fact that other banks have received similar injections of state aid, is any other bank under investigation or likely to be so? If so, which ones and on what grounds?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

It is correct that the Commission has launched an investigation; on 18 December 2012, it initiated its investigation (not yet published) under Article 108(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in state aid case 'SA.35062 (2012/NN) — Portugal — Breach of a dividend ban by Caixa Geral de Depósitos, S.A. — Misuse of rescue aid'.

This investigation is ongoing, with a final decision yet to be made. When it is, it will be published on DG Competition's website, accessible via the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/index.cfm.

The identification of the 'institutional investors' is part of the investigation that is still ongoing.

In July 2001 the Commission launched an overview table — the so-called 'Scoreboard' — to provide a transparent and publicly accessible source of information on the overall state aid situation in each Member State and on the Commission's current state aid control activities. It also includes cases involving banks affected by the financial crisis that have received State support.

The Scoreboard, which is regularly updated and published in all official languages, is accessible via the link:

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/studies_reports.html

In addition, the Commission regularly publishes an overview of decisions and ongoing, in-depth investigations in the context of the financial crisis. You may find the last overview under the following link: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-1018_en.htm.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001431/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Respeito pelo princípio do multilinguismo por parte da Comissão Europeia

Na resposta à pergunta escrita E-009664/2012, sobre a «observância do princípio do respeito pelo multilinguismo», a Comissão Europeia remete para uma resposta dada a uma outra pergunta escrita (P-003280/2011), da autoria da Deputada Daciana Sârbu. Sucede, porém, que essa resposta não se encontra disponível em português, o que denota mais um desrespeito pelo princípio do multilinguismo.

Na resposta à pergunta escrita E-009007/2012, sobre «a redução da ajuda pública ao desenvolvimento», a Comissão Europeia remete para a resposta a uma outra pergunta escrita (E-006649/2012), da autoria da Deputada Vasilica Dancila. Sucede, porém, que essa resposta não se encontra disponível em português, o que denota mais um desrespeito pelo princípio do multilinguismo.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Não consideraria adequado disponibilizar as referidas respostas em português? Por que razão não o fez?

2. Está disponível para corrigir esta situação e para evitar a sua repetição no futuro?

Resposta dada por José Manuel Barroso em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão entende que as suas respostas às perguntas parlamentares escritas devem ser expressas na língua do Senhor Deputado que fez a pergunta. Quando uma resposta se referir a uma resposta anterior, esta será igualmente traduzida para a língua do Senhor Deputado. No que respeita às respostas anteriores a que faz referência a presente pergunta, os serviços da Comissão já enviaram as traduções em falta diretamente ao Senhor Deputado em causa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001431/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Commission compliance with the principle of multilingualism

In its answer to Written Question E-009664/2012 on compliance with the principle of multilingualism, the Commission referred the author to the reply given to another written question (P-003280/2011) presented by Daciana Sârbu. It so happens that this answer is not available in Portuguese, which indicates yet another example of incompliance with the principle of multilingualism.

In its answer to Written Question E-009007/2012 on compliance with the principle of multilingualism, the Commission referred the author to the reply given to another written question (E-006649/2012) presented by Vasilica Dancila. It so happens that this answer is not available in Portuguese, which indicates yet another example of incompliance with the principle of multilingualism.

1. Does the Commission consider it appropriate make the abovementioned replies available in Portuguese? Why has it not done so?

2. Is it prepared to correct this situation and prevent its reoccurrence in the future?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The Commission considers it appropriate to make its answers to written parliamentary questions available in the language of the Honourable Member who asked the question. In case an answer refers to a previous answer, the latter will also be translated into the language of the Honourable Member. With respect to the previous answers referred to in the question, the Commission services have in the meantime sent the missing translations directly to the Honourable Member.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001432/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Resultados da austeridade na situação das mulheres trabalhadoras — Estudo da OCDE

De acordo com um estudo da OCDE, as políticas ditas de austeridade impostas em vários países da UE, como é o caso de Portugal, agravam a situação das mulheres trabalhadoras.

O estudo aponta o aprofundamento da desigualdade (salário, reconhecimento e carreira) entre homens e mulheres, a sobre-exposição das mulheres aos despedimentos no setor público (onde são mais numerosas), o agravamento das condições de vida das mulheres (mães solteiras, por exemplo) em resultado dos cortes nos apoios sociais e investimento público, ou a renúncia à atividade laboral por deixar de ser materialmente compensadora.

Em face das conclusões deste estudo, e tendo em conta as responsabilidades da Comissão Europeia na imposição das referidas políticas, solicitamos que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento das conclusões deste estudo?

2. Que avaliação faz a Comissão do impacto das políticas ditas de austeridade, que impõe em países como Portugal, na situação das mulheres trabalhadoras?

3. Vai este estudo determinar alguma mudança de orientação por parte da Comissão?

Resposta dada pelo Vice-Presidente Ollie Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão prestou apoio financeiro à Iniciativa relativa ao género lançada pela OCDE que culminou com a publicação em 2012 do relatório intitulado «*Closing the Gender Gap*» (Reduzir as disparidades de género), estando plenamente empenhada na igualdade entre homens e mulheres.

A Comissão tem vindo a apelar reiteradamente para uma consolidação orçamental diferenciada e favorável ao crescimento, em vez de sustentar soluções rígidas. O impacto específico da consolidação orçamental em termos da igualdade de género diverge consideravelmente consoante os países. Enquanto nalguns países o impacto é pouco significativo, noutros países a importante contenção das despesas nos domínios do emprego, das transferências sociais e dos serviços sociais pode aumentar a desigualdade entre homens e mulheres ([1]). A Comissão concorda que, aquando da análise das eventuais medidas de consolidação orçamental, deve ser tido em conta o impacto potencial a nível da igualdade do género, para além do impacto macroeconómico ou social dessas medidas.

No âmbito do Semestre Europeu de 2012, foram dirigidas recomendações específicas por país a diversos Estados-Membros que tiveram um impacto direto sobre a igualdade de género. A maioria destas recomendações incidia sobre a prestação de serviços de assistência adequados e a preços acessíveis (AT, CZ, DE, HU, IT, MT, PL, SK, UK). Uma recomendação específica por país foi dirigida a um Estado-Membro que se prendia com o elevado diferencial em matéria salarial entre homens e mulheres. Em dois casos, era abordado o tratamento fiscal aplicado ao segundo rendimento do agregado familiar. Além disso, a Comissão acompanha de perto tanto a situação de emprego como social nos países que beneficiam de assistência financeira, nomeadamente em Portugal.

A Comissão continuará a promover a igualdade de género, a acompanhar os progressos realizados, a lançar alertas sobre os riscos e a propor soluções concretas no âmbito da estratégia Europa 2020. Neste contexto, é de referir que assume particular interesse o relatório anual sobre os progressos realizados em matéria de igualdade de género, a publicar em maio de 2013.

([1]) O grupo de peritos em matéria de género e emprego (EGGE) e o grupo de peritos em matéria de igualdade de género e inclusão social, saúde e cuidados prolongados (EGGSI) elaboraram um relatório sobre o impacto da crise económica a nível da situação dos homens e das mulheres e das políticas de igualdade de género (The impact of the economic crisis on the situation of women and men and on gender equality policies), consultar:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/enege_crisis_report__dec_2012_final_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001432/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Impact of austerity on women workers — OECD report

An OECD report has found that the 'austerity' policies being imposed in a number of EU countries, including Portugal, are worsening the situation for women workers.

The report highlights the deepening inequality between men and women (in terms of pay, recognition and career), the fact that women have been particularly badly hit by redundancies in the public sector (where more women work), deteriorating living conditions for women (such as single mothers, for example) resulting from cuts to social benefits and public investment, and the fact that women may give up working because there is no longer any financial gain from doing so.

Given the conclusions of this report, and bearing in mind the Commission's responsibilities in connection with the imposition of these policies, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of the conclusions of the above report?

2. How does it assess the impact on the situation for women workers resulting from the 'austerity' policies that it is currently imposing on countries such as Portugal?

3. Will this report bring about any change in direction on the Commission's part?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission has provided financial support to the OECD Gender Initiative which culminated in the publication of the 2012 report 'Closing the Gender Gap', and is fully committed to gender equality.

The Commission consistently called for a differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation, rather than advocating straightjacket solutions. The specific impact of fiscal consolidation on gender equality varies considerably among countries. While in some countries the impact is modest, in others considerable retrenchment in employment, social transfers and social services may increase gender inequality ([1]). The Commission agrees that when considering possible budgetary consolidation measures, the potential impact on gender equality should be taken into account, among other macroeconomic or social impact of the measures.

Within the 2012 European Semester, several Member States have received a country specific recommendation with a direct impact on gender equality. The majority of these recommendations concern the provision of adequate and affordable care services (AT, CZ, DE, HU, IT, MT, PL, SK, UK). One Member State received a country specific recommendation on a high gender pay gap. In two cases, improving the fiscal treatment of second earners was addressed. The Commission also closely monitors the employment and social situation in countries receiving financial assistance, including in Portugal.

The Commission will continue to promote gender equality, to monitor progress, to alert on risks and to propose concrete solutions under the Europe 2020 strategy. Of particular relevance in this respect is the annual report on Progress on Equality between Women and Men, to be published in May 2013.

([1]) The Expert Group on Gender and Employment (EGGE) and the Expert Group on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, Health and Long-Term Care (EGGSI) have produced a report on 'The impact of the economic crisis on the situation of women and men and on gender equality policies', seehttp://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/enege_crisis_report__dec_2012_final_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001433/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Rótulos fraudulentos em produtos contendo carne de cavalo

Mais um escândalo está a levantar polémica sobre a complexidade das cadeias de indústria de alimentos na União Europeia.

Na última sexta-feira, foi noticiado que refeições pré-confeccionadas (lasanhas de carne e bolonhesas congeladas) da marca Findus — um grupo sueco agroalimentar e cuja carne procedia da Roménia — continham 100 % de carne de cavalo, quando supostamente continham carne de vaca. Em 18 lasanhas de carne congelada do seu fornecedor francês Comigel, a Findus detetou 11 com 60 % a 100 % de carne de cavalo, de acordo com a Agência de Segurança Alimentar britânica (FSA).

De acordo com as últimas notícias, a produção destas refeições terá envolvido pelo menos meia dúzia de países da UE. As lasanhas terão sido produzidas no Luxemburgo. Porém, a carne foi importada de França, com «rótulos fraudulentos». Nesses rótulos, a carne era designada como sendo de vaca, quando na verdade não era.

Em meados de janeiro, inspetores irlandeses do setor agroalimentar encontraram carne de cavalo em alguns hambúrgueres em redes de supermercados no Reino Unido, incluindo os supermercados Tesco, Iceland e Lidl.

Entretanto, também sete redes de supermercados francesas já retiraram das prateleiras algumas de suas refeições congeladas à base de carne, incluindo lasanha: Auchan, Casino, Carrefour, Cora, Monoprix, Grand Jury e Picard.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que avaliação faz sobre o sucedido? Considera existir alguma ligação entre estes dois casos?

2. Qual o papel das autoridades europeias nestes casos e que falhas foram, até ao momento, detetadas no sistema de rastreabilidade da UE?

3. Que medidas tomou ou vai tomar para impedir que situações destas se repitam no futuro?

4. Que países solicitaram, até à data, moratórias na importação de carne de vaca proveniente da UE?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(2 de abril de 2013)

Até à data, não há indícios de uma preocupação em termos de segurança; não obstante, a falsificação de rótulos de géneros alimentícios constitui uma fraude no domínio da rotulagem dos alimentos.

Na União Europeia, está em vigor um sistema global de normas em matéria de segurança dos alimentos, que inclui requisitos de rastreabilidade aplicáveis aos géneros alimentícios de origem animal ([1]). Graças a este sistema, a origem e o âmbito destas ações fraudulentas foram rapidamente revelados.

A Comissão tem trabalhado ativamente — tanto a nível político como a nível técnico — na coordenação dos inquéritos pendentes nos Estados-Membros em causa para identificar a prevalência das práticas fraudulentas em questão o mais rapidamente possível. Para o efeito, a Comissão adotou recentemente uma recomendação relativa a um plano de controlo coordenado ([2]) que insta à realização de controlos, à escala da UE, dos géneros alimentícios comercializados que contêm carne de bovino, por forma a detetar rotulagem fraudulenta, assim como dos que contêm carne de equídeos destinada ao consumo humano, para detetar fenilbutazona. A fenilbutazona é um medicamento veterinário, cuja utilização é permitida unicamente em animais não produtores de alimentos. Uma síntese de todos os resultados estará disponível até abril de 2013. Em função da avaliação desses resultados, a Comissão decidirá sobre a linha de ação adequada a seguir. O plano está a ser cofinanciado pela União, à taxa de 75 %.

([1]) Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 931/2011 da Comissão, de 19 de setembro de 2011, relativo aos requisitos de rastreabilidade estabelecidos pelo Regulamento (CE) n.° 178/2002 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho para os géneros alimentícios de origem animal (JO L 242 de 20.9.2011, p. 2).

([2]) Recomendação da Comissão, de 19 de fevereiro de 2013, relativa a um plano de controlo coordenado com vista a determinar a prevalência de práticas fraudulentas na comercialização de certos alimentos (2013/99/UE), JO L 48 de 21.2.2013, p. 28.

A próxima proposta da Comissão sobre os controlos oficiais procurará reforçar o sistema existente, incluindo no que diz respeito a disposições em matéria de sanções.

Até hoje, nenhum país terceiro solicitou uma moratória relativa à importação de produtos à base de carne de bovino proveniente da UE devido a uma rotulagem fraudulenta dos produtos que contêm carne de equídeo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001433/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Fraudulent labelling of products containing horsemeat

Yet another scandal is causing controversy in connection with the complex supply chains in the European Union food industry.

Last Friday, it was reported that ready meals (frozen lasagne and Bolognese sauce) marketed by Findus — a Swedish agri-food group using meat from Romania — contained 100% horsemeat when they were supposed to contain beef. According to the British Food Standards Agency (FSA), after testing 18 frozen lasagnes produced by its French supplier Comigel, Findus found that 11 contained between 60 and 100% horsemeat.

According to the most recent reports, at least half a dozen EU countries were involved in producing these ready meals. The lasagne was produced in Luxembourg. However, the meat was imported from France, with 'fraudulent labels'. The labels identified the meat as beef when it was not.

In mid-January, Irish agri-food inspectors found horsemeat in some hamburgers sold by supermarket chains in the United Kingdom, including Tesco, Iceland and Lidl.

In the meantime, seven French supermarket chains have also withdrawn some of their meat-based frozen ready meals, including lasagne: Auchan, Casino, Carrefour, Cora, Monoprix, Grand Jury and Picard.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What is its assessment of these incidents? Does it see a link between these two cases?

2. What role are European authorities playing in these cases, and what shortcomings have so far been detected in the EU traceability system?

3. What steps has the Commission taken or will it take to prevent any repeat of such incidents in the future?

4. To date, which countries have requested moratoriums on the import of beef from the EU?

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

To date, there is no indication of a safety concern; however, falsifying labels on foods constitutes fraud in food labelling.

A comprehensive system of food safety rules is in place at the European Union level, including traceability requirements for foods of animal origin. ([1]) It is because of this system, that the origin and extent of these fraudulent actions were quickly exposed.

The Commission has been active — at both the political and technical levels — in coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned to identify the prevalence of the fraud at issue as soon as possible. To this end, the Commission has recently adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([2]) calling for EU-wide controls on foods marketed as containing beef to detect fraudulent labelling, and on horse meat destined for human consumption to detect phenylbutazone. Phenylbutazone is a veterinary drug whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013. Depending on the assessment of the findings, the Commission will decide on an appropriate course of action. The plan is being co-financed by the Union at a rate of 75%.

The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 931/2011 on the traceability requirements set by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council for food of animal origin, OJ L 242, 20.9.2011, p. 2.
([2]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

To date, no third country has requested a moratorium on the import of beef products from the EU because of fraudulent labelling of products containing horsemeat.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001434/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Situação das mães trabalhadoras

Em Portugal, a esmagadora maioria das mães são trabalhadoras por conta de outrem. Tal significa que trabalham, a tempo inteiro, a partir do momento em que os filhos completam os 4 meses de idade. Trabalhando 8 horas diárias com 1 hora de almoço, na prática estão 9 horas fora de casa, com os filhos no infantário. Se contarmos o tempo das deslocações entre casa e trabalho, podem estar 11 horas ou mais fora de casa. Tendo em conta os ritmos e horários habitualmente praticados pelas crianças, o tempo útil que conseguem estar com as mães pode reduzir-se a cerca de 3 horas diárias ou pouco mais. Isto sem contar com as inúmeras tarefas domésticas que as mães têm de desempenhar.

Esta situação acarreta evidentes prejuízos para as crianças e para as mães, com repercussões evidentes na educação das primeiras e na saúde e bem-estar de ambas.

Em face do exposto, perguntamos à Comissão se considera a possibilidade de adotar alguma medida tendente a conferir proteção às mães e crianças, tendo em vista a compatibilização da vida pessoal e familiar. Em caso afirmativo, qual o seu conteúdo?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão reconhece a importância de assegurar um bom equilíbrio entre as necessidades económicas e o bem-estar das crianças e das famílias.

A Comissão tem promovido uma combinação de políticas destinadas a permitir tanto às mulheres como aos homens conciliarem a vida profissional com a vida familiar. Tais políticas assentam num conjunto de regimes laborais flexíveis, num sistema de licenças de assistência à família e na existência de estruturas de qualidade para o acolhimento das crianças a preços acessíveis.

A possibilidade de solicitar um horário de trabalho flexível, que permita aos trabalhadores determinar, nomeadamente, o início e o fim do seu dia de trabalho, pode ajudar a conciliar o trabalho com a vida privada. No documento de consulta sobre a revisão da diretiva «Tempo de Trabalho» ([1]), a Comissão propôs a inclusão de «(…) uma disposição segundo a qual os empregadores devem examinar os pedidos de mudanças de horários e padrões de trabalho apresentados pelos trabalhadores, à luz das necessidades de flexibilidade de ambos, e justificar devidamente possíveis recusas de tais pedidos» ([2]).

No que respeita aos serviços de acolhimento de crianças, a Comissão sublinhou recentemente a importância da qualidade dessas estruturas para o bem-estar das crianças, estando atualmente a elaborar um quadro europeu de qualidade para os serviços de educação e cuidados infantis ([3]).

A Comissão insta igualmente os Estados-Membros a ajudarem os pais a assumir maiores responsabilidades familiares, nomeadamente incentivando-os a solicitarem licenças de assistência à família, em pé de igualdade com as mulheres. A Diretiva 2010/18/UE revista, relativa à licença parental, incentiva os pais a beneficiarem da licença parental. Os Senhores Deputados são convidados a consultar a resposta dada pela Comissão à pergunta escrita E-000162/2012.

A Comissão pretende conferir visibilidade ao papel dos homens na igualdade entre os géneros. Brevemente, será publicado um estudo sobre esta questão.

([1]) Diretiva 2003/88/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, JO L 299 de 18.11.2003, p. 9.
([2]) COM(2010) 801 final.
([3]) COM(2011) 66.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001434/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Working mothers

In Portugal, the overwhelming majority of mothers are employed. This means that they return to work full-time when their children reach the age of four months. Working for eight hours a day with a one-hour lunch break means that in practice they are away from home for nine hours, while their children are at a crèche. If we add the time taken travelling between home and work, these women may be away from home for 11 hours or more. Bearing in mind young children's usual rhythms and routines, the amount of active time which they are able to spend with their mothers may be as little as three hours a day. On top of this, of course, account must be taken of the countless domestic tasks that mothers have to perform.

It is clear that this situation is damaging for both children and mothers, with obvious consequences for children's education and for the health and well-being of both children and their mothers.

Is the Commission looking into the possibility of taking action to provide protection for mothers and children, in the context of balancing work with personal and family life? If so, what action will it take?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission acknowledges the fact that a balance is to be found between economic necessity and well-being of children and families.

The Commission promotes a policy mix to allow women and men to reconcile their work and private life formed by flexible work arrangements, a system of family leave and the provision of affordable and quality childcare.

The possibility to require flexible working hours which would allow workers to choose, in particular, when they start and finish their working day, may help to reconcile work and private life. In its consultation paper on reviewing the Working Time Directive ([1]), the Commission proposed including '(…) a provision for employers to examine workers' requests for changes to their working hours and patterns, in the light of each other's needs for flexibility, and to give reasons if refusing such requests.' ([2])

Regarding childcare services the Commission recently emphasised the importance of the quality of childcare for the well-being of children and is working on a European quality framework for ECEC ([3]).

The Commission also encourages Member States to support fathers to take on more family responsibilities including the take-up of family leave on an equal footing with women. The revised Directive 2010/18/EU on Parental Leave offers incentives to fathers to take the leave. The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the reply given to the Written Question E-000162/2012.

The Commission gives visibility to the role of men in gender equality: a study dedicated to this subject will be published soon.

([1]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9.
([2]) COM(2010) 801 final.
([3]) COM(2011) 66.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001435/13
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(12. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Anzahl von EU-Beamten je nach EU-MS und Funktionsgruppe

1. Wie viele Beamte gibt es jeweils in den Funktionsgruppen AST1, AST2, AST3, AST4, AST5, AST6, AST7, AST8, AST9, AST10, AST11, aufgelistet nach den EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

2. Wie viele Beamte gibt es jeweils in den Funktionsgruppen AD5, AD6, AD7, AD8, AD9, AD10, AD11, AD12, AD13, AD14, AD15, AD16, aufgelistet nach den EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

Um Verwaltungslasten zu reduzieren wurden diese Fragen in einer Anfrage zusammengefasst und die einzelnen Fragen mit einer laufenden Nummer versehen. Die Kommission wird darum ersucht, die einzelnen Fragen unter Anführung der jeweiligen Nummerierung zu beantworten.

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(25. März 2013)

Die Kommission verfügt nicht über die angeforderten Daten für andere EU-Organe und -Agenturen.

Der Herr Abgeordnete wird die Anzahl der Kommissionsbeamten je nach EU-Mitgliedstaat und Funktionsgruppe unter dem folgenden Link finden: http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/about/figures/index_de.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001435/13
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Number of EU officials broken down by EU Member State and grade

1. How many officials are there in grade AST1, AST2, AST3, AST 4, AST5, AST6, AST7, AST8, AST9, AST10, AST11, respectively, listed by EU Member State?

2. How many officials are there in grade AD5, AD6, AD7, AD8, AD9, AD10, AD11, AD12, AD13, AD14, AD15, AD16, respectively, listed by EU Member State?

In order to reduce the administrative burden, these questions have been collected together into a single written question, and the individual questions have each been given a number. I would therefore kindly request that each of the questions be answered, indicating the corresponding number.

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

The Commission does not possess the requested data for other EU institutions and agencies.

The Honourable Member will find the number of Commission officials broken down by EU Member State and grade at the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/about/figures/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001436/13
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(12. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Förderung einer (binationalen) Landesgartenschau

Die oberösterreichische Stadt Schärding bewirbt sich um die Landesgartenschau 2017. In diesem Zusammenhang gibt es Überlegungen der am direkt gegenüberliegenden Innufer liegenden bayerischen Gemeinde Neuhaus/Inn, sich an diesem Projekt zu beteiligen.

Welche konkreten Fördermöglichkeiten sieht die Kommission für gemeinsame Projekte im Zusammenhang mit dieser Landesgartenschau? Welche Fördermöglichkeiten gibt es für eine binationale Landesgartenschau?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(27. März 2013)

Die thematischen Finanzierungsprioritäten für den Zeitraum 2014-2020 für grenzübergreifende Kooperationsprogramme, die unter dem Ziel „Europäische territoriale Zusammenarbeit“ im Rahmen des Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung finanziert werden sollen, werden derzeit gemeinsam von den am betreffenden Programm (Programm für grenzübergreifende Zusammenarbeit Österreich — Bayern) beteiligten Mitgliedstaaten und Regionen erarbeitet. Sie müssen sich einigen, auf welche Bereiche sich die Unterstützung konzentrieren soll und wo Kooperationsmaßnahmen den größten Mehrwert im Hinblick auf die Ziele von Europa 2020 und den Gemeinsamen Strategischen Rahmen erzielen können. Die Förderfähigkeit konkreter Projekte, wie einer binationalen Gartenschau, hängt von der Auswahl der thematischen Prioritäten des Programms ab, die gemeinsam von den Projektpartnern herausgearbeitet werden.

Die Kommission unterhält zusammen mit den Mitgliedstaaten Internetseiten, die eine hervorragende Informationsquelle über die verschiedenen aus den Strukturfonds finanzierten Tätigkeiten darstellen, und die auch eine Aufstellung der Begünstigten umfassen:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/beneficiaries/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001436/13
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Promoting a (bi-national) State Garden Show

The Upper Austrian town of Schärding is a candidate to host the 2017 State Garden Show. In this context, the Bavarian community of Neuhaus/Inn, which lies directly opposite on the banks of the river Inn, is considering getting involved in this project.

What specific funding opportunities does the Commission envisage for joint projects in connection with this State Garden Show? What funding opportunities exist for a bi-national State Garden Show?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The thematic funding priorities for the 2014-2020 period for cross-border cooperation programmes to be financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Territorial Cooperation goal are currently being established jointly by the Member States and regions involved in the respective programme (the Austria-Bavaria cross-border cooperation programme). They need to jointly identify the areas on which support should be focused and where cooperative action can yield most added value, taking account of Europe 2020 objectives and the Common Strategic Framework. The eligibility for funding of specific projects, such as a bi-national garden show, will depend on the choice of the thematic priorities of the programme, as jointly developed by the programme partners.

The Commission, together with the Member States, maintains Internet sites which are an excellent source of information about the various activities financed by the Structural Funds including lists of beneficiaries:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/beneficiaries/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001437/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(12 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διευκρινίσεις για την απαγόρευση καλλιέργειας κλωστικής κάνναβης στην Ελλάδα

Στην απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής ([1]) σε προηγούμενη γραπτή ερώτηση του συναδέλφου Μιχαήλ Τρεμόπουλου στις 19.1.2012 [E-011400/2011], αναφέρεται ότι «*Η Επιτροπή δεν έλαβε πληροφορίες από τις ελληνικές αρχές σχετικά με περιπτώσεις άρνησης των ελληνικών αρχών να χρηματοδοτήσουν την καλλιέργεια βιομηχανικής κάνναβης*». Συμπεραίνει δε ότι «*σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που περιλαμβάνονται σε προηγούμενες ερωτήσεις του Αξιότιμου Μέλους του Κοινοβουλίου, προκύπτει ότι η συμβατότητα του άρθρου 20 της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας για τα ναρκωτικά με την ενωσιακή νομοθεσία θα πρέπει να αποτελέσει αντικείμενο περαιτέρω εξέτασης. Για τον λόγο αυτό, η Επιτροπή διεξάγει επί του παρόντος νομική διαδικασία έρευνας της σχετικής ελληνικής νομοθεσίας*».

Το νέο σχέδιο νόμου περί ναρκωτικών ([2]) που κατατέθηκε πριν μερικές μέρες στο Κοινοβούλιο της Ελλάδας προς ψήφιση, διαχωρίζει μεν ρητά τα προϊόντα της κλωστικής κάνναβης στο άρθρο 1, παράγραφος 2 (ορισμός), αλλά όχι την καλλιέργεια του ίδιου του φυτού, ενώ στο επίμαχο άρθρο 20 (βασικό έγκλημα) δεν γίνεται καμία αναφορά στο διαχωρισμό της καλλιέργειας της κλωστικής (βιομηχανικής) κάνναβης. Δεν φαίνεται δηλαδή το σχέδιο νόμου να εναρμονίζεται με την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία σε ό,τι αφορά την καλλιέργεια κλωστικής κάνναβης.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι τα αποτελέσματα της νομικής διαδικασίας για την έρευνα της σχετικής ελληνικής νομοθεσίας που είχε αναγγείλει ο Επίτροπος με την προηγούμενη απάντηση στην ερώτηση του συναδέλφου;

2. Θεωρεί ότι η επιχειρούμενη αλλαγή της νομοθεσίας στην Ελλάδα που νομιμοποιεί τα προϊόντα κλωστικής (βιομηχανικής) κάνναβης και όχι την καλλιέργεια του ίδιου του φυτού είναι σύμφωνη με την ενωσιακή νομοθεσία;

3. Αν όχι, σε τι συστάσεις θα προβεί προς το κράτος μέλος που δεν εναρμονίζει την εθνική νομοθεσία σύμφωνα με τους Ευρωπαϊκούς Κανονισμούς (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 619/71, (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 2358/71, (ΕΚ) αριθ. 507/2008, (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1529/2000, (ΕΚ) αριθ. 796/2004, (ΕΚ) αριθ. 953/2006, και (ΕΚ) αριθ. 73/2009;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή έχει λάβει τα σχέδια τροποποίησης του κώδικα νόμων για τα ναρκωτικά (Ν. 3459/2006). Έπειτα από την αναθεώρηση των τροποποιήσεων αυτών, οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής βεβαιώθηκαν ότι η βιομηχανική κάνναβη δεν εμπίπτει στο πεδίο εφαρμογής των άρθρων 1 και 20 του ελληνικού κώδικα νόμων για τα ναρκωτικά. Οι ελληνικές αρχές κλήθηκαν να ενημερώσουν την Επιτροπή σχετικά με τις περαιτέρω εξελίξεις όσον αφορά την έγκριση των εν λόγω τροποποιήσεων. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει περαιτέρω στοιχεία σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό.

2 και 3. Κατά την άποψη της Επιτροπής, η καλλιέργεια της βιομηχανικής κάνναβης δεν θα έπρεπε να απαγορεύεται σε κανένα κράτος μέλος. Τα σχέδια τροποποιήσεων του ελληνικού κώδικα νόμων για τα ναρκωτικά (Ν. 3459/2006) που υποβλήθηκαν στην Επιτροπή δεν ποινικοποιούσαν την καλλιέργεια βιομηχανικής κάνναβης. Μολονότι το κείμενο που παρουσιάστηκε στη Βουλή των Ελλήνων τον Φεβρουάριο του τρέχοντος έτους παρουσιάζει διαφορές σε σχέση με το κείμενο που κοινοποιήθηκε στην Επιτροπή, φαίνεται ότι δεν απαγορεύει επίσης την καλλιέργεια βιομηχανικής κάνναβης, η οποία εξαιρείται ρητά από το πεδίο εφαρμογής του ελληνικού κώδικα νόμων για τα ναρκωτικά.

Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να αποφανθεί οριστικά ως προς το συμβιβάσιμο του κειμένου που παρουσιάστηκε στη Βουλή των Ελλήνων με το ενωσιακό δίκαιο, αφού δεν είχε τη δυνατότητα να εξετάσει δεόντως το εν λόγω κείμενο. Μετά τα στοιχεία που παρείχε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής θα επικοινωνήσουν εκ νέου με τις ελληνικές αρχές για να διευκρινιστεί ποια μέτρα τελούν υπό έγκριση και να αξιολογηθεί το συμβιβάσιμό τους με το δίκαιο της ΕΕ.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-011400&language=EL
([2]) http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Nomothetiko-Ergo/Katatethenta-Nomosxedia?law_id=e0ab521f-fceb-4d77-b88d-97a165ba95e5

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001437/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Clarifications about the ban on the cultivation of fibre hemp in Greece

The answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission ([1]) to a previous written question by Michael Tremopoulos on 19 January 2012 [E-011400/2011] states that: 'The Commission has not received any information from the Greek authorities concerning the existence of cases where Greek authorities have refused to finance the cultivation of industrial hemp.' He concludes that '…following the information contained in the previous questions from the Honourable Member it would appear that the compatibility of Article 20 of the Greek Code of laws on drugs with EC law should be further examined. This is why the Commission is currently carrying out a legal investigation of the Greek law in question.'

The new draft law on drugs ([2]) which was put to the vote a few days ago in the Hellenic Parliament, explicitly exempts fibre hemp products in Article 1, paragraph 2 (definition), but not the cultivation of the plant, while the controversial Article 20 (basic crime) makes no reference to any exemption of the cultivation of fibre (industrial) hemp. The draft law does not therefore appear to be in line with EU legislation as regards the cultivation of fibre hemp.

In this connection, will the Commission say:

1. What is the outcome of the legal investigation into the relevant Greek legislation announced by the Commissioner in his previous answer to my colleague's question?

2. Does it believe that the attempt to change the law in Greece, by legalising fibre (industrial) hemp products, but not the cultivation of the plant, is in line with EU legislation?

3. If not, what recommendations will it make to the Member State in question which has failed to bring national legislation into line with EU Regulations (EEC) No 619/71, (EEC) No 2358/71, (EC) No 507/2008, (EC) No 1529/2000, (EC) No 796/2004, (EC) No 953/2006 and (EC) No 73/2009?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

1. The Commission has been provided with draft amendments of the Drugs Code (Law 3459/2006). After an assessment of these amendments, the Commission's services were satisfied that industrial hemp was not covered by the scope of Articles 1 and 20 of the Greek Drugs Code. The Greek authorities were invited to inform the Commission about further developments on the adoption of these amendments. The Commission has, however, not received any further information in that regard.

2 and 3. In the view of the Commission the cultivation of industrial hemp should not be prohibited in any Member State. The draft amendments of the Greek Drugs Code (Law 3459/2006) presented to the Commission did not criminalise the cultivation of industrial hemp. Even if the text presented before the Hellenic Parliament in February this year seems different from the text notified to the Commission, it would appear that it would also not prohibit the cultivation of industrial hemp which is explicitly exempted from the scope of the Greek Drugs Code.

However, without having had the opportunity to properly examine the text presented before the Hellenic Parliament, it is not possible for the Commission to pronounce itself conclusively on its compatibility with EC law. Following the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission's services will again contact the Greek authorities to clarify what measures are currently being adopted and assess their compatibility with EC law.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-011400&language=EN
([2]) http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Nomothetiko-Ergo/Katatethenta-Nomosxedia?law_id=e0ab521f-fceb-4d77-b88d-97a165ba95e5

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001438/13
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to Written Question E-009080/2012 on Internet domain names in Slovakia

In response to Written Question (E-009080/2012) on Internet domain names in Slovakia , the Commission advised me that it was investigating the compatibility of national rules on the allocation of top-level domain names by Member States with the fundamental freedoms of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, and that the case raised by my constituent would be included in this investigation.

1. Has the Commission concluded this investigation yet, and if so, what findings have been made? What further steps will the Commission be taking in this matter?

2. If the investigation is still ongoing, what is the timescale for completion, and what does the Commission intend to do with the findings?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The Commission is in the process of analysing the compatibility with EC law of the Slovak national system of the allocation of the top-level domain names (TLDs).

While national rules at hand can lead to obstacles to the allocation of TLDs to companies providing their services or selling their goods online that are established in other Member States (because the TLD would only be allocated to a company having its seat in the host Member State), it must be taken into account that these obstacles alone do not prevent online service providers from selling their goods or providing their services in another Member State, as their website would still be accessible outside of the home country.

The Commission therefore intends to further assess whether the system in place in Slovakia constitutes a restriction to the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Treaty and, if this is the case, whether such a restriction would be justified by overriding reasons of general interest, and proportionate in view of the objectives pursued.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001439/13
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Clean air / air quality (Croydon, England)

In view of London's likely failure to meet its target of not exceeding the limits for some of the most dangerous pollutants listed within the Air Quality Directive, considering it will also have failed to meet the deadline postponing not exceeding those limits granted in 2009, and bearing in mind that London it will be amongst the worst offenders with regard to the Air Quality Directive:

A waste incinerator planned for construction in Beddington, in the London borough of Croydon — an area falling within a London Air Quality Management zone — is likely to be granted planning permission within the next year.

According to a study by the British Society for Ecological Medicine, 'fine particulates formed in incinerators in the presence of toxic metals and organic toxins (including those known to be carcinogens) adsorb these pollutants and carry them into the bloodstream and into the cells of the body', causing a serious and widespread health risk to local populations ([1]).

This particulate matter is widely documented as not being filtered from pollution that is expelled into the air from incinerators. The serious negative health effects of this particulate matter include a significant increase in cardiovascular mortality and deaths from lung cancer. A recent study of the health effects of this pollution in postmenopausal women has found that their chances of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular mortality increase by 76% and 83% respectively.

Given this, and given the failure to address the serious excess of pollution currently affecting the lives of millions of Londoners, can the Commission:

1. confirm that it is aware of this incinerator project and other similar projects in London;

2. give details on how it will approach this issue and related issues, in the light of London's non-compliance with the pollution limits of the Air Quality Directive?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the development of the incinerator referred to by the Honourable Member.

According to the information submitted by the UK authorities, in their last annual report (2011), there are no exceedances of particular matter in the zone within which Beddington is situated. The UK authorities need to continue to monitor the pollutant concentration levels and, if an exceedance situation according to the applicable EU legislation is confirmed, to report it and to take the necessary action in line with Directive 2008/50/EC ([2]) on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe as quickly as possible.

([1]) Jeremy Thompson et al., 'The health effects of waste incinerators', 4th report of the British Society for Ecological Medicine, 2 June 2008.
([2]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001440/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: EU-Japan free trade agreement

The proposed free trade agreement between Japan and the EU would aim to remove both customs duties on vehicles made in Japan and imported into the EU and non-tariff barriers that prevent European auto manufacturers from entering the Japanese market. Studies show, however, that there will be far more incentives for Japanese companies to export vehicles to the EU than vice versa.

Has the Commission considered the significant challenges that this, especially when combined with a probable depreciation of the yen versus the euro, is likely to pose to the sustainability of the EU's auto industry?

Does the Commission consider this to be a balanced free trade agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

The EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement negotiations will be launched on the occasion of the EU-Japan Summit and the first round of the talks is scheduled for mid-April in Brussels. This is the beginning of a complex process and it is therefore too early to anticipate its outcome.

The Commission aims at negotiating an ambitious Agreement that would benefit EU industries, consumers and citizens.

As declared in the Cars 2020 Action Plan (COM(2012) 636, 08.11.12) ([1]), the Commission takes full account of the importance of maintaining a strong and competitive automotive manufacturing base in Europe when conducting trade policy. Both the Commission and the representatives of the car industry have already commissioned studies of impact which demonstrate a more balanced picture than the one you suggest. The Commission is also currently assessing the cumulative impact of trade agreements on the competitiveness of this industry.

The Commission will work closely with the representatives of the car manufacturers to defend offensive and defensive interests of the EU industry. The auto industry falls in both categories, as on the defensive side the internal market is currently indeed partially shielded from competition by customs duties, and on the offensive side EU car manufacturers suffer from non-tariff barriers which limit their access to the Japanese market.

The euro / yen exchange rate is an independent parameter from the negotiations and the Commission will continue to monitor its effects on international trade.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/index.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001441/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Determining structural fund amounts

The amount of structural funding allocated to various regions under the Multiannual Financial Framework has been decided on the basis of the classification of regions. This classification is in turn based on data collected during a reference period of 2007-2009.

Given the fall in employment rates and in the GDP of many regions since 2007, does the Commission consider it appropriate that the allocation of funding until 2020 will be based on such out-of-date information?

Did the Commission consider any other methods of determining the appropriate classifications?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2013)

The Commission proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework was submitted in 2012, on the basis of the most recent available harmonised indicators available at the time. For regional GDP/head, the most recent data available refers to the years 2007-2008-2009. The allocation distribution methods also take into account national level indicators and regional labour market related indicators with reference years 2008-2009-2010.

The draft Common Provisions Regulation includes a review clause, by which the allocation method will be updated in 2016 on the basis of up-to-date figures.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001442/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(12 februari 2013)

Betreft: Noord-Korea voert nucleaire test uit

Noord-Korea heeft in de nacht van maandag 11 op dinsdag 12 februari 2013 een nucleaire test uitgevoerd. De proef heeft geleid tot een aardbeving met een kracht van 4,9 op de schaal van Richter.

Volgens Noord-Korea is de proef ondergronds uitgevoerd op een „veilige en perfecte manier". Volgens de staatspropaganda maakte de test deel uit van „praktische maatregelen om de veiligheid en soevereiniteit van het land te verdedigen tegen de wrede vijandelijkheden van de Verenigde Staten". Het Noord-Koreaanse bewind is ervan overtuigd dat het continu zou worden bedreigd door het Amerikaanse leger.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de nucleaire test in Noord-Korea? Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie deze test?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat enerzijds de nucleaire test en anderzijds de Noord-Koreaanse verklaring daarbij dat het land zou worden bedreigd door het Amerikaanse leger, van een oorlogszuchtige houding getuigen? Zo neen, hoe interpreteert de Commissie de nucleaire test dan wél?

3. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie überhaupt de anti-Amerikaanse houding van Noord-Korea?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het Noord-Koreaanse bewind geenszins financieel door de EU ondersteund hoort te worden? Is de Commissie er dan ook toe bereid direct alle financiële ondersteuning ([1]) aan Noord-Korea te beëindigen? Zo neen, hoe verantwoordt de Commissie het tegenover de EU-burgers dat zij hún belastinggeld schenkt aan een oorlogszuchtig regime?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(25 maart 2013)

De Europese Unie heeft de kernproef van de DVK in de krachtigste bewoordingen veroordeeld, met name in de verklaring van 12 februari van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de EU en in de conclusies van de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken van 18 februari.

De EU beschouwt de acties van de DVK als een rechtstreekse aanval op het mondiale non-proliferatiestelsel en een onmiskenbare schending van de internationale verplichtingen van de DVK om geen kernwapens te produceren of te testen, met name op grond van de resoluties 1718, 1874 en 2087 van de VN-Veiligheidsraad. De kernproef vormt een ernstige bedreiging voor een duurzame vrede op het Koreaanse schiereiland en voor zowel de regionale als internationale veiligheid en stabiliteit in Noordoost-Azië.

De EU betreurt de aanhoudende bedreigingen van de DVK.

De EU verleent geen enkele vorm van bijstand aan het Noord-Koreaanse regime. De EU blijft echter wel bezorgd over de benarde situatie van de Noord-Koreaanse bevolking en zal humanitaire bijstand blijven verschaffen volgens onafhankelijk geraamde behoeften en passende toegangsvoorwaarden.

De bijstand die de EU verleent aan de DVK is in overeenstemming met de desbetreffende resoluties van de Raad die de EU-interventies in de DVK beperken tot humanitaire hulp. De EU verleent bijstand in het kader van de component samenhang van noodhulp, rehabilitatie en ontwikkeling van het thematische programma voor voedselzekerheid. De voornaamste doelstelling van deze interventies is het verbeteren van de levensomstandigheden van de meest kwetsbare bevolkingsgroepen, in het bijzonder kinderen, zwangere vrouwen, gehandicapten en ouderen. De maatregelen worden uitgevoerd door internationale ngo's die zijn geselecteerd via openbare oproepen tot het indienen van voorstellen en niet via de regering van de DVK.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/annual-reports/2012_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001442/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Nuclear test conducted by North Korea

During the night from Monday, 11 to Tuesday, 12 February, North Korea conducted a nuclear test, which caused an earthquake with a magnitude of 4.9 on the Richter Scale.

North Korea announced that the test had been conducted underground in a 'secure and perfect manner'. According to state propaganda, the test formed part of practical measures to defend the country's security and sovereignty against the cruel hostilities of the United States. The North Korean regime is convinced that it is under constant threat from the US Army.

1. Is the Commission aware of the nuclear test in North Korea? What view does the Commission take of that test?

2. Does the Commission agree that both the nuclear test and North Korea's explanation that it is threatened by the US Army indicate a bellicose attitude? If not, how does the Commission interpret the nuclear test?

3. More generally, what view does the Commission take of the anti-American attitude of North Korea?

4. Does the Commission agree that the North Korean regime should not receive any form of financial assistance from the EU? Will the Commission accordingly immediately halt all financial support ([1]) for North Korea? If not, how does the Commission explain to EU citizens the fact that it is donating the money levied from them in tax to a bellicose regime?

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

The EU condemned in the strongest possible terms the DPRK's nuclear test, notably through HRVP Ashton's Declaration on behalf of the EU of 12 February and Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of 18 February.

The EU sees DPRK's actions as a direct challenge to the global non-proliferation regime and an outright violation of the DPRK's international obligations not to produce or test nuclear weapons, in particular under UN Security Council Resolutions 1718, 1874 and 2087. As such, it constitutes a serious threat to a lasting peace in the Korean Peninsula and to both regional and international security and stability in North-East Asia.

The EU deplores DPRK's continued threats.

The EU does not provide any assistance to the North Korean regime. However, the EU remains concerned about the plight of the North Korean people and will continue to provide humanitarian assistance subject to independently assessed needs and adequate conditions for access.

The EU's assistance to DPRK is in line with relevant Council resolutions which limit EU interventions in DPRK to humanitarian aid. The EU provides assistance under the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development component of the Food Security Thematic Programme. The main objective of these interventions is to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable, especially children, pregnant women, disabled and the elderly. These actions are implemented by international NGO's selected through open Calls for Proposals and not through the Government of DPRK.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/annual-reports/2012_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001443/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(12 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Stadiul implementării directivei privind vehiculele nepoluante și eficiente energetic

Directiva 2009/33/CE prevede că, la fiecare doi ani, cu începere de la 4 decembrie 2010, Comisia redactează un raport privind aplicarea directivei și privind acțiunile întreprinse de statele membre pentru promovarea cumpărării de vehicule de transport rutier nepoluante și eficiente din punct de vedere energetic.

1. Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul implementării acestei directive și care sunt rezultatele evaluărilor Comisiei?

2. Care sunt rapoartele realizate și care sunt comunicările Comisiei prin care se fac publice rezultatele rapoartelor?

3. Are Comisia în vedere o adaptare a metodologiei prevăzută la Art. 6 (Metodologia pentru calcularea costurilor operaționale pe durata de viață) și a opțiunilor prevăzute la Art. 5 (Cumpărarea de vehicule de transport rutier nepoluante și eficiente din punct de vedere energetic)?

Răspuns dat de Kallas în numele Comisiei
(5 aprilie 2013)

Cu anumite întârzieri, toate statele membre, cu excepția Letoniei, au transpus integral Directiva 2009/33/CE privind promovarea vehiculelor de transport rutier nepoluante și eficiente din punct de vedere energetic ([1]) în ordinea juridică națională. Rezultatele evaluărilor Comisiei vor fi publicate în următoarele săptămâni în cadrul primului raport privind aplicarea prezentei directive.

Comisia va lua în considerare concluziile formulate în prezentul raport în vederea modificărilor care trebuie aduse Directivei 2009/33/CE.

([1]) JO L 120, 15.5.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001443/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Stage reached in implementing the directive on clean and energy-efficient vehicles

Directive 2009/33/EC stipulates that every two years, with effect from 4 December 2010, the Commission is to prepare a report on the application of that directive and on the actions taken by Member States to promote the purchase of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles.

1. What stage has been reached in implementing this directive and what are the results of the Commission's assessments?

2. What reports have been drawn up and in which communications has the Commission published the results of its reports?

3. Is the Commission planning to adapt the methodology provided for in Article 6 (Methodology for the calculation of operational lifetime costs) and the options provided for in Article 5 (Purchase of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles)?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

With certain delays, all Member States with the exception of Latvia fully transposed Directive 2009/33/EC on the application of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles ([1]) into national legal orders. The results of the Commission's assessments will be published in the coming weeks as part of the first report on the application of this directive.

The Commission would take into consideration the conclusions reached in this report in view of amendments to be made to Directive 2009/33/EC.

([1]) OJ L 120, 15.5.2009.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001444/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(12 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Infrastructura cu hidrogen în domeniul transportului

Comisia Europeană va finanța cu suma de 3,5 milioane de EUR un proiect privind infrastructura cu hidrogen în domeniul transportului (HIT). Acest proiect a început în aprilie 2012 și vor participa patru state: Olanda, Danemarca, Franța și Suedia. Proiectul vizează definirea unor strategii de a trece de la hotspoturi cu hidrogen către stații locale de realimentare cu hidrogen și apoi la transportul pe distanțe lungi și la mobilitate de-a lungul coridoarelor TEN-T. Obiectivul este realizarea unui sistem viabil de infrastructură cu hidrogen în cadrul proiectului-pilot, care apoi să poată fi extinsă la nivelul UE. Proiectul urmează a fi finalizat în decembrie 2014.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul implementării acestui proiect și dacă există deja un interes manifestat din partea altor state membre pentru extinderea acestui proiect?

Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei
(27 martie 2013)

Cele patru state membre implicate în proiectul de infrastructură cu hidrogen în domeniul transportului (HIT) ([1]) au început, într-adevăr, elaborarea propriilor planuri naționale de punere în aplicare (NIP) pentru dezvoltarea infrastructurii cu hidrogen în domeniul transportului. Aceste planuri naționale de punere în aplicare vor fi apoi integrate într-un plan comun de punere în aplicare sincronizată (SIP) care urmează a fi finalizat până la sfârșitul anului 2014. Acest plan de punere în aplicare sincronizată urmează să fie reprodus la scară europeană mai largă, pentru a include și alte state membre. În ceea ce privește proiectul pilot, și anume stațiile de alimentare cu hidrogen din Rotterdam (NL), Fredericia (DK) și Aalborg (DK), punerea în aplicare se desfășoară conform planului, facilitățile urmând să fie complet funcționale la sfârșitul anului 2013 sau la începutul anului 2014. Punerea în aplicare a acestui proiect va furniza date tehnice concrete privind cele patru planuri naționale de punere în aplicare și planul comun de punere în aplicare sincronizată.

Germania, Italia, Regatul Unit, Spania, Portugalia și Norvegia și-au exprimat interesul asupra creării unei legături între acest proiect și propriile planuri naționale în domeniul infrastructurii cu hidrogen. Promotorii proiectului HIT au precizat, de asemenea, că anumite țări ar dori să creeze un „grup de sprijin” mai larg pentru coordonarea suplimentară a strategiilor de dezvoltare a infrastructurii cu hidrogen.

Pachetul de măsuri privind „energia nepoluantă pentru transport” ([2]), adoptat de către Comisie la 24 ianuarie 2013, prevede dezvoltarea de către statele membre a unei infrastructuri pentru combustibili alternativi, inclusiv a stațiilor de realimentare cu hidrogen. Prin urmare, proiectul menționat va completa strategia de dezvoltare a infrastructurii cu hidrogen, astfel cum este definită în cadrul pachetului de măsuri privind „energia nepoluantă pentru transport”.

([1]) Pentru informații privind lansarea și alte aspecte legate de proiectul HIT, consultați: http://www.hyer.eu/publications/newsletters/hyer-update-december-2012/hydrogen-infrastructure-project-hits-the-ten-t-corridors-at-the-transport-days-2012

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/cpt/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001444/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Hydrogen infrastructure for transport

The Commission is to provide EUR 3.5 million in funding for a project on hydrogen infrastructure for transport (HIT). The project was launched in April 2012 and will involve four countries: the Netherlands, Denmark, France and Sweden. The intention is to define strategies for moving from hydrogen hotspots to local hydrogen refuelling stations, and subsequently to long-distance transport and mobility along the TEN-T road network. The pilot project is aimed at creating a viable hydrogen infrastructure which can then be expanded at EU level. The project is set to be completed in December 2014.

Can the Commission say what stage has been reached in implementing this project and whether other Member States have already expressed an interest in expanding it?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The four Member States involved in the Hydrogen Infrastructure for Transport (HIT) project ([1]) have indeed started working on their respective National Implementation Plans (NIP) for the development of hydrogen in transport. These NIPs will then be integrated into a common Synchronised Implementation Plan (SIP) to be completed by the end of 2014. This SIP aims at being replicable at a wider European scale in other Member States. As regards the pilot project, namely the Hydrogen Refuelling Station in Rotterdam (NL), Fredericia (DK) and Aalborg (DK), its implementation is progressing as planned and the facilities are expected to be fully operational in the late 2013 / early 2014. This implementation will provide concrete technical data concerning the four NIPs and the SIP.

Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal and Norway have expressed interest to link their national hydrogen infrastructure planning to this project. The HIT project promoters further indicated that some countries would like to establish a wider 'support group' to further coordinate the deployment strategies for hydrogen.

The Clean Power for transport package ([2]) adopted by the Commission on 24 January 2013 foresees that Members States deploy alternative fuels infrastructure, including hydrogen refuelling stations. Therefore the abovementioned project will complement the deployment strategy of hydrogen infrastructure as defined in the Clean Power for Transport Package.

([1]) The launch and further information on the HIT project is given at: http://www.hyer.eu/publications/newsletters/hyer-update-december-2012/hydrogen-infrastructure-project-hits-the-ten-t-corridors-at-the-transport-days-2012.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/cpt/index_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001445/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(12 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Reducerea emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră provenite din transportul maritim

În programul de lucru al Comisiei pentru anul 2012, era prevăzută prezentarea unei inițiative legislative privind includerea emisiilor de CO_2 provenite din transportul maritim în angajamentul UE de a reduce emisiile de gaze cu efect de seră.

Comisia Europeană examinează posibile acțiuni europene prin care să introducă monitorizarea, raportarea și verificarea emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră provenite din transportul maritim, ca un prim pas spre măsuri de reducere a acestor emisii.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia când va prezenta o inițiativă legislativă privind emisiile de gaze cu efect de seră provenite din transportul maritim și care sunt etapele și acțiunile-cheie prin care se va atinge obiectivul de a reduce aceste emisii la nivelul transportului maritim?

Răspuns dat de dna Hedegaard în numele Comisiei
(2 aprilie 2013)

Inițiativele recente din cadrul Organizației Maritime Internaționale (OMI) justifică o abordare graduală referitoare la emisiile de gaze cu efect de seră provenite din transportul maritim. În aceeași ordine de idei, UE prevede o abordare treptată a includerii emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră provenite din transportul maritim în cadrul politicii sale privind schimbările climatice, începând cu instituirea unui sistem de monitorizare, raportare și verificare (MRV) a emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră. Pe această bază, va fi necesară luarea unor decizii în ceea ce privește stabilirea de obiective de reducere și rolul măsurilor bazate pe mecanismele pieței pentru îndeplinirea acestor obiective.

Un sistem MRV solid constituie baza pentru implementarea oricărei măsuri de reducere a emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră provenite din transportul maritim la nivelul UE sau la nivel global. Comisia va prezenta o propunere de regulament privind monitorizarea, raportarea și verificarea emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră provenite din transportul maritim înainte de vara anului 2013. Comisia speră că acest fapt va contribui, de asemenea, la discuțiile din cadrul OMI, cu scopul de a dezvolta un sistem global cât mai curând posibil.

În paralel cu prezenta propunere, Comisia va prezenta o comunicare pentru lansarea unei discuții cu privire la următoarele etape și pentru analizarea modului în care eventualele inițiative viitoare pentru abordarea emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră provenite din transportul maritim pot susține realizarea unui acord global în acest domeniu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001445/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from maritime transport

As part of its work programme for 2012, the Commission planned to submit a legislative initiative on including CO_2 emissions from maritime transport in the EU's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Commission is considering possible European action to introduce monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas emissions from maritime transport, as a first step towards measures to reduce these emissions.

Can the Commission say when it will submit a legislative initiative on greenhouse gas emissions from maritime transport? What are the stages and key actions through which the target of reducing these emissions in the maritime transport sector will be achieved?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

Recent initiatives in the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) provide the ground for a stepwise approach addressing GHG emissions of the shipping sector. In line with that, the EU foresees a gradual approach of the inclusion of maritime greenhouse emissions (GHG) in its climate policy, starting with establishing a system for monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of GHG emissions. Building on this, decisions will be required with regard to establishment of reduction targets and the role of market-based measures to meet these targets.

A robust MRV system is the foundation for implementation of any measure reducing GHG emissions of ships at EU or global level. The Commission will make a proposal for a regulation on MRV of greenhouse gas emissions of ships before summer 2013. The Commission hopes this will also feed into the IMO discussions, with the aim to develop a global system as soon as possible.

In parallel to this proposal, the Commission will present a communication to launch a discussion on the next steps and to explore how possible future initiatives for addressing GHG emissions from maritime transport can support the achievement of a global agreement in this domain.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001446/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(12 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η δημόσια ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη του λαού έχει προ πολλού ξεπεράσει τα όρια του συναγερμού

Η δημόσια ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη του λαού έχει προ πολλού ξεπεράσει τα όρια του συναγερμού. Ένας όλο και μεγαλύτερος αριθμός ανέργων, ανασφάλιστων, αλλά και εργαζομένων με λεηλατημένο το εισόδημά τους, είναι αποκλεισμένοι ακόμα και από τις στοιχειώδεις δημόσιες παροχές στην υγεία. Το γεγονός ότι οι δημόσιες δαπάνες της υγείας μειώθηκαν το 2012 σε σχέση με το 2009 κατά 32,1% και, αντίστοιχα, οι ιδιωτικές κατά 52,9%, αποδεικνύει ότι ένα μέρος του λαού στερείται απολύτως κάθε παροχή σε εξετάσεις και φάρμακα.

Οι συγχωνεύσεις και καταργήσεις δημόσιων νοσοκομείων, κλινικών, εργαστηρίων, κρεβατιών και ειδικών μονάδων, η μείωση του προσωπικού μέσω των νέων οργανισμών, υπηρετούν τη μείωση των κρατικών δαπανών και την επιχειρηματικότητα των δημόσιων μονάδων υγείας. Επεκτείνεται η ανατροπή της μόνιμης και σταθερής εργασίας, μειώνονται δραστικά οι αποδοχές των εργαζομένων, περικόπτονται οι εφημερίες των γιατρών, παρουσιάζονται σοβαρές ελλείψεις σε ιατρικά και αναλώσιμα υλικά για την έγκαιρη και ασφαλή αντιμετώπιση,ακόμα και σε επείγοντα περιστατικά.

Η δραστική κρατική υποχρηματοδότηση του ΕΟΠΥΥ και των ασφαλιστικών ταμείων, η περικοπή των παροχών αυτού του οργανισμού και η αύξηση των πληρωμών των ασφαλισμένων για φάρμακα, θεραπείες και εξετάσεις, επιδεινώνει την κατάσταση των ασθενών, ιδιαίτερα των λαϊκών στρωμάτων, καθώς και τη θέση των αυτοαπασχολούμενων υγειονομικών από τις μεγάλες καθυστερήσεις στην πληρωμή τους από το κράτος και τον ΕΟΠΥΥ, από το «κούρεμα» των αποζημιώσεων που τους χρωστούν, ενώ απειλείται η επαγγελματική τους επιβίωση από τους επιχειρηματικούς ομίλους της υγείας και του φαρμάκου.

Η καπιταλιστική οικονομική κρίση αξιοποιείται για να προωθηθούν και να παγιωθούν τα σχεδιασμένα εδώ και χρόνια μέτρα εμπορευματοποίησης και ιδιωτικοποίησης της δημόσιας υγείας, ενταγμένα στη στρατηγική της ΕΕ και όλων των κυβερνήσεων για να επιτευχθεί η ανταγωνιστικότητα των επιχειρηματικών ομίλων.

Αυτή η κατάσταση δε θα υπήρχε εάν ο πλούτος που παράγουν οι εργαζόμενοι αποτελούσε κοινωνική και όχι ατομική ιδιοκτησία. Γι' αυτό απαιτείται άλλη οργάνωση της οικονομίας και της κοινωνίας που θα θέτει ως κριτήριο ανάπτυξης την ικανοποίηση των λαϊκών αναγκών στην ιατροφαρμακευτική και νοσοκομειακή περίθαλψη με την ανάπτυξη ενός σύγχρονου και απολύτως δωρεάν κρατικού συστήματος υγείας.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή πως τοποθετείται στα παραπάνω ζητήματα;

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

Η δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση, τα μέτρα για την ανάκτηση της χρηματοοικονομικής σταθερότητας και οι διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις είναι αναγκαία μέτρα για την αποκατάσταση του κλίματος εμπιστοσύνης και της φορολογικής φερεγγυότητας και την προώθηση της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης σε κράτη μέλη που έχουν πληγεί από την κρίση χρέους. Τα υγιή δημόσια οικονομικά αποτελούν προϋπόθεση για τη χρηματοδότηση υπηρεσιών όπως η ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη, η οποία μπορεί να συμβάλει στο να παραμένουν οι άνθρωποι ενεργοί για μεγαλύτερο χρονικό διάστημα.

Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής, οι ελληνικές αρχές καλούνται να βελτιώσουν την αποτελεσματικότητα του συστήματος, διατηρώντας ταυτόχρονα την καθολική πρόσβαση σε υψηλής ποιότητας ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη. Οι συμφωνηθείσες μεταρρυθμίσεις συμβάλουν στην αντιμετώπιση των προβλημάτων που αναφέρονται από το Αξιότιμο Μέλος ως εξής: με την καταπολέμηση της κατακερματισμένης και ισχνής διακυβέρνησης, την ενίσχυση της θεσμικής ικανότητας, τη μείωση της σπατάλης και της διαφθοράς και την αντιμετώπιση των διαρθρωτικών ανεπαρκειών όσον αφορά την οργάνωση, τη χρηματοδότηση και την παροχή υπηρεσιών ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης.

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί με προσοχή την οικονομική και κοινωνική κατάσταση στην Ελλάδα και ειδικότερα την κατάσταση σχετικά με την ιατροφαρμακευτική κάλυψη των ανέργων.

Ορισμένες πολιτικές μπορούν να βελτιώσουν την πρόσβαση στην περίθαλψη και την ασφάλεια των ασθενών παράλληλα με την μείωση του κόστους των ασθενών, της σπατάλης και της απάτης και των δημοσίων δαπανών. Μεταξύ αυτών περιλαμβάνονται: η συγχώνευση του συνόλου των συστημάτων ασφάλισης ασθενείας σε έναν οργανισμό (τον ΕΟΠΥΥ), οι μειώσεις των τιμών στα φαρμακευτικά προϊόντα, η υποχρεωτική ηλεκτρονική συνταγογράφηση (e-prescription) των φαρμακευτικών και διαγνωστικών μέσων, η υποχρεωτική συνταγογράφηση με διεθνή κοινή ονομασία και η χρησιμοποίηση μιας κεντρικής μονάδας αγοράς. Η Επιτροπή θα παρακολουθήσει την πρόοδο των πολιτικών στο πλαίσιο των τακτικών αποστολών επιθεώρησης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001446/13
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Desperate state of public healthcare in Greece

Public healthcare in Greece has been in an alarming state for some time. An increasing number of unemployed and uninsured people, but also workers whose wages have been plundered, are excluded from even basic public health services. The fact that public health spending fell by 32.1% in 2012 compared to 2009 and private healthcare by 52.9% over the same period shows that some population groups are completely excluded from any kind of medical examination and medicine.

Mergers between — and the dismantling of — public hospitals, clinics, laboratories, bed capacity and specialist units and staff reductions through the creation of new agencies all serve to reduce government spending and boost the entrepreneurial efficiency of public health units. Permanent and stable jobs are increasingly disappearing, employees' salaries are being drastically cut, the number of doctors on call is being reduced, and there are severe shortages of medical equipment and disposable material for prompt and safe treatment, even in emergencies.

The severe state of underfunding of the National Organisation for the Provision of Health Services (EOPYY) and the insurance funds, reductions in the services provided by this organisation and the increase in payments by insured persons for medicines, treatments and tests are leading to a deterioration of the condition of patients, especially among the working classes. The position of self-employed health workers is also deteriorating due to long delays in payments by the state and EOPYY and the 'haircut' in the compensation owed to them; furthermore, their livelihoods are at risk from healthcare and drugs consortia.

The capitalist economic crisis is being used to promote and consolidate public health commercialisation and privatisation measures that have been planned for years, as part of the strategy pursued by the EU and all Member State governments to boost the competitiveness of business groups.

This situation would not exist if the wealth produced by the workers belonged to society and not to individuals. The economy and society must be organised differently, and the criterion for development must be the ability to meet the health and hospital care needs of the people by developing a modern and absolutely free state health system.

What is the Commission's position on these issues?

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

Fiscal consolidation, measures to regain financial stability and structural reforms are necessary to restore confidence, establish fiscal solvency and foster economic growth in Member States hit by the debt crisis. Sound public finances are a requirement for the financing of services like health, which can contribute to enabling people to remain active for longer.

Under the Economic Adjustment Programme, Greek Authorities are to improve the efficiency of the system, while maintaining universal access to quality healthcare. Agreed reforms contribute to addressing the problems mentioned by the Honourable Member by: addressing the fragmented and weak governance, building institutional capacity, reducing waste and corruption and addressing structural inefficiencies in the organisation, financing and delivery of health services.

The Commission remains attentive to the economic and social situation in Greece and more specifically to the situation regarding the healthcare coverage of unemployed people.

Many policies can improve access to care and patients' safety while reducing patients' costs, waste and fraud and public spending. These include: merging of all health insurance schemes into one organisation (EOPYY); pharmaceutical price reductions; compulsory e-prescription of pharmaceuticals and diagnostics; compulsory prescription by international non-proprietary name and the use of a centralised purchasing unit. The Commission will be monitoring policy progress within regular review missions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001447/13
a la Comisión
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) y Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Preocupación por el ascenso de las fuerzas políticas extremistas en Europa

En los últimos años se ha registrado un aumento considerable de la presencia, actividad e influencia política de los movimientos políticos extremistas en un número de Estados miembros cada vez mayor. La aparición y la consolidación de fuerzas extremistas, intolerantes, abiertamente xenófobas e incluso racistas no solo están vinculadas a las consecuencias sociales —el desempleo, el aumento de la pobreza y las dificultades— de la grave crisis económica que afecta a los países europeos y, en particular, a los países meridionales, sino que se aprovechan de dicha situación, conjuntamente con una gestión inadecuada de la cuestión de la inmigración.

En Grecia, se ha observado un aumento de la presencia de dichas fuerzas en la escena política, incluida su representación en el parlamento nacional. Sus discursos políticos, símbolos y acciones concretas, todos ellos de carácter extremista, nos han traído recuerdos de los años más oscuros de la historia política de la Europa moderna, la década de los años 30 y principios de los años 40. Se ha demostrado que la violencia física y verbal, los elogios a la Dictadura de los Coroneles, los reiterados ataques contra ciudadanos y extranjeros y las amenazas contra los opositores políticos son características permanentes de la acción de estas fuerzas políticas, así como una consecuencia de su presencia.

A la luz de estas cuestiones de suma importancia:

1. ¿Es consciente la Comisión de que estas fuerzas hacen uso de la violencia e infringen casi todas las normas de la democracia, el Estado de Derecho y los valores europeos fundamentales en los que se basa la UE?

2. ¿La Comisión y las agencias pertinentes supervisan de manera sistemática el resurgimiento de fuerzas políticas similares en Europa?

3. En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál es la posición de la Comisión al respecto, y cuál es su plan de acción para atajar esta situación tan grave y preocupante, en particular, con miras a las próximas elecciones al Parlamento Europeo en 2014?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de marzo de 2013)

La Comisión condena enérgicamente todas las manifestaciones de racismo y xenofobia, incluida la violencia, ya que son incompatibles con los valores en que se funda la UE. Se ha comprometido a combatir esos fenómenos con todos los medios a su alcance en virtud de los Tratados.

Incitar al odio xenófobo contra un individuo o un grupo de personas constituye un delito en la EU. En virtud de la Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI del Consejo, relativa a la lucha contra el racismo y la xenofobia, todos los Estados miembros de la UE están obligados a tipificar como delito la incitación pública y deliberada a la violencia o al odio contra un grupo de personas o un miembro de tal grupo, definiéndose este en relación con la raza, el color, la religión, la ascendencia o el origen nacional o étnico, inclusive cuando tal incitación se cometa mediante la difusión o reparto de escritos, imágenes u otros materiales.

Los Estados miembros estaban obligados a incorporar esta Decisión marco a su ordenamiento jurídico nacional a más tardar el 28 de noviembre de 2010. La Comisión está estudiando las notificaciones de los Estados miembros de las medidas nacionales de aplicación y presentará sus conclusiones en un informe más adelante en 2013.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-001447/13
Komisi
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) a Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12. února 2013)

Předmět: Obavy ohledně posilování extrémních politických sil v Evropě

V posledních několika letech dochází ve stále více členských státech k výraznému posílení přítomnosti, činnosti a politického vlivu extrémních politických hnutí. Vzestup a posilování extrémních, netolerantních, otevřeně xenofobních a dokonce rasistických sil souvisí se společenskými dopady – nezaměstnaností a zvýšenou chudobou a svízelnou životní situací – velké hospodářské krize, které čelí evropské země, zejména země na jihu Evropy, a také s nedostatečným řízením migrace a využívá jich.

V Řecku došlo k posílení přítomnosti takovýchto sil v politice, a to i v parlamentu. Jejich extrémní politické projevy, symboly a konkrétní činy připomínají nejtemnější léta moderních evropských politických dějin – třicátá léta a počátek čtyřicátých let minulého století. Slovní a fyzické násilí, chvála vojenské diktatury, která vládla v Řecku na přelomu šedesátých a sedmdesátých let minulého století, opakované útoky proti občanům i cizincům a výhrůžky politickým protivníkům se staly trvalými rysy činnosti těchto politických sil a důsledkem jejich přítomnosti.

S ohledem na tyto extrémně závažné záležitosti žádáme Komisi, aby zodpověděla následující otázky:

1. Je si vědoma toho, že tyto síly používají násilí a porušují téměř všechny standardy demokracie, právního státu a základních evropských hodnot, na nichž je EU založena?

2. Monitorují Komise a příslušné agentury systematicky vzestup podobných politických sil po celé Evropě?

3. Pokud ano, jaký má Komise k této otázce postoj a jaké kroky plánuje podniknout k řešení této vážné a velmi znepokojující situace, zejména s ohledem na nadcházející volby do Evropského parlamentu v roce 2014?

Odpověď komisařky Redingové jménem Komise
(27. března 2013)

Komise důrazně odsuzuje veškeré projevy rasismu a xenofobie, včetně násilí, neboť nejsou slučitelné s hodnotami, na nichž je EU založena. Je odhodlána bojovat s těmito jevy všemi dostupnými prostředky, jež jsou v souladu se Smlouvami.

Podněcování k nenávisti vůči jedinci nebo skupině osob je v EU trestným činem. Na základě rámcového rozhodnutí Rady 2008/913/SVV o boji proti rasismu a xenofobii jsou všechny členské státy EU povinny zajistit, aby se na úmyslné veřejné podněcování k násilí nebo nenávisti namířené proti skupině osob nebo proti příslušníkovi této skupiny vymezené podle rasy, barvy pleti, náboženského vyznání, původu nebo národnostního či etnického původu, včetně je-li tento čin spáchán veřejným šířením nebo distribucí tiskovin, obrazového nebo jiného materiálu, vztahovaly trestní sankce.

Členské státy měly povinnost provést toto rámcové rozhodnutí ve svém vnitrostátním právu do 28. listopadu 2010. Komise v současné době zkoumá oznámení o vnitrostátních prováděcích opatřeních členských států a později v roce 2013 předloží zprávu o posouzení.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001447/13
an die Kommission
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) und Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Besorgnis über das Erstarken extremer politischer Kräfte in Europa

Seit einigen Jahren ist ein beträchtlicher Anstieg der Präsenz, der Aktionen und des politischen Einflusses extremer politischer Bewegungen in einer wachsenden Zahl von Mitgliedstaaten zu verzeichnen. Das Auftauchen und Erstarken extremer, intoleranter offen ausländerfeindlicher oder gar rassistischer Kräfte ist auf die sozialen Konsequenzen (Arbeitslosigkeit, wachsende Armut und Not) der schweren Wirtschaftskrise zurückzuführen, die die Länder Europas insbesondere im Süden erfasst hat, und wird dadurch genährt. Eine weitere Ursache ist die unzureichende Bewältigung des Migrationsproblems durch die Behörden.

In Griechenland gewinnen solche Kräfte auf der politischen Bühne immer mehr an Zulauf und sind inzwischen auch im Parlament vertreten. Ihr extremer politischer Diskurs, ihre Symbole und konkreten Handlungen lassen Erinnerungen an die dunkelsten Jahre der modernen politischen Geschichte Europas aus den 1930-er und Anfang der 1940-er Jahre wach werden. Verbale und körperliche Gewalt, die Verherrlichung des Obristenregimes, wiederholte Angriffe auf griechische Staatsbürger und Ausländer sowie die Bedrohung politischer Gegner gehen auf das Konto dieser politischen Kräfte und sind eine Konsequenz ihrer Präsenz.

Angesichts dieses außerordentlich ernsten Problems wird die Kommission um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen gebeten:

1. Ist sich die Kommission dessen bewusst, dass diese Kräfte Gewalt anwenden und nahezu gegen alle Normen der Demokratie, Rechtsstaatlichkeit und europäischen Grundwerte verstoßen, auf die sich die EU gründet?

2. Wird das Wiederaufleben ähnlicher politischer Kräfte in ganz Europa von der Kommission und den zuständigen Agenturen systematisch überwacht?

3. Falls ja, welchen Standpunkt nimmt die Kommission dazu ein und wie gedenkt sie, dieser ernsten und zutiefst beunruhigenden Situation im Lichte der kommenden Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament im Jahr 2014 zu begegnen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(27. März 2013)

Die Kommission verurteilt aufs Schärfste alle Erscheinungsformen von Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit sowie von Gewalt, da sie unvereinbar sind mit den Werten, auf denen die Europäische Union beruht. Sie ist entschlossen, dagegen mit allen Mitteln vorzugehen, die ihr nach den Verträgen zur Verfügung stehen.

Die Aufstachelung zu Hass gegen eine Person oder eine Gruppe von Personen ist in der EU ein Strafbestand. Gemäß dem Rahmenbeschluss 2008/913/JI des Rates zur Bekämpfung von Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit sind alle EU-Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, die öffentliche Aufstachelung zu Gewalt und Hass gegen eine nach den Kriterien der Rasse, Hautfarbe, Religion, Abstammung oder nationalen oder ethnischen Herkunft definierte Gruppe von Personen oder gegen ein Mitglied einer solchen Gruppe unter Strafe zu stellen, auch wenn dies durch die öffentliche Verbreitung oder Verteilung von Schriften, Bild- sonstigem Material geschieht.

Die Mitgliedstaaten mussten den Rahmenbeschluss bis zum 28. November 2010 in nationales Recht umsetzen. Zurzeit prüft die Kommission die von den Mitgliedstaaten übermittelten Umsetzungsmaßnahmen und wird im späteren Verlauf des Jahres einen Bewertungsbericht vorlegen.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001447/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) και Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανησυχίες για την άνοδο ακραίων πολιτικών δυνάμεων στην Ευρώπη

Κατά τα τελευταία χρόνια, σε έναν αυξανόμενο αριθμό κρατών μελών, παρατηρείται μια σημαντική αύξηση στην παρουσία, δράση και πολιτική επιρροή ακραίων πολιτικών κινημάτων. Η ανάδειξη και ενίσχυση ακραίων, αδιάλλακτων και εξαιρετικά ξενοφόβων ακόμη και ρατσιστικών δυνάμεων, συνδέεται και αντλεί δυνάμεις από τις κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις — ανεργία και αυξημένη φτώχεια καθώς και κοινωνικά προβλήματα — της σημαντικής οικονομικής κρίσεως που αντιμετωπίζουν οι ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, κυρίως αυτές του Νότου, μαζί με την ανεπαρκή διαχείριση του θέματος της μετανάστευσης.

Στην Ελλάδα παρατηρήθηκε η αύξηση της παρουσίας παρόμοιων δυνάμεων στην πολιτική σκηνή, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της κοινοβουλευτικής εκπροσώπησης. Ο ακραίος τους πολιτικός λόγος, σύμβολα και συγκεκριμένες δράσεις επανέφεραν μνήμες των μαύρων ετών της σύγχρονης ευρωπαϊκής πολιτικής ιστορίας, των δεκαετιών του 1930 και των αρχών του 1940. Λεκτική και σωματική βία, εξύμνηση του καθεστώτος των συνταγματαρχών, επαναλαμβανόμενες επιθέσεις τόσο κατά πολιτών όσο και αλλοδαπών και απειλές κατά πολιτικών αντιπάλων, αποδείχτηκαν ότι αποτελούν μόνιμα χαρακτηριστικά της δράσης των εν λόγω πολιτικών δυνάμεων και απόρροια της παρουσίας τους.

Υπό το φως των ανωτέρω εξαιρετικά σοβαρών ζητημάτων, η Επιτροπή καλείται να απαντήσει στα ακόλουθα:

1. Είναι ενήμερη ότι παρόμοιες δυνάμεις χρησιμοποιούν βία και παραβιάζουν σχεδόν όλα τα πρότυπα της δημοκρατίας, του κράτους δικαίου και των θεμελιωδών ευρωπαϊκών αξιών πάνω στα οποία έχει θεμελιωθεί η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση;

2. Ελέγχει συστηματικά η Επιτροπή και οι σχετικές υπηρεσίες την αναβίωση παρόμοιων πολιτικών δυνάμεων στην Ευρώπη;

3. Εάν ναι, ποια είναι σχετικά η θέση της Επιτροπής, και ποιο είναι το πρόγραμμα δράσης για την αντιμετώπιση αυτής της σοβαρής και ιδιαίτερα ανησυχητικής κατάστασης, ειδικότερα ενόψει των μελλοντικών εκλογών για το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο το 2014;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαρτίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή καταδικάζει απερίφραστα όλες τις μορφές ρατσισμού και ξενοφοβίας, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της βίας, καθώς δεν συνάδουν με τις αξίες στις οποίες βασίζεται η ΕΕ. Η ΕΕ δεσμεύεται να καταπολεμήσει τα φαινόμενα αυτά με όλα τα μέσα που της παρέχουν οι Συνθήκες.

Η υποκίνηση ξενοφοβικού μίσους εναντίον μεμονωμένου προσώπου ή ομάδας προσώπων αποτελεί αδίκημα στην ΕΕ. Σύμφωνα με την απόφαση-πλαίσιο 2008/913/ΔΕΥ του Συμβουλίου για την καταπολέμηση του ρατσισμού και της ξενοφοβίας, όλα τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ υποχρεούνται να διώκουν ποινικά την εκ προθέσεως δημόσια υποκίνηση βίας ή μίσους που στρέφεται κατά ομάδας προσώπων ή μέλους ομάδας που προσδιορίζονται βάσει της φυλής, του χρώματος, της θρησκείας, των γενεαλογικών καταβολών ή της εθνικής ή εθνοτικής καταγωγής τους, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της υποκίνησης μέσω της διάδοσης πληροφοριών ή διανομής προπαγανδιστικών φυλλαδίων, εικόνων ή άλλου υλικού.

Τα κράτη μέλη υποχρεώθηκαν να μεταφέρουν την εν λόγω απόφαση-πλαίσιο στο εθνικό τους δίκαιο μέχρι τις 28 Νοεμβρίου 2010. Η Επιτροπή εξετάζει επί του παρόντος τα εθνικά μέτρα εφαρμογής που κοινοποίησαν τα κράτη μέλη και πρόκειται να υποβάλει έκθεση αξιολόγησης εντός του 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001447/13
à la Commission
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) et Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12 février 2013)

Objet: Inquiétude face à la montée des mouvements politiques extrémistes en Europe

Un nombre croissant d'États membres est confronté, ces dernières années, à une montée en force des mouvements politiques extrémistes dont la présence, les activités et l'influence politique ne cessent de se développer. L'émergence et la multiplication de ces mouvements extrémistes, intolérants, ouvertement xénophobes et même racistes sont indissociables de l'environnement social et des conséquences de la grave crise économique — chômage, paupérisation et précarité — que connaissent les pays européens, notamment ceux du Sud. Le tout sur fond de gestion catastrophique de l'immigration.

En Grèce, nous avons observé une progression de ces forces sur l'échiquier politique, notamment au Parlement. Leur discours politique extrémiste, leurs symboles et leurs actions sur le terrain nous font revivre les années 30 et le début des années 1940, bref, les moments les plus sombres de l'histoire politique de l'Europe moderne. L'action de ces forces politiques a une constante: elle se caractérise par la violence tant verbale que physique, l'éloge du régime des colonels, des attaques répétées contre certains citoyens et les étrangers ainsi que des menaces à l'encontre des opposants politiques. C'est la marque logique de leur présence.

Face à ce problème d'une extrême gravité, la Commission est invitée à répondre aux questions suivantes:

1. Sait-elle que ces mouvements recourent à la violence et bafouent la quasi-totalité des principes démocratiques, l'état de loi et les valeurs fondamentales européennes sur lesquelles repose l'UE?

2. La Commission et les agences compétentes en la matière surveillent-elles systématiquement la résurgence des mouvements politiques de cette nature en Europe?

3. Dans l'affirmative, quelle est la position de la Commission sur le sujet? Quel est son plan d'action pour faire face à cette situation des plus inquiétantes et à sa gravité, notamment à la veille des élections 2014 au Parlement européen?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(27 mars 2013)

La Commission condamne vigoureusement toutes les manifestations de racisme et de xénophobie, ainsi que de violence, qui sont incompatibles avec les valeurs sur lesquelles repose l'UE, et elle est déterminée à lutter contre ces phénomènes par tous les moyens que lui confèrent les traités.

L'incitation à la haine xénophobe contre un individu ou un groupe d'individus constitue une infraction au sein de l'UE. En vertu de la décision-cadre 2008/913/JAI du Conseil sur la lutte contre le racisme et la xénophobie, chaque État membre de l'UE est tenu de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour faire en sorte que soit punissable par des sanctions pénales l'incitation publique à la violence ou à la haine visant un groupe de personnes ou un membre d'un tel groupe, défini par référence à la race, la couleur, la religion, l'ascendance, l'origine nationale ou ethnique, y compris lorsque l'acte est commis par diffusion ou distribution publique d'écrits, d'images ou d'autres supports.

Les États membres étaient tenus de transposer cette directive-cadre dans leur droit interne le 28 novembre 2010 au plus tard. La Commission examine actuellement les notifications des mesures d'exécution nationales prises par les États membres et elle présentera son évaluation dans un rapport courant 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001447/13
alla Commissione
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) e Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Preoccupazioni suscitate dall'incremento delle forze politiche estremiste in Europa

Nel corso degli ultimi anni, si è registrato un notevole aumento della presenza, dell'azione e dell'influenza politica dei movimenti politici estremisti in un numero crescente di Stati membri. L'emergere e il rafforzamento delle forze estremiste intolleranti e apertamente xenofobe e perfino razziste sono legati e indotti dalle conseguenze sociali — disoccupazione e aumento della povertà e del disagio — della grave crisi economica che affligge i paesi europei, in particolare quelli del sud, e dalla gestione inadeguata del problema dell'immigrazione.

In Grecia abbiamo assistito a un aumento della presenza di tali forze sulla scena politica, anche nella rappresentanza parlamentare. Le loro argomentazioni politiche estremistiche, come anche i loro simboli ed azioni concrete hanno riportato alla memoria gli anni più bui della storia politica moderna europea, gli anni '30 e i primi anni '40. La violenza verbale e fisica, l'apprezzamento per il regime dei colonnelli, i ripetuti attacchi contro cittadini e stranieri e le minacce nei confronti degli avversari politici hanno dimostrato di essere le caratteristiche permanenti dell'azione di queste forze politiche, e una conseguenza della loro presenza.

Alla luce di questi problemi estremamente gravi, si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È consapevole del fatto che queste forze usano la violenza e violano quasi tutte le norme della democrazia, dello Stato di diritto e dei valori europei fondamentali su cui si fonda l'UE?

2. La Commissione e le agenzie competenti stanno monitorando sistematicamente il riproporsi di siffatte forze politiche in tutta Europa?

3. In caso affermativo, qual è la posizione della Commissione in merito, e qual è il suo piano di azione per affrontare e risolvere questa grave e fortemente preoccupante situazione, soprattutto in vista delle prossime elezioni del Parlamento europeo nel 2014?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2013)

La Commissione condanna fermamente qualsiasi manifestazione di razzismo e xenofobia, compresa la violenza, in quanto fenomeni incompatibili con i valori su cui si fonda l'UE, e si impegna a combatterli con tutti i mezzi disponibili previsti dai trattati.

Nell'UE l'istigazione all'odio a carattere xenofobo nei confronti di un singolo individuo o di un gruppo di persone è considerata un reato. A norma della decisione quadro 2008/913/GAI del Consiglio sulla lotta al razzismo e alla xenofobia, gli Stati membri dell'UE sono obbligati a punire con sanzioni penali l'istigazione pubblica alla violenza o all'odio nei confronti di un gruppo di persone, o di un suo membro, definito in riferimento alla razza, al colore, alla religione, all'ascendenza o all'origine nazionale o etnica, anche nel caso in cui ciò avvenga mediante la diffusione e la distribuzione pubblica di scritti, immagini o altro materiale.

Gli Stati membri dell'UE erano tenuti a recepire tale direttiva quadro nelle rispettive legislazioni nazionali entro il 28 novembre 2010. La Commissione sta attualmente esaminando le notifiche delle misure di attuazione nazionali degli Stati membri e presenterà le sue valutazioni in una relazione nel corso del 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001447/13
à Comissão
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) e Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Apreensão quanto à ascensão de forças políticas extremistas na Europa

Nos últimos anos, tem-se observado um considerável aumento da presença, ação e influência política de movimentos políticos extremistas num número crescente de Estados-Membros. A emergência e reforço de forças extremistas, intolerantes, abertamente xenófobas e, mesmo, racistas estão relacionadas e tiram partido das consequências sociais — desemprego e aumento da pobreza e das dificuldades — da maior crise económica enfrentada pelos países europeus, em especial os países do Sul, conjuntamente com a inadequada gestão da questão migratória.

Na Grécia, assistimos ao aumento da presença dessas forças na cena política, incluindo no plano da representação parlamentar. O seu discurso político extremista, os símbolos e as ações concretas devolvem-nos memórias dos mais negros anos negros da moderna história política da Europa, os anos trinta e o início dos anos quarenta. A violência física e verbal, o elogio do Regime dos Coronéis, os repetidos ataques tanto contra cidadãos, como contra estrangeiros e as ameaças contra os opositores políticos revelaram-se traços permanentes da ação destas forças políticas, bem como uma consequência da sua presença.

À luz da extrema gravidade desta situação, pergunta-se:

1. É do conhecimento da Comissão que estas forças recorrem à violência e violam todas as normas democráticas, o primado do direito e os valores europeus fundamentais em que a UE assenta?

2. A Comissão e as agências relevantes procedem ao acompanhamento sistemático do ressurgimento de forças políticas de semelhante natureza na Europa?

3. Sendo o caso, qual a posição da Comissão face a esta problemática e qual o seu plano de ação para acometer esta grave e extremamente preocupante situação, nomeadamente na perspetiva das próximas eleições para o Parlamento Europeu, em 2014?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(27 de março de 2013)

A Comissão condena firmemente todas as formas de racismo e de xenofobia, visto que são incompatíveis com os valores em que a UE assenta. A Comissão está empenhada em combater estes fenómenos recorrendo a todos os meios previstos ao abrigo dos Tratados.

O incitamento ao ódio e à xenofobia contra um indivíduo ou um grupo de pessoas constitui uma infração na UE. Nos termos da Decisão-Quadro 2008/913/JAI do Conselho relativa à luta contra o racismo e xenofobia, todos os Estados-Membros estão obrigados a tornar punível o incitamento público e intencional à violência ou ao ódio contra um grupo de pessoas ou os seus membros, definido por referência à raça, cor, religião, ascendência ou origem nacional ou étnica, inclusivamente quando cometido através da difusão ou distribuição públicas de escritos, imagens ou outros suportes.

Os Estados-Membros tinham a obrigação de transpor a decisão-quadro para o direito nacional até 28 de novembro de 2010. A Comissão está presentemente a analisar as notificações dos Estados-Membros respeitantes às medidas de execução nacionais e avaliará o seu cumprimento num relatório a apresentar em finais de 2013.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-001447/13
till kommissionen
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) och Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12 februari 2013)

Angående: Oro för de växande extrempolitiska krafterna i Europa

Under de senaste åren har de extrempolitiska rörelsernas närvaro, verksamhet och politiska inflytande ökat markant i allt fler medlemsstater. Att extrema, intoleranta, öppet främlingsfientliga och till och med rasistiska krafter uppstår och blir allt starkare beror på och främjas av de sociala konsekvenserna – arbetslöshet, ökad fattigdom och större påfrestningar – av den allvarliga ekonomiska kris som drabbat europeiska länder, särskilt i söder, och en otillfredsställande hantering av migrationsfrågan.

I Grekland har dessa krafter ökat sin närvaro på den politiska arenan, bland annat genom sin representation i parlamentet. Deras extrempolitiska tal, symboler och konkreta åtgärder väcker minnen från de allra mörkaste åren av Europas politiska historia i modern tid, det vill säga 1930- och 1940-talen. Verbalt och fysiskt våld, lovordande av militärjuntan, upprepade attacker mot både medborgare och utlänningar och hot mot alla politiska motståndare – detta har varit ständiga inslag i dessa politiska krafters verksamhet, och en konsekvens av deras närvaro.

Mot bakgrund av dessa extremt allvarliga problem tillfrågas kommissionen följande:

1. Känner kommissionen till att dessa krafter använder våld och handlar i strid med nästan alla normer som rör demokrati, rättsstatsprincipen och de grundläggande europeiska värden som EU grundar sig på?

2. Ser kommissionen och de relevanta byråerna systematiskt över hur liknande politiska krafter blossar upp runtom i Europa?

3. Om så är fallet, vad anser kommissionen om detta och vad har den för handlingsplan för att ta itu med denna allvarliga och mycket oroväckande situation, särskilt med tanke på det kommande valet till Europaparlamentet 2014?

Svar från Viviane Reding på kommissionens vägnar
(27 mars 2013)

Kommissionen fördömer starkt alla former av rasism och främlingsfientlighet, däribland våld, då dessa företeelser är oförenliga med de värderingar som EU grundar sig på. Kommissionen är fast besluten att bekämpa dessa fenomen med alla medel som står till buds enligt fördragen.

Att uppmana till rasistiskt hat mot en individ eller en grupp människor är ett brott inom EU. I enlighet med rådets rambeslut 2008/913/RIF om bekämpande av rasism och främlingsfientlighet måste alla medlemsländer i EU vidta straffåtgärder för avsiktliga offentliga uppmaningar till våld eller hat riktat mot en grupp av personer eller en medlem av en sådan grupp, utpekad med åberopande av ras, hudfärg, religion, härkomst eller nationellt eller etniskt ursprung, även när det sker genom offentlig spridning eller distribution av skrifter, bilder eller annat material.

Medlemsstaterna skulle ha införlivat detta rambeslut med nationell rätt senast den 28 november 2010. Kommissionen undersöker för närvarande anmälningarna om medlemsstaternas nationella genomförandebestämmelser och kommer att presentera sina resultat i en rapport senare under år 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001447/13
to the Commission
Georges Bach (PPE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Isabelle Durant (Verts/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Jim Higgins (PPE), Seán Kelly (PPE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Gay Mitchell (PPE), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Libor Rouček (S&D), Olle Schmidt (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE) and Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Concerns about the rise of extreme political forces in Europe

Over the last few years, there has been a considerable increase in the presence, action and political influence of extreme political movements in a growing number of Member States. The emergence and strengthening of extreme, intolerant, overtly xenophobic and even racist forces are linked to and draw on the social consequences — unemployment and increased poverty and hardship — of the major economic crisis facing European countries, especially those in the south, along with the inadequate management of the migration issue.

In Greece, we have seen a rise in the presence of such forces on the political scene, including parliamentary representation. Their extreme political discourse, symbols and concrete actions have brought back memories of the darkest years of modern European political history, the 1930s and early 1940s. Verbal and physical violence, praise for the Regime of the Colonels, repeated attacks against citizens and foreigners alike and threats against political opponents have proved to be permanent features of the action of these political forces, and a consequence of their presence.

In the light of these extremely serious issues, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. Is it aware that these forces use violence and violate nearly all norms of democracy, the rule of law and the fundamental European values upon which the EU is founded?

2. Are the Commission and the relevant agencies systematically monitoring the resurgence of similar political forces across Europe?

3. If so, what is the Commission's position on this, and what is its plan of action for tackling this serious and most worrying situation, especially with a view to the forthcoming European Parliament elections in 2014?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission strongly condemns all manifestations of racism and xenophobia, including violence, as they are incompatible with the values the EU is founded upon. It is committed to fight these phenomena by all means available under the Treaties.

Inciting to xenophobic hatred against an individual or a group of people is an offence in the EU. Under Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating racism and xenophobia, all EU Member States are obliged to make punishable by criminal penalties the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin, including when committed by public dissemination or distribution of tracts, pictures or other material.

Member States were obliged to transpose this framework Decision into their national laws by 28 November 2010. The Commission is currently examining the notifications of Member States' national implementing measures and will present its assessment in a report later 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001448/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Cost of NCT tests (roadworthiness tests in Ireland)

With regard to the Roadworthiness Package, could the Commission state what the cost would be to consumers of having their cars tested by the NCTS (National Car Testing Service in Ireland) under the regime proposed by the Commission? Has a cost-benefit analysis been carried out?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

The Commission has carried out a cost benefit analysis which is covered in the impact assessment (SWD (2012)206 final) accompanying the Commission's Roadworthiness Package proposal, which includes information on the current average costs of periodic roadworthiness tests in each Member State.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001449/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Roadworthiness testing in Member States

Can the Commission say whether or not Member States with strict roadworthiness tests have to accept and recognise a roadworthiness certificate from another Member State, in which there is clearly a different standard of testing? To provide a level playing field for all road users in a particular country, does the Commission agree that cars being re-registered in another Member State should undergo a test there to ensure compliance with any stricter rules?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2013)

The Commission would like to refer to the rulings of the European Court of Justice C-150/11 requesting the Member State of re-registration to take under consideration the result of previous roadworthiness tests performed in the Member State of origin. Therefore any additional test may only contain elements that have not been covered by the roadworthiness test in the Member State of origin.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001450/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Standardised EU roadworthiness test

Does the Commission have any plans to introduce an EU-wide roadworthiness test? Does the Commission have any plans to introduce EU-wide inspections of roadworthiness test centres in all the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

Article 4(1) of the Commission's proposal for a regulation on periodic roadworthiness tests (COM(2012)380 final) requires that vehicles shall periodically be tested in the Member State where they are registered. Supervision of roadworthiness test centres shall be carried out by the Member State where the test centre is situated.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001451/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Availability of mileage information for second-hand cars

Does the Commission share the view that the mileage recorded at each NCT test (roadworthiness test in Ireland) should be publicly and freely available to those wishing to purchase a second-hand car? If such information were provided at the time of selling a car, cases of car clocking would be greatly reduced.

Question for written answer E-001458/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Clocking vehicles

Does the Commission view the problem of clocking vehicles as a consumer issue or a road safety issue?

Does it have any guidelines for Member States as to what should be included in proposals for legislation on clocking?

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that with the Commission's proposal for a regulation on periodic roadworthiness tests (COM(2012)380 final) includes several provisions aimed at combating odometer fraud, through mileage recording, keeping odometer records of each tested vehicles and requiering penalties in case of odometer manipulations.

As regards the possibility to make the recorded mileage of each individual vehicle publicly available, this is not prohibited by the Commission's proposal. However, making it mandatory at EU level might create certain conflicts with data protection rules in the different Member States.

Nevertheless, the odometer reading is recorded on the roadworthiness certificate which in practice is transferred to the new owner as part of the vehicle's documentation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001452/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Testing for motorbikes

What evidence can the Commission provide to show that extending Member States' roadworthiness tests to include motorbikes would improve road safety? Has the Commission simply made these proposals without any hard evidence to show that testing motorbikes would lead to improvements in road safety? Does the Commission have any data which shows that rather than introducing more tests, what is need is better training for motorcyclists, or did it not consider any data at all when taking the decision to propose motorcycle tests in the Roadworthiness Package?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-010344/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001453/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Availability of technical information to NCTS (Ireland's National Car Testing Service) inspectors

Should car manufacturers be obliged to provide necessary technical information to NCTS inspectors free of charge in order to facilitate technical NCT tests (roadworthiness tests in Ireland), especially as cars are becoming more and more computerised?

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

Article 4(3) of the Commission's proposal for a regulation on periodic roadworthiness tests (COM(2012)380 final) requires vehicle manufacturers to provide the testing centres or, when relevant, the competent authority, with access to the technical information necessary for roadworthiness testing.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001454/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Elephant poaching and illegal ivory exports to China

Despite the success of the 1989 ban on ivory trading introduced under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which curbed the decline of the elephant population in Africa, recent developments have illustrated the continuing vulnerability of elephants and the rise in illegal ivory exports. Last month's ambush and slaughter of a family of twelve elephants in Kenya is merely the tip of the iceberg: some experts estimate that 12% of the world's elephants were killed in Africa last year. Studies point to the involvement of organised crime, as well as to the huge rise in demand for ivory in China in particular, with a corresponding boom in prices for poached ivory. Up to 90% of all the ivory sold in China is thought to be illegally sourced.

When coupled with a smaller elephant population than existed before the ban, this phenomenon could produce grave consequences for the entire species and the ecosystem around them. While Parliament this month supported a move not to downgrade elephants in the CITES appendices, this will have little effect if the rules are not implemented.

Will the Commission therefore remind the Chinese authorities of their obligations under the CITES agreement, urging them to clamp down on illegal ivory traders and more thoroughly regulate ivory sales? Will the Commission further encourage China to explain the negative impact of ivory consumption to its citizens, many of whom may not be aware of the consequences of buying such products?

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

The EU has taken a very active stance in the debate on ivory in the context of CITES, and encourages China and other markets, as well as the range states of the elephant, to clamp down on illegal ivory trade. Many countries have, in the context of the 16th Conference of the Partiesto CITES in Bangkok, Thailand, highlighted the priority they give to curbing illegal ivory trade, and some, such as Thailand, have taken concrete commitments.

The EU discusses implementation of the CITES Convention with several Parties, including China. Moreover the EU supports initiatives such as MIKE (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants). MIKE measures trends and identifies the factors that influence these trends, thereby helping policy-makers to define appropriate responses, within the context of the CITES Convention.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001455/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR) and Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Long-term imprisonment of Dr Shakil Afridi

On 2 May 2011 Osama bin Laden was killed in a CIA-led operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The EU High Representative, European Council President Van Rompuy, European Commission President Barroso and European heads of state congratulated the US for eliminating the threat posed by someone who had been responsible for the death of many thousands of civilians, including hundreds of European citizens.

In the Pakistani investigation that followed, Dr Shakil Afridi, a Pakistani physician, was identified as having been instrumental in confirming Osama bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad. Dr Afridi was arrested a few days after the US operation while trying to escape the country, and on 23 May 2012 was sentenced to 33 years' imprisonment for treason.

In response, former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that 'the United States does not believe that there is any basis for holding Dr Afridi.' Mrs Clinton and US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said that Dr Afridi's arrest was a mistake and called for his release. Furthermore, a US Senate panel has cut millions of dollars in aid to Pakistan and has pledged to cut more if it judges it necessary to increase pressure on the Pakistani authorities.

1. Does the High Representative agree that Dr Afridi was instrumental in locating Osama bin Laden?

2. Does the High Representative agree with her US counterpart that there is no basis for holding Dr Afridi, and will she call for his release or a reduction in the length of his custodial sentence?

3. Does the High Representative agree that the arrest and imprisonment of Dr Afridi has fuelled hostility towards vaccination workers in Pakistan and encouraged the Taliban to engage in indiscriminate violence against vaccination workers?

4. Does the High Representative intend to take any action against the Government of Pakistan concerning the imprisonment of Dr Afridi? If so, what action?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President has no specific information on the alleged role Dr Afridi may have played in the context of the special operation against Osama bin Laden carried out by US special forces on 2 May 2012, and is therefore not in a position to comment on the judicial proceedings against him.

Concerning the hostility towards vaccination workers in Pakistan, the High Representative recalls the European Parliament's Resolution of 7 February 2013 on recent attacks on medical aid workers in Pakistan. It appears that the reason for the recent attacks is opposition to the vaccination campaigns among Islamic extremist groups, who allege that the vaccine is intended to make Muslim children sterile. Furthermore, the Taliban have used the excuse that in the past foreign intelligence agencies have used local vaccination teams across Pakistan for the purpose of gathering intelligence. Medical teams have also been attacked on similar grounds in other countries.

The EU will continue to urge the Government of Pakistan to do whatever it can to protect health workers against these senseless and damaging attacks, and to combat gratuitous violence and prejudice.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001456/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(12 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — El honor de Oswaldo Payá y Harol Cepada

El accidente que causó la muerte de dos firmes defensores de los derechos humanos en Cuba, Oswaldo Payá y Harol Cepera, sigue sin esclarecerse. Los familiares y amigos han denunciado contradicciones en los datos suministrados por las autoridades cubanas, y existe una petición de ciudadanos de todo el mundo para que se realice una investigación independiente, porque esa tragedia ha originado, lógicamente, mucha conmoción.

Varios diputados hemos ya formulado preguntas sobre la actuación de los servicios exteriores europeos (E-007458/2012 o E-011124/2012). Recientemente, el pasado día 4 de febrero, he recibido la contestación de la Sra. Ashton de la que se deduce que acepta la versión oficial, precisando, además, que «no existe ninguna investigación» ni del Servicio Exterior ni de la Delegación europea en La Habana.

Por todo ello, vuelvo a preguntar:

1. ¿No se considera, en consecuencia, indispensable impulsar una investigación transparente por una autoridad internacional, es decir, una investigación independiente de la que realizan las autoridades cubanas?

2. ¿No se advierte que al menos la familia y amigos tienen el derecho a conocer con unas mínimas garantías de veracidad los detalles de la muerte de dos hombres que defendieron de manera pacífica la libertad y los derechos humanos en Cuba?

3. ¿Consentirán el Servicio Exterior y la Delegación europea de La Habana que se tape con el manto del olvido y de la inactividad la legítima búsqueda de la verdad para esclarecer los últimos minutos de la vida de defensores de la libertad y de los derechos humanos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de abril de 2013)

El SEAE y la Delegación de la UE en La Habana defienden el Estado de Derecho y unos procedimientos judiciales correctos y transparentes en todos los casos. La Delegación de la UE ha seguido este asunto en la medida de sus capacidades.

España, uno de cuyos ciudadanos era el conductor del vehículo, ha tratado el caso como un asunto consular. Cuba ha entregado a dicha persona a las autoridades españolas. No tenemos información sobre ninguna tramitación ulterior del caso por ninguno de los Estados de los nacionales no cubanos involucrados en este trágico incidente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001456/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The honour of Oswaldo Payá and Harold Cepera

The accident which caused the death of two staunch defenders of human rights in Cuba, Oswaldo Payá and Harold Cepera, has still not been resolved. Their families and friends have highlighted the inconsistencies in the information provided by the Cuban authorities and people around the world have signed a petition calling for an independent investigation, as the tragedy has inevitably caused a strong public reaction.

Several MEPs have already presented written questions in relation to the behaviour of the European External Action Service (E-007458/2012 and E-011124/2012). Recently, on 4 February 2012, I received a response from Ms Ashton which implies that she accepts the official version, and in which she further states that 'no investigation' is being carried out by either the European External Action Service (EEAS) or the EU delegation in Havana.

In light of this, I once again ask:

1. Is it not essential that a transparent investigation be launched by an international authority; in other words, an investigation independent of the one being carried out by the Cuban authorities?

2. Is it not clear that the families and friends have the right to know, with a minimum guarantee of truthfulness, the details concerning the deaths of two men who peacefully campaigned for freedom and human rights in Cuba?

3. Will the EEAS and the EU delegation in Havana allow a veil of amnesia and inactivity to obscure the legitimate quest to uncover the truth about the last moments of these two defenders of human rights and freedom?

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

The EEAS and EU Delegation in Havana stand for the rule of law and for adequate and transparent legal procedures in all cases. The EU Delegation has been monitoring this case to the best of its capabilities.

Spain, one of whose citizens was the driver of the crushed vehicle, has treated the affair as a consular case. The individual involved has been released to the Spanish authorities by Cuba. We have no information of any further pursuit of the matter by any of the non-Cubans' States of nationality involved in this tragic incident.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001457/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Roadside inspections

With regard to roadside inspections, would the Commission state how many extra vehicles in the EU would be affected should LGVs be subject to roadside technical inspections?

Does the Commission understand that in a crash, a car driver has a 50 times greater chance of being killed if the collision is with a HGV and not an LGV, and that resources should be focused on technical inspections of HGVs rather than LGVs?

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

Based on the information provided on the technical roadside inspections performed in the years 2009 and 2010 by the Member States, it could be established that already 6% of the commercial vehicle fleet, including light commercial vehicles, has been checked per year. The proposal does not reduce standards for heavy commercial vehicles which need to be maintained at a high level. The Commission does not consider that by extending the scope for technical roadside inspections to light commercial vehicles, the Member States will now only focus on this vehicle category.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001459/13
à la Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(12 février 2013)

Objet: Arômes alimentaires

Test-Achat, le magazine belge de défense des consommateurs, a publié dans son numéro 113 de février/mars 2013 une enquête sur la présence d'arômes dans les yaourts aux fruits, les jus de fruits et les produits alimentaires artisanaux. L'étude pointe notamment du doigt le fait que certains pots de yaourts «aux fraises» sont composés d'une très faible quantité de fruits (de 2,5 à 4 fraises pour 500 g de produit fini), que des produits qualifiés d'artisanaux contiennent des arômes ou encore que des produits dont on affirme qu'ils ne contiennent pas de conservateurs sont composés d'arômes, eux-mêmes fabriqués à base de conservateurs.

La Commission peut-elle répondre aux questions suivantes:

1. L'article 2 de la directive 2000/13/CE du 20 mars 2000 dispose, dans son paragraphe 1, que «l'étiquetage d'une denrée alimentaire ne peut être de nature à induire l'acheteur en erreur, notamment sur les caractéristiques [telles que (…)] les qualités, la composition [ou] la quantité (…)». Le paragraphe 3 de cette directive étend les effets du paragraphe 1 aux emballages. Or, l'emballage des yaourts aux fruits laisse penser que la quantité de fruits est élevée alors qu'il n'en est rien. La Commission peut-elle confirmer le respect de la directive et motiver sa réponse?

2. Dans certains États membres, les appellations «aux fraises» ou «à la viande» sont visées par une législation obligeant de respecter un pourcentage minimum de l'ingrédient dans le produit fini. Ainsi, en Allemagne, un yaourt ne peut se revendiquer «aux fruits» que s'il contient un minimum de 6 % de fruit. La Commission ne devrait-elle pas élargir ce type de norme à l'ensemble de l'Union européenne?

3. Certains produits font valoir leur qualité «artisanale». Or, ceux-ci contiennent des ingrédients industriels; donc, en vertu de la directive 2000/13/CE, l'appellation est de nature à induire en erreur le consommateur. La Commission n'a-t-elle pas la possibilité de renforcer ou d'encadrer de manière plus stricte ce type d'appellation?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(8 avril 2013)

1. En plus du principe général mentionné par l'Honorable Parlementaire, la directive 2000/13/CE [1] définit des exigences en matière d'étiquetage pour éviter que le consommateur ne soit induit en erreur sur l'identité et la composition du produit. Par conséquent, en l'absence de dispositions spécifiques à l'échelle de l'Union ou au niveau national, la dénomination de vente d'un produit alimentaire doit correspondre au nom habituellement employé dans l'État membre dans lequel il est commercialisé, ou doit comporter une description suffisamment claire pour que l'acheteur en connaisse la véritable nature. En outre, si un ingrédient est mentionné dans le nom d'un produit alimentaire, ou s'il est mis en relief sur l'étiquette par une image ou une représentation graphique, sa quantité, exprimée en pourcentage, doit être précisée dans la liste des ingrédients.

L'évaluation du caractère trompeur d'une étiquette alimentaire doit être réalisée par les autorités compétentes des États membres au cas par cas, en prenant en compte toutes les informations fournies par l'étiquette.

2. En raison du principe de subsidiarité et en l'absence d'éléments prouvant que le manque d'harmonisation, au niveau de l'Union, des conditions d'utilisation de termes tels que «aux fraises» dans les noms de yoghourts génère des distorsions importantes dans le fonctionnement du marché intérieur, il appartient aux États membres de décider de la meilleure manière de procéder.

[1] Directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 mars 2000 relative au rapprochement des législations des États membres concernant l'étiquetage et la présentation des denrées alimentaires ainsi que la publicité faite à leur égard (JO L 109 du 6.5.2000, p. 29).

3. Étant donné que des mentions facultatives telles que «traditionnel» sont liées à la culture et aux pratiques nationales, il a été décidé, lors de l'adoption du règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 ([2]), qu'elles devaient être examinées au plan local, au moyen de la jurisprudence nationale ou d'orientations déterminées au niveau national. Ce règlement, applicable à partir du 13 décembre 2014, complète cependant les exigences générales visant les informations fournies à titre facultatif sur les denrées alimentaires en exigeant que celles-ci ne soient pas ambiguës ou déroutantes pour le consommateur et, le cas échéant, qu'elles disposent d'une base scientifique pertinente.

([2]) Règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires, (JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001459/13
to the Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Flavouring in foodstuffs

Issue No 113 of the 'Test-Achat' Belgian consumer magazine of February/March 2013 contains a survey regarding flavouring in fruit yoghurts, fruit juices and traditionally made foods, pointing out in particular that certain 'strawberry' yoghurts contain only very small quantities of actual fruit (between 2.5 and 4 strawberries per 500g of yoghurt), that some 'traditionally made' products actually contain flavouring and that certain products labelled as containing no preservatives in fact contain flavouring made partly from preservatives.

1. Article 2(1) of Directive 2000/13/EC of 20 March 2000 states that labelling must not be such as could mislead the purchaser, particularly as to the characteristics of the foodstuff or its nature, properties, composition or quantity. Article 2(3) states that these restrictions shall also apply to packaging. However, the packaging of fruit yoghurts gives the impression that they contain a high percentage of fruit, while this is not necessarily the case at all. Can the Commission say whether it considers that directive is being complied with and justify its response?

2. In certain Member States, indications such as 'strawberry' or 'meat' are subject to legislation requiring a minimum percentage of the relevant ingredients in the finished product. In Germany for example, yoghurts may only be called 'fruit' yoghurt if their fruit content is at least 6%. Should the Commission not extend this provision to the entire European Union?

3. It is claimed that certain products are 'traditionally' made, despite the fact that they contain industrial ingredients, thereby misleading consumers within the meaning of Directive 2000/13/EC. Is it not possible for the Commission to introduce more stringent or restrictive rules regarding such designations?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

1. In addition to the general principle referred to by the Honourable Member, Directive 2000/13/EC ([1]) establishes labelling requirements aiming to avoid the consumer being misled as to the identity and composition of the food. Accordingly, in the absence of specific Union or national rules, the sale name of a food must be the name customary in the Member State in which it is sold, or a description of the food which is clear enough to let the purchaser know its true nature. Moreover, if an ingredient is mentioned in the name of the food, or if it is emphasised on the label in picture or graphics, its quantity expressed as percentage has to be provided in the list of ingredients.

The evaluation of the misleading character of a food label is to be carried by the competent authorities of the Member States, on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all information provided on the label.

2. In the light of subsidiarity and in the absence of evidence that the lack of harmonisation at Union level of the conditions of use of terms such as 'strawberries' in the names of yogurt causes any significant distortion in the functioning of the internal market, it is up to the Member States to decide on the best way forward.

3. Given that voluntary terms such as 'traditional' are linked to national culture and practices, it has been agreed in the context of the adoption of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([2]) that they should be assessed locally, through national case law or guidance set at national level. The regulation, applicable from 13 December 2014, enhances however the general requirements applicable to voluntary food information by requiring that it shall not be ambiguous or confusing for the consumer and, where appropriate, be based on relevant scientific data.

([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, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001460/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Carne d'asino non tracciata nei prodotti alimentari

Lo scandalo delle «lasagne alla bolognese» a base di carne di cavallo ha fatto emergere un'ulteriore violazione delle regole igienico-sanitarie, poiché frattanto è emerso molto chiaramente che, oltre alle lasagne alla carne di cavallo, risulta essere stata massicciamente utilizzata in alcuni prodotti alimentari anche carne d'asino proveniente dalla Romania.

La Commissione intende estendere la necessaria indagine anche all'utilizzo di carne d'asino nei prodotti alimentari, che non risulta indicata nelle etichette e non è adeguatamente controllata?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2013)

La Commissione desidera ribadire che, a tutt'oggi, non vi sono indicazioni che facciano pensare a problemi di sicurezza. Tuttavia il fatto di falsificare le etichette degli alimenti configura una frode. In effetti, in forza delle regole vigenti ([1]), l'etichettatura degli alimenti non deve trarre in inganno i consumatori quanto alla loro natura e al loro contenuto, tutti gli ingredienti devono essere indicati sull'etichetta e le etichette degli alimenti contenenti carni devono anche indicare le specie animali in questione. Pertanto gli alimenti contenenti carni asinine devono rispettare questi requisiti in tema di etichettatura.

Spetta alle autorità competenti nazionali fare rispettare la normativa dell'Unione in tema di prodotti alimentari. Parallelamente, la Commissione si è attivata a livello sia politico che tecnico per coordinare le indagini in corso. Essa ha adottato di recente una raccomandazione relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo ([2]) con cui sollecita controlli su scala unionale su due lati: a) sugli alimenti commercializzati in quanto contenenti carni bovine per individuare le etichettature fraudolente e b) sulle carni equine destinate al consumo umano per individuare l'eventuale presenza di fenilbutazone, un farmaco veterinario il cui uso è consentito soltanto sugli animali non destinati alla produzione alimentare. Il primo intervento consiste in test del DNA che sono in grado di identificare le carni equine ma non quelle asinine. Il secondo intervento tuttavia coprirebbe anche le carni asinine. Una sintesi di tutte le risultanze sarà disponibile entro l'aprile 2013. A seconda di tali risultanze si considererà la linea d'azione più appropriata da seguire.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 marzo 2000, relativa al ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri concernenti l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità, GU L 109 del 6.5.2000, pag. 29.

([2]) 2013/99/UE: raccomandazione della Commissione, del 19 febbraio 2013, relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo volto a stabilire la prevalenza di pratiche fraudolente nella commercializzazione di determinati prodotti alimentari, GU L 48 del 21.2.2013, pag. 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001460/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Undetected donkey meat in food products

Investigations into the ongoing horsemeat lasagne scandal have revealed that donkey meat from Romania is also being used on a massive scale in some food products. This is yet another breach of the rules governing health and hygiene in the food distribution chain.

Will the Commission make sure that the investigations also cover the use of donkey meat in food products, given that the meat is not listed as an ingredient on product labels and is not subject to proper food safety checks?

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

The Commission would like to stress that, to date, there is no indication of safety concern. However, falsifying food labels constitutes fraud in food labelling. Indeed, under existing rules ([1]), the labelling of foods must not mislead the consumer as to their nature and content, all food ingredients must be indicated on the label and the labelling of foods containing meat must also indicate the animal species concerned. As such, foods containing donkey meat must comply with these labelling requirements.

Responsible for enforcing Union food law are the national competent authorities. In parallel, the Commission has been active both on political and technical levels in coordinating pending investigations. It recently adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([2]) calling for EU-wide controls on two fronts: (a) on foods marketed as containing beef to detect fraudulent labelling and (b) on horse meat destined for human consumption to detect phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. The first action would consist of DNA testing which is capable of identifying horse meat only and not donkey meat. The second action, however, would also cover donkey meat. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013. Depending on these findings, appropriate course of action will be considered.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and 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]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001462/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Utilizzo improprio dei fondi UE in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria la recente polemica sull'utilizzo disinvolto dei fondi comunitari riguarda un finanziamento di 1,6 milioni di euro coperto per il 60 per cento dalla UE e destinato a *Payner Media*, gigante mediatico proprietario di tre canali tv ed etichetta discografica pop-folk leader in Bulgaria specializzata in musica di sonorità turche, rom, arabe e balcaniche e che si è aggiudicata i finanziamenti del programma «Sviluppo della competitività dell'economia bulgara», lanciato nel luglio 2012, con un piano di rilancio che prevede la creazione di trenta nuovi posti di lavoro.

Lo stanziamento, inoltre, andrebbe a consolidare la posizione di monopolio di questa società di produzione e distribuzione, che già controlla l'80-90 per cento del mercato musicale nazionale, a danno delle piccole e medie imprese alle quali erano originariamente destinati i fondi.

Non ritiene la Commissione necessario avviare quanto prima un'inchiesta su tale utilizzo dei fondi europei?

Quali urgenti misure intende la Commissione attuare affinché i fondi vengono rimessi ai suoi destinatari iniziali, ossia alle piccole e medie imprese?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(12 aprile 2013)

Le autorità bulgare hanno informato la Commissione che Payner Media ha deciso unilateralmente di abbandonare il progetto e che quindi non accetta la sovvenzione concessa. Pertanto, non vi è la necessità di procedere a ulteriori indagini.

Nessuna PMI ammissibile era stata esclusa a motivo dell'approvazione del progetto di Payner Media. La Commissione segue i progressi realizzati dai programmi nazionali, comprese le misure per le PMI, nel quadro della gestione condivisa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001462/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Improper use of EU funding in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, the recent polemics concerning the over-casual use of EU funding relate to funding of EUR 1.6 million, 60% of which is being supplied by the EU and whose recipient is Payner Media, a large media company which owns three television channels and the leading pop-folk record label in Bulgaria specialising in Turkish, Roma, Arab and Balkan music, which was awarded the funding from the programme 'Development of the competitiveness of the Bulgarian economy', launched in July 2012, with a recovery plan providing for the creation of 30 new jobs.

Moreover, the funding would consolidate the monopoly of this production and distribution company, which already controls between 80 and 90% of the national music market, to the detriment of the SMEs for which the funds were originally intended.

Does not the Commission consider it necessary to investigate this use of European funding with the minimum of delay?

What measures will the Commission take, as a matter of urgency, to ensure that the funding reaches the recipients for whom it was originally intended, i.e. SMEs?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Bulgarian authorities have informed the Commission that Payner Media has decided unilaterally to abandon the project and as a consequence does not accept the grant that was awarded. Therefore, there is no need for further investigation.

No eligible SME was excluded because of the approval of the project of Payner Media. The Commission monitors the progress achieved by national programmes, including measures for SMEs, within the framework of shared management.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001463/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti sui finanziamenti europei relativi all'accordo di riammissione UE/Turchia

Relativamente alla proposta di decisione del Consiglio relativa alla conclusione dell'accordo di riammissione delle persone in posizione irregolare tra l'Unione Europea e la Repubblica di Turchia (COM(2012)0239) del 22.6.2012, si chiede alla Commissione di specificare quanto segue:

Articolo 23 («Assistenza tecnica») e «Dichiarazione comune sull'assistenza tecnica»: si sostiene che «(…) l'Unione europea si impegna a mettere a disposizione un'assistenza finanziaria rafforzata per sostenere la Turchia nell'attuazione del presente accordo». A quanto ammonta l'assistenza finanziaria rafforzata?

Si aggiunge : «Per sostenere la piena, efficace e continuativa attuazione del presente accordo sarà predisposta — secondo modalità da definire insieme alle autorità turche e, dopo il 2013, nell'ambito delle prossime prospettive finanziarie dell'UE e conformemente ad esse — un'assistenza finanziaria da parte dell'UE, compreso un programma di sostegno settoriale per la gestione integrata delle frontiere e l'emigrazione». Se, come dichiarato all'articolo 24, paragrafo 4, «il presente accordo è concluso per una durata illimitata» anche l'assistenza finanziaria sarà illimitata nel tempo?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 aprile 2013)

La Turchia riceve sostegno finanziario attraverso lo strumento di assistenza preadesione (IPA) che ha l'obiettivo di favorire l'allineamento all'acquis dell'UE e l'introduzione di norme europee. Le priorità dei bilanci 2011-2013 sono espresse nel documento indicativo di pianificazione pluriennale (MIPD), disponibile all'indirizzo:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/key-documents/index_en.htm?key_document=0801262488184a8c,08012624885ccbf7.

Per il periodo di programmazione 2007-2013 sono stati destinati 272 milioni di EUR al settore della giustizia e degli affari interni e sono in programma diversi progetti sulla gestione della migrazione e delle frontiere e sull'asilo. Le schede dei progetti sono disponibili all'indirizzo:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/funding-by-country/turkey/index_en.htm, alla sezione «Transition Assistance and Institution Building». È importante notare che molti di questi progetti sono ancora in corso o devono ancora essere attuati.

Per quanto riguarda l'IPA 2013, il processo di programmazione è ancora in corso. La gestione della migrazione e le frontiere costituiscono uno dei settori prioritari, anche in termini di assegnazione dei fondi. Le misure previste contribuiranno a rafforzare il sistema nazionale di asilo in Turchia e le istituzioni che gestiscono la migrazione in questo paese. Inoltre, esse mirano a potenziare le capacità di controllo e la sorveglianza di frontiera, anche lungo le regioni di confine in comune tra UE e Turchia, e a sostenere le riforme in corso per un eventuale accordo di riammissione.

Per quanto riguarda l'assistenza futura nell'ambito dell'IPA II (2014-2020), sono in corso preparativi di programmazione strategica e, molto probabilmente, la gestione della migrazione e le frontiere resteranno un settore prioritario, in linea con la strategia di allargamento della Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001463/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Clarification on EU funding in regard to the EU-Turkey readmission agreement

Could the Commission answer the following questions in regard to the 'Proposal for a Council Decision concerning the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation' (COM(2012)0239) of 22 June 2012:

The 'Joint Declaration on technical assistence' referred to in Article 23 ('Technical Assistence') maintains that: '(…) the European Union is committed to making available reinforced financial assistance in order to support Turkey in the implementation of this Agreement'. How much will this reinforced financial assistance amount to?

The Joint Declaration goes on to say: 'In order to support continued full and effective implementation of this Agreement, EU financial assistance, including a sector support programme in the area of integrated border management and migration, will be developed according to modalities to be defined together with the Turkish authorities and, beyond 2013, within and in accordance with the next EU financial perspectives'. If, as stated in Article 24(4), '[t]his Agreement is concluded for an unlimited period', will the financial assistance also be for an unlimited period of time?

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

Turkey receives financial assistance via the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) with the aim to support alignment with the EU *acquis* and the introduction of European standards. Priorities for the budgets 2011-2013 are spelled out in the Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD), available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/key-documents/index_en.htm?key_document=0801262488184a8c,08012624885ccbf7.

For the 2007-2013 programming period, EUR 272 million have been earmarked for the area of Justice and Home Affairs. Several projects on migration management & asylum and on border management have been programmed. Project Fiches can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/funding-by-country/turkey/index_en.htm

under the section 'Transition Assistance and Institution Building'. It should be noted that many of these projects are still ongoing or their implementation still has to start.

For IPA 2013 the programming process is ongoing. Migration Management & Borders will be one of the priority areas, also in terms of allocations. Foreseen measures will help to reinforce Turkey's national asylum system and migration management institutions and support strengthening Turkey's capacities for border checks and border surveillance, including along common EU — Turkey border regions, not least to support ongoing reforms of relevance for an eventual readmission agreement.

Concerning future assistance under IPA II (2014-2020), strategic programming preparations are under way, and Migration Management & Borders is likely to remain a priority area in line with the Commission's Enlargement Strategy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001464/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti sull'accordo di riammissione UE-Turchia

Relativamente al documento «Decisione del Consiglio relativa alla conclusione dell'accordo di riammissione delle persone in posizione irregolare tra l'Unione europea e la Repubblica di Turchia», COM(2012)0239 del 22 giugno 2012, può la Commissione specificare quanto segue:

1. Articolo 3, «La Commissione, assistita da esperti degli Stati membri, rappresenta l'Unione nel comitato misto per la riammissione istituito ai sensi dell'articolo 19 dell'accordo»: quanti e chi sono gli esperti degli Stati membri e in base a quali criteri e modalità vengono designati questi esperti?

2. Allegato, articolo 19, paragrafo 3, «Il comitato è composto da rappresentanti della Turchia e dell'Unione. L'Unione è rappresentata dalla Commissione europea, assistita da esperti degli Stati membri»: quanti sono in totale i componenti del comitato? la remunerazione di tali componenti è a carico di chi?

3. Allegato, articolo 19, paragrafo 4, «Il comitato si riunisce ogniqualvolta necessario su istanza di una delle parti contraenti»: dove si riunisce il comitato?

4. Allegato, articolo 19, paragrafo 5, «Il comitato adotta il proprio regolamento interno»: in cosa consta il regolamento?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(11 aprile 2013)

I comitati misti di riammissione sono stati istituiti in ottemperanza a tutti gli accordi di riammissione finora conclusi dall'Unione europea con i paesi terzi. Le norme di funzionamento dei comitati e di partecipazione agli stessi sono praticamente identiche per tutti e, nella maggior parte di essi, la Commissione è assistita da esperti degli Stati membri.

Ogni Stato membro decide chi parteciperà in qualità di esperto nazionale al comitato misto di riammissione con la Turchia. Alla luce dell'esperienza di altri comitati misti di riammissione, gli esperti sono funzionari degli Stati membri che si occupano dei casi di riammissione e applicano concretamente l'accordo, e generalmente hanno contatti costanti con la Commissione su questioni relative all'attuazione degli accordi di riammissione con l'Unione europea. Abitualmente viene delegato un esperto per ogni Stato membro, ma formalmente non ci sono limiti al numero di esperti che uno Stato membro può delegare in un comitato misto di riammissione.

Non è previsto nessun limite del numero di partecipanti a un comitato misto di riammissione. Le parti (Turchia ed Unione europea) sostengono i costi di partecipazione alle riunioni e gli esperti degli Stati membri che vi assistono non percepiscono compensi aggiuntivi dalla Commissione.

Le parti firmatarie dell'accordo ospitano alternativamente il comitato misto di riammissione. Quando spetta all'Unione europea ospitare il comitato, la riunione si tiene a Bruxelles.

Il regolamento interno è necessario per il funzionamento tecnico del comitato misto di riammissione. Esso disciplina gli aspetti pratici relativi alla convocazione e allo svolgimento delle riunioni del comitato, come la preparazione degli ordini del giorno, la gestione dei partecipanti e dei costi, le modalità di notifica dei documenti al comitato misto di riammissione e la redazione dei verbali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001464/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Clarifications on the EU-Turkey readmission agreement

With reference to the document 'Council Decision concerning the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation' (COM(2012)0239 of 22 June 2012), can the Commission state the following:

1. Article 3 reads: 'The Commission, assisted by experts from Member States, shall represent the Union in the Joint Readmission Committee established by Article 19 of the Agreement.' Who are the experts from Member States, how many are there, and on the basis of what criteria and procedures are they appointed?

2. Article 19(3) of the annex reads: 'The committee shall be composed by representatives of Turkey and the Union; the Union shall be represented by the Commission, assisted by experts from Member States.' Of how many persons is the committee composed? Who is responsible for paying them?

3. Article 19(4) of the annex reads: 'The committee shall meet where necessary at the request of one of the Contracting Parties.' Where does the committee meet?

4. Article 19(5) of the annex reads: 'The committee shall establish its rules of procedure.' What do those rules of procedure consist of?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

Joint Readmission Committees (JRC) have been established under all readmission agreements concluded so far by the EU with third countries. The rules of functioning of and participation in those Committees are virtually identical for all of them and in great majority of them the Commission is assisted by the Member States experts.

Each Member State decides who exactly will join the JRC with Turkey as its expert. Judging from the experience from other JRCs, the experts are officials of the Member States dealing with readmission cases and implementing the agreement in practice. The same officials are usually in regular contact with the Commission on issues pertaining to the implementation of EU readmission agreements. Usually, there is one expert delegated per Member State but no formal limits are imposed on how many experts may be delegated for JRC by one Member State.

There is no limit on the number of persons allowed to participate in the JRC. Each party (Turkey and the EU) bears the costs of its participation in the meetings. The Member States' experts participating do not receive any extra remuneration from the Commission.

The JRC is hosted by the two parties to the agreement in alternation. The JRC would be convened in Brussels whenever the EU is the hosting party.

The Rules of Procedure are necessary for technical functioning of the JRC. They regulate the practical arrangements for convening and following-up JRC meetings, such as setting the agenda, participation, costs, rules on notification of documents to JRC and preparation of minutes.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001465/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Utilizzo dei finanziamenti UE in Romania in tema di progetti anticorruzione

Nella sua relazione «sui progressi compiuti dalla Romania in base al meccanismo di cooperazione e verifica» COM(2013)0047 del 30 gennaio 2013, la Commissione, riferendosi alla diffusione della corruzione in questo Paese, sottolinea che «(…) i fondi UE finanziano una serie di progetti anticorruzione riguardanti, tra l'altro, i ministeri dell'Istruzione, della Salute e dello Sviluppo regionale e della pubblica amministrazione. L'attuazione procede e ora si attendono i risultati».

1. La Commissione può indicare a quanto ammontano i finanziamenti concessi alla Romania in tema di progetti anticorruzione?

2. La Commissione può fornire l'elenco completo dei progetti finanziati dall'UE in questo settore relativi alla Romania?

3. Come controlla la Commissione il corretto utilizzo di tali finanziamenti da parte della Romania?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(10 aprile 2013)

Il Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) finanzia progetti anticorruzione in Romania attraverso il programma operativo Sviluppo della capacità amministrativa (di seguito denominato PO ACD). Finora i Ministeri dell'istruzione, della sanità, dell'amministrazione e dell'interno, dello sviluppo regionale e l'Associazione per l'attuazione della democrazia ricevono finanziamenti per progetti anticorruzione. Il valore totale dei contratti è di circa 7,2 milioni di euro che rappresentano il 3,5 % della dotazione globale per il PO ACD. Di tutta la dotazione globale per la politica di coesione durante il periodo di programmazione 2007-2013 l'importo destinato a finanziare progetti anticorruzione rappresenta quindi circa lo 0,04 %. L'allegato specifica l'elenco dei progetti cofinanziati dal FSE.

Gli Stati membri sono responsabili della gestione e del controllo dei programmi operativi del FSE. La Commissione segue la loro attuazione attraverso gli strumenti previsti nei regolamenti: comitati di sorveglianza, relazioni periodiche, incontri con le autorità nazionali, missioni di audit del sistema e delle operazioni, disimpegno dei finanziamenti, rettifiche finanziarie. Inoltre, in caso di denunce di frodi e irregolarità, l'Ufficio europeo per la lotta antifrode procede ad una selezione per determinare se la denuncia rientra fra le sue competenze e, se sono rispettati i criteri prescritti, indaga sulla questione.

Inoltre, nel quadro del programma ISEC (Prevenzione e lotta contro la criminalità), alla Romania, in qualità di coordinatore, sono stati attribuiti tre progetti relativi alla lotta anticorruzione per un totale di circa 500.000 euro. Nel contempo la Romania è stata cobeneficiaria di almeno un altro progetto cofinanziato dall'ISEC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001465/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Use of EU funding for anti-corruption projects in Romania

In its report on progress in Romania under the cooperation and verification mechanism (COM(2013)0047 of 30 January 2013), the Commission states, with reference to the prevalence of corruption in the country, that 'EU funds are financing a number of anti-corruption projects, including in the Ministries of Education, Health and Regional Development and Public Administration. Implementation is progressing and results are now awaited'.

1. Can the Commission say how much funding has been granted to Romania for anti-corruption projects?

2. Can it provide a list of all EU-funded projects in this area in Romania?

3. What checks does it make on whether proper use is being made of such funding by Romania?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The European Social Fund (ESF) finances anti-corruption projects in Romania, though the Administrative Capacity Development operational programme (ACD OP). So far, the Ministries of Education, Health, Administration and Interior, Regional Development and the Association for Implementing Democracy receive funding for anti-corruption projects. The total value of the contracts is around EUR 7.2 million, representing 3.5% of the total allocation for the ACD OP. Out of Romania's total allocation for Cohesion Policy during the 2007-2013 programming period (EUR 19.7 billion), the amount financing anti-corruption measures would thus represent about 0.04%. The annex presents the list of the projects co-financed by the ESF.

Member States are responsible for the management and control of operational programmes of the ESF. The Commission monitors their implementation by way of the instruments foreseen in the regulations: Monitoring Committees, periodical reports, meetings with the national authorities, system and operations audit missions, de-commitmment of the funds, financial corrections. Also, in case of allegations of fraud and irregularities, the European Anti-Fraud Office undergoes a selection procedure to determine if the allegation falls within its remit and meets the criteria for opening an investigation and, if the relevant criteria are met, investigates the matter.

Moreover, in the framework of Programme ISEC(prevention of and Fight against Crime), Romania was awarded, as coordinator, 3 corruption-related projects for a total of around EUR 500 000. At the same time Romania has been co-beneficiary in at least one more project co-financed by ISEC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001466/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(12 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Addio privacy?

Pare che uno dei più grandi business della rete possa diventare il riconoscimento facciale. Negli USA succede che alcune aziende porno permettono a chiunque di caricare la foto di una persona nel loro servizio per trovare immagini e facce che corrispondano o siano molto simili nel loro data base. Lo scopo di tale operazione sarebbe di trovare un attore o un'attrice a luci rosse che assomigli il più possibile a una data persona. Il suo volto verrebbe utilizzato per caricarlo su figure impegnate in attività erotiche. Le foto caricate per lo più senza il consenso e la conoscenza delle persone ritratte non si sa che fine faranno. Saranno distrutte, modificate, riutilizzate?

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza di queste pratiche?

2. Non ritiene che quelle foto caricate impropriamente rappresentino un grave attentato al diritto alla privacy?

3. Per queste ragioni, ed essendo la privacy un diritto umano, che cosa intende fare per impedire che simili procedure e attività informatiche possano avere corso nei paesi dell'Unione?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2013)

L'uso delle tecnologie di riconoscimento del volto è una forma di trattamento automatizzato dei dati personali, in quanto rivela informazioni quali l'età, il sesso e la razza di persone fisiche. Nella misura in cui si riferiscono a una persona fisica identificata o identificabile («l'interessato»), tali informazioni costituiscono dati personali, che devono essere trattati conformemente alle disposizioni legislative nazionali di attuazione della direttiva 95/46/CE ([1]) sulla protezione dei dati. In particolare, i dati personali devono essere trattati in base a motivi legittimi, per finalità specifiche ed essere proporzionati all'obiettivo perseguito ([2]). Inoltre, l'interessato deve essere informato del trattamento.

La Commissione sa che l'uso delle tecnologie di riconoscimento del volto è sempre più diffuso, soprattutto tra attori privati e per svariate finalità.

Fatti salvi i poteri della Commissione in qualità di custode dei trattati, spetta alle autorità nazionali di controllo della protezione dei dati monitorare l'applicazione delle misure nazionali di attuazione della direttiva 95/46/CE.

([1]) Direttiva 95/46/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 ottobre 1995, relativa alla tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali, nonché alla libera circolazione di tali dati (GU L 281 del 23.11.1995, pag. 31).

([2]) Parere 2/2012 del Gruppo di lavoro Articolo 29, relativo al riconoscimento facciale nell'ambito dei servizi online e mobili, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/article-29/documentation/opinion-recommendation/files/2012/wp192_it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001466/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Goodbye privacy?

It seems that facial recognition technology is set to become a major Internet business. Some companies in the US pornography industry enable Internet users to upload a person's photograph in order to find matching or similar faces on the company's image database. The purpose of the exercise is apparently to find an 'adult' film actor who resembles as closely as possible a specific person. The person's face can then be transposed on to images of actors engaged in various erotic activities. It is not clear what becomes of the photos uploaded in this way, generally without the consent or knowledge of the person concerned. Are they destroyed, altered, recycled?

1. Is the Commission aware of this practice?

2. Does the Commission agree that uploading photos in this inappropriate way is a serious abuse of the right to privacy?

3. If so, given that privacy is a human right, what action does the Commission intend to take to prevent similar online activities and techniques in European Union countries?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The use of facial recognition technology constitutes an automated form of processing of personal data as it reveals information about individuals, such as age, gender, race, sex. Insofar as that information relates to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'), it is personal data and the processing of that data needs to be carried out in line with the national laws implementing the requirements laid down in the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC ([1]): *inter alia*, personal data must be processed on legitimate grounds, for a specific purpose and must be proportionate to the aim pursued ([2]). The data subjects concerned must be informed about the processing.

The Commission is aware that facial recognition technology has increasingly been used, especially by private actors and for a range of purposes.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, it is the national data protection supervisory authorities which are competent to monitor the application of national measures implementing Directive 95/46/EC.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data; Official Journal, 1995, L 281, p. 31.

([2]) Opinion 2/2012 on facial recognition in online and mobile services, Article 29 Working Party, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/article-29/documentation/opinion-recommendation/files/2012/wp192_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001467/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(12 februari 2013)

Betreft: Nanomaterialen

De Europese Commissie erkent in haar tweede overzicht van de regelgevingaspecten van nanomaterialen dat transparante informatie over nanomaterialen en -producten essentieel is.

Het Europees Parlement heeft eerder al aangedrongen op het opzetten van een permanent en onafhankelijk Europees netwerk dat verantwoordelijk is voor het monitoren van nanotechnologie en nanomaterialen (zie resolutie van 24 april 2009 over de regelgevingsaspecten van nanomaterialen).

De Commissie stelt echter dat de huidige kennis niet wijst op risico's die een dergelijke monitoring zou verantwoorden. Bestaande instrumenten zouden voorlopig volstaan.

Nochtans blijkt uit de studie die door de Commissie besteld werd (onder contractnummer 070307/2010/580540/SER/D) dat er een problematisch gebrek is aan blootstellinggegevens en dat verschillende lidstaten (waaronder Italië, België en Frankrijk) reeds initiatieven nemen voor een gemeenschappelijk project voor het harmoniseren van de nationale databanken voor nanomaterialen op de markt. De studie vermeldt ook dat er in de Raad opgeroepen wordt om op EU-niveau stappen te ondernemen om te verhinderen dat er een oneven speelveld ontstaat door de uiteenlopende acties van de lidstaten.

Op welke manier denkt de Commissie een ongelijk speelveld te voorkomen gezien de verschillende initiatieven van de lidstaten? Gaat de Commissie ermee akkoord dat het zinvol is om een EU-kader ter zake uit te werken?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(26 maart 2013)

Momenteel heeft alleen Frankrijk nationale verslagleggingregels vastgesteld die van toepassing zijn op nanomaterialen. De Franse autoriteiten hebben overeenkomstig Richtlijn 98/34/EG ([1]) betreffende normen en technische voorschriften de ontwerpmaatregelen ingediend die de Commissie en alle EU-lidstaten in staat stellen om de verenigbaarheid van deze maatregelen met het Verdrag te beoordelen. In dit verband is een aantal kwesties met de Franse autoriteiten besproken die mogelijke gevolgen hebben voor de interne markt, wat geleid heeft tot een aantal wijzigingen in de definitieve wetgeving. Indien andere lidstaten in een later stadium vergelijkbare maatregelen indienen, moet dezelfde procedure worden toegepast.

De Commissie heeft de stappen die zij voornemens is te gaan nemen, samengevat in de tweede evaluatie van de regelgeving inzake nanomaterialen. Hiertoe behoort het uitvoeren van een effectbeoordeling om vast te stellen hoe op de meest adequate wijze de transparantie kan worden vergroot en regelgevend toezicht kan worden gegarandeerd en om de methoden hiervoor te ontwikkelen, met inbegrip van een grondige analyse van de behoeften ten aanzien van het verzamelen van gegevens voor dat doel. De effectbeoordeling, waarin rekening gehouden zal met de in Frankrijk opgedane ervaring, zal de Commissie in staat stellen te bepalen of en welke aanvullende maatregelen op EU-niveau gerechtvaardigd zouden zijn.

([1]) PB L 269 van 21.07.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001467/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(12 February 2013)

Subject: Nanomaterials

In its second regulatory overview on nanomaterials, the Commission stresses the importance of transparency regarding nanomaterials and related products.

The European Parliament has already called for the creation of a permanent and independent European network responsible for the monitoring of nanotechnologies and nanomaterials (see resolution of 24 April 2009 on regulatory aspects of nanomaterials).

The Commission points out, however, that current knowledge about nanomaterials does not indicate risks which would require such monitoring and that existing tools are sufficient for the moment.

Nevertheless, a study carried out for the Commission (Contract No 070307/2010/580540/SER/D) bring to light a serious lack of exposure data. Moreover, it emerges that a number of Member States (including Italy, Belgium and France) are already envisaging a joint project for the harmonisation of national data banks regarding nanomaterials on the market. According to the study, the Council is being called on to take action at EU level to prevent an uneven playing field resulting from divergent measures taken by the Member States.

How does the Commission intend to prevent an uneven playing field resulting from differing Member State initiatives? Does it agree that it would be reasonable to adopt EU framework provisions in this area?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

Currently, only France has enacted national reporting rules applicable to nanomaterials. The French authorities submitted in accordance with Directive 98/34/EC ([1]) on standardisation and technical regulation the draft measures enabling the Commission and all EU Member States to assess the compatibility with the Treaty. In this context, a number of issues with potential impact on the internal market have been discussed with the French authorities resulting in a number of modifications in the final legislation. In case other Member States introduce similar types of measures at a later stage, they would need to apply the same procedure.

The Commission outlined the steps it intends to take in the second Regulatory Review on Nanomaterials. Among these an impact assessment will be conducted to identify and develop the most adequate means to increase transparency and ensure regulatory oversight, including an in-depth analysis of the data gathering needs for such purpose. The impact assessment will take into account experience gathered in France and will enable the Commission to determine whether and which additional measures at the EU level would be justified.

([1]) OJ L 209, 21.7.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001468/13
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Blood donation

Blood donation is a selfless act performed by people who are concerned about the welfare of others. These selfless people are found in all spheres of our society and include some who find it more difficult than others to give blood, for example those with a disability. Without the contribution of these people many victims of medical emergencies such as accidents would not survive.

Can the Commission tell me if there are measures in place at a European level to ensure a minimum level of assistance for people with a disability who want to give blood? Does the Commission have any plans to introduce or extend such measures in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

The Commission's mandate under Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is limited to ensuring the quality and safety of blood and blood derivatives. National efforts to increase donation rates and provisions on how to allocate blood to potential patients are not covered by Article 168. Such decisions fall under the exclusive competence of the Member States, including provisions regarding people with a disability. The Commission encourages, however, the exchange of best practices between Member States and has funded a number of projects in this area under the Health Program in this respect.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001469/13
a la Comisión
María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(13 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Límites a la libre circulación de trabajadores comunitarios por parte de Suiza

Teniendo en cuenta de que Suiza forma parte del Tratado Schengen y que, por tanto, tras sendos acuerdos de 1999 y 2002, comparte con la UE las cuatro libertades fundamentales, la UE ha recibido con preocupación la posibilidad de restricción de permisos de trabajo por parte de Suiza, país donde uno de cada cuatro trabajadores es extranjero.

Una cláusula del Tratado de 2002 contempla la posibilidad de restringir los permisos de residencia si su expedición aumenta en un 10 % respecto a la media de los tres años anteriores. En el segundo trimestre de 2011, la tasa de extranjeros alcanzó el 28,5 %, frente al 26,2 % de cinco años antes. Las autoridades helvéticas destacan una llegada masiva de extranjeros desde 2011, sin que consten cifras oficiales.

En el artículo 2° del citado Tratado se recoge el principio de no discriminación en base a la nacionalidad y, sin embargo, esta medida ya fue utilizada en abril de 2012 para restringir la entrada de ciudadanos de ocho países de la UE: Estonia, Letonia, Polonia, Hungría, Lituania, Eslovaquia, Eslovenia y República Checa.

1. ¿Qué medidas va a adoptar la Unión Europea ante la reactivación de esta cláusula respecto al resto de países miembros de la Unión, el próximo 31 de marzo, día en que las autoridades helvéticas prevén llegar a ese 10 %?

Tras las declaraciones de David O'Sullivan, planteando que es una decisión que no está justificada, y en las que hizo saber a Suiza que las negociaciones con ellos tienen que recibir luz verde de todos los Estados miembros, incluidos aquellos a los que ha sancionado, ¿en qué medida van a cambiar las relaciones bilaterales con Suiza tras esta clara vulneración del principio de reciprocidad?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de abril de 2013)

La Comisión remite a sus respuestas a las preguntas anteriores O-000115/2012, O-000113/2012 y E-004403/2012 ([1]) sobre las restricciones cuantitativas decididas por el Gobierno suizo en abril de 2012 por lo que respecta a los nacionales de Chequia, Eslovaquia, Eslovenia, Estonia, Hungría, Letonia, Lituania y Polonia.

El Acuerdo sobre la libre circulación de personas, modificado por el Protocolo de 26 de octubre de 2004, dispone en su artículo 10, apartado 4, que, hasta doce años después de la entrada en vigor del Acuerdo (es decir, hasta el 1 de junio de 2014), Suiza podrá limitar unilateralmente el número de nuevos permisos de residencia de una de las dos categorías (residencia por un período superior a cuatro meses e inferior a un año y por un período igual o superior a un año) para los trabajadores por cuenta propia o ajena de la Unión Europea si el número de nuevos permisos de residencia para cualquiera de las dos categorías, expedidos a los trabajadores por cuenta ajena y a los trabajadores por cuenta propia durante un año determinado, es superior en más del 10 % a la media de los tres años anteriores. Esta posibilidad afecta a los nacionales de todos los Estados miembros sin distinción (salvo Bulgaria y Rumanía, países que todavía están sujetos a medidas transitorias en virtud del Protocolo del Acuerdo de 27 de mayo de 2008).

La Comisión no ha recibido ninguna comunicación oficial de Suiza en relación con un posible ampliación de las restricciones cuantitativas a los nacionales de los Estados miembros. No obstante, la Comisión observa de cerca la situación y se mantiene en estrecho contacto con las autoridades suizas.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001469/13
to the Commission
María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Limitations placed on the free movement of workers by Switzerland

Given that Switzerland adheres to the Schengen Treaty and that, having signed agreements in 1999 and 2002, it shares in the EU's four fundamental freedoms, the EU has been concerned to learn that restrictions may be placed on the issue of work permits in Switzerland, where one in four workers is a foreign national.

A clause in the 2002 treaty allows for the possibility that residence permits may be restricted if their emission increases by more than 10% compared with the previous three years. During the second half of 2011, the number of foreigners in Switzerland reached 28.5%, up from 26.2% five years earlier. The Swiss authorities say there has been a massive influx of foreigners since 2011, although this is not reflected by the official figures.

Although Article 2 of the abovementioned treaty reaffirms the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of nationality, this was the argument used in April 2012 to restrict entry by citizens of eight EU countries: Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

1. What steps will the EU take in response to the reactivation of this clause in relation to the remaining EU Member States on 31 March 2013, the date on which the Swiss authorities predict the 10% limit will be reached?

In the wake of David O'Sullivan's statement to the effect that this decision is unjustified and in which he pointed out to Switzerland that the negotiations need to be approved by all the Member States, including the ones on which Switzerland has placed restrictions, how will bilateral relations with Switzerland change as a result of this clear violation of the principle of reciprocity?

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

The Commission refers to its answer given to previous questions O-000115/2012, O-000113/2012 and E-004403/2012, E-001337/2013 ([1]) on the quantitative restrictions decided by the Swiss Government in April 2012 as regards the nationals of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia.

The Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons, as amended by the Protocol of 26 October 2004, provides in its Article 10(4) that, up to 12 years after the entry into force of the Agreement (i.e. until 1 June 2014), Switzerland may limit unilaterally the number of new residence permits of either of two categories (residence for a period of more than four months and less than one year and residence for a period equal to, or exceeding, one year) for employed and self-employed persons of the European Union if the number of new residence permits for either of the two categories issued to employed and self-employed persons in a given year exceeds the average for the three preceding years by more than 10%. This possibility concerns the nationals of all the Member States without distinction (bar Bulgaria and Romania, still under transition measures on the basis of the Protocol of 27 May 2008 to the Agreement).

The Commission has not received any official communication from Switzerland regarding a possible extension of the quantitative restrictions to the nationals of Member States. However, the Commission monitors closely the situation and is in close contact with the Swiss authorities.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001471/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) y Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Cierre de la factoría Puertas Norma en San Leonardo de Yagüe (aspectos que afectan a la libre competencia)

La factoría Puertas Norma, situada en San Leonardo de Yagüe*, en la provincia española de Soria, presentó el pasado 9 de julio de 2012 un Expediente de Regulación de Empleo (ERE) que inicialmente afectaba a 386 trabajadores de la planta —de los casi 600 que había al inicio del conflicto—, que temen por la incertidumbre económica en que son dejados por la empresa*.

La Planta pertenecía a la empresa Puertas Norma S.A. cuyo ERE de extinción definitivo ha sido finalmente llevado a cabo el pasado 28 de diciembre a través del auto del Juzgado de lo Mercantil de Soria. Dicho ERE, que despide a 282 trabajadores de la planta y suspende temporalmente a otros 258, supone el fin de la *relación laboral. La factoría era el principal centro laboral de la localidad, por lo cual su tejido económico ha sido duramente afectado*.

El auto del juzgado considera también demostrada la relación económica entre Puertas Norma y el grupo multinacional Jeld Wen. Esta multinacional con sede en Oregón (EE.UU.) es líder mundial en el sector con unos beneficios millonarios a nivel global y con fábricas en numerosos país*es. Según el auto, la factoría Puertas Norma pertenece al «grupo laboral» de Jeld Wen. Establecida la responsabilidad financiera de Jeld Wen, la empresa sigue siendo viable y existen inversores nacionales dispuestos a comprarla y a mantener la actividad y los puestos de trabajo*.

Esta práctica de «deslocalización» afecta a numerosas empresas europeas donde las multinacionales buscan evitar su responsabilidad al tratarse de empresas filiales o subcontratadas. Las filiales alegan pérdidas para despedir más barato, mientras sus grupos matrices gozan de beneficios millonarios y no se hacen cargo de las deudas derivadas de su gestión.

¿Puede entenderse, a juicio de la Comisión, que la actuación de la empresa matriz ha atentado contra el principio de libre competencia en el Mercado Único, alterando esta con posible fraude?

¿Qué medidas está adoptando la Comisión desde la perspectiva de que hipotéticas actuaciones de «deslocalización disfrazada» de las empresas puedan afectar a las normas de competencia en el mercado de la Unión Europea?

¿Vulnera la empresa matriz los compromisos asumidos en materia de ayudas públicas con consecuencias desde la perspectiva del Derecho de la Unión Europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de abril de 2013)

Sobre la base de la información disponible, la Comisión no considera que el presunto comportamiento de la sociedad matriz de Puertas Norma pueda interpretarse como una infracción de las normas de competencia de la UE. De hecho, no se aprecia ningún acuerdo, decisión o práctica concertada que pueda impedir, restringir o falsear la competencia, y nada indica que la sociedad matriz de Puertas Norma tenga una posición dominante de la que podría haber abusado. Asimismo, no hay ningún indicio de que la sociedad matriz de Puertas Norma haya recibido ayudas estatales. En cuanto a las alegaciones de posible fraude, corresponde a las autoridades nacionales evaluar si la sociedad matriz de Puertas Norma ha cometido un fraude.

Puesto que el comportamiento de la sociedad matriz de Puertas Norma no muestra indicios de constituir una infracción de las normas de competencia de la UE, la Comisión no tiene la intención de adoptar medidas en virtud de tales normas. La Comisión remite a Sus Señorías a la respuesta dada a la pregunta E-001473/2013.

Tal como se recoge en el artículo 107, apartado 1, del TFUE, para que una medida constituya ayuda estatal, ésta debe cumplir cuatro condiciones acumulativas: i) ser otorgada por un Estado miembro o mediante fondos estatales, ii) proporcionar una ventaja selectiva indebida a la empresa beneficiaria, iii) falsear o amenazar con falsear la competencia, y iv) afectar a los intercambios comerciales entre los Estados miembros. Sobre la base de la información disponible, no parece que se hayan cumplido estas condiciones en el caso de la sociedad matriz de Puertas Norma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001471/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) and Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Closure of the Puertas Norma factory in San Leonardo de Yagüe (aspects affecting free competition)

On 9 July 2012, the Puertas Norma factory in San Leonardo de Yagüe (Soria, Spain) presented a labour force adjustment plan (ERE) which initially affected 386 of the plant's workers — out of the almost 600 employed at the start of the conflict — who are worried about the precarious economic situation in which the firm's decision has left them.

The factory belonged to the firm Puertas Norma S.A., which went into liquidation with the application of the final ERE approved by Soria Mercantile Court on 28 December 2012, under which 282 employees were made redundant and a further 258 temporarily laid off, severing their employment relationship. Since the factory was the town's main source of employment, the fabric of its economy has been very hard hit.

The court's ruling also considers there to be a proven relationship between Puertas Norma and the Oregon-based multinational group Jeld Wen, which is the world leader in its sector The group makes multi-million worldwide profits and has plants in numerous countries. According to the judgment, Puertas Norma forms part of Jeld Wen's employment group. Having established Jeld Wen's financial responsibility, the company remains viable and national investors have declared their interest in purchasing it, keeping it operational and continuing to provide jobs.

Numerous European firms are affected by 'relocations' carried out by multinationals which try to evade their responsibilities towards their subsidiary or subcontracted firms. The subsidiaries claim losses in order to lay off their employees more cheaply, while the parent firms obtain spectacular profits and deny responsibility for the debts incurred under their management.

Does the Commission consider that the behaviour of the parent firm can be understood to have infringed the principle of free competition in the single market, possibly by fraudulent means?

What measures is the Commission adopting, bearing in mind that hypothetical 'disguised relocation' moves by firms may affect the rules on competition in the EU market?

Is the parent company failing to meet its commitments in relation to state aid, with consequences in terms of EC law?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

On the basis of the information available, the Commission does not consider that the alleged behaviour of the parent company of Puertas Norma could be interpreted as an infringement of EU competition rules. Indeed, there is no apparent agreement, decision or concerted practice which could prevent, restrict or distort competition, and nothing indicates that the parent company of Puertas Norma holds a dominant position which it might have abused. Also, there is no indication that the parent company of Puertas Norma might have unduly received state aid. Regarding the allegations of possible fraud, it is up to the national authorities to assess whether the parent company of Puertas Norma committed fraud.

Since the behaviour of the parent company of Puertas Norma does not seem to indicate an infringement of EU competition rules, the Commission does not intend to adopt any measure based on them. The Commission would also refer the Honourable Members to its answer to Written Question E-001473/2013.

As stated in Article 107(1) TFEU, in order for a given measure to constitute state aid, the measure must meet four cumulative conditions: it must (i) be granted by a Member State or through State resources, (ii) provide an undue selective advantage to the beneficiary undertaking, (iii) distort or threaten to distort competition, and (iv) be liable to affect trade between Member States. On the basis of the information available, it does not appear that these conditions have been met in the case of the parent company of Puertas Norma.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001473/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) y Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Cierre de la factoría de Puertas Norma en San Leonardo de Yagüe (aspectos laborales y responsabilidad social empresarial)

La factoría Puertas Norma, situada en San Leonardo de Yagüe, en la provincia española de Soria, presentó e*l pasado 9 de julio de 2012 un expediente de regulación de empleo (ERE) que inicialmente afectaba a 386 trabajadores de la planta —de los casi 600 que había al inicio del conflicto—, que temen por la incertidumbre económica en que son dejados por la empresa.*

La *planta pertenecía a la empresa Puertas Norma, S.A., cuyo ERE de extinción definitivo ha sido finalmente llevado a cabo el pasado 28 de diciembre, a través del auto del juzgado de lo mercantil de Soria. Dicho ERE, que despide a 282 trabajadores de la planta y suspende temporalmente a otros 258, supone el fin de la relación laboral. La factoría era el principal centro laboral de la localidad, por lo cual su tejido económico ha sido duramente afectado.*

El auto del juzgado considera también demostrada la relación económica entre Puertas Norma y el grupo multinacional Jeld Wen. Esta multinacional con sede en Oregón (EE.UU.*) es líder mundial en el sector, con unos beneficios millonarios a nivel global y con fábricas en numerosos países. Según el auto, la factoría Puertas Norma pertenece al «grupo laboral» de Jeld Wen. Establecida la responsabilidad financiera de Jeld Wen, la empresa sigue siendo viable y existen inversores nacionales dispuestos a comprarla y a mantener la actividad y los puestos de trabajo.*

Esta práctica de «*deslocalización» afecta a numerosas empresas europeas cuando las multinacionales buscan evitar su responsabilidad, al tratarse de empresas filiales o subcontratadas. Las filiales alegan pérdidas para despedir más barato, mientras sus grupos matrices gozan de beneficios millonarios y no se hacen cargo de las deudas derivadas de su gestión.*

¿Existiría en la actuación de la empresa matriz algún comportamiento discriminatorio que pudie*ra afectar a la libre circulación de trabajadores en el mercado único?*

¿Está la Comisión contemplando cambios legislativos para evitar que las multinacionales puedan cerrar empresas filiales sin *asumir sus responsabilidades para con los trabajadores al no ser consideradas dentro del «grupo laboral» cuando existe un claro vínculo productivo?*

¿Qué medidas está adoptando la Comisión para garantizar que las empresas hace*n un buen uso de las normas de responsabilidad social empresarial y no las utilizan como una simple herramienta de marketing?*

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de abril de 2013)

La Comisión no tiene competencias para interferir en las decisiones que adopten empresas concretas que conduzcan al cierre de fábricas en Europa. Sin embargo, la legislación de la UE establece que los empresarios deben informar y consultar a los representantes de los trabajadores antes de decidir efectuar despidos colectivos. Esta consulta incluye cómo evitar despidos, o reducir su número, y cómo mitigar sus consecuencias mediante medidas sociales de acompañamiento. La Comisión no tiene intención de modificar esta legislación pero insta a las empresas y a todas las partes interesadas a anticipar la reestructuración en la medida de lo posible y a gestionarla de forma responsable socialmente. A raíz del Libro Verde ([1]) y de la adopción del Informe Cercas, la Comisión está estudiando la mejor manera de fomentar y garantizar que se apliquen de manera generalizada las buenas prácticas en el ámbito de la reestructuración y la previsión del cambio. Informará al Parlamento Europeo de las medidas que tiene intención de adoptar en respuesta a su solicitud en virtud del artículo 225 del TFUE.

La Comisión elaboró una Comunicación sobre la responsabilidad social de las empresas (RSE) en 2011, cuyo objetivo consiste en fomentar que las grandes y las pequeñas empresas se comprometan genuinamente con la RSE. Por ejemplo, la Comisión está impulsando un aumento de la confianza en las empresas que asumen la RSE mediante el examen de la aplicación de la Directiva sobre las prácticas comerciales desleales y mediante la organización de una encuesta de las percepciones que tienen los ciudadanos sobre la influencia de las empresas en la sociedad.

([1]) COM(2012) 7 final de 17 de enero de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001473/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) and Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Closure of the Puertas Norma factory in San Leonardo de Yagüe (labour aspects and corporate social responsibility)

On 9 July 2012, the Puertas Norma factory in San Leonardo de Yagüe (Soria, Spain) presented a labour force adjustment plan (ERE) which initially affected 386 of the plant's workers — out of the almost 600 employed at the start of the conflict — who are worried about the precarious economic situation in which the firm's decision has left them.

The factory belonged to the firm Puertas Norma S.A., which went into liquidation with the application of the final ERE approved by Soria Mercantile Court on 28 December 2012, under which 282 employees were made redundant and a further 258 temporarily laid off, severing their employment relationship. Since the factory was the town's main source of employment, the fabric of its economy has been very hard hit.

The court's ruling also considers there to be a proven relationship between Puertas Norma and the Oregon-based multinational group Jeld Wen, which is the world leader in its sector The group makes multi-million worldwide profits and has plants in numerous countries. According to the judgment, Puertas Norma forms part of Jeld Wen's employment group. Having established Jeld Wen's financial responsibility, the company remains viable and national investors have declared their interest in purchasing it, keeping it operational and continuing to provide jobs.

Numerous European firms are affected by 'relocations' carried out by multinationals which try to evade their responsibilities towards their subsidiary or subcontracted firms. The subsidiaries claim losses in order to lay off their employees more cheaply, while the parent firms obtain spectacular profits and deny responsibility for the debts incurred under their management.

Has the parent company's behaviour been in any way discriminatory and likely to affect the free movement of workers within the single market?

Is the Commission considering changing the law to prevent multinational enterprises from closing down subsidiary companies without taking responsibility for their workers, by failing to consider them part of their 'employment group', despite an obvious productive link?

What measures is the Commission adopting to ensure that companies make proper use of corporate social responsibility requirements, rather than merely using them as a marketing tool?

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

The Commission has no powers to interfere in specific company decisions leading to the closure of plants in Europe. However, EC law provides that employers are to inform and consult employees' representatives before they decide to carry out collective redundancies. Such consultation covers ways of avoiding redundancies, or reducing their number, and of mitigating their consequences through accompanying social measures. The Commission does not intend to modify this legislation but urges companies and all stakeholders to anticipate restructuring as far as possible and to manage it in a socially responsible way. Following the Green Paper ([1]) and the adoption of the Cercas Report, the Commission is considering how best to encourage and ensure wide observance of best practice in the field of restructuring and anticipation of change. It will inform the European Parliament of the action it intends taking in response to its request on the basis of Article 225 TFEU.

([1]) COM(2012) 7 final of 17 January 2012.

The Commission wrote a communication on Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) in 2011, whose aim is to encourage genuine commitment to CSR by large and small companies. For example, the Commission is encouraging greater trust in companies who undertake CSR by examining the implementation of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive and by organising a survey of citizens' perceptions of the influence of companies on society.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001475/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) y Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Cierre de la factoría de Puertas Norma en San Leonardo de Yagüe (aspectos concursales y fondos públicos)

La factoría Puertas Norma, situada en San Leonardo de Yagüe, en la provincia española de Soria, presentó el pasado 9 de julio de 2012 un expediente de regulación de empleo (ERE) que inicialmente afectaba a 386 trabajadores de la planta —de los casi 600 que había *al inicio del conflicto—, que temen por la incertidumbre económica en que son dejados por la empresa*.

La planta pertenecía a la empresa Puertas Norma, S.A., cuyo ERE de extinción definitivo *se ha llevado a cabo finalmente el pasado 28 de diciembre, a través del auto del juzgado de lo mercantil de Soria. Dicho ERE, por el que despide a 282 trabajadores de la planta y se suspende temporalmente a otros 258, supone el fin de la relación laboral. La factoría era el principal centro laboral de la localidad, por lo cual su tejido económico ha sido duramente afectado*.

El auto del juzgado considera también demostrada la relación económica entre Puertas Norma y el grupo multinacional Jeld Wen. Esta multinacional con sede en Oregón (EE.UU.) es líder mundial en el sector, con unos beneficios millonarios a nivel global y con fábricas en numerosos países. Según el auto, la factoría Puertas Norma pertenece al «grupo laboral» de Jeld Wen. Establecida la responsabilidad financiera de Jeld Wen, la empresa sigue siendo viable y existen inversores nacionales dispuestos a comprarla y a mantener la actividad y los puestos de trabajo.

Esta práctica de «deslocalización» afecta a numerosas empresas europeas cuando las multinacionales buscan evitar su responsabilidad, al tratarse de empresas filiales o subcontratadas. Las filiales alegan pérdidas para despedir más barato, mientras sus grupos matrices gozan de beneficios millonarios y no se hacen cargo de las deudas derivadas de su gestión.

En un momento de crisis económica como la actual, ¿se están utilizando instrumentos para evitar el uso no adecuado de las legislaciones concursales nacionales derivadas del Reglamento (CE) n° 1346/2000, de 29 de mayo de 2000, del Consejo de la Unión Europea sobre procedimientos transfronterizos de insolvencia? ¿Se está analizando el funcionamiento de las normas del mencionado Reglamento y sus posibles disfunciones en situaciones de crisis?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de abril de 2013)

La Comisión comparte la inquietud expresada por Su Señoría respecto a las dificultades a las que se enfrentan los trabajadores de la factoría Puertas Norma en España. A escala de la UE, la Directiva 2008/94/CE garantiza el pago de las deudas pendientes a los trabajadores asalariados en caso de insolvencia del empleador.

El Reglamento (CE) n° 1346/2000 del Consejo establece una serie de normas comunes sobre los aspectos internacionales de los procedimientos de insolvencia desde 2002. Según la información que obra en poder la Comisión, el Reglamento no se aplica a este caso, ya que se trata de un asunto nacional, y se aplicaría la normativa nacional sobre la insolvencia.

Su Señoría estará tal vez al corriente de que la Comisión presentó un informe sobre la aplicación de ese Reglamento. Uno de los principales problemas detectados era que el Reglamento se centra en la liquidación y no contempla claramente las disposiciones nacionales para la reestructuración de las empresas, de forma que puedan seguir siendo viables. Otros problemas se refieren al ámbito de aplicación, las normas sobre la jurisdicción, la coordinación y la transparencia de los procedimientos y la falta de normas específicas sobre la insolvencia de grupos.

Por lo tanto, la Comisión propuso enmiendas el 12 de diciembre de 2012 a fin de tener en cuenta los nuevos tipos de procedimiento de preinsolvencia que persiguen salvar las empresas, mejorar la cooperación entre los tribunales, crear un marco jurídico para los grupos de empresas internacionales y garantizar la publicidad en los registros sobre procedimientos de insolvencia. Los cambios propuestos contribuirán a mejorar la eficacia y efectividad de los procedimientos de insolvencia transfronterizos, que afectan a cincuenta mil empresas al año. Al mismo tiempo, la Comisión adoptó una Comunicación dirigida a abrir un debate sobre las disparidades entre las legislaciones nacionales sobre insolvencia que puedan generar inseguridad jurídica y un entorno empresarial desfavorable.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001475/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) and Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Closure of the Puertas Norma factory in San Leonardo de Yagüe (insolvency aspects and public funding)

On 9 July 2012, the Puertas Norma factory in San Leonardo de Yagüe (Soria, Spain) presented a labour force adjustment plan (ERE) which initially affected 386 of the plant's workers — out of the almost 600 employed at the start of the conflict — who are worried about the precarious economic situation in which the firm's decision has left them.

The factory belonged to the firm Puertas Norma S.A., which went into liquidation with the application of the final ERE approved by Soria Mercantile Court on 28 December 2012, under which 282 employees were made redundant and a further 258 temporarily laid off, severing their employment relationship. Since the factory was the town's main source of employment, the fabric of its economy has been very hard hit.

The court's ruling also considers there to be a proven relationship between Puertas Norma and the Oregon-based multinational group Jeld Wen, which is the world leader in its sector The group makes multi-million worldwide profits and has plants in numerous countries. According to the judgment, Puertas Norma forms part of Jeld Wen's employment group. Having established Jeld Wen's financial responsibility, the company remains viable and national investors have declared their interest in purchasing it, keeping it operational and continuing to provide jobs.

Numerous European firms are affected by 'relocations' carried out by multinationals which try to evade their responsibilities towards their subsidiary or subcontracted firms. The subsidiaries claim losses in order to lay off their employees more cheaply, while the parent firms obtain spectacular profits and deny responsibility for the debts accumulated under their management.

At this present time of economic crisis, are any instruments being used to prevent the improper use of national bankruptcy laws pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1346/2000, of 29 May 2000 on cross-border insolvency proceedings? Has there been any analysis of the functioning of this regulation's provisions and their possible malfunctioning under situations of crisis?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The Commission shares the concerns expressed by the Honourable Members as regards the difficulties faced by the workers of the Puertas Norma factory in Spain. At EU level Directive 2008/94/EC ensures payment of employees' outstanding claims in the event of employer insolvency.

Regulation (EC) No 1346/2000 provides common rules for cross-border insolvencies since 2002. According to the information available to the Commission the regulation does not apply to this case as it is a domestic case; national insolvency law would apply.

The Honourable Members might be aware that the Commission presented a report on the application of the regulation. One of the main problems identified was that the regulation is oriented towards liquidation and does not clearly accommodate national arrangements to restructure companies so they can stay in business. Other problems relate to the scope, the rules on jurisdiction, the coordination and transparency of proceedings, the absence of specific rules for groups' insolvency.

Therefore the Commission proposed on 12 December 2012 amendments to cover the new types of pre-insolvency proceedings which aim at rescuing businesses, to improve the cooperation between courts, to create a legal framework for cross-border groups of companies and to ensure the publicity in insolvency registers. The proposed changes will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of cross-border insolvency proceedings, affecting 50 000 businesses a year. At the same time, the Commission adopted a communication to launch a debate on disparities between national insolvency laws that can create legal uncertainty and an unfriendly business environment.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001476/13
til Kommissionen
Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: Den interne højde for transportmidler, der anvendes ved dyretransporter

Den 10.8.2011 henvendte Kommissionen sig til medlemslandenes veterinærdirektører (CVO) angående den interne højde for transportmidler, der anvendes ved dyretransporter (SANCO G3 AN/ap D(2011) 862232).

— Hvor mange medlemslande har svaret tilbage på Kommissionens henvendelse og bekræftet, at de har indført bestemmelser, som sikrer, at den interne højde er i overensstemmelse med Kommissionens anbefalinger i (SANCO G3 AN/ap D(2011) 862232)?

— Såfremt medlemslandenes besvarelser viser, at de nødvendige bestemmelser ikke er blevet indført, eller såfremt medlemslandene ikke har besvaret Kommissionens henvendelse, hvad agter Kommissionen så at gøre for at bekæmpe de uacceptable forhold, der fortsat karakteriserer dyretransporter i det indre marked? Hvordan vil Kommissionen desuden sikre overholdelsen og implementeringen af Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(3. april 2013)

1. Fem medlemsstater besvarede Kommissionens brev om interne højder, der er omhandlet i spørgsmålet fra det ærede medlem. Som anmodet om i brevet fra Kommissionen, orienterede medlemsstaterne hovedsageligt om vanskeligheder og mulige løsninger i forbindelse med gennemførelsen af forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport ([1]) i forhold til interne højder under transport.

2. Forordningen forpligter ikke medlemsstaterne til at indføre særlige ordninger i forhold til interne højder. Dette er grunden til, at det ovennævnte brev fra Kommissionen fremhæver, at »vedtagelsen af specifikke tal eller skriftlige retningslinjer […] kan være nyttigt for at forebygge dårlig velfærd.«

Kommissionen planlægger på nuværende tidspunkt ingen specifikke initiativer til at forbedre håndhævelsen af interne højder, men har en samlet tilgang for så vidt angår håndhævelse af forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005. For yderligere detaljer henviser Kommissionen til sit svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-011231/2012 ([2]).

([1]) EUT L 3 af 5.1.2005, s. 1.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001476/13
to the Commission
Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Internal height of means of transport for animals

On 10 August 2011 the Commission wrote to the Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) of the Member States concerning the internal height of means of transport for animals (SANCO G3 AN/ap D(2011) 86223).

— How many Member States replied to the Commission's letter and confirmed that they had introduced rules ensuring that the internal height complied with the Commission's recommendations in SANCO G3 AN/ap D(2011) 86223?

— Where Member States' answers show that the necessary rules have not been introduced, or where Member States have not answered the Commission's letter, what measures does the Commission propose to take to combat the unacceptable conditions which still prevail in animal transport in the internal market? What other measures will the Commission take to ensure compliance with and implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

1. Five Member States responded to the Commission letter on internal heights referred to in the question from the Honourable Member. As requested in the letter from the Commission, Member States mainly informed on difficulties and possible solutions in implementing Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]) in relation to internal heights during transport.

2. The regulation does not require Member States to introduce particular rules in relation to internal heights. This is why the abovementioned letter from the Commission highlights that 'the adoption of specific figures or written guidelines […] may be useful to prevent poor welfare.'

The Commission does at this point not foresee any particular initiatives to improve enforcement of internal heights, but has an overall approach in relation to enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. For further details the Commission would refer to its answer to Written Question E-011231/2012 ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001477/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: Hjemmel til at udstede indrejseforbud i Schengenlandene

Spørgeren er blevet bekendt med, at et Schengenland har udstedt et indrejseforbud for en tredjelandsborger. Indrejseforbuddet gælder angiveligt alle Schengenlandene.

Kan Kommissionen oplyse, hvilken hjemmel der findes i fællesskabsretten for et sådant forbud?

Vil Kommissionen redegøre for, hvilke betingelser der skal være opfyldt, for at sådanne forbud kan udstedes ensidigt af en stat og omfattende alle de andre?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Cecilia Malmström
(4. april 2013)

Artikel 11 i direktiv 2008/115/EF om tilbagesendelse forpligter medlemsstaterne til at udstede et indrejseforbud, som forhindrer genindrejse i *alle* medlemsstater, i visse »kvalificerede« tilfælde af overtrædelse af migrationsreglerne. Dette indrejseforbud, som gælder i hele EU, udstedes sammen med afgørelsen om tilbagesendelse og har til formål at fungere forebyggende ved at sende en klar besked om, at de tredjelandsstatsborgere, som ikke overholder migrationsreglerne i EU's medlemsstater, vil blive nægtet genindrejse i alle EU-medlemsstater i en specifik periode.

Varigheden af genindrejseforbuddet afgøres under hensyntagen til alle relevante forhold i den enkelte sag. Normalt bør den ikke overstige fem år. Kun når der foreligger en alvorlig trussel mod den offentlige orden eller den offentlige sikkerhed, kan genindrejseforbuddet udstedes med længere varighed. Der er to tilfælde, hvor medlemsstaterne undtagelsesvis kan tilsidesætte et indrejseforbud, som er blevet udstedt i henhold til direktivet om tilbagesendelse:

I henhold til artikel 11, stk. 4, kan en medlemsstat udstede en opholdstilladelse eller anden tilladelse, som giver ret til ophold, til en tredjelandsstatsborger, der har fået et indrejseforbud udstedt af en anden medlemsstat, forudsat at den først har konsulteret den medlemsstat, der har udstedt indrejseforbuddet, og tager hensyn til dennes interesser i overensstemmelse med artikel 25 i konventionen om gennemførelse af Schengenaftalen.

I henhold til artikel 11, stk. 5, berører reglerne for genindrejseforbud ikke retten til at søge asyl i en af medlemsstaterne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001477/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Authority to issue entry bans in Schengen Area countries

It has been drawn to my attention that a Schengen Area country has issued an entry ban on a third-country national. The ban reportedly applies in all Schengen Area countries.

Can the Commission say where, in EC law, such bans are authorised?

Will the Commission set out the conditions to be met which make it possible for such a ban to be issued unilaterally by one country and to apply to all the others?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2013)

Article 11 of the Return Directive 2008/115/EC obliges Member States to issue an entry ban, preventing re-entry into the territory of *all* the Member States, in certain 'qualified' cases of non-compliance with migration rules. This EU wide entry ban shall be issued together with the return decision and is intended to have preventative effects by sending a clear message that those third-country nationals who disregard migration rules in EU Member States will not be allowed to re-enter any EU Member State for a specific period.

The length of the re-entry ban must be determined with due regard to all relevant circumstances of the individual case. Normally it should not exceed 5 years. Only in cases of serious threat to public policy or public security, may the re-entry ban be issued for a longer period. Member States may exceptionally disregard an entry ban issued under the Return Directive in two cases:

Article 11(4) allows Member State to issue a residence permit or other authorisation offering a right to stay to a third-country national who is the subject of an entry ban issued by another Member State, provided it has first consulted the Member State having issued the entry ban in order to take into account its interests in accordance with Article 25 of the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement.

Article 11(5) provides that the rules on the re-entry ban 'apply without prejudice to the right to seek asylum in one of the Member States.'

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001478/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: Retssikkerhedsmæssige hensyn i forbindelse med DNS-blokeringer

Spørgeren ønsker, på baggrund af en række danske eksempler på DNS-blokeringer af internetsider, Kommissionens stillingtagen til, hvilke retssikkerhedsmæssige hensyn der bør tages i forbindelse med denne form for begrænsning af ytringsfriheden på nettet.

Spørgeren finder naturligvis, at det skal være muligt at lukke for sider, der formidler kriminelt indhold på nettet, f.eks. børneporno. Men det ses nu i Danmark, at der ved dom fra fogedretten kan opnås midlertidig lukning (blokering) af hjemmesider, der potentielt krænker andres immaterielle rettigheder.

Det er her især problematisk at de teleselskaber, som med dommen pålægges at blokere de pågældende sider, sjældent har interesse i at bruge ressourcer på at få blokeringen ophævet igen, hvorved internetsiderne *de facto* forbliver utilgængelige fra danske IP-adresser.

Vil Kommissionen på denne baggrund redegøre for, om denne praksis er i overensstemmelse med det indre markeds regler, eller om der kan stilles krav til, hvilke retssikkerhedsmæssige standarder der skal være iagttaget, før man kan iværksætte en DNS-blokering af eksempelvis en konkurrerende virksomheds internetside(r)? En sådan standard kunne f.eks. være et krav om en tidsmæssig begrænsning af virkningen af et fogedforbud, hvis sagen ikke videreføres til domstolene.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Michel Barnier
(15. april 2013)

Direktiv 2000/31/EF (»direktivet om elektronisk handel«) ([1]) bestemmer, at domstole eller administrative myndigheder i overensstemmelse med medlemsstaternes retssystemer kan kræve, at tjenesteyderen bringer en overtrædelse til ophør eller forhindrer den. I det tilfælde, det ærede medlem omtalte, gik en retsafgørelse forud for blokeringen af et websted, og der var derfor sikret retsligt tilsyn.

Alle afgørelser fra medlemsstaternes domstole, der implementerer EU-lovgivning, skal være i overensstemmelse med Den Europæiske Unions charter om grundlæggende rettigheder. Der kan kun indføres begrænsninger i udøvelsen af ytringsfriheden, hvis det er nødvendigt og reelt opfylder mål af almen interesse, der er anerkendt af Unionen, eller et behov for beskyttelse af andres rettigheder og friheder.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0031:DA:NOT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001478/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Legal certainty considerations in connection with DNS blocking

Following a number of cases in Denmark of the DNS blocking of websites, I should like to ask the Commission's view on the legal certainty issues raised by this form of restriction of the freedom of expression on the Internet.

Of course it should be possible to close down sites containing criminal content, e.g. child pornography. However, we are now seeing in Denmark that a ruling from the Fogedret (Bailiff's court) can be used to enforce the closure (blocking) of websites that might potentially infringe other people's intangible rights.

One particular problem in this context is that the telecoms companies which seek a ruling to block such sites rarely have any interest in spending money to unblock them again, which means that the sites remain *de facto* inaccessible from Danish IP addresses.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state whether this practice is in accordance with the rules of the internal market, or whether it is possible to require that certain standards of legal certainty be applied before carrying out DNS blocking of — for example — a rival firm's website(s)? One such a standard might be a requirement that there should be a time limit on the effects a Bailiff's court ruling if the case is not taken any further before the courts.

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

Directive 2000/31/EC ('the E-commerce Directive') ([1]) sets out that courts or administrative authorities may, in accordance with Member States' legal systems, require a service provider to terminate or prevent an infringement. In the case raised by the Honourable Member, a court ruling had preceded the blocking of a website and judicial oversight had thus been guaranteed.

Any rulings from Member States' courts implementing EC law must be in conformity with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Any limitation on the exercise of the freedom of expression may only be made if it is necessary and genuinely meets the objectives of general interest recognised by the European Union or the need to protect the rights and freedoms of others.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0031:EN:NOT.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001479/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: Tysklands opgørelse af ammoniakemission

Spørgeren er blevet bekendt med, at Tyskland i sin opgørelse af ammoniakemissioner afviger væsentligt fra den opgørelsesmetode, der anvendes i andre medlemslande som f.eks. Holland og Danmark. Dette medfører formentlig, at Tyskland overtræder Göteborgaftalen, og at konkurrencevilkårene for landmænd i Unionen således forvrides stærkt.

Efter spørgerens oplysninger har Tyskland valgt at definere biogasgylle som industriaffald og ikke som gylle, hvorved det ikke tælles med i ammoniakemissionsstatistikken.

Da biogasgylle har en højere ammoniakemission end kvæggylle, betyder dette — sammenholdt med Tysklands store produktion af biogas — at ammoniakemission fra biogasgylle maskeres i forhold til den stipulerede rammeudledning i Göteborgaftalen. Dette medfører, at tysk landbrug ikke i nær samme omfang som i det øvrige EU behøver omstille sig for at begrænse sin ammoniakudledning, hvilket naturligvis medfører en konkurrencefordel i forhold til Unionens øvrige landmænd.

Vil Kommission give en begrundet udtalelse om, hvorvidt den tyske praksis er i overensstemmelse med fællesskabsretten?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(4. april 2013)

EU's direktiv om nationale emissionslofter (2001/81/EF) fastsætter 2010-lofterne for svovldioxid, nitrogenoxider, flygtige organiske stoffer og ammoniak for hver medlemsstat i overensstemmelse med Göteborgprotokollen. Indberetningskravene i henhold til dette direktiv henviser præcis til samme metodik, retningslinjer og opgørelsesvejledning, som bruges ved rapporteringen i henhold til Göteborgprotokollen. Kommissionen modtager derfor fra medlemsstaterne de samme emissionsoplysninger, som indberettes i forbindelse med Göteborgprotokollen. Tysklands seneste emissionsrapport viser en ammoniakudledning på 563 kiloton i 2011, hvilket er over landets årlige loft på 550 kiloton for 2010 og hvert efterfølgende år.

Kommissionen har i samråd med Det Europæiske Miljøagentur nøje kontrolleret oplysningerne indberettet af Tyskland i december 2012 i henhold til direktivet om nationale emissionslofter. Denne første kontrol har ikke fundet tegn på, at Tyskland har afveget fra de seneste opgørelsesmetoder til udfærdigelsen af ammoniakemissionsopgørelser fastsat i Göteborgprotokollen.

At Tyskland indberetter sine ammoniakemissioner under andre kategorier (i dette tilfælde under industriemissioner frem for landbrugsemissioner), fordi man i Tyskland finder det mere hensigtsmæssigt, betyder ikke, at emissionerne ikke indgår i de samlede, nationale tal, som bruges til kontrollen.

Skønt overholdelsen af medlemsstaternes forpligtelser under Göteborgprotokollen er et emne, som parterne i protokollen behandler ved deres årlige møde, har Kommissionen på nuværende tidspunkt ikke grund til at tro, at Tyskland afviger fra sine indberetningsforpligtelser.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001479/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: German inventory of ammonia gas emissions

It has been drawn to my attention that Germany, in drawing up its inventory of ammonia gas emissions, departs significantly from the inventory method used in other Member States such as Holland and Denmark. This means that Germany is probably infringing the Gothenburg Protocol and thus heavily distorting competition among farmers in the Union.

According to my information, Germany has opted to define manure used for biogas production as industrial waste and not as manure, meaning that it is not counted in the ammonia gas emissions statistics.

Since manure for biogas emits more ammonia than cattle manure, this means — combined with Germany's high levels of biogas production — that ammonia emissions from manure for biogas are concealed and do not count towards the emission ceiling set under the Gothenburg Protocol. Consequently German farmers do not need to adjust nearly as much as the rest of the EU in order to reduce their ammonia emissions, which of course gives them a competitive advantage over farmers in the rest of the Union.

Will the Commission issue a reasoned opinion on whether German practice is in accordance with EC law?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2013)

The EU Directive on National Emission Ceilings (NEC Directive 2001/81/EC) ([1]) sets the 2010 ceilings for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic substances and ammonia for each Member State in coherence with the Gothenburg Protocol. The reporting obligations under this directive refer exactly to the same methodologies, guidance and inventory guidebook as those used in the reporting under the Gothenburg Protocol. The Commission therefore receives the same emission information from Member States as that provided in the context of the Gothenburg Protocol. Germany's latest emission report shows ammonia emissions of 563 ktonnes for 2011 which is above its ceiling which is set at 550 ktonnes for 2010 and any year thereafter.

The Commission has, in consultation with the European Environment Agency, carefully reviewed the information provided by Germany in December 2012 under the NEC Directive. This first review has not found that Germany has deviated from applying the latest inventory methods for the preparation of ammonia emission inventories provided by the Gothenburg Protocol.

In particular, the fact that Germany reports its ammonia emissions under different headings (here under industrial emissions instead of agriculture) as it considers it more appropriate does not mean that the emissions are not accounted for in its national totals, which are used for the purpose of compliance checking.

Albeit the fulfilment of Member State's obligations under the Gothenburg Protocol is a matter for the Parties to the Protocol to address at their annual meeting the Commission has presently no ground to believe that Germany deviates from its reporting obligations.

([1]) OJ L 309, 27.11.2001.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001480/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: EU's krav til terrorsikringen af havne

Spørgeren er blevet bekendt med, at en lang række danske havne, herunder også meget små havne og lystbådehavne, med baggrund i EU-bestemmelser er blevet pålagt en række udgifter til terrorsikring.

Vil Kommissionen redegøre for, om der er en bagatelgrænse for, og i givet fald niveauet for denne, hvilke havne der falder ind under EU's terrorsikringsbestemmelser?

Vil Kommissionen ligeledes oplyse om, hvorvidt kravene til terrorsikring af meget små havne er proportionale med den konkrete trusselsvurdering, der gælder for sådanne havneanlæg?

Er der i Kommissionen overvejelser på vej om at lempe reglerne, så mindre havne kan fritages helt eller delvist for de meget store udgifter, terrorsikringen pålægger dem?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(15. april 2013)

Forordning (EF) nr. 725/2004 ([1]) og direktiv 2005/65/EF ([2]) fastsætter kravene i EU med henblik på at forbedre sikringen af skibe, havne og havnefaciliteter mod trusler om overlagte kriminelle handlinger. Deres anvendelsesområde er ikke kun begrænset til »anti-terrorforanstaltninger«. Anvendelsen af sikkerhedsforanstaltningerne i europæiske havne afhænger ikke af størrelsen på havnen, men derimod af kategorien eller klassen på de skibe, der lægger til i den.

Med undtagelse af passagerskibe, der hører til klasse A (defineret i artikel 4 i direktiv 98/18/EF ([3])) og sejler med en afstand på over 20 sømil fra kysten, er det kun skibe, som anvendes til international skibsfart, der automatisk udløser krav om sikkerhedsforanstaltninger. Selv da finder kravene ikke anvendelse på lastskibe med en bruttotonnage på under 500, krigsskibe og troppetransportskibe, skibe, der ikke fremdrives ved mekaniske midler, træskibe af primitiv konstruktion, fiskerfartøjer eller fartøjer, der ikke anvendes i erhvervsmæssigt øjemed.

Havne, der kun modtager den slags skibe, behøver derfor ikke anvende sikkerhedskravene. Hertil kommer, at en lille havn, som kun lejlighedsvis modtager skibe, der ikke er fritaget, kan vælge at anvende de relevante sikkerhedsforanstaltninger midlertidigt i den periode, hvor skibet er i havn.

Det er Kommissionens opfattelse, at dette system tillader tilstrækkeligt fleksible og proportionale sikkerhedsforanstaltninger, da det står medlemsstaterne frit for at beslutte, i hvilken grad de ønsker at anvende denne forordnings bestemmelser på andre kategorier af skibe i indenrigsfart.

([1]) EUT L 129 af 29.4.2004.
([2]) EUT L 310 af 25.11.2005.
([3]) EFT L 144 af 15.5.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001480/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU requirements for anti-terrorism measures at ports

It has been drawn to my attention that a large number of Danish ports, including very small ports and seaside resorts, have had to incur considerable expenditure on anti-terrorism measures to comply with EU rules.

Can the Commission say whether there is a *de minimis* threshold below which ports are not covered by the EU's anti-terrorism rules? If so, what is it?

To what extent are the anti-terrorism requirements for very small ports proportionate to the specific threat assessment for such ports?

Is the Commission considering relaxing the rules so that smaller ports can be wholly or partly exempted from the major expenditure incurred by anti-terrorism measures?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 725/2004 ([1]) and Directive 2005/65/EC ([2]) lay down requirements in the EU with the aim of enhancing the security of ships, ports and port facilities in the face of threats on intentional unlawful acts. Their scope is not limited to 'anti-terrorism' measures.

The application of security measures in European ports depends not on the size of the port, but rather on the category or class of ships calling at it.

With the exception of Class A passenger ships (defined in Article 4 of Directive 98/18/EC ([3])) sailing at a distance which exceeds 20 Nautical Miles from the coast, only ships undertaking international voyages will automatically trigger the need for security measures. Even then, the requirements do not apply to cargo ships less than 500 gross tonnes, to ships of war and troopships, ships not propelled by mechanical means, wooden ships of primitive build, fishing vessels or vessels not engaged in commercial activities.

Therefore, any port that only handles any of these ships need not apply the security requirements. Furthermore, if a small port only handles occasionally ships that are not exempted, it may choose to apply appropriate security measures on a temporary basis for the period that the ship is in port.

In the view of the Commission the system allows sufficient flexibility for proportionate of security measures, as it leaves to Member States to decide the extent to which they will apply the provisions of this regulation to other categories of ships operating domestic services.

([1]) OJ L 129, 29.4.2004.
([2]) OJ L 310, 25.11.2005.
([3]) OJ L 144, 15.5.1998.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001481/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: EU-rettens regulering af (forbud mod) rituel slagtning

Spørgeren er blevet bekendt med, at såvel kongeriget Sverige som republikken Polen over de seneste år har ønsket at indføre et forbud mod visse rituelle/religiøse slagtemetoder ud fra et hensyn til dyrenes velfærd og værdighed. Det drejer sig om den muslimske halalslagtning og de jødiske schæchtninger.

I begge tilfælde har landene opgivet et forbud, angiveligt på baggrund af at et forbud vil stride mod EU-retten.

Vil Kommissionen oplyse den hjemmel i EU-retten, der nægter medlemsstaterne at forbyde disse slagtemetoder ud fra et dyrevelfærdsmæssigt hensyn?

Vil Kommissionen i øvrigt begrunde, hvordan et sådant forbud kan være i overensstemmelse med subsidiaritetsprincippet?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(9. april 2013)

Forordning (EF) nr. 1099/2009 ([1]) om beskyttelse af dyr på aflivningstidspunktet fastsætter det generelle princip, at dyr kun må aflives efter bedøvelse. Efter forordningens artikel 4, stk. 4, kan medlemsstaterne fravige dette princip for dyr, der slagtes ved særlige metoder, der er foreskrevet af religiøse ritualer, forudsat at slagtningen finder sted på et slagteri.

Som nævnt i svaret på P-011704/12 ([2]) skal artikel 4, stk. 4, fortolkes indskrænkende, idet forordningens mål og målene i Den Europæiske Unions charter om grundlæggende rettigheder tages i betragtning.

Ifølge nærhedsprincippet kan medlemsstaterne bestemme, at de på grund af situationen i landet ikke behøver gøre brug af fravigelsen.

Forordningens artikel 26, stk. 2, litra c), fastlægger, at medlemsstater kan vedtage nationale bestemmelser med henblik på at sikre mere omfattende beskyttelse af dyr på aflivningstidspunktet end de bestemmelser, der er indeholdt i forordningen, for dyr, der slagtes ved særlige metoder, der er foreskrevet af religiøse ritualer, hvor krav om bedøvelse ikke finder anvendelse. Medlemsstaterne skal vurdere sådanne reglers indvirkning på dyrevelfærd og på religionsfriheden som foreskrevet i artikel 10 i Den Europæiske Unions charter om grundlæggende rettigheder. Strengere regler vedrørende dyrebeskyttelse skal respektere retten til at udøve religion eller tro i overensstemmelse med artikel 10, stk. 1, og artikel 52, stk. 2, i chartret om grundlæggende rettigheder og skal meddeles til Kommissionen.

Så vidt det er Kommissionen bekendt, tillader Sverige og Polen på nuværende tidspunkt ikke slagtning uden bedøvelse.

([1]) EUT L 303 af 18.11.2009.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001481/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EC law and (banning) the ritual slaughter of animals

It has been drawn to my attention that in recent years both the Kingdom of Sweden and the Republic of Poland wished to impose a ban on certain ritual/religious slaughter methods — specifically Muslim halal and Jewish shechita (kosher) slaughter — in the interest of the welfare and dignity of the animals.

In both cases the countries abandoned the attempt, allegedly because such a ban would conflict with EC law.

Can the Commission identify the provision of EC law which denies Member States the right to prohibit such slaughter methods in the interests of animal welfare?

Can the Commission also explain how denying them this right can be in accordance with the subsidiarity principle?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 ([1]) on the protection of animals at the time of killing establishes the general principle that animals shall only be killed after stunning. Yet Article 4 (4) of this regulation allows Member States to derogate from this principle for animals subject to particular methods of slaughter prescribed by religious rites, provided that the slaughter takes place in a slaughterhouse. As already explained in the answer to P-011704/12 ([2]), like any derogation, Article 4(4) has to be interpreted in a narrow way taking into account the objectives of the regulation and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

According to the principle of subsidiarity, Member States may conclude that given the situation on their territory they do not need to make to use of the derogation.

Article 26(2)(c) of the regulation provides that Member States may adopt national rules aimed at ensuring more extensive protection of animals at the time of killing than those contained in the regulation for animals subject to particular methods of slaughter prescribed by religious rites, where requirements for stunning do not apply. Member States must assess the consequences of such rules on animal welfare and on the freedom of religion as prescribed in Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Stricter rules concerning the protection of animals must comply with the freedom to manifest religion or belief, in accordance with Articles 10(1) and 52(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be notified to the Commission.

To the Commission's knowledge Sweden and Poland currently do not allow slaughter without stunning.

([1]) OJ L 303, 18.11.2009.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001482/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: Firmaet Microsofts overholdelse af EU's konkurrenceregler

Spørgeren er blevet gjort bekendt med en sag om muligt brud på EU's konkurrenceregler, hvor firmaet Microsoft, der tidligere er idømt bøder for såkaldt »bounding« af sine produkter, hvorved firmaet ved hjælp af tekniske specifikationer og udnyttelse af sin monopolstilling på leverandørmarkedet udelukker andre styresystemer fra installation på såvel stationære som bærbare computere.

Spørgeren er bekendt med, at Kommissionen den 21. november 2012 har modtaget en klage fra danske interessenter på området om netop dette forhold.

Vil Kommissionen oplyse, om man agter at iværksætte en undersøgelse eller andre initiativer på baggrund af ovennævnte klage og det beskrevne forhold i øvrigt?

Vil Kommissionen yderlige oplyse, om den på baggrund af Microsofts tidligere overtrædelser af EU's konkurrenceregler overvåger selskabets aktiviteter løbende for at sikre, at firmaet overholder EU-lovgivningens intentioner og ånd?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Joaquín Almunia
(16. april 2013)

Kommissionen er klar over de problemer, som brugere, der ønsker at købe en personlig computer (»pc«) uden Microsofts Windows som forhåndsinstalleret styresystem, står over for, og den følger udviklingen på området tæt.

Ud fra et EU-konkurrenceretligt perspektiv ser den praksis, der bliver beskrevet, ikke ud til at være udtryk for nogen konkurrencebegrænsende aftaler mellem Microsoft og producenter af originaludstyr til pc'er (»OEM«). Det er Kommissionens opfattelse, at der ikke er pålagt disse producenter nogen kontraktlige forpligtelser om at sælge deres pc'er med styresystemet Windows forhåndsinstalleret. Det er snarere markedskræfterne og efterspørgslen fra brugerne, der får disse producenter til at udbyde pc'er med styresystemet Windows forhåndsinstalleret.

Kommissionen bemærker også, at visse producenter af originaludstyr udbyder pc'er med styresystemet Linux forhåndsinstalleret.

Derfor har Kommissionen ikke på nuværende tidspunkt planer om at indlede en procedure over for den praksis, der beskrives.

Kommissionen vil også gerne understrege, at forbrugere i visse medlemsstater ad rettens vej har søgt at få godtgørelse for uønskede og ubrugte softwarelicenser. Kommissionen henleder Deres opmærksomhed på en italiensk og fire franske sager, der danner præcedens i denne forbindelse:

http://www.aduc.it/dyn/comunicati/comu_mostra.php?id=197413,

http://www.aful.org/media/document/JugementCRESP-ASUS_06.07.06.pdf,

http://www.aful.org/media/document/jugement-Gutzwiller-Acer-20070723.pdf,

http://www.foruminternet.org/specialistes/veille-juridique/jurisprudence/IMG/pdf/jurpro-lib20080213.pdf og

http://www.aful.org/media/document/Jugement-Hordoir-ASUS-20080430.pdf

Kommissionen er fortsat indstillet på at sikre, at EU's konkurrenceregler gennemføres fuldt ud inden for it-sektoren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001482/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Compliance by Microsoft with EU competition rules

A possible breach of the EU's competition rules has been drawn to my attention involving Microsoft, which was earlier fined for the 'bounding' of its products. This is a procedure whereby the firm, using technical specifications and exploiting its monopoly on the supply market, prevents other operating systems from being installed on either PCs or laptops.

I am aware that on 21 November 2012 the Commission received a complaint on precisely this issue from Danish stakeholders in the field.

Can the Commission state whether there are any plans to carry out an investigation or other initiatives in response to this complaint or on this subject in general?

Can the Commission also state whether, in the light of Microsoft's earlier infringements of EU competition rules, it is monitoring the firm's activities on an ongoing basis so as to ensure that it complies with the intentions and spirit of the EU legislation?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the difficulties faced by users that seek to purchase Personal Computers ('PCs') that do not have Microsoft's Windows pre-installed as the operating system and monitors developments in this field closely.

From an EU competition law perspective, the practices referred to do not appear to be evidence of any anti-competitive agreements between Microsoft and PC Original Equipment Manufacturers ('OEMs'). The Commission understands that there are no contractual obligations on OEMs to sell their PCs with the Windows operating system pre-installed. It is more likely the nature of the market and demand from users that lead OEMs to offer PCs with the Windows operating system pre-installed.

The Commission also notes that certain OEMs offer PCs with a pre-installed Linux operating system.

Therefore, the Commission does not intend, at this stage, to open proceedings regarding the practices you describe.

The Commission would also like to point out that in certain Member States consumers have sought reimbursement for unwanted and unused software licences by judicial means. The Commission draws your attention to an Italian and four French cases that provide precedents on the matter:

http://www.aduc.it/dyn/comunicati/comu_mostra.php?id=197413,

http://www.aful.org/media/document/JugementCRESP-ASUS_06.07.06.pdf,

http://www.aful.org/media/document/jugement-Gutzwiller-Acer-20070723.pdf,

http://www.forumInternet.org/specialistes/veille-juridique/jurisprudence/IMG/pdf/jurpro-lib20080213.pdf, and

http://www.aful.org/media/document/Jugement-Hordoir-ASUS-20080430.pdf

The Commission remains committed to ensuring the full implementation of the Union competition rules within the IT industry.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001483/13
til Kommissionen (Næstformand / Højtstående repræsentant)
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: VP/HR — Midler tildelt Det Palæstinensiske Selvstyre og mulig misbrug heraf af terrorister

Vil den højtstående repræsentant i forlængelse af svaret på spørgsmål E-008732/2012 oplyse, hvor mange penge EU har tildelt Det Palæstinensiske Selvstyre (PNA) siden organisationens etablering i 1994?

Vil den højtstående repræsentant endvidere i detaljer oplyse, hvilke konkrete foranstaltninger der er iværksat for at sikre, at disse midler ikke er havnet i hænderne på individuelle terrorister eller terrororganisationer, herunder Hamas?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Štefan Füle
(16. april 2013)

EU ydede 2 297 mia. EUR i direkte og indirekte økonomisk støtte til Den Palæstinensiske Myndighed mellem 1994 og 2012.

Alle beløb, der er beregnet til lønninger, sociale ydelser såvel som til kontrakter med palæstinensiske organisationer, er underlagt strenge forudgående og efterfølgende kontrolprocedurer, herunder især en målrettet kontrol ved hjælp af en anerkendt database over individer, der anses for at have forbindelse med en hvilken som helst form for terrorisme. Hvis et navn optræder i databasen, slettes det fra listen over støttemodtagere. Denne kontrol udføres i forbindelse med enhver betalingsanmodning. Alle udbetalinger fra PEGASE-mekanismen ([1]), der udgør direkte økonomisk støtte til Den Palæstinensiske Myndighed, skal godkendes af Kommissionen efter endt kontrolprocedure.

I øvrigt henvises det ærede medlem til svar på tidligere skriftlige forespørgsler E-003409/2012, E-008019/2012 og E-010442/2012 ([2]).

([1]) Den palæstinensisk-europæiske mekanisme til forvaltning af socioøkonomisk støtte: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/westbank/eu_westbank/tech_financial_cooperation/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001483/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Funds allocated to the Palestinian National Authority and possible misuse by terrorists

Further to the answer to Question E-008732/2012, will the Vice-President/High Representative say how much money the EU has allocated to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) since it was established in 1994?

Will the Vice-President/High Representative further detail what specific measures are taken to ensure that those funds do not end up in the hands of individual terrorists or terrorist organisations, including Hamas?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

The EU allocated EUR 2.297 billion in direct and indirect financial support to the Palestinian Authority between 1994 and 2012.

All sums intended for salaries, social allocations as well as all contracts for Palestinian organisations are subject to rigorous *ex ante* and *ex post* verification procedures, notably including a specific check against a recognised data base of individuals listed as having a connection with terrorism of any sort. In the event that any such names appear, they are removed from the list of beneficiaries. This exercise is carried out with every payment request. All disbursements from the PEGASE ([1]) mechanism providing direct financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority have to be approved by Commission headquarters following completion of this procedure.

The Honourable Member is also referred to the answer to previous written questions E-003409/2012, E-008019/2012 and E-010442/2012 ([2]).

([1]) Mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/westbank/eu_westbank/tech_financial_cooperation/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001484/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: Opførelse af tyrkiske moskéer på Nordcypern med EU-støtte

På det tyrkisk besatte Nordcypern opføres der angiveligt med EU-støtte moskéer uden synderlig respekt for oprindelige græske monumenter og græsk kulturel egenart ([1]).

Kan Kommissionen bekræfte, at der på Nordcypern opføres tyrkiske moskeer med økonomisk støtte fra EU, og vil Kommissionen i givet fald oplyse omfanget af denne støtte?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Štefan Füle
(12. april 2013)

Kommissionen har ikke ydet nogen finansiering til bygning af nye moskéer på Nordcypern, hverken gennem sit kulturprogram eller gennem sit bistandsprogram for det tyrkisk-cypriotiske samfund.

Gennem bistandsprogrammet har Kommissionen ydet 2 mio. EUR i 2012 til støtte af de aktiviteter, der gennemføres af det tekniske udvalg om kulturarv, som blev oprettet i FN-regi i 2008 af lederne af det græskcypriotiske og det tyrkiskcypriotiske samfund. Gennem bistandsprogrammet har Kommissionen forpligtet sig til fortsat at støtte udvalgets arbejde med yderligere 2 mio. EUR i 2013.

Udvalget har allerede identificeret en liste over 11 monumenter af høj prioritet, som EU vil yde støtte til i form af hastende bevarelsesforanstaltninger. Listen omfatter kirker, moskéer og ikke-religiøse bygninger, og den er en del af en mere omfattende liste på 40 monumenter, som begge ledere er enige om at bevare. Listen er prioriteret efter monumenternes bevaringstilstand og disses behov for, at der gribes hurtigt ind for at undgå yderligere forværring. Projekterne gennemføres af FN's Udviklingsprogram.

([1]) http://www.mfs-theothernews.com/2013/01/the-european-union-donating-money-for.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001484/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Building of Turkish mosques in Northern Cyprus with EU support

In Turkish-occupied Northern Cyprus, mosques are reportedly being built with EU support and with little respect for the original Greek monuments and Greek cultural identity ([1]).

Can the Commission confirm that Turkish mosques are being built in Northern Cyprus with EU financial assistance and, should that be the case, will the Commission say how much financial assistance is being provided?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The Commission has not provided any funding neither through its Culture Programme nor through its Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community for the building of new mosques in the northern part of Cyprus.

Under the Aid Programme, the Commission has provided EUR 2 million in 2012 for the support of activities of the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage set up in 2008 by the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities under UN auspices. Under the 2013 Aid Programme, the Commission is committed to continue supporting the work of the bi-communal committee with a further contribution of EUR 2 million.

The bi-communal Committee has already identified a list of 11 priority monuments for which EU would fund emergency conservation measures. These include churches, mosques and non-religious buildings, and are part of a wider list of 40 monuments agreed by both leaders. They have been prioritised based on their state of conservation and the need for urgent intervention to avoid further deterioration. The projects are implemented by UNDP.

([1]) http://www.mfs-theothernews.com/2013/01/the-european-union-donating-money-for.html

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001485/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2013)

Om: Arbejdsløshedens omfang i Spanien, Portugal og Grækenland

Arbejdsløsheden er i disse år stigende i eurozonen. Det gælder ikke mindst i sydeuropæiske lande som Spanien, Portugal og Grækenland, hvor de seneste tal tyder på, at arbejdsløsheden har nået nye højder. Således er ledighedsfrekvensen i Spanien og Grækenland ifølge IMF nu oppe på 25 % ([1]).

Kan Kommissionen bekræfte, at arbejdsløsheden aldrig har været højere, end det i øjeblikket er tilfældet i Spanien, Portugal og Grækenland?

Kan Kommissionen endvidere bekræfte, at også specielt ungdomsarbejdsløsheden i de pågældende lande er højere end nogensinde før?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(4. april 2013)

Efter tegn på stabilisering ved udgangen af 2012 steg EU's samlede arbejdsløshedsprocent i januar 2013 sammenlignet med december 2012 med 0,1 procentpoint til 10,8 %. Forskellen mellem landene med den højeste og den laveste sats er fortsat høj: 22,1 procentpoint skilte Østrig (4,9 % i januar 2013) og Grækenland (27,0 % i november 2012).

I Grækenlands, Spaniens og Portugals tilfælde, i særdeleshed, blev der registreret historisk høje niveauer ([2]) for den samlede arbejdsløshed i forhold til den erhvervsaktive befolkning (dvs. arbejdsløshedsprocenter):

- Grækenland: 27 % i november 2012 (seneste tilgængelige data)/hidtidige rekord: 12,5 % inovember 1999

- Spanien: 26,2 % i januar 2013/hidtidige rekord: 21,5 % i første halvår af 1994

- Portugal: 17,6 % i januar 2013/hidtidige rekord: 9,4 %, januar-marts 1986.

Denne bemærkning gælder også for ungdomsarbejdsløsheden (arbejdsløshedsprocenter):

- Grækenland: 59,4 % i november 2012 (seneste tilgængelige data)/hidtidige rekord: 31,7 % i maj 1999

- Spanien: 55,5 % i januar 2013/hidtidige rekord: ± 45 % i midten af 1980'erne

- Portugal: 38,6 % i januar 2013/hidtidige rekord: over 20 % i midten af 1980'erne.

Ungdomsarbejdsløshed giver grund til særlig bekymring. 5,7 mio. EU-borgere under 25 var arbejdsløse i januar 2013, hvilket svarer til 23,6 % af de aktive unge. Det er 0,2 procentpoint mere end i den foregående måned.

([1]) http://www.statista.com/statistics/17327/unemployment-in-spain/, http://www.statista.com/statistics/17312/unemployment-rate-in-greece/.
([2]) Kilde: Eurostat & GD EMPL analyse. Se også http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01032013-BP/EN/3-01032013-BP-EN.PDF og http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&langId=en (begge på engelsk).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001485/13
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Scale of unemployment in Spain, Portugal and Greece

Unemployment has been rising in the eurozone in recent years. That is especially true of southern European countries such as Spain, Portugal and Greece, where, according to the latest figures, unemployment has reached a new high. In Spain and Greece, according to the IMF, it now exceeds 25%.

Can the Commission confirm that unemployment has never been higher than it currently is in Spain, Portugal and Greece?

Can the Commission further confirm that, in those countries, youth unemployment in particular has never been higher?

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

After signs of stabilisation at the end of 2012, the total EU unemployment rate increased in January 2013 compared with December 2012, by 0.1 percentage point, to 10.8%. The gap between the countries with the highest and the lowest rates remains high: 22.1 percentage points between Austria (4.9% in January 2013 and Greece (27.0% in November 2012).

In the case of Greece, Spain and Portugal in particular, total unemployment, compared to the active population (i.e. unemployment rates), has indeed recorded historically high levels ([1]):

— Greece: 27% in November 2012 (latest available data)/previous record high: 12.5% in November 1999

— Spain: 26.2% in January 2013/previous record high: 21.5% in 1st semester of 1994

— Portugal: 17.6% in January 2013/previous record high: 9.4% Jan-March 1986

This observation is also valid for youth unemployment (unempl. rates):

— Greece: 59.4% in November 2012 (latest available data)/previous record high: 31.7% in May 1999

— Spain: 55.5% in January 2013/previous record high: +/- 45% in the mid-1980s

— Portugal: 38.6% in January 2013/previous record high: above 20% in the mid-1980s

Youth unemployment is of particular concern. 5.7 million EU citizens aged less than 25 were jobless in January 2013, accounting for 23.6% of the active youth, up by 0.2 percentage point on the previous month.

([1]) *Source:* Eurostat & DG EMPL analysis. See also http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01032013-BP/EN/3-01032013-BP-EN.PDF and http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&langId=en

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001487/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(13. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Datenbankzugang des INTCEN

1. Kann der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst einen Überblick über alle Datenbanken zur Verfügung stellen, zu denen das INTCEN (EU Intelligence Analysis Centre) Zugang hat? Ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

2. Hat das INTCEN Zugang zu allen von Europol eingerichteten Datenbanken, d. h. zu Check the Web, der Datenbank für die technische Analyse von Vorsatzgeräten, DOCIS-Europol, EUVID, ICROS, HTCC, EEODN, KMC, CARIN und EBDS? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

3. Hat das INTCEN Zugang zu den Informations- und Wissenszentren von Europol, der ENFSI Crime Scene Website und zum Informationszentrum für Finanzkriminalität (Financial Crime Information Centre — FCIC)? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

4. Hat das INTCEN Zugang zu Datenbanken in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten? Falls ja, zu welchen? Ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt? Erhält das INTCEN Informationen aus den Datenbanken der EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

5. Hat das INTCEN Zugang zu den Datenbanken von Interpol und Drittstaaten? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt? Erhält das INTCEN Informationen aus den Datenbanken von Interpol und den Datenbanken der Drittstaaten?

6. Hat das INTCEN Zugang zu den Datenbanken der EUMS INT und des EU-Lagezentrums? Ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

7. Kann der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst einen Überblick über alle Datenbanken zur Verfügung stellen, die vom INTCEN eingerichtet wurden?

8. Wann wurden die Datenbanken des INTCEN jeweils eingerichtet und sind sie noch alle aktiv?

9. Welche Arten von Informationen werden von den Datenbanken des INTCEN verarbeitet?

10. Wer hat Zugang zu den INTCEN-Datenbanken?

Um den Verwaltungsaufwand gering zu halten, wurden diese Einzelfragen zusammen als eine Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung eingereicht und nummeriert. Es wird daher darum gebeten, jede einzelne Frage zu beantworten und dabei die entsprechende Nummer anzugeben.

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsident im Namen der Kommission
(4. April 2013)

Unter Berücksichtigung der allgemein anerkannten Definition einer Datenbank (wonach es sich bei einer Datenbank um eine Anwendung zur Verwaltung von Daten und zur raschen Speicherung und Abfrage dieser Daten handelt [1]) wird der Herr Abgeordnete darauf hingewiesen, dass das EU INTCEN — mit Ausnahme des Systems OSIShare — über keine eigenen Datenbanken verfügt und auch keinen Zugang zu Datenbanken Dritter hat, abgesehen von den — etwa im Internet — öffentlich zugänglichen Datenbanken.

OSIShare ist eine interne Webanwendungsplattform zur gemeinsamen Nutzung von Open-Source-Dokumenten und zur Erleichterung der Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Mitarbeitern.

Außerdem stützt sich das EU INTCEN (vormals EU SitCen) seit seiner Einrichtung im Jahr 2001 auf freiwillige Beiträge der Nachrichten- und Sicherheitsdienste der Mitgliedstaaten und wird dies auch künftig tun. Die Dienste der Mitgliedstaaten stellen diese Beiträge über ihre abgeordneten nationalen Sachverständigen bereit, die im EU INTCEN arbeiten.

[1] „A database is an application that manages data and allows fast storage and retrieval of that data" (http://cplus.about.com/od/glossar1/g/databasedefn.htm).

Alle Beiträge werden in einem in sich geschlossenen LAN gespeichert und verarbeitet, das den „SECRET UE"-Anforderungen entspricht. Der Zugang zu diesem LAN ist dem Personal des EU INTCEN vorbehalten. Die Beiträge der Dienste der Mitgliedstaaten stehen je nach den im Einzelfall festgelegten Freigabebedingungen auch den anderen Mitgliedstaaten zur Verfügung.

Die Verfahrensweisen zur Gewinnung und Verbreitung nachrichtendienstlicher Erkenntnisse im Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst (EAD) beruhen auf der Vereinbarung über ein einheitliches Analyseverfahren (SIAC). Diese Vereinbarung dient der Integration der Analysefähigkeiten von EUMS INT und EU INTCEN und ermöglicht bei entsprechender Beschlusslage den Zugang zu den Berichten der anderen Seite. Aufgrund der geltenden Sicherheitsbestimmungen können hier keine näheren Angaben zu den vom EU INTCEN gespeicherten Daten gemacht werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001487/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — INTCEN databases

1. Can the European External Action Service provide an overview of all the databases that INTCEN has access to? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

2. Does INTCEN have access to each of the databases set up by Europol, i.e. Check the Web, Database of technical analysis of skimming devices, DOCIS-Europol, EUVID, ICROS, HTCC, EEODN, KMC, CARIN and EBDS? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

3. Does INTCEN have access to Europol's information and knowledge centres, the ENFSI crime scene website and the Financial Crime Information Centre? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

4. Does INTCEN have access to databases in the EU Member States? If so, to which databases does it have access? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them? Does INTCEN receive information from the EU Member States' databases?

5. Does INTCEN have access to Interpol's and non-EU countries' databases? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them? Does INTCEN receive information from Interpol and non-EU countries' databases?

6. Does INTCEN have access to the EUMS INT and Situation Room databases? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

7. Can the European External Action Service provide an overview of all the databases set up by INTCEN?

8. When was each of INTCEN's databases set up and are all of them still active?

9. What kind of information is handled by each of INTCEN's databases?

10. Who has access to INTCEN's databases?

In order to reduce the administrative burden, these individual questions have been submitted together as a single written question and have each been given a number. I would therefore kindly request that each of the questions be answered, indicating the corresponding number.

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

Having regard to the generally accepted definition of a database ('A database is an application that manages data and allows fast storage and retrieval of that data' ([1])), the Honourable Member is informed that EU INTCEN does — apart from the OSIShare system — not maintain any databases nor does it have access to databases maintained by other parties, apart from publically available databases such as those on websites.

It should be noted that OSIShare is an internally Web-based application platform to share open source documents and improve collaboration among staff.

It should be recalled that since establishment in 2001, the EU INTCEN (previously EU SITCEN) has, in its work, relied on voluntary contributions of Member States intelligence and security services and will continue to do so. Member States services provide these contributions through their seconded national experts working within EU INTCEN.

All contributions are stored and processed within a stand-alone LAN, accredited to Secret UE. Access to this LAN is limited to EU INTCEN personnel. The contributions of Member States services are shared with Member States in accordance with the 'releasability' defined for each product.

([1]) http://cplus.about.com/od/glossar1/g/databasedefn.htm

The Intelligence production and distribution processes within the European External Action Service (EEAS) are carried out within the functional arrangement named 'Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity (SIAC)'. This arrangement integrates the analytical capacities of EUMS INT and EU INTCEN, thus providing access to the reports of each others contributors if so decided. The existing security regulations do not enable us to provide further details on data stored within EU INTCEN.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001488/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(13. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Datenbankzugang des EU-Lagezentrums

1. Kann der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst einen Überblick über alle Datenbanken zur Verfügung stellen, zu denen das EU-Lagezentrum Zugang hat? Ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

2. Hat das EU-Lagezentrum Zugang zu allen von Europol eingerichteten Datenbanken, d. h. zu Check the Web, der Datenbank für die technische Analyse von Vorsatzgeräten, DOCIS-Europol, EUVID, ICROS, HTCC, EEODN, KMC, CARIN und EBDS? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

3. Hat das EU-Lagezentrum Zugang zu den Informations- und Wissenszentren von Europol, der ENFSI Crime Scene Website und zum Informationszentrum für Finanzkriminalität (Financial Crime Information Centre — FCIC)? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

4. Hat das EU-Lagezentrum Zugang zu Datenbanken in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten? Falls ja, zu welchen? Ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt? Erhält das EU-Lagezentrum Informationen aus den Datenbanken der EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

5. Hat das EU-Lagezentrum Zugang zu den Datenbanken von Interpol und Drittstaaten? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt? Erhält das EU-Lagezentrum Informationen aus den Datenbanken von Interpol und den Datenbanken der Drittstaaten?

6. Hat das EU-Lagezentrum Zugang zu den INTCEN-Datenbanken und den Datenbanken der EUMS INT? Ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

7. Kann der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst einen Überblick über alle Datenbanken zur Verfügung stellen, die vom EU-Lagezentrum eingerichtet wurden?

8. Wann wurden die Datenbanken des EU-Lagezentrums jeweils eingerichtet und sind sie noch alle aktiv?

9. Welche Arten von Informationen werden von den Datenbanken des EU-Lagezentrums verarbeitet?

10. Wer hat Zugang zu den Datenbanken des EU-Lagezentrums?

Um den Verwaltungsaufwand gering zu halten, wurden diese Einzelfragen zusammen als eine Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung eingereicht und nummeriert. Es wird daher darum gebeten, jede einzelne Frage zu beantworten und dabei die entsprechende Nummer anzugeben.

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

1. Das EU-Lagezentrum hat Zugang zu den Pay-per-view-Datenbanken, die vom EAD auf dem Markt für Informationen aus offenen Quellen angeschafft wurden (wie z. B. Oxford Analytica, Jane's, Lexis & Nexis usw.).

2., 3., 5. Das EU-Lagezentrum hat keinen Zugang zu diesen Ressourcen.

4. Das EU-Lagezentrum unterhält eine Datenbank der Krisenzentren der EU-Mitgliedstaaten. Diese Ressource basiert auf Beiträgen spezifischer EU-Verwaltungen und enthält vor allem die Organigramme der in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten für die politische Reaktion auf Krisen im Gebiet der EU und in Drittländern zuständigen Behörden.

6. Das EU-Lagerzentrum hat keinen Zugang zu diesen Datenbanken.

7. Alle vom EU-Lagezentrum verwalteten Datenbanken enthalten vor allem Kontaktdaten von Beamten der EU-Institutionen und der Mitgliedstaaten.

8. Die Datenbanken des EU-Lagerzentrums wurden in den Jahren 2011 und 2012 eingerichtet.

9. Bei allen vom EU-Lagezentrum eingerichteten Datenbanken handelt es sich um Verteilerlisten mit den Kontaktdaten von Beamten der EU-Institutionen und der Mitgliedstaaten.

10. Nur das Personal des EU-Lagezentrums hat Zugang zu den Kontakt-Datenbanken. Die Open-Source-Datenbanken sind auch für das übrige EAD-Personal auf der Grundlage von Verträgen mit den jeweiligen Urheberrechtsinhabern zugänglich.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001488/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU Situation Room databases

1. Can the European External Action Service provide an overview of all the databases that the EU Situation Room has access to? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

2. Does the Situation Room have access to each of the databases set up by Europol, i.e. Check the Web, Database of technical analysis of skimming devices, DOCIS-Europol, EUVID, ICROS, HTCC, EEODN, KMC, CARIN and EBDS? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

3. Does the Situation Room have access to Europol's information and knowledge centres, the ENFSI crime scene website and the Financial Crime Information Centre? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

4. Does the Situation Room have access to databases in the EU Member States? If so, to which databases? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them? Does the Situation Room receive information from the EU Member States' databases?

5. Does the Situation Room have access to Interpol's and non-EU countries' databases? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them? Does the Situation Room receive information from Interpol's and non-EU countries' databases?

6. Does the Situation Room have access to the INTCEN and EUMS INT databases? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

7. Can the European External Action Service provide an overview of all the databases set up by the Situation Room?

8. When was each of the databases of the Situation Room set up and are all of them still active?

9. What kind of information is handled by each of the databases of the Situation Room?

10. Who has access to the Situation Room's databases?

In order to reduce the administrative burden, these individual questions have been submitted together as a single written question, and have each been given a number. I would therefore kindly request that each of the questions be answered, indicating the corresponding number.

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

1. The EU Situation Room has access to the same pay-per-view databases purchased by the EEAS on the market of the open source information databases (such as Oxford Analytica, Jane's, Lexis & Nexis etc.).

2, 3, 5. The EU Situation Room does not have access to these resources.

4. The EU SITROOM maintains a contact database of EU Member States Crisis Management Centres. This resource is built on the basis of contribution of specific EU administrations and focuses on the organigramme of EU Member States administrations responsible for the policy response to crises occurring in the EU territory and in third countries.

6. The EU SITROOM does not access any such database.

7. All the databases maintained by the EU Situation Room focus on contact details of officials of EU institutions and of Member States.

8. The EU Situation Room's contact databases were created in 2011-2012.

9. All the databases set up by the EU Situation Room are mailing lists composed of contact details of officials of EU institutions and of Member States.

10. Only the staff of the EU Situation Room has access to the contact databases. The open source databases are accessible by the rest of the EEAS along the lines of specific contracts established with the copyright owners.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001489/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(13. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Datenbankzugang der EUMS INT

1. Kann der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst einen Überblick über alle Datenbanken zur Verfügung stellen, zu denen die Direktion Nachrichtenwesen des Militärstabs der Europäischen Union (EUMS INT) Zugang hat? Hat die EUMS INT beschränkten oder unbeschränkten Zugang zu diesen Datenbanken?

2. Hat die EUMS INT Zugang zu allen von Europol eingerichteten Datenbanken, d. h. zu Check the Web, der Datenbank für die technische Analyse von Vorsatzgeräten, DOCIS-Europol, EUVID, ICROS, HTCC, EEODN, KMC, CARIN und EBDS? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

3. Hat die EUMS INT Zugang zu den Informations- und Wissenszentren von Europol, der ENFSI Crime Scene Website und zum Informationszentrum für Finanzkriminalität (Financial Crime Information Centre — FCIC)? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

4. Hat die EUMS INT Zugang zu den Datenbanken in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten? Falls ja, zu welchen? Ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt? Erhält die EUMS INT Informationen aus den Datenbanken der EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

5. Hat die EUMS INT Zugang zu den Datenbanken von Interpol und Drittstaaten? Falls ja, ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt? Erhält die EUMS INT Informationen aus den Datenbanken von Interpol und den Datenbanken der Drittstaaten?

6. Hat die EUMS INT Zugang zu den INTCEN-Datenbanken und den Datenbanken des EU-Lagezentrums? Ist dieser Zugang beschränkt oder unbeschränkt?

7. Kann der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst einen Überblick über alle Datenbanken zur Verfügung stellen, die von der EUMS INT eingerichtet wurden?

8. Wann wurden die Datenbanken der EUMS INT jeweils eingerichtet und sind sie noch alle aktiv?

9. Welche Arten von Informationen werden von den Datenbanken der EUMS INT verarbeitet?

10. Wer hat Zugang zu den EUMS INT Datenbanken?

Um den Verwaltungsaufwand gering zu halten, wurden diese Einzelfragen zusammen als eine Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung eingereicht und nummeriert. Es wird daher darum gebeten, jede einzelne Frage zu beantworten und dabei die entsprechende Nummer anzugeben.

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

Die Direktion EUMS INT stützt sich seit ihrer Einrichtung im Jahr 2001 auf freiwillige Beiträge der militärischen Nachrichtendienste der Mitgliedstaaten in Form von Aufklärungsberichten (mit Geheimhaltungsgrad bis zu SECRET UE) und wird dies auch künftig tun. Die Nachrichtendienste stellen diese Berichte über ihre abgeordneten nationalen Sachverständigen bereit, die in der EUMS INT arbeiten. Jeder Nachrichtendienst legt für jeden seiner Beiträge die Freigabebedingungen fest.

Alle nachrichtendienstlichen Beiträge werden in einem in sich geschlossenen LAN gespeichert und verarbeitet, das den „SECRET UE"-Anforderungen entspricht. Der Zugang zu diesem LAN ist dem Personal der EUMS INT vorbehalten, das keinen direkten Zugang zu anderen Datenbanken der Mitgliedstaaten und/oder EU-Einrichtungen hat. Die Beiträge der Nachrichtendienste stehen je nach den im Einzelfall festgelegten Freigabebedingungen auch dem Zentrum der Europäischen Union für Informationsgewinnung und -analyse (EU INTCEN) zur Verfügung.

Die Verfahrensweisen zur Gewinnung und Verbreitung nachrichtendienstlicher Erkenntnisse im Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst (EAD) beruhen auf der Vereinbarung über ein einheitliches Analyseverfahren (SIAC). Diese Vereinbarung dient der Integration der Analysefähigkeiten von EUMS INT und EU INTCEN und ermöglicht bei entsprechender Beschlusslage den Zugang zu den Berichten der anderen Seite. Aufgrund der geltenden Sicherheitsbestimmungen können hier keine näheren Angaben zu den von der EUMS INT gespeicherten Daten gemacht werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001489/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EUMS INT databases

1. Can the European External Action Service provide an overview of all the databases that EUMS INT has access to? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

2. Does EUMS INT have access to each of the databases set up by Europol, i.e. Check the Web, Database of technical analysis of skimming devices, DOCIS-Europol, EUVID, ICROS, HTCC, EEODN, KMC, CARIN and EBDS? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

3. Does EUMS INT have access to Europol's information and knowledge centres, the ENFSI crime scene website and the Financial Crime Information Centre? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

4. Does EUMS INT have access to databases in the EU Member States? If so, to which databases? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them? Does EUMS INT receive information from the EU Member States' databases?

5. Does EUMS INT have access to Interpol's and non-EU countries' databases? If so, does it have limited or unlimited access to them? Does EUMS INT receive information from Interpol's and non-EU countries' databases?

6. Does EUMS INT have access to the INTCEN and Situation Room databases? Does it have limited or unlimited access to them?

7. Can the European External Action Service provide an overview of all the databases set up by EUMS INT?

8. When was each of the EUMS INT databases set up and are all of them still active?

9. What kind of information is handled by each of EUMS INT's databases?

10. Who has access to EUMS INT's databases?

In order to reduce the administrative burden, these individual questions have been submitted together as a single written question, and have each been given a number. I would therefore kindly request that each of the questions be answered, indicating the corresponding number.

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

Since establishment in 2001, the EUMS INT in its work has relied on voluntary contribution of Member States (MS) Defence Intelligence Organisations (DIO) in the form of Intelligence reports (up to S UE) and will continue to do so. DIOs provide these reports via their seconded national experts working within EUMS INT. Each DIO defines the releasability of each contribution.

All DIO contributions are stored and processed within a stand-alone LAN, accredited S UE. Access to this LAN is limited to EUMS INT personnel, which does not have direct access to any other database of MSs and/or EU bodies. The contributions of DIOs are shared with the European Union Intelligence Analysis Centre (EU INTCEN) in accordance with the releasability defined for each product.

The Intelligence production and distribution processes within the European External Action Service (EEAS) are carried out within the functional arrangement named Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity (SIAC). This arrangement integrates analytical capacities of EUMS INT and EU INTCEN thus providing access to the reports of each others contributors if they so decide. The existing security regulations do not enable us to provide details on data stored within EUMS INT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001490/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: European aid to North Korea

Could the Commission explain what action will be taken against North Korea since its breach of international non-proliferation? Despite two UN resolutions banning such activities by the regime, Pyongyang has continued to defy international law.

Regardless of this, since 1995 the EU has continued to fund aid programmes in excess of EUR 366 million in the form of food, water, and medical and sanitary assistance.

Whilst I welcome the fact of the EU assisting in projects and initiatives throughout the world, must we not ensure that there are consequences when those we aid disregard international law?

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

The EU condemned in the strongest possible terms the DPRK nuclear test, notably through the HR/VP's Declaration on behalf of the EU of 12 February and Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of 18 February. The EU adopted a set of autonomous measures against DPRK and is supportive of a strong and effective international response (i.e. further robust and effective sanctions); the EU therefore welcomes and supports the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council resolution 2094 on 7 March 2013.

The EU distinguishes between the North Korean people and its regime. The EU does not provide any assistance to the North Korean regime. The EU remains concerned about the plight of the North Korean people and will continue to provide humanitarian assistance in duly justified cases and delivered with appropriate monitoring arrangements.

The EU's assistance to DPRK is in line with relevant Council resolutions which limit EU interventions in DPRK to humanitarian aid. The EU provides assistance under the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development component of the Food Security Thematic Programme. The main objective of these interventions is to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable, especially children, pregnant women, disabled and the elderly.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001491/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Funding for the eradication of polio

In the last two decades, major progress has been made in eradicating polio, a disease which cripples a child for life. An ever-decreasing number of children now contract the disease each year, compared to more than 350 000 children who were infected with polio every year in the 1980s. However, much still remains to be done to completely eradicate polio.

Can the Commission confirm that provisions will be made in the 2014-2020 budget to ensure that the EU can support global polio eradication?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answer given to previous Question E-011670/2012.

Furthermore, the Commission is following the development of global polio eradication efforts attentively and will continue to explore possible synergies between its country level health systems support, its global support to routine immunisation and the ongoing polio eradication efforts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001492/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU-China economic relations

With the growing presence of China as a global economic power and with increased trade between the EU and China, how is the EEAS addressing the situation regarding human rights abuses, lack of freedom of expression and the methods and conditions facing those detained in China?

Is the EU ensuring that China is being held to account and that these matters are not being ignored because of the economic benefits of trade with China?

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

As stated in the Joint Communication of the European Commission and High Representative 'Human Rights and democracy at the heart of EU external action — Towards a more effective approach', adopted on 25 June 2012, the European Union is founded on a shared determination to promote peace and stability and to build a world founded on respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These principles underpin all aspects of the internal and external policies of the European Union. Furthermore, Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union clearly asserts the EU's determination to promote human rights and democracy through all its external actions.

Through the EU strategic framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, also adopted on 25 June 2012, the EU promotes human rights in all areas of its external action without exception. In particular, it integrates the promotion of human rights into trade, investment, technology and telecommunications, Internet, energy, environmental, corporate social responsibility and development policy.

In this context, issues such as those mentioned by the Honourable Member are raised regularly with the Chinese authorities in the framework of the bi-annual human rights dialogues and yearly human rights seminar. The EU continues to address the human rights situation in China in the appropriate UN fora, especially in the Human Rights Council and at the General Assembly. Moreover, because human rights are the 'silver thread' running through all EU policies, human rights concerns are also raised at different levels and in the framework of various contacts with China, as was the case during the 15th EU-China summit.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001493/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Connecting Europe Facility

Having won the backing of the Committees on Transport and Industry for the Connecting Europe Facility, can the Commission say what percentage of the proposed EUR 10 billion will be spent in the UK on infrastructure for the duration of the project?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The amount of EUR 10 billion transferred from the Cohesion fund for use under the rules of the Connecting Europe Facility ([1]) is to be spent exclusively in Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund, and therefore cannot be spent in the United Kingdom.

As for the transport part of the CEF, which is available to all Member States (EUR 21.7 billion in the Commission proposal), projects will be selected through a procedure of annual and multiannual calls for proposals. Therefore, the number of projects to be selected in the United Kingdom and the level of co-financing to be received depends on the quality and maturity of the projects and cannot be known at this stage.

([1]) COM(2011)665.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001494/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Plight of women in India

In recent weeks the issue of the plight of women in India has been brought to the fore, with the death of a student who was gang-raped on a bus in Delhi. Coupled with this are the widespread killings of unborn and infant girls, and the trafficking of females across India. Whilst these practices are illegal, they remain widespread in Indian society.

It is quite clear that there are pressing issues in India concerning rape, illegal abortions and marriage laws.

What pressure is the EU putting on India and similar countries to ensure that this gender issue is corrected?

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

The EU has engaged the Indian authorities and civil society for some time already on violence, discrimination against women and gender issues. The EU approach is based on three principles: promoting gender equality and women's empowerment; combating gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls; and protecting and promoting the rights of children, especially girls.

These topics features prominently, *inter alia*, in the meetings of the regular Human Rights Dialogue between the EU and India, conducted locally with the active participation of the EU Delegation as co-chair.

Gender issues are also mainstreamed into the EU's development cooperation activities, which have a strong focus on women and girls' welfare; numerous EU projects have assisted civil society organisations in addressing discrimination against girls and violence against women, including trafficking and child marriage, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. Such activities, open to the participation of both EU and local NGOs, are carried out in close cooperation with the local authorities. The EU also expanded its outreach through channels such as the EU Film Festival which is dedicated to women in 2013.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001495/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Zamierzone zabójstwa i porzucanie ciał w Beludżystanie

W Beludżystanie ma miejsce ludobójstwo – tysiące ludzi giną tam w wyniku zamierzonych zabójstw, a ich ciała są porzucane.

1. Co robi UE, aby chronić niewinnych ludzi w Beludżystanie?

2. Czy UE nie powinna poruszyć kwestii praw człowieka w rozmowach z władzami Pakistanu?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001501/13
do Komisji
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Sytuacja w Beludżystanie

W Beludżystanie znajdują się główne złoża ropy naftowej, gazu ziemnego i surowców naturalnych Pakistanu.

1. Czy UE jest świadoma, że niedawno, w okresie Bożego Narodzenia, z rąk armii pakistańskiej w Pendżabie zginęło 50 osób cywilnych?

2. Dlaczego UE nie wystosowała żadnych ostrzeżeń ani oświadczeń w sprawie bezpieczeństwa mieszkańców Beludżystanu?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(24 kwietnia 2013 r.)

UE nie posiada informacji na temat incydentu w Pendżabie, do którego odnosi się Szanowny Pan Poseł. UE jest świadoma dramatycznej sytuacji związanej z wymuszonymi zaginięciami w Beludżystanie oraz innych częściach Pakistanu. UE nie może bezpośrednio interweniować w wewnętrzne sprawy kraju partnerskiego, może jednak wyrazić zaniepokojenie zniszczeniami, jakie klimat przemocy i zastraszania wyrządza ogólnemu rozwojowi kraju oraz zaoferować podzielenie się swymi doświadczeniami w rozwiązywaniu kwestii politycznych poprzez dialog.

UE prowadzi regularny dialog z Pakistanem na temat praw człowieka i zasad demokratycznych, obejmujący również kwestie praw obywatelskich i politycznych. UE wezwała władze pakistańskie najwyższego szczebla do przyjęcia środków w celu ochrony praw obywateli Pakistanu zgodnie z międzynarodowymi normami i konwencjami praw człowieka, w tym do podpisania i ratyfikacji konwencji w sprawie wymuszonych zaginięć. UE konsekwentnie wzywa rząd Pakistanu do zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa wszystkich społeczności w kraju.

Równocześnie UE wspiera projekty mające na celu poprawę dostępu do wymiaru sprawiedliwości oraz skuteczniejsze egzekwowanie prawa w Pakistanie, zwłaszcza przez policję i prokuraturę. Jeśli chodzi o prawa człowieka, Komisja Europejska udziela także dotacji lokalnym organizacjom pozarządowym w Pakistanie działającym w zakresie praw człowieka i demokratyzacji w ramach Europejskiego Instrumentu na rzecz Wspierania Demokracji i Praw Człowieka.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001495/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — 'Kill and dump' policy in Baluchistan

Genocide is taking place in Baluchistan, where thousands of people have disappeared under the 'kill and dump' policy.

1. What is the EU doing to protect innocent people in Baluchistan?

2. Should the EU not take up the issue of human rights in Baluchistan with the Pakistani authorities?

Question for written answer E-001501/13
to the Commission
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Balochistan

Balochistan is the hub of the oil, natural gas and natural resources of Pakistan.

1. Is the EU aware of the recent killings of 50 civilians by the Pakistan army in Punjab during the Christmas period?

2. Why has the EU not issued any warnings or statements regarding the safety of the people of Balochistan?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The EU is not aware of the incident in the Punjab to which the Honourable Member refers.

The EU is aware of the appalling situation of enforced disappearances in Balochistan and elsewhere in Pakistan. Although the EU cannot directly intervene in the internal affairs of a partner country, it can convey its concern at the damage a climate of violence and intimidation does to a country's overall development, and offer to share its experience in solving political issues through dialogue.

The EU engages in regular dialogue with Pakistan on human rights and democratic principles, including civil and political rights. The EU has called on the Pakistani authorities, at the highest level, to adopt measures to protect the rights of Pakistani citizens in line with international human rights standards and conventions, including signing and ratifying the Convention on Enforced Disappearances. The EU has consistently urged the Government of Pakistan to assure the security of all communities in the country.

At the same time the EU is supporting projects which are intended to improve access to justice and also to improve the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan, not least with the police and prosecution services. In addition, concerning human rights, the European Commission provides grants to local NGOs in Pakistan in the field of human rights and democratisation, within the framework of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001496/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Środki finansowe UE w Pakistanie

W ubiegłym roku (2012) UE przeznaczyła na rzecz Pakistanu miliardowe kwoty. Pomimo to obywatele Pakistanu nadal zapadają na polio i inne śmiertelne choroby.

Czy wynika to z tego, że te środki finansowe nie trafiają do właściwych odbiorców lub nie są prawidłowo wydawane?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(3 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Odnośnie do poziomu dofinansowania dla Pakistanu, płatności z instrumentu finansowania współpracy na rzecz rozwoju przeznaczone na działania w Pakistanie wyniosły 27,5 mln EUR w 2012 r. Ponadto UE udzieliła pomocy humanitarnej w wysokości 70 mln EUR w 2012 r., by zareagować na bezpośrednie skutki katastrof w tym kraju.

Co do kwestii zwalczania choroby Heinego-Medina i innych chorób w Pakistanie, Komisja odsyła Szanownego Pana Posła do punktu 1 odpowiedzi na pisemne zapytanie E-010575/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001496/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU funding in Pakistan

EU funding to Pakistan amounted to billions of euros over the last year (2012). Despite this, Pakistani citizens continue to fall victim to polio and other deadly diseases.

Is it the case that these funds are not reaching the right recipients or are not being spent correctly?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

Concerning the level of funding to Pakistan, the payments from the Development Cooperation Instrument in favour of actions in Pakistan amounted to EUR 27.5 million in 2012. Additionally, the EU provided humanitarian aid of EUR 70 million in 2012 in order to respond to the immediate effects of disasters in the country.

Concerning the fight against polio and other diseases in Pakistan, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to point 1 of the answer to Written Question E-010575/2012 ([1]).

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001497/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Środki finansowe UE w Pakistanie II

W 2012 r. w Pakistanie doszło do szeregu zabójstw pracowników krajowych i zagranicznych organizacji dobroczynnych, którzy uczestniczyli w projektach finansowanych bezpośrednio przez UE.

1. Czy UE uważa, że zabójstwa te są związane z faktem, iż bezpośrednio finansuje ona te projekty, zważywszy, że nie ma ofiar w przypadku projektów finansowanych przez rząd Pakistanu?

2. Czy jest możliwe, że za tymi zamachami stoi rząd Pakistanu, chcący doprowadzić do tego, by środki finansowe były przekazywane za jego pośrednictwem, a nie bezpośrednio do organizacji pozarządowych?

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

UE zdecydowanie potępia nieuzasadnione ataki, które zagrażają światowej walce z polio i dotykają przede wszystkim społeczeństwa najbardziej poszkodowanych krajów. Większość ostatnich zabójstw pracowników organizacji humanitarnych związana jest z finansowaną z różnych źródeł kampanią na rzecz likwidacji polio prowadzoną przez rząd Pakistanu.

Nie ma dowodów na powiązania rządu Pakistanu z atakami na pracowników agencji humanitarnych. W niektórych przypadkach przyczyną ataków była wrogość w stosunku do organizacji prowadzącej kampanię, reprezentującej wartości zachodniej i chrześcijańskiej kultury; w innych natomiast miały one raczej przestępcze, a nie polityczne podstawy – mianowicie pozyskanie pieniędzy z okupu.

W ramach dialogu politycznego z rządem Pakistanu UE podjęła zagadnienia dotyczące bezpieczeństwa i – oprócz ciągłego wsparcia UE na rzecz rozwoju edukacji w Pakistanie, w tym w zakresie tolerancji w odniesieniu do innych religii – zapewnia odpowiednią pomoc ukierunkowaną na wzmocnienie praworządności.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001497/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU funding in Pakistan II

In 2012 Pakistan witnessed several killings of domestic and foreign charity workers who were involved in projects which are directly funded through the EU.

1. Does the EU think these killings are due to the fact that it is directly funding these projects, since projects funded through the Pakistani Government result in no victims?

2. Is it possible that the Pakistani Government is behind these attacks, in order for the funding to be routed through it and not directly to the NGOs concerned?

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

The EU utterly condemns these senseless attacks that undermine the global fight against polio and impact particularly on the people in those worst-affected countries. The majority of recent killings of aid workers in Pakistan are linked to the polio eradication campaign conducted by the Government of Pakistan with funding from different sources.

There is no evidence of involvement by the Government of Pakistan in attacks on aid workers. In some cases, hostility to the western and Christian affiliation of the implementing organisation may have been the cause but in others, the cause may well have been criminal rather than political intent, in order to raise ransom money.

The EU has taken up the security issue in political dialogue with the Pakistani Government, and is providing support to strengthen the rule of law in addition to continued EU support for education in Pakistan — including tolerance of other religions.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001498/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Misja rozpoznawcza w Pakistanie

W Gilgit-Baltistanie, regionie, którego większą część jest okupowana przez Pakistan, doszło niedawno do szeregu zmian.

1. Czy Komisja może powiedzieć, dlaczego nie odbyła się żadna wizyta w tym regionie?

2. Mieszkańcy Gilgit-Baltistanu padają ofiarą przemocy o podłożu wyznaniowym. Dlaczego UE nie wystosowała ostrzeżeń, ani nie zorganizowała misji rozpoznawczych w tym regionie?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001500/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Sytuacja w Gilgit-Baltistanie

Terroryzm stanowi problem w Pakistanie. Czy UE jest świadoma, że organizacje terrorystyczne przenoszą swoje bazy z głównej części terytorium Pakistanu do Gilgit-Baltistanu?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(9 kwietnia 2013 r.)

UE jest świadoma nasilenia się przemocy o podłożu wyznaniowym w Gilgit-Baltistanie, podobnie jak w wielu innych częściach Pakistanu. Ostatnia wizyta przedstawicieli delegatury UE w Pakistanie w regionie Gilgit-Baltistanu miała miejsce w 2011 r.

UE wyraziła swoje zaniepokojenie tym, jak bardzo ekstremizm i akty terroryzmu szkodą rozwojowi kraju. Unia stale zachęca swoich partnerów do dokładania wszelkich starań, by sprawcy przemocy byli pociągani do odpowiedzialności. UE prowadzi już regularny dialog z Pakistanem i wezwała władze tego kraju do przyjęcia środków zapewniających fizyczne bezpieczeństwo i ochronę praw wszystkich obywateli Pakistanu zgodnie z międzynarodowymi normami i konwencjami dotyczącymi praw człowieka.

Równocześnie UE wspiera projekty mające na celu poprawę dostępu do wymiaru sprawiedliwości oraz skuteczniejsze egzekwowanie prawa w Pakistanie, zwłaszcza przez policję i prokuraturę. Po przyjęciu w czerwcu 2012 r. przez Radę do Spraw Zagranicznych unijnej strategii dla Pakistanu dotyczącej zwalczania terroryzmu i bezpieczeństwa oczekuje się, że działania UE wspierające bezpieczeństwo i zwalczanie terroryzmu w Pakistanie zostaną zintensyfikowane.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001498/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Fact-finding mission in Pakistan

Gilgit-Baltistan, a region which is predominantly occupied by Pakistan, has recently undergone a series of changes.

1. Can the Commission say why there has been no visit to the area?

2. The people of Gilgit-Baltistan are victims of sectarian violence. Why has the EU not issued any warnings or conducted any fact-finding missions in the area?

Question for written answer E-001500/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Gilgit-Baltistan

Terrorism has been a problem in Pakistan. Is the EU aware that terrorist organisations are shifting base from mainland Pakistan to Gilgit Baltistan?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The EU is aware of a rise in terrorist sectarian violence affecting Gilgit Baltistan as is the case in many other parts of Pakistan. The last visit by the EU Delegation in Pakistan to Gilgit Baltistan was in 2011.

The EU has conveyed its concern at the damage caused by extremism and incidents of terrorism do to a country's development. It consistently encourages its partners to ensure that perpetrators of violence are held to account. The EU already engages in regular dialogue with Pakistan and has called on the Pakistani authorities to adopt measures to the ensure the physical security and protect the rights of all Pakistani citizens in line with international human rights standards and conventions.

At the same time the EU is supporting projects which are intended to improve access to justice and also to improve the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan, not least with the police and prosecution services. After the adoption of the EU counter terrorism /Security Strategy for Pakistan by the June 2012 Foreign Affairs Council, it is expected that EU activities in support of security and counter-terrorism in Pakistan will be reinforced.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001499/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – ukierunkowane zabójstwa w Pakistanie

Ukierunkowane zabójstwa stały się dla rządu Pakistanu głównym sposobem eliminowania opozycji.

Czy Unia Europejska jest świadoma problemów istniejących pomiędzy szyitami i sunnitami w Pakistanie? Jakie kroki podjęła w celu ich rozwiązania?

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

Unia Europejska jest świadoma rosnącej przemocy na tle wyznaniowym w Pakistanie i wspiera władze Pakistanu, jeśli chodzi o utrzymanie praworządności i ochronę praw człowieka. UE zdecydowanie potępia wszelkie akty przemocy, w tym przemocy na tle religijnym i przemocy wobec mniejszości.

UE już teraz prowadzi regularny dialog z Pakistanem i wezwała władze Pakistanu do przyjęcia środków w celu zapewnienia fizycznego bezpieczeństwa i ochrony praw wszystkich obywateli Pakistanu. Po przyjęciu planu zaangażowania UE-Pakistan prowadzony dotychczas dialog zostanie rozszerzony o regularne dialogi sektorowe na temat bezpieczeństwa, w tym zwalczania terroryzmu, a także ochrony praw człowieka. Oczekuje się, że elementem tego dialogu będzie zwalczanie brutalnego ekstremizmu.

Równocześnie UE wspiera projekty mające na celu poprawę dostępu do wymiaru sprawiedliwości oraz skuteczniejsze egzekwowanie prawa w Pakistanie, zwłaszcza przez policję i prokuraturę. Po przyjęciu w czerwcu 2012 r. przez Radę do Spraw Zagranicznych unijnej strategii dla Pakistanu dotyczącej zwalczania terroryzmu i bezpieczeństwa oczekuje się, że działania UE wspierające bezpieczeństwo i zwalczanie terroryzmu w Pakistanie zostaną zintensyfikowane.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001499/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Target killings in Pakistan

Target killing has become a means of eliminating those who oppose Pakistan's government.

Is the EU aware of the problems existing between Shia and Sunni Muslims in Pakistan? What steps has it taken with a view to remedying these problems?

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

The EU is aware of growing sectarian violence in Pakistan, and supports the Pakistani authorities in upholding the rule of law and human rights. The EU strongly condemns all acts of violence, including sectarian violence and violence against minorities.

The EU already engages in regular dialogue with Pakistan and has called on the Pakistani authorities to adopt measures to the ensure the physical security and protect the rights of all Pakistani citizens. Following adoption of the EU-Pakistan Engagement Plan, the existing dialogue will be enhanced by regular sector dialogues on security, including counter-terrorism, as well as human rights. Countering violent extremism is expected to be part of the dialogue.

At the same time the EU is supporting projects which are intended to improve access to justice and also to improve the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan, not least with the police and prosecution services. After the adoption of the EU CT/Security Strategy for Pakistan by the June 2012 Foreign Affairs Council, it is expected that EU activities in support of security and counter-terrorism in Pakistan will be reinforced.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001502/13
do Komisji
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Odra w Pakistanie

UE kieruje do Pakistanu środki finansowe na walkę z chorobami śmiertelnymi. Światowa Organizacja Zdrowia doniosła niedawno, że w Pakistanie setki dzieci zmarły na odrę.

Dlaczego przedstawicieli rządu Pakistanu nie pociągnięto do odpowiedzialności?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Kristalinę Georgijewą w imieniu Komisji
(8 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Niedożywienie, ubóstwo i brak szczepień to główne czynniki przyczyniające się do śmierci osób chorych na odrę. Dane z różnych oficjalnych źródeł i badań wskazują, iż obecna epidemia odry w różnych częściach Pakistanu jest spowodowana niewystarczającym zasięgiem rutynowych szczepień. Pakistan otrzymał środki finansowe z Rozszerzonego Programu Szczepień. Zgodnie z wnioskami z badania standardów społecznych i poziomu życia w Pakistanie w latach 2010-2011 (*Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement*), zasięg rutynowych szczepień w tym kraju nie odpowiada optymalnemu wskaźnikowi takich szczepień, który ma utrzymywać się na poziomie powyżej 80 %. Obecnie wskaźnik ten w Pakistanie wynosi prawie 65 %, jedynie kilka miast, takich jak Pendżab, osiąga lepsze wyniki.

Federalny rzecznik praw obywatelskich powołał komitet do zbadania zarzutów niewłaściwego administrowania, które spowodować miało szereg ognisk choroby i wysoki współczynnik umieralności na odrę na terenie Pakistanu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001502/13
to the Commission
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Measles in Pakistan

The EU has been providing funding for Pakistan's efforts to tackle deadly diseases. The WHO recently reported that hundreds of children had died from measles in Pakistan.

Why have no Pakistani government officials been held accountable for this?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

Malnourishment, poverty and non-vaccination are key contributing factors to deaths from measles. Figures collected from various official sources and surveys point to the fact that the current outbreak of measles in different parts of Pakistan results from insufficient rates of routine immunization coverage. Pakistan has received funding for an Expanded Program of Immunization (EPI). According to the survey of Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (2010-2011) Pakistan's routine immunization coverage does not meet the optimal routine immunization rate of more than 80%. Pakistan's routine immunization coverage is close to 65% with only some cities of Punjab recording a better performance.

The Federal Ombudsman has put in place a committee to examine the issue of alleged maladministration that has resulted in the number of outbreaks and high levels of mortality due to measles across the country.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001503/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU funding to war-torn Mali

With the rise in violence in Mali and the presence of armed groups there, including those with links to al-Qaeda who took control of northern Mali in April 2012, it is clear that urgent action must be taken by the international community to find a peaceful resolution to this conflict.

As the EU already provides funding through the European Development Fund, will it be providing logistical, military, technical or financial support to the African Union troops currently stationed in Mali? What else is the EU prepared to do to ensure that peace can be restored in the region?

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

In line with the International Support and Follow-up Group on the situation in Mali, which it hosted in Brussels on 5 February and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the EU is participating in the efforts of the international community to achieve stability and security in Mali. In this respect:

— the EU has given its political support to the French operation 'Serval' and to the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) and reaffirmed its commitment to the fight against the threat of terrorism. It is providing financial and logistical support for AFISMA by releasing EUR 50 million for the Peace Facility;

— further to its increased humanitarian assistance in Mali and bordering countries, the EU supports the deployment of human rights monitors by the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) and the United Nations and states that perpetrators of human rights abuses must be held accountable for their actions;

— the EU supports the process of stabilisation and reconstruction in Mali. Its EUTM ([1]) mission provides training for the Malian defence and security forces. The EU agrees to provide emergency relief focusing in particular on the redeployment of the administration in the north, strengthening the antiterrorist forces, and promoting dialogue/reconciliation efforts (EUR 20 million package under the Stability Instrument). The EU will support the elections. It has committed to a gradual relaunch of its budgetary and sectoral aid on the basis of the Transition's progress.

([1]) EUTM = European Union Training Mission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001504/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Assistance to Burma

Myanmar (Burma) has made significant steps in the past several years towards transition from authoritarian rule to a quasi-civilian government. Whilst there is still much to be done, major progress has been made in pursuing social and economic development.

What assistance does the EU provide to Myanmar? Additionally, with the recent escalation in violence in Kashin Province, will the EEAS be raising this with ASEAN as a means of resolving the conflict?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

In line with the opening up of the country, EU development cooperation has more than doubled in value and expanded its scope. In February 2012, the Member of the Commission responsible for development announced a package of EUR 150 million for 2012 and 2013 to support the country's inclusive development plans. These funds build upon existing support to the MDG ([1]) in the social sectors of health, education and livelihoods, while also helping to improve the government's capacity to advance its reforms. Capacity building activities are initially focusing on improving statistics, planning, environment policy and the reinstatement of the GSP ([2]). Further support to trade is being committed, as is a substantial package of assistance to support progress in the ethnic peace process, including support to those who have been internally displaced.

In addition, the EU is reinforcing its support to civil society organisations so that they are able to play their role effectively in the political and economic transition. The EU already provides support to the Myanmar Human Rights Commission, as well as assistance for democratic institutions and for electoral reform. The EU's ongoing development assistance portfolio in Myanmar amounts to over EUR 200 million.

In addition, via its Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department, the Commission funds relief programmes (the Honourable Member will find the details in the annex).

Concerning the situation in Kachin, the EU raises the issue in all bilateral meetings with Myanmar (Burma), including during the recent visit by President U Thein Sein to Brussels. Ethnic conflicts and the need for national reconciliation in Myanmar are also discussed with ASEAN, notably at the EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in April 2012.

([1]) Millennium Development Goals.
([2]) Generalised Scheme of Preferences.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001505/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Crisis in Syria

Given that the civil war in Syria has been going on for more than 22 months and that neither side looks close to defeat, death and destruction look set to continue in Syria.

In recent weeks, Assad has attempted to regionalise the conflict by sending weapons into Lebanon. These attempts to destabilise the region have been met with hostility by Israel, which recently bombed a Syrian weapons facility that had been arming Hezbollah militants.

What is the EEAS doing to facilitate talks in Syria, where 60 000 people have been killed and countless lives destroyed?

What is being done to stop the transfer of weapons to Islamist militants in Lebanon?

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

The EU welcomes all efforts to bring a peaceful solution to the violence in Syria. The EU continues to believe that the key to the solution of the conflict lies in facilitating the Syrian led political process. In this context, the EU reiterates its full support to the Joint Special Representative of the UN and the League of Arab States, Lakhdar Brahimi to promote a credible and effective political solution with those genuinely committed to the transition.

The EU urges all countries active in promoting a solution to the crisis to support these efforts. This process should be based on the principles included in the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012 and on the UNSC resolution 2042. The EU commends the proposals made by Brahimi in his briefing to the UN Security Council on 29 January 2013, and strongly calls on all members of the UNSC to uphold their responsibilities regarding the crisis in Syria.

The EU commends the initiative made by the President of the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces, Moaz al-Khatib, of a political dialogue, bearing in mind the necessary conditions that would lead to a peaceful transition towards a future without Assad. In the face of the ever deteriorating conflict and growing human suffering, the EU calls on the representatives of the Syrian regime not to miss this opportunity and respond positively to the offer of political dialogue. The EU encourages the Coalition to continue to engage with the UN/LAS Special Representative and confirms its readiness to assist the necessary dialogue process, in any way possible.

The EU is worried about the spill-over of the conflict, in various forms, to the neighbouring countries. The EU calls on all parties to refrain from entering territories of neighbouring countries in respect of their sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as to refrain from any cross-border military and other actions that may endanger regional stability. The EU is calling for the respect of Lebanon's disassociation policy by all actors.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001506/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: French intervention in Mali

With the swift recapture of many Malian towns by French forces, it is now the correct time to discuss the security and humanitarian situation in Mali. There has been a rapîd escalation of the situation, from an initial French intervention to an EU mission with numerous Member States assisting militarily and financially.

1. What role do the EU institutions, and specifically the EEAS, have in this campaign?

2. When will African Union forces take over from French forces?

3. What is the EEAS doing to ensure that reprisals do not occur in the form of attacks on the ethnic Tuaregs who have been affiliated to the al-Qaeda-linked rebels?

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

The EU is not directly involved in the French operations in Mali. The Foreign Affairs Council of 18 February 2013 nevertheless offered its political support to both the French Operation Serval and the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). It also reaffirmed its commitment to combating the threat of terrorism. Moreover, parallel to the action of its Member States, whether directly involved in France's operational plan or indirectly involved via logistical support for the African operation, the EU is assisting by providing financial and logistical support for AFISMA (EUR 50 million) and making experts available. On 12 February 2013, the EU launched the EUTM mission ([1]) to train the Malian defence and security forces and reinforced the Bamako liaison office for the EUCAP SAHEL Niger mission. Regarding the humanitarian situation, the EU has repeatedly increased the humanitarian aid granted to affected populations in Mali and surrounding countries. The total aid granted has now reached EUR 115 million (EUR 73 million in 2012 and EUR 42 million since the start of 2013).

France has indicated that it will start to scale down its presence in April 2013, in parallel to the growing involvement of AFISMA (ongoing) which is likely to operate under the auspices of a UN stabilisation mission in future (discussion ongoing within the context of the next UN resolution).

The EU is keen for the process of improving security in the north to be accompanied by a political process of national reconciliation. It has declared that it will remain vigilant with respect to compliance with the rule of law and the law of armed conflict, *inter alia* as this relates to the treatment of members of terrorist groups and specific communities, particularly in northern Mali. The EU supports human rights monitors being deployed (AU, Ecowas, UN) and agrees that perpetrators of human rights abuses must be held accountable for their actions.

([1]) EUTM = European Union Training Mission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001507/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Unemployment across Europe

In December 2012, Eurostat estimated that unemployment in the EU-27 stood at a total of 25 926 000.

While I recognise that these are hard financial time for all Member States, with many having unprecedented levels of unemployment, what is the EU doing centrally to encourage the growth of entrepreneurship and enterprise through SMEs?

Additionally, there has been much talk of a generational detachment because of youth unemployment. Is the EU providing or encouraging schemes which enable under-25s to begin on the career ladder across Europe?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The Commission recognises the importance of SMEs for the European economy. This issue is being systematically tackled by various initiatives reflecting the diverse nature of difficulties faced by the heterogeneous group of SMEs. In particular, the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan ([1]), adopted on 9 January 2013, is a blueprint for decisive joint action at all levels, from European to local. The Plan is based on three pillars of entrepreneurship education, creation of an environment where entrepreneurs can flourish and grow, and reaching out to specific groups.

A focus on access to finance is reflected by the Progress Microfinance ([2]) established in 2010 and facilitating access to financing. This instrument shall continue as a part of the Programme for Social Change and Innovation ([3]) in the period 2014-2020.

On 5 December 2012, the Commission adopted a Youth Employment Package (YEP) ([4]), which includes a proposal for a Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee. The Council reached agreement on this recommendation on 28 February 2013. It aims to ensure that all young people under 25 receive a good quality offer of a job, further education, a traineeship or an apprenticeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed.

The YEP also announced the launch of a European Alliance for Apprenticeships, and a consultation of Social Partners on a Quality Framework for Traineeships.

The implementation of the YEP will be supported by the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), proposed by the European Council of 7-8 February. The YEI earmarks EUR 6 billion for 2014-2020 to all regions with levels of youth unemployment above 25%.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0795:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=836&langId=en.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1093.
([4]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final of 5 December 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001508/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Freedom of religion

Since the beginning of the Arab Spring, there has been an increase in violence towards religious minorities. Does the Comission not agree that regardless of one's religion, all citizens should be treated as equals? As this is currently not happening in all the countries affected by the Arab Spring, what is the Commission prepared to do to ensure that religious freedom is upheld?

Various religious minorities claim that violence against minorities has become endemic since the outbreak of the Arab Spring 18 months ago. In Tunisia, for example, non-Muslims are only allowed to gather in predetermined locations.

The EU must ensure that its neighbours do not abuse their power and when universal human rights are endangered that those responsible will be held to account. Freedom of religion and expression are of crucial importance for newly emerging democracies.

What role does the EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights play in ensuring tolerance and peace in difficult times?

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

Freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) is a priority under EU's human rights policy. States have a primary duty to protect all individuals living in their territory, citizens or non-citizens alike, including non-believers or persons belonging to minorities, and treat them without discrimination on the basis of their religion or belief. States should condemn all acts of violence and bring perpetrators to justice.

Defending such universal principles, the EU has been using the full range of its diplomatic and cooperation instruments, notably on a bilateral basis. The EU has stepped up its bilateral dialogues with the ENP countries, at all levels, with a strong focus on mutual political accountability, in order to advance towards higher standards of democracy. As recalled by the HR/VP in her 19 July 2012 remarks following her meeting with the Egyptian president, such 'deep democracy' is about 'building institutions and ensuring people's rights — freedom of expression, freedom of religion and respect for minorities'.

On the HR/VP proposal, the elaboration of new public Guidelines on FoRB has been agreed by the Foreign Affairs Council, within the framework of the action plan adopted on 25 June 2012, alongside the EU Strategic Framework on Democracy and Human Rights. These guidelines, which will contain clearly defined priorities and tools for the promotion of FoRB worlwide, should be adopted in the coming months.

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) supports projects fighting discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, a dedicated call for proposals worth 5 MEUR is scheduled for June 2013. FoRB was one of the focus themes of April 2013 EIDHR forum on strengthening EU and civil society operational partnership on the ground.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001509/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment

Given the dramatic rise in youth unemployment throughout Member States in recent years, it is clear that steps need to be taken to ensure that a generation of talented young people is not lost to the effects of the economic depression.

How does the Commission plan to support individuals and groups working with young people during the next funding period (2014-2020)?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

1. The proposed ESF Regulation for the next programming period 2014-2020 includes a dedicated ESF investment priority targeting the sustainable labour market integration of young people not in employment, education or training ('NEETs'). Member States facing high youth unemployment rates are expected to focus their Partnership Agreements and Operational Programmes for the period 2014-2020 on actions to facilitate school-to-work transitions and the possibility to introduce Youth Guarantee schemes, following the political agreement on the Council recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee on 28 February 2013.

Furthermore, the European Council of 7-8 February 2013 decided to create a Youth Employment Initiative (YEI). It will earmark EUR 6 billion funding from the ESF and a dedicated YEI budget line in order to enhance ESF interventions and ensure targeted actions to support youth. These will be based on the measures set out in the Youth Emplyoment Package and in particular the Youth Guarantee and will be open to all regions with levels of youth unemployment above 25%.

2. Moreover the Commission has proposed for the period 2014-2020 a draft regulation to establish the 'Erasmus for All' programme, aimed at helping young people to increase their personal development, gain new competences and boost their job prospects. This new programme would significantly increase the funds for the development of knowledge and skills of young people currently allocated through the Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action programmes. It will directly target young people themselves, notably through learning mobility activities, and will also support activities for those who work with young people, be it in formal or in non-formal learning.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001510/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Hercule II (2007-2013)

Could OLAF provide information as to what percentage of funding under the EU's Hercule II programme is spent on anti-fraud measures in the UK, and specifically in Northern Ireland?

Additionally, could OLAF provide information relating to which administrations, institutes and non-profit bodies have been awarded funding in the UK?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

1. The UK received around 3.5% of the Hercule II budget (EUR 3.5 million out of EUR 98.5 million), which was mostly spent on contracts concluded between the Commission and companies or institutions located in the UK for the provision of IT-support. OLAF doesn't possess further details as regards the specifics funding from Hercule II to Northern Ireland.

The IT-support consists of (access to) databases containing information on e.g. ship movements or company data. The information in these databases is made available to national and regional authorities in the Member States that strengthen the protection of the financial interests of the Union, e.g. customs, police forces. The Commission also concluded a contract with a laboratory in Scotland that carries out analyses on samples of tobacco and cigarettes from seizures made by customs in the Member States. These analyses allow customs to determine the origin and/or manufacturer of the tobacco/cigarettes and contribute to feeding a database with information on origin, trade and composition of tobacco and cigarettes. The technical assistance received by the UK was mostly spent on the purchase of X-Ray scanners used in the fight against cigarette smuggling.

		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
Grants: Technical Assistance	EUR		32	62				94
	Actions		2	1				3
Grants: Training	EUR				13	11		24
	Actions				2	2		4
Grants: Legal Training	EUR			37			56	93
	Actions			1			1	2
Procurement: IT-support	EUR	227	469	513	816	679	502	3206
	Actions	2	2	5	3	5	4	21
Total	EUR	227	501	611	830	690	558	3417
	Actions	2	4	7	5	7	5	30

Number and amounts of actions (in 1 000 EUR) supported in the UK under the Hercule II programme.

2. This information can be retrieved by the Honourable Member from the Commission Financial Transparency System: http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/beneficiaries_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001511/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Humanitarian aid

The EU is recognised as the world's leading provider of humanitarian aid, which takes the form of financing, the provision of goods, services and technical assistance.

1. Could the Commission provide details about how much is spent annually by the EU on humanitarian aid?

2. Have there been any cases in which the EU has withheld humanitarian aid from countries that have violated human rights and international law? How have such cases been resolved?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

1. The table in the annex, which is sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat, shows the expenditure (commitments appropriations) for humanitarian aid for the period 1993-2012.

In 2012, the total humanitarian aid provided by the Commission amounted to EUR 1.31 billion. This comprised of: EUR 843 million from the humanitarian aid chapter of the EU budget, EUR 250 million from unspent funds within Heading 4 and from the European Development Fund (EDF), and EUR 224 million from the EU's Emergency Aid Reserve, which can be drawn upon in exceptional cases where significant new needs arise that cannot be met from the regular humanitarian aid budget.

2. The objective of EU humanitarian aid is to provide assistance relief and protection to victims of natural and man-made disasters in third countries to meet the needs arising thereof. EU humanitarian aid is provided solely on the basis of the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence and is not subject to political considerations. EU humanitarian aid is implemented through partners (Red Cross Movement, United Nations and non-governmental organisations) and provided to the victims of humanitarian crises. EU humanitarian aid is not channelled through governments.

The EU does therefore not suspend humanitarian aid operations in countries which violate human rights or international law. The EU can, however, decide to halt other types of assistance (e.g. development assistance) in case of grave violations of human rights or international law, for example.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001512/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Meeting with Burmese Minister of Foreign Affairs

In High Representative Catherine Ashton's upcoming meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, Wunna Maung Lwin, could she ensure that the evident human rights violations in Burma are addressed with her counterpart?

Whilst it is to be welcomed that Burma has begun to embrace democracy and the transition has begun from a military junta to a civilian government, there are still many steps to be taken.

What is the EEAS doing to help ensure this transition?

What humanitarian funds are available to the Burmese administration?

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

The HR/VP has raised the issue of human rights in Burma/Myanmar in meetings with the Foreign Minister on 6 February and with President U Thein Sein on 5 March.

The EU engages in dialogue with the government, the opposition and civil society with a view to supporting the reform process and contributing to economic, political and social development.

The EU is also working to ensure that development assistance supports the transition to democracy, a legitimate government, the rule of law and national reconciliation. Among others, the EU provides funding to the Myanmar Human Rights Commission, as well as for electoral reform. The EU's ongoing development assistance portfolio amounts to over EUR 200 million and aims to strengthen civil society and democratic institutions, as well as contribute to the social sectors of health, education and livelihoods.

In 2012 the Commission allocated EUR 24.7 million in humanitarian aid to Burma/Myanmar, implemented by European NGOs, UN organisations, and the Red Cross family.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001513/13
adresată Comisiei
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(13 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Scandalul cărnii de cal și siguranța consumatorilor

Scandalul recent cu privire la carnea de cal găsită în produsele alimentare cu eticheta de carne de vită a testat încrederea consumatorilor în sistemul de etichetare a produselor alimentare în UE.

Având în vedere riscurile pentru sănătate și amploarea problemei (16 state membre ale UE au fost afectate de scandal), Comisia este invitată să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

1. Cum intenționează să evite apariția unor situații similare?

2. Ce măsuri vor fi luate pentru a mări transparența lanțului de aprovizionare din industria alimentară pe teritoriul UE pentru a garanta consumatorilor că produsele pe care le cumpără sunt sigure?

3. Ce măsuri vor fi luate pentru a restabili încrederea consumatorilor în industria alimentară a UE?

4. Cum va ancheta Comisia scandalul cărnii de cal și posibilitatea ca o rețea internațională de crimă organizată să fie la originea acestuia?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(25 martie 2013)

Până în prezent, nu există niciun indiciu care să ridice probleme de siguranță. Prin urmare, nu este afectată siguranța produselor alimentare introduse pe piața Uniunii. Cu toate acestea, falsificarea etichetelor induce în eroare consumatorii cu privire la conținutul produselor alimentare și, prin urmare, reprezintă o fraudă în ceea ce privește etichetarea produselor.

Operatorii din sectorul alimentar au, în primul rând, responsabilitatea de a se asigura că produsele alimentare introduse pe piață respectă cerințele legislației UE privind produsele alimentare, în timp ce autoritățile naționale competente sunt responsabile cu punerea în aplicare, prin efectuarea de controale adecvate și prin impunerea de sancțiuni disuasive și eficiente. În UE este deja în vigoare un sistem amplu de norme privind siguranța alimentelor, care prevede inclusiv cerințe referitoare la trasabilitatea produselor alimentare de origine animală ([1]); datorită acestui sistem, originea și amploarea acțiunilor frauduloase în cauză au fost identificate rapid.

Comisia a fost activă atât la nivel politic, cât și la nivel tehnic în ceea ce privește coordonarea anchetelor în curs în statele membre respective. În acest scop, Comisia a adoptat o recomandare ([2]) prin care se solicită instituirea de controale la nivelul UE privind vânzarea cu amănuntul, cu scopul de a identifica amploarea eventualelor practici de etichetare înșelătoare privind prezența cărnii de vită, precum și controale oficiale pentru a detecta posibile reziduuri de fenilbutazonă, un medicament de uz veterinar a cărui utilizare este ilegală pentru animalele de la care se obțin produse alimentare. Un rezumat al rezultatelor va fi disponibil cel târziu în luna aprilie 2013. Europol este, de asemenea, implicat în anchetele în curs, beneficiind de o puternică susținere din partea statelor membre.

Viitoarea propunere privind controalele oficiale va urmări o mai bună consolidare a sistemului existent, inclusiv a dispozițiilor referitoare la sancțiuni.

([1]) Regulamentul de punere în aplicare (UE) nr. 931/2011 al Comisiei din 19 septembrie 2011 privind cerințele în materie de trasabilitate a alimentelor de origine animală stabilite în Regulamentul (CE) nr. 178/2002 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului (JO L 242, 20.9.2011, p. 2).

([2]) Recomandarea Comisiei din 19 februarie 2013 privind un plan de control coordonat pentru a stabili prevalența unor practici frauduloase (2013/99/UE) (JO L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001513/13
to the Commission
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Horsemeat scandal and consumer safety

The recent scandal over horsemeat found in food products labelled as beef has tested consumer confidence in the food labelling system in the EU.

Given the health risk and the scale of the problem (up to 16 EU Member States have been affected by the scandal), the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. How does it intend to prevent any similar situations from occurring?

2. What measures will be taken to increase transparency along the food industry's supply chain throughout the EU, in order to assure consumers that the products they buy are safe?

3. What measures will be taken to restore consumer confidence in the EU food industry?

4. How will the Commission investigate the horsemeat scandal and the possibility that an international organised crime network could be behind it?

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

To date, there is no indication on the subject which raises a safety issue. As such, the safety of foods placed on the Union market is not at stake. However, the falsification of labels misleads the consumers as regards the content of foods and therefore, it constitutes fraud in food labelling.

Food business operators are primarily responsible for ensuring that foods placed on the market comply with Union food law requirements, while the national competent authorities are responsible for enforcement, by conducting appropriate controls and imposing dissuasive and effective penalties. A comprehensive system of food safety rules is already in place at Union level, including traceability requirements for foods of animal origin ([1]); it is because of this system that the origin and extent of the fraudulent actions in question were quickly identified.

The Commission has been active both on political and technical levels in coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned. To this end, the Commission adopted a recommendation ([2]) which calls for EU-wide controls at retail level in order to identify the scale of any misleading labelling practices as to the presence of beef as well as official controls to detect possible residues of phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug whose use in food producing animals is illegal. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013. Europol is also involved in the ongoing investigations with a strong support by the Member States.

The forthcoming proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 931/2011 on the traceability requirements set by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council for food of animal origin, OJ L 242, 20.9.2011, p. 2.

([2]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001514/13
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Livret de circulation des gens du voyage contraire à la directive sur la liberté de circulation

En France, la loi nº 69-3 du 3 janvier 1969 créé une catégorie administrative, celle des gens du voyage qui sont entre 300 000 et 400 000 personnes sur le territoire. Les personnes de plus de seize ans n'ayant ni domicile ni résidence fixes pendant plus de six mois sont considérées comme tels.

Ce statut spécifique oblige les gens du voyage à déclarer, après avis motivé du maire, une commune de rattachement, qui ne relève pas totalement de leur libre choix puisque le nombre de gens du voyage par commune ne peut être supérieur à 3 % de la population telle que dénombrée au dernier recensement. Qu'est-ce qui peut justifier une telle mesure? La peur de voir un jour élire un maire «Gens du voyage»? Lorsque ce pourcentage est atteint, le préfet ou le sous-préfet invite le déclarant à choisir une autre commune de rattachement. Les gens du voyage disposent par ailleurs d'un «livret de circulation» qu'ils doivent faire viser chaque année dans le commissariat ou la gendarmerie de cette commune.

Il s'agit d'une atteinte claire et nette à la liberté de circulation puisque ces citoyens ne peuvent pas s'éloigner pour une longue durée de ladite commune. Cette atteinte ne peut en aucun cas être justifiée par leur mode de vie puisque les gens du voyage ne sont pas la seule composante de la population française sans domicile fixe. Les sans domiciles fixes de «droit commun» ne sont pas soumis à une commune de rattachement. La réelle justification, intolérable, est la suivante: dans sa décision nº 2012-279 du 5 octobre 2012, le Conseil constitutionnel justifie le maintien de titres de circulation par le fait que l'«atteinte portée à la liberté d'aller et venir est justifiée par la nécessité de protéger l'ordre public». Pourtant, n'est expliqué nulle part en quoi, en tant que tels, les gens du voyage représenteraient un trouble à l'ordre public!

Ces mesures discriminatoires me paraissent donc contraires à la directive 2004/38/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 29 avril 2004 relative au droit des citoyens de l'Union et des membres de leurs familles de circuler et de séjourner librement sur le territoire des États membres.

1. La Commission est-elle informée de l'existence de cette atteinte à la libre circulation basée sur des principes discriminatoires?

2. Que compte faire la Commission pour mettre fin à cette entrave?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(3 avril 2013)

La Commission est informée de la loi française nº 69-3 du 3 janvier 1969 relative au statut des gens du voyage et de la décision du Conseil constitutionnel français du 5 octobre 2012 qui a abrogé certaines dispositions de cette loi, tout en jugeant l'ensemble de celle-ci conforme à la Constitution.

Dans le cadre de la stratégie nationale d'intégration des Roms et du dialogue subséquent entre la Commission et la France, les autorités françaises ont rappelé leur engagement à améliorer la situation des Roms et des gens du voyage dans les domaines de l'éducation, l'emploi, la santé et le logement mais aussi la lutte contre les discriminations. Les autorités françaises ont également souligné leur volonté de respecter les dispositions de la directive 2004/38/CE, qui a été correctement transposée en droit interne français.

Il convient de noter que cette directive ne concerne que le droit des citoyens de l'Union et des membres de leurs familles de circuler entre les territoires des États membres et d'y séjourner librement, et ses limitations.

La Commission reste néanmoins vigilante quant à toute discrimination contraire au droit de l'Union qui pourrait frapper les Roms ou les gens du voyage dans l'un ou l'autre État membre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001514/13
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Circulation booklet for travellers contrary to the free movement directive

In accordance with Law No 69-3 of 3 January 1969, travellers in France are treated as a separate administrative category of persons, who currently number between 300 000 and 400 000 individuals. This category covers people over the age of 16 who have no fixed domicile or residence for a period of more than six months.

This specific status requires travellers to declare, based on a reasoned opinion from the mayor, the municipality with which they wish to be associated, which is not entirely their choice as the number of travellers in any given municipality may not exceed 3% of the population in accordance with the most recent census. What could justify such a measure? The fear of one day seeing a traveller elected mayor? If this percentage is reached, the prefect or deputy prefect invites the individual making the declaration to choose another municipality with which to be associated. Travellers also need to have a 'circulation booklet', which they have to have approved every year at a police station in the municipality.

This is a clear infringement of the freedom of movement because these people are not able to be absent from the municipality in question for a long time. This infringement cannot in any way be justified by their way of life, as travellers are not the only section of the French population without a fixed abode. Ordinary homeless people are not required to declare a municipality of association. The real, and intolerable, justification is this: in its decision No 2012-279 of 5 October 2012, the Constitutional Council justified the retention of circulation permits by stating that 'the infringement to the freedom of movement is justified by the need to protect public order'. But nowhere is it explained in what way travellers as such represent a threat to public order.

These discriminatory measures therefore appear to be in violation of Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States.

1. Has the Commission been informed of the existence of this infringement of the freedom of movement on a discriminatory basis?

2. What does the Commission intend to do to remove this obstacle?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The Commission has been informed of France's Law No 69-3 of 3 January 1969 on the status of travellers and of the French Constitutional Council's decision of 5 October 2012, which repealed certain provisions of the Law, whilst judging that the Law as a whole conformed to the Constitution.

Within the framework of the National Roma Integration Strategy and the subsequent dialogue between the Commission and France, the French authorities have reiterated their commitment to improving the situation of Roma and travellers with regard to education, work, health and housing as well as the fight against discrimination. The French authorities have also emphasised their intention to comply with the provisions of Directive 2004/38/EC, which has been properly transposed into French national law.

It should be noted that this directive relates only to the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, and to restrictions on that right.

However, the Commission remains vigilant to any discrimination contrary to Union law which could affect Roma or travellers in any Member State.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001515/13
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Signalisation des véhicules sans permis

Les voitures sans permis donnent à des publics, qui ne peuvent pas se soumettre à l'examen du permis de conduire, mais qui ont besoin de se déplacer, la possibilité de rouler à bord d'un véhicule motorisé sur la plupart des voies de circulations.

En France, elles peuvent ainsi se déplacer en dehors des agglomérations sur les routes départementales et nationales.

Alors que les véhicules à permis peuvent rouler jusqu'à 90 km/h sur ces voies de circulation, les véhicules sans permis, qui sont bridés, n'excèdent pas 50 km/h.

Ce différentiel de vitesse peut être une source de danger, voire d'accident, sur les routes européennes. Le conducteur d'un véhicule classique est en effet souvent surpris lorsqu'il se trouve confronté à ce genre de véhicules sur une route où la vitesse est limitée à 90 km/h.

Pour garantir à la fois l'opportunité de mobilité pour tous les citoyens et la sécurité routière, d'aucuns préconisent que ces voitures sans permis soient équipées d'un phare clignotant, afin de les différencier des voitures classiques et d'éviter ainsi les accidents.

Au regard de ces éléments:

1. La Commission envisage-t-elle de proposer une modification de la directive 2002/24/CE, afin d'y intégrer des prescriptions techniques garantissant une meilleure identification des véhicules sans permis?

2. En tout état de cause, comment la Commission entend-elle garantir une meilleure sécurité à la fois des conducteurs de véhicules sans permis et des autres automobilistes?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(5 avril 2013)

Le règlement (UE) n° 168/2013 ([1]) relatif à la réception et à la surveillance du marché des véhicules à deux ou trois roues et des quadricycles a été adopté récemment. Il définit toute une série d'exigences qui amélioreront la sécurité fonctionnelle de ces véhicules légers. L'une d'entre elles rendra obligatoire l'allumage automatique du système d'éclairage. Une solution de substitution consisterait en l'installation d'un éclairage diurne. Cette mesure augmentera la visibilité des quadricycles et des autres véhicules légers dans la circulation et améliorera grandement leur sécurité fonctionnelle. Le nouveau règlement prendra effet à partir du 1er janvier 2016, rendant ainsi obligatoire l'installation de l'allumage automatique des phares sur tous les nouveaux véhicules légers.

La Commission comprend le problème soulevé par l'auteur de la question et examinera donc l'opportunité d'équiper de la sorte les nouveaux modèles de véhicules de catégorie L avant le 1er janvier 2016.

Le 19 janvier 2013, la directive 2006/126/CE ([2]) a introduit une nouvelle catégorie de permis AM, laquelle s'étend aux quadricycles légers. Cette disposition contribuera à accroître la sécurité des conducteurs de ces véhicules et des autres usagers de la route.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 168/2013 relatif à la réception et à la surveillance du marché des véhicules à deux ou trois roues et des quadricycles (JO L 60 du 2.3.2013).
([2]) Directive 2006/126/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 décembre 2006 relative au permis de conduire (JO L 403 du 30.12.2006).

La sécurité relève aussi de la responsabilité du conducteur. Comme le précise la Convention de Vienne sur la circulation routière ([3]), tout conducteur doit se conformer aux exigences de la prudence et ajuster sa vitesse afin d'éviter des situations dangereuses résultant d'obstacles prévisibles. Cela vaut pour les véhicules roulant à une vitesse inférieure à la limitation générale, ce à quoi il faut s'attendre sur la plupart des routes: camions chargés gravissant une côte, véhicules agricoles, etc.

([3]) Convention sur la circulation routière (Vienne, 8.11.1968).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001515/13
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Identification of no-licence cars

No-licence cars are designed for people who cannot take a driving test but who nevertheless need to get around using a motorised vehicle that can be driven on most public roads.

In France such vehicles may therefore be driven outside towns and cities, on the French equivalent of A- and B-roads.

Cars for which a licence is required may be driven at speeds of up to 90 km/hour on those roads, but no-licence vehicles are limited to a speed of 50 km/hour.

This difference in speed can be dangerous, and even cause accidents, on Europe's roads. It can often be a shock for people driving normal cars to come across these no-licence vehicles on roads on which speeds of 90 km/hour are permitted.

In the interests of both ensuring mobility for all members of the public and guaranteeing road safety, it has been suggested that no-licence cars be fitted with a flashing light to differentiate them from ordinary cars and thereby prevent accidents.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission intending to propose that Directive 2002/24/EC be amended to include technical requirements that would make it easier to identify no-licence vehicles?

2. How does the Commission intend to increase safety for the drivers of both no-licence vehicles and other cars?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 ([1]) on approval and market surveillance of two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles was recently adopted. It sets out a whole range of requirements that will improve the functional safety of such light vehicles. One of these requirements will make automatic switching-on of the lighting system obligatory. Alternatively day time running lights can be fitted. This measure will increase visibility of quadricycles and other light vehicles in traffic and will enhance their functional safety considerably. Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 will start to apply as of 1 January 2016, thus rendering fitting of the automatic headlamp-on feature obligatory for all new light vehicles.

The Commission understands the concern raised by the Honourable Member and will therefore evaluate whether or not this feature would need to be fitted prior to 1 January 2016 for new types of L-category vehicles.

From 19 January 2013 a new driving licence category AM was introduced by Directive 2006/126/EC ([2]), which includes light quadricycles. This will contribute to increased safety for the drivers of such vehicles and other road users.

Furthermore, safety is also a responsibility of the driver. The Vienna Convention on Road Traffic ([3]) requires any driver to take due and proper care and adapt speed so as to avoid dangerous situations arising from foreseeable obstructions. This applies to vehices moving slower than the general speed limit, which is something that can be expected on most roads, e.g. loaded trucks going uphill or agricultural vehicles.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 on approval and market surveillance of two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles, OJ L60, 2.3.2013.
([2]) Directive 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on driving licences, OJ L 403, 30.12.2006.
([3]) Convention on Road Traffic done at Vienna 8 November 1968.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001516/13
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Commerce dans l'UE de vins à destination des particuliers

Le commerce de vins aux particuliers européens est un axe privilégié de développement pour le secteur viticole. Pourtant, l'organisation fiscale actuelle rend ce commerce intracommunautaire difficile pour les petites exploitations ou les sites de vente en ligne.

Aujourd'hui, le professionnel ou le site de vente en ligne vendant à un particulier résidant dans un autre État membre doit s'acquitter d'un droit d'accise, qui répond à des préoccupations d'intérêt général (par exemple, de santé publique). Pour ce faire, il doit s'enregistrer au titre du règlement d'accise dans le pays de destination et compléter les formulaires requis (en l'occurrence, le document administratif électronique, DAE). La procédure doit être conduite dans chaque État membre où le viticulteur souhaite exporter.

La lourdeur de la procédure administrative et le coût lié à la perception du droit d'accise empêchent les exploitations indépendantes de profiter véritablement du marché unique et constituent de facto une discrimination entre les grands négociants, les grandes exploitations et les petits exploitants: le coût lié à la procédure fiscale est quasiment le même que l'on vende 2 ou 20 caisses de bouteilles de vins.

Au regard de ces éléments:

1. Comment la Commission entend-elle alléger les formalités administratives liées à la perception des droits d'accise pour favoriser les ventes intracommunautaires de vins aux particuliers de faible volume?

2. La Commission est-elle favorable à la mise en place d'un guichet unique de perception des droits d'accise (à l'image du guichet unique de TVA transfrontalière) pour permettre ainsi au viticulteur de payer l'accise au taux étranger dans son pays d'origine?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(26 mars 2013)

1. La Commission constitue actuellement un groupe de projet composé des services de la Commission et des représentants des États membres en vue de trouver des pistes permettant d'améliorer les modalités de mise en conformité fiscale actuelles, notamment celles fondées sur l'article 36 de la directive 2008/118/CE du Conseil. Un premier rapport portant sur les meilleures pratiques à adopter dans le cadre des modalités actuelles sera présenté d'ici le mois de juin 2014.

2. La mise en place d'un guichet unique de perception des droits d'accise pour la vente à distance transfrontalière de produits viticoles serait l'une des mesures possibles permettant de diminuer les charges administratives, mais elle requerrait une modification de la directive 2008/118/CE du Conseil.

3. L'article 45, paragraphe 2, de la directive 2008/118/CE du Conseil prévoit qu'en 2015, la Commission présentera un rapport au Parlement européen et au Conseil sur la mise en œuvre de ladite directive, y compris sur les dispositions concernant la vente à distance. Les modifications du cadre juridique actuel que la Commission considère nécessaires et concrètes seront également reprises dans ce rapport.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001516/13
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Sales of wine to private individuals in the EU

The sale of wine to private individuals in Europe is a major element in the development of the wine sector. The current tax arrangements, however, make it difficult for small-scale growers and online sales websites to sell wine within the EU.

Currently, winegrowers and wine sales websites selling to private individuals resident in other Member States must pay excise duty connected with public interest concerns (e.g. public health). To do this, they must register for excise purposes in the country of destination and fill in the required forms (in this case, an 'electronic administrative document'). This procedure must be followed in each Member State to which the winegrowers wish to export.

The administrative red tape and the costs involved in excise collection mean that independent winegrowers cannot really benefit from the single market and amount to a form of discrimination against small-scale winegrowers, to the benefit of large-scale traders and producers: the costs incurred as a result of tax are practically the same whether 2 or 20 cases of wine are being sold.

In view of the above:

1. How does the Commission intend to cut the red tape associated with excise collection with a view to helping small-scale wine producers increase their trade within the EU?

2. Is the Commission in favour of the establishment of a one-stop scheme for excise collection (based on the one-stop cross-border VAT scheme) to allow winegrowers to pay the foreign excise duty in their own country?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

1. The Commission is establishing a Project Group consisting of the Commission Services and representatives of the Member States ([1]) to investigate how current arrangements for fiscal compliance can be improved, particularly those based on Article 36 of Directive 2008/118/EC. An initial report on best practice under the current arrangements will be produced by June 2014.

2. A one-stop scheme for excise collection in the case of cross-border distance selling of wines would be one possible measure to reduce administrative burden, but would require changes to Directive 2008/118/EC.

3. Under Article 45(2) of Directive 2008/118/EC the Commission will submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council in 2015 on the implementation of the directive, including the provisions on distance selling. Where the Commission considers changes to the current legal situation to be necessary and practical such changes will be included in this report.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001517/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Assainissement budgétaire proportionné et différencié propice à la croissance

1. Le Parlement souligne la prise en compte trop faible, par la Commission, des tendances locales, régionales et nationales spécifiques, ainsi que d'éventuelles erreurs dans ses prévisions qui sont à la base de l'examen annuel de la croissance. Comment la Commission réagit-elle?

2. La Commission envisage-t-elle de recalibrer ses modèles relatifs à l'impact de l'effet multiplicateur des coupes budgétaires des États membres sur la croissance et la création d'emplois conformément aux révisions récemment effectuées par le FMI?

3. La Commission va-t-elle enfin mettre en place les mécanismes de surveillance nécessaires pour faire en sorte que les États membres appliquent les recommandations sociales formulées dans le cadre du semestre européen et du programme national de réforme? Pourquoi ne l'a-t-elle pas fait lors des semestres précédents?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(11 avril 2013)

L'examen annuel de la croissance met en évidence la nécessité de poursuivre la stratégie d'assainissement différencié et propice à la croissance, couplée au respect par les États membres du pacte de stabilité et de croissance. La bonne santé et la viabilité des finances publiques sont un préalable essentiel à la croissance. La Commission estime que les États membres dont l'accès aux marchés est réduit n'ont guère d'alternative viable à l'assainissement budgétaire, sans lequel les conséquences qu'ils auraient à subir seraient encore plus négatives. Les pays qui disposent d'une plus grande marge de manœuvre budgétaire pourraient, quant à eux, poursuivre avec plus de souplesse leurs objectifs à moyen terme.

En ce qui concerne les multiplicateurs budgétaires, les prévisions de la Commission ne faisant pas intervenir de multiplicateurs prédéfinis, elles ne sont pas directement affectées par les conclusions du FMI. En outre, le FMI est très prudent quant aux implications politiques de son analyse économique, et souligne que la définition d'une politique budgétaire adéquate requiert bien plus qu'une appréciation de la valeur des multiplicateurs budgétaires à court terme. Le FMI signale que les effets à court terme de la politique budgétaire sur l'activité économique ne constituent qu'un seul des nombreux facteurs à prendre en compte pour décider du rythme de l'assainissement budgétaire convenant à un pays donné.

Dans le contexte du semestre européen, la Commission surveille chaque année la mise en œuvre par les États membres de politiques faisant suite aux recommandations spécifiques par pays formulées au cours du semestre européen précédent. Cette surveillance comprend les recommandations sociales lorsqu'elles ont été adoptées par le Conseil. Depuis 2011, elle intervient annuellement. La Commission fournit l'analyse correspondante dans un document de travail de ses services, sur lequel se fondent l'évaluation de la mise en œuvre des recommandations déjà formulées ainsi que les recommandations pour l'année à venir.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001517/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Proportionate, differentiated budgetary consolidation to boost growth

1. Parliament has called on the Commission to take greater account of specific local, regional and national trends, as well as potential errors in its forecasts, which represent the basis for the annual growth survey. What is the Commission's response?

2. Does the Commission intend to the Commission to recalibrate its models on the impact of the multiplier effect on growth and job creation of fiscal cuts on the budgets of Member States in line with recent IMF revisions?

3. Will the Commission finally establish the necessary surveillance mechanisms to ensure that Member States meet the social recommendations introduced in the European Semester and in the National Reform Programme? Why has it failed to do so following past European Semesters?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Annual Growth Survey underscores that differentiated growth friendly consolidation has to continue, while Member States should continue to respect the Stability and Growth Pact. Sound and sustainable public finances are an essential prerequisite for growth. The Commission believes that in Member States facing reduced market access there is no viable alternative to fiscal consolidation, as its absence could lead to even more negative consequences. Countries with more fiscal space could be more flexible while progressing towards their medium-term objectives.

As regards the fiscal multipliers, the IMF findings do not directly affect the Commission's forecast as the Commission does not employ predetermined multipliers in its forecast. Moreover, the IMF is very cautious regarding the policy implications of its economic analysis emphasising that deciding on the appropriate stance of fiscal policy requires much more than an assessment of the size of short-term fiscal multipliers. The IMF stresses that the short-term effects of fiscal policy on economic activity are only one of the many factors that need to be considered in determining the appropriate pace of fiscal consolidation for any single country.

As part of the European Semester, the Commission each year monitors the implementation on the part of Member States of policies responding to the country-specific recommendations issued in the preceding European Semester. Monitoring includes recommendations on social issues where they have been adopted by the Council. As from 2011 monitoring takes place yearly. The Commission provides the relevant analysis in staff working, which underpin the assessment of implementation of past recommendations as well as recommendations for the year ahead.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001518/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: État d'avancement de la stratégie Europe 2020

1. Pourquoi l'examen annuel de la croissance 2013 ne comporte pas de rapport sur l'état d'avancement de la stratégie Europe 2020?

2. Quand la Commission compte-t-elle présenter ce rapport afin qu'il soit publié en temps utile pour la réunion de printemps du Conseil européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(21 mars 2013)

La Commission a présenté un rapport exhaustif sur l'état d'avancement de la stratégie Europe 2020 dans le cadre du semestre européen de juin 2012, qui portait notamment sur les progrès accomplis en vue d'atteindre les objectifs nationaux d'Europe 2020 ainsi que sur une mise à jour relative aux objectifs pour l'Union européenne. Chaque initiative phare fait l'objet de rapports qui ont été publiés ou le seront sous peu: par exemple, la mise à jour de la communication sur la politique industrielle a été publiée en octobre 2012 ([1]), celle sur l'initiative phare relative à la stratégie numérique a été présentée en décembre 2012 ([2]), alors que le rapport sur l'Union de l'innovation doit être adopté bientôt. L'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre des initiatives phare relatives à la croissance, de la stratégie pour des compétences nouvelles et des emplois et de la plateforme européenne contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale a respectivement été pris en compte dans les paquets «emploi» et «investissements sociaux». Ces deux paquets alimentent les recommandations qui s'inscrivent dans le semestre européen et aident les États membres à réaliser leurs objectifs en matière d'emploi et de lutte contre la pauvreté dans le cadre de la stratégie Europe 2020. Enfin, le nouveau rapport relatif à l'intégration du marché intérieur, annexé à l'examen annuel de la croissance de 2013, rend essentiellement compte des progrès réalisés dans les domaines politiques pertinents, tels que l'énergie ou les services. La prochaine mise à jour des objectifs sera présentée dans le paquet de recommandations par pays, prévu pour le mois de mai 2013.

([1]) COM(2012)582 final du 10.10.2012.
([2]) COM(2012)784 final du 18.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001518/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Progress of the Europe 2020 strategy

1. Why does the Annual Growth Survey 2013 not contain a progress report on the Europe 2020 strategy?

2. When will the Commission present this report? Will it be published in good time for the spring meeting of the European Council?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2013)

The Commission reported comprehensively on progress in relation to the Europe 2020 strategy in the European Semester package of June 2012, which covered notably the progress made in reaching the national Europe 2020 targets as well as an update on targets for the European Union. Reporting on separate flagship initiatives is ongoing: for instance, the update on Industrial Policy was published in October 2012 ([1]), the update on the Digital Agenda Flagship initiative was presented in December 2012 ([2]), while the report on the Innovation Union is soon to be adopted. Progress on the implementation of the flagships concerning inclusive growth, the agenda for new skills and jobs and the European platform against poverty and social exclusion, have been reflected in the employment package and the social investment package respectively. Both packages feed into the European Semester and support Member States in reaching the employment and poverty targets under the Europe 2020 strategy. Finally, the new Internal Market integration report annexed to the 2013 Annual Growth Survey largely covers reporting on progress in relevant policy areas, such as energy or services. The next update of the targets will be provided for in the package of country-specific recommendations due in May 2013.

([1]) COM(2012) 582 final, 10.10.2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 784 final, 18.12.2012.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001519/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Évasion fiscale: Suisse, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg et Autriche

L'Autriche a signé, mardi 29 janvier, un accord fiscal avec le Liechtenstein afin de récupérer des impôts sur les fonds déposés par ses citoyens dans la principauté alpine tout en préservant le secret bancaire. Cet arrangement est analogue à celui que Vienne a conclu, en 2012, avec la Suisse.

1. Pour la Commission, cet acte ne va-t-il pas à l'encontre des efforts européens visant à mettre en place des règles communes aux 27 membres sur l'évasion fiscale?

2. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission face au refus de l'Autriche et du Luxembourg de confier un mandat pour négocier avec la Suisse un accord d'échange d'informations bancaires? Quelles sont les actions entreprises et à entreprendre à ce sujet?

3. Comment réagit la Commission sur la future signature entre l'Autriche et les États-Unis d'un accord d'échange automatique d'informations sur les résidents américains détenteurs de comptes bancaires en Autriche?

4. Est-il normal pour la Commission qu'un État, membre des 27, échange des informations bancaires avec les États-Unis mais le refuse à ses partenaires européens? Quelles sont les actions que la Commission compte entreprendre?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(25 mars 2013)

L'approche préconisée par la Commission pour garantir une taxation adéquate de l'épargne placée à l'étranger est bien connue. Elle repose sur des accords au niveau de l'Union européenne et sur l'échange automatique d'informations entre les États. Cependant, en principe, les États membres sont libres de conclure des accords internationaux pour autant que ces derniers respectent la législation de l'Union européenne, y compris sur le plan des compétences de l'Union. En sa qualité de gardienne des traités, la Commission examine actuellement l'accord conclu entre l'Autriche et le Liechtenstein afin de s'assurer qu'il est conforme à la législation de l'Union européenne. Dans ce contexte, certains paramètres clés ont été notifiés par écrit à tous les États membres le 5 mars 2012.

Certains États membres ont trop longtemps retardé le renforcement de la directive sur la fiscalité de l'épargne. Les points de friction actuels portent sur les termes du mandat requis par la Commission pour amorcer des négociations avec la Suisse et d'autres pays tiers ainsi que sur l'expiration éventuelle de la période transitoire, qui contraindrait le Luxembourg et l'Autriche à échanger automatiquement des informations plutôt que de prélever une retenue à la source.

Même si l'Autriche et les États-Unis n'ont pas, à ce jour, annoncé la signature d'un accord intergouvernemental (AIG) afin de mettre en application la loi américaine dénommée «Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act» (FATCA), il semble en effet que certains États membres ou leurs intermédiaires financiers s'apprêtent à communiquer des informations substantielles aux États-Unis en vertu d'un accord de type AIG FACTA. Si l'Autriche ou tout autre État membre accepte de communiquer de telles informations fiscales aux États-Unis, la Commission insistera pour que les États membres ne soient pas traités moins favorablement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001519/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Tax evasion: Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Austria

On Tuesday, 29 January, Austria signed a tax agreement with Liechtenstein enabling tax on assets placed in the Alpine principality by its citizens to be reclaimed whilst maintaining banking secrecy. This is a similar arrangement to that concluded between Vienna and Switzerland in 2012.

1. Does the Commission not think that this action flies in the face of Europe's attempts to establish rules on tax evasion which are common to all 27 Member States?

2. What is the Commission's reaction to the refusal by Austria and Luxembourg to grant authorisation for negotiations with Switzerland on an agreement for the exchange of banking information? What action has been and will be taken on this matter?

3. What is the Commission's reaction to the upcoming signature by Austria and the USA of an automatic information exchange agreement concerning American residents who have bank accounts in Austria?

4. Does the Commission regard it as normal for a Member State to exchange banking information with the USA but to refuse to do so with its fellow Member States? What action does the Commission intend to take here?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

The approach favoured by the Commission to ensure proper taxation of savings held abroad is well known. It is one based on EU-level agreements and automatic exchange of information between states. However, in principle, Member States are free to enter into international agreements, provided such agreements comply with EC law, including in regard to EU competences. In its role as guardian of the Treaties, the Commission is examining the Austria — Liechtenstein agreement, to ensure that it complies with EC law. Some key parameters were, in this context, notified to all Member States in writing on 5 March 2012.

The enhancement of the Savings Directive has been held up for too long by some Member States. The current sticking points are the terms of the mandate required by the Commission to open negotiations with Switzerland and other third countries and the possible ending of the transitional period, after which Luxembourg and Austria would have to exchange information automatically, rather than applying a withholding tax.

Although Austria and the US have not, to date, announced the signing of an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to implement the US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), it does appear that Member States or their financial intermediaries will release substantial information to the US, under a FATCA IGA. If Austria or any other Member State agrees to the release of such tax information to the US, the Commission will insist that Member States are treated no less favourably.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001520/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Banque européenne d'investissement

Le rôle de la BEI devient essentiel pour l'avenir de l'Union européenne afin de contribuer à la réalisation des objectifs de l'Union tels que la croissance et l'emploi. L'Union a déjà pris des mesures drastiques pour améliorer la discipline et la surveillance des dettes et budgets nationaux. En parallèle, le projet européen, mais avant tout les citoyens européens, ont besoin de mesures favorisant une croissance économique forte et continue.

L'Europe doit prendre des mesures actives pour améliorer la croissance inclusive et les opportunités, renforcer sa capacité d'innovation et son industrie fondée sur la connaissance, augmenter les investissements en matière d'infrastructures, développer les réseaux et renforcer les politiques sociales et environnementales. L'Europe a besoin d'offres d'emploi de haut niveau, d'un taux d'emploi plus élevé et d'une meilleure productivité. Si nous ne prenons pas de mesures, l'Europe devra faire face à une compétitivité accrue de nos partenaires commerciaux.

Pour atteindre ces objectifs, le Parlement a recommandé que la BEI et la Commission coopèrent mieux et plus étroitement, en étudiant également la possibilité, pour l'Union, de devenir actionnaire de la BEI.

1. Le Parlement européen a formulé à de nombreuses reprises et depuis de nombreuses années la nécessité d'un contrôle prudentiel de supervision bancaire de la BEI. Ce contrôle de régulation doit être exercé soit par la BCE sur la base de l'article 127, paragraphe 6 du traité FUE, soit dans le cadre de la future Union bancaire prévue par la communication de la Commission européenne du 12 septembre 2012, ou encore, à défaut, et sur la base d'une démarche volontaire de la BEI, par l'Autorité bancaire européenne, avec ou sans la participation d'un ou de plusieurs superviseurs nationaux, ou bien par un auditeur indépendant. Pourquoi la Commission n'a-t-elle rien proposé dans ce sens, malgré les demandes du Parlement, dont la première date d'il y a plus de 5 ans?

2. La Commission, avec la BEI, envisage-t-elle de développer un volet de prêts de la BEI aux PME destinés à ces partenaires, afin que les prêts de la BEI prévus pour les PME soient octroyés aux intermédiaires financiers de plus petite taille (et aux PME plus petites) qui sont aujourd'hui moins bien pourvus en raison, notamment, de leur faible profil de crédit?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(12 avril 2013)

La question de la surveillance financière de la BEI mérite une attention particulière, compte tenu de la nature supranationale de la BEI (aucune autre banque multilatérale de développement n'est soumise au contrôle d'un organe de surveillance), de son statut en vertu du droit de l'Union et du cadre de contrôle existant consacré par ce statut. La proposition de conférer des pouvoirs de surveillance à la BCE ou à l'Autorité bancaire européenne devrait faire l'objet d'une analyse approfondie, en tenant compte du cadre juridique établi par le traité de l'UE.

Conformément à sa stratégie de prêts liée à son augmentation de capital, la BEI cherche à diversifier ses interlocuteurs pour le financement des PME avec intermédiation, parmi lesquels des établissements bancaires de plus petite taille. La BEI et les représentants de ces établissements évaluent actuellement la faisabilité d'un régime spécifique aux banques de plus petite taille.

Par ailleurs, la Commission a proposé de prolonger les instruments financiers en faveur des PME dans le prochain cadre financier pluriannuel 2014-2020 au titre du programme pour la compétitivité des entreprises et les PME et du programme «Horizon 2020», ainsi que des Fonds structurels aux niveaux national et régional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001520/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: European Investment Bank (EIB)

The role of the EIB is becoming crucial for the future of the EU in order to further the objectives of the European Union, such as growth and employment. The EU has already taken severe measures to increase the discipline and the surveillance of the national debts and the national budgets. At the same time the European project — but above all European citizens — need measures which will encourage strong and steady economic growth.

Europe needs to take active steps to increase inclusive growth and opportunities, reinforce its innovation capacity and knowledge-based industry, expand infrastructure investment, develop networks and strengthen social and environmental policies. Europe needs high-profile job opportunities, an increased employment rate and better productivity. If we do not take any action, Europe will face increased competitiveness from our trading partners.

In order to achieve these goals, Parliament recommended closer cooperation between the EIB and the European Commission and consideration of the possibility of the EU becoming a shareholder of the EIB.

1. Parliament has for years repeatedly stated the need for prudential banking supervision of the EIB. This regulatory supervision must be exercised either by the Central European Bank (BCE) on the basis of Article 127(6) TFEU or in the context of the future Banking Union envisaged in the Commission communication of 12 September 2012; failing that, and on the basis of a voluntary approach by the EIB, by the European Banking Authority, with or without the participation of one or more national supervisors, or by an independent auditor. Why has the Commission not proposed something along these lines — in spite of requests by Parliament, the first of which was made more than five years ago?

2. Does the Commission, together with the EIB, intend to develop an EIB loan window for SMEs in order to extend EIB loans for SMEs to smaller financial intermediaries (and smaller SMEs), which are currently underserved by reason of, notably, their limited credit profile?

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

The issue of financial supervision of the EIB deserves careful consideration, taking into account the supranational nature of the EIB (no other Multilateral Development Banks are subject to scrutiny of a supervisory body), its statute under Union law and the existing control framework enshrined in the EIB Statute. The proposal to give supervisory powers to the ECB or to the EBA would need to be analysed in detail, taking into account the legal framework established under the EU Treaty.

In line with its capital increase lending strategy, the EIB seeks to widen its range of counterparts for intermediated SME financing, including smaller banking institutions. The EIB is currently assessing with representatives of these institutions the feasibility of a scheme dedicated to smaller banks.

Furthermore, the Commission proposed to pursue financial instruments for SMEs in the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 under the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs and Horizon 2020, as well as under Structural Funds at a national and regional level.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001521/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Légitimité démocratique des orientations de la Commission quant à la croissance

1. Les orientations politiques proposées par la Commission au titre de l'examen annuel de la croissance en vue de leur adoption par le Conseil européen sont définies sans la participation des parlements et de la société civile. La Commission ne trouve-t-elle pas, par conséquent, que ses orientations sont dépourvues d'une légitimité démocratique?

2. La Commission trouve-t-elle normal le rôle très limité du Parlement européen, des parlements nationaux, des partenaires sociaux et de la société civile dans le semestre européen? Dans un souci de légitimité démocratique, un autre *modus operandi* ne serait-il pas profitable?

3. Comment la Commission va-t-elle imposer aux États membres de garantir une transparence maximale dans l'élaboration des programmes nationaux de réforme et d'associer largement les parlements nationaux et les acteurs sociaux à ce processus?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(17 avril 2013)

Le semestre européen permet une coordination en amont, au niveau de l'Union, des politiques économiques des États membres. Il s'ouvre par l'examen annuel de la croissance (EAC), dans lequel la Commission fixe les actions prioritaires pour l'année en cours. C'est sur la base de l'EAC et des débats qu'il suscite au Conseil (Ecofin et EPSCO) et au Parlement européen que le Conseil européen de printemps adopte les orientations politiques définissant les priorités en matière de réformes économiques dans les États membres.

La Commission est favorable à la participation du Parlement au semestre européen et au rôle actif qu'il joue à travers le dialogue économique. Ce dialogue, qui a été instauré par le train de mesures sur la gouvernance économique («six-pack») dans le but d'assurer la responsabilité démocratique dans le domaine de la coordination des politiques économiques, a été encore renforcé par le «two-pack», deux textes législatifs relatifs à la surveillance budgétaire. Le Parlement peut par ailleurs convier les différents États membres à prendre part à un échange de vues. La Commission a également participé à la semaine parlementaire en janvier 2013.

Les programmes nationaux de réforme (PNR) sont des documents nationaux élaborés par les États membres. La stratégie Europe 2020 préconise que les parlements nationaux, les partenaires sociaux et les représentants de la société civile soient étroitement associés à leur élaboration. La Commission insiste continuellement sur ce point auprès des États membres et a demandé que les PNR indiquent comment les parlements nationaux et les autres parties concernées ont été associés à leur élaboration et à la mise en œuvre des orientations et engagements antérieurs. La Commission encourage par ailleurs les parlements nationaux à débattre des recommandations spécifiques par pays.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001521/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Democratic legitimacy of the Commission's policy guidelines on growth

1. The policy guidelines put forward by the Commission in the context of the Annual Growth Survey, which are subsequently adopted by the European Council, are formulated without any involvement on the part of the national parliaments or civil society. Does the Commission not agree that, as a result, the policy guidelines lack democratic legitimacy?

2. Does the Commission regard it as acceptable that the European Parliament, the national parliaments, the social partners and civil society should be given only such a limited role in the European Semester? In the interests of ensuring democratic legitimacy, should the Commission not consider an alternative approach?

3. How will the Commission make sure that the Member States draw up their national reform programmes in the most transparent manner possible and involve the national parliaments and social partners properly in this process?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The European Semester provides for *ex-ante* coordination at the EU level of economic policies of the Member States. The Commission's Annual Growth Survey (AGS) launches the European Semester, providing the Commission's view on policy priorities for 2013. It is on the basis of the AGS and the subsequent debates in the Council (Ecofin and EPSCO) and in the European Parliament that the Spring European Council eventually adopts policy guidance, which identifies priorities for economic reforms in the Member States.

The Commission is supportive of involvement of the Parliament in the European Semester and of the active role the Parliament has through the Economic Dialogue. The Economic Dialogue was introduced by the six-pack legislation with the aim of ensuring democratic accountability in the area of economic policy coordination, and was further strengthened with the two-pack legislation. The Parliament may also invite individual Member States to participate in an exchange of views. The Commission also participated in the Parliamentary week in January 2013.

The National Reform Programmes (NRPs) are national documents prepared by the Member States. The Europe 2020 strategy calls for close association of national parliaments, social partners and representatives of civil society in the preparation of the NRPs. The Commission continues to emphasise this to the Member States and has asked that NRPs state how national parliaments and other concerned parties were involved in the process of preparing the NRP and in the implementation of past guidance and commitments. The Commission also encourages national parliaments to discuss the Country Specific Recommendations.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001522/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Gouvernance du marché unique

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission quant à choisir comme instrument juridique de prédilection, dans le respect du principe de subsidiarité et si cela est approprié, les règlements plutôt que les directives pour réglementer le marché unique, principalement lorsque des mesures supplémentaires relatives à la mise en œuvre de la législation de l'Union ne sont pas nécessaires?

2. La Commission va-t-elle, comme l'a suggéré le Parlement européen, introduire un «test du marché unique» au niveau national, afin d'évaluer si toute nouvelle disposition législative nationale peut avoir une influence négative sur le fonctionnement correct du marché unique?

3. De quelle manière la Commission envisage-t-elle la faisabilité d'un système de notification pour les projets de loi au niveau national susceptibles d'avoir un impact négatif sur le fonctionnement du marché unique? Ce système pourrait ainsi compléter la procédure définie dans la directive 98/34/CE pour créer un instrument horizontal, pour renforcer sa nature préventive lorsque la Commission présente un avis détaillé sur un projet de loi et pour garantir sa mise en œuvre afin de remédier à la mise en œuvre, insuffisante, de la législation de l'Union au niveau local.

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

Dans sa communication ([1]), la Commission a pris l'engagement de veiller à ce que toutes les propositions législatives sur le marché unique soient fonctionnelles et applicables et que les coûts administratifs qu'elles entraînent soient aussi faibles que possible. Elle présentera, lorsqu'il y a lieu, des propositions de règlements plutôt que de directives, notamment lorsqu'il n'est pas utile de laisser une marge d'appréciation pour mettre en œuvre les règles de l'Union proposées.

En ce qui concerne la libre circulation des produits de fabrication industrielle et des produits de l'agriculture et de la pêche, ainsi que des services de la société de l'information, la directive 98/34/CE prévoyant une procédure d'information dans le domaine des normes et réglementations techniques ([2]) constitue un instrument horizontal qui vise à prévenir l'apparition d'obstacles techniques dans le marché intérieur. La procédure de notification s'est révélée très efficace pour prévenir l'apparition d'obstacles aux échanges et veiller à la bonne application de la législation de l'Union. Elle a ainsi permis d'éviter l'ouverture de longues et coûteuses procédures d'infraction.

Dans son dernier rapport sur le fonctionnement de la directive 98/34/CE en 2009 et 2010 ([3]), la Commission a confirmé toute l'utilité de cette procédure du point de vue de l'efficacité, de la transparence et de la coopération administrative.

Par conséquent, tout en partageant les objectifs indiqués, la Commission n'envisage pas de mettre en place un nouveau «test du marché unique» à l'échelon national pour déterminer si des textes législatifs nationaux nouvellement adoptés sont de nature à entraver le bon fonctionnement du marché unique pour les produits et services concernés.

([1]) Une meilleure gouvernance pour le marché unique, 8 juin 2012: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/strategy/docs/governance/com_2012_259_fr.pdf
([2]) JO L 204 du 21.7.1998, p. 37.
([3]) COM,(2011) 853 final — http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0853:FIN:FR:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001522/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Single Market governance

1. Taking only cases where it is appropriate and consistent with the subsidiarity principle, what is the Commission's stance on giving preference to regulations over directives for the purposes of Single Market governance, particularly when there is no need for additional measures to implement EU legislation?

2. Is the Commission planning, as Parliament has suggested, to introduce a 'Single Market test' at national level that would determine whether new pieces of national legislation are likely to hamper the proper functioning of the Single Market?

3. How does the Commission imagine that a notification system for draft national legislation likely to hamper the proper functioning of the Single Market would work? Such a system would supplement the notification procedure laid down in Directive 98/34/EC, creating a horizontal instrument that would strengthen the preventive nature of the procedure when the Commission submits a detailed opinion on a draft law and ensure that the procedure is in fact employed in order to rectify the inadequate implementation of EC law at local level.

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

In its communication ([1]), the Commission commits itself to ensure that all proposals for Single Market legislation are operable and enforceable, at minimum administrative cost. Where appropriate, it will propose Regulations instead of Directives, notably where there is no need for further discretion when implementing the proposed EU rules.

As far as the free movement of industrially manufactured, agricultural and fish products as well as Information Society services is concerned, Directive 98/34/EC laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations ([2]) as amended constitutes a preventive horizontal instrument which aims at removing technical obstacles in the internal market before they appear. The notification procedure has proved to be a very effective instrument of prevention of barriers to trade and for ensuring the correct application of European Union legislation, thus avoiding long and costly infringement proceedings.

The last report on the operation of Directive 98/34/EC for 2009 and 2010 ([3]) has confirmed the relevance of the procedure in terms of effectiveness, transparency and administrative cooperation.

Therefore, the Commission, while sharing the objectives, as indicated, does not plan to introduce a new 'Single Market test' at national level that would determine whether new pieces of national legislation are likely to hamper the proper functioning of the Single Market for the concerned products and services.

([1]) Better Governance for the Single Market, 8 June 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/strategy/docs/governance/com_2012_259_en.pdf
([2]) OJ L 204, 21.7.1998, p. 37-48.
([3]) COM(2011) 853 final — http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0853:FIN:EN:PDF

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001523/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Minerai: traçabilité de la viande poubelle

À l'origine de cette question, il y a, d'une part, le cas de la viande Findus et, d'autre part, celui des hamburgers qui avaient tué deux jeunes consommateurs français en 2011.

La fabrication du minerai ou de certaines viandes hachées est une aberration totale et l'information fournie au client encore déficiente. Si on ne réglemente pas la production de viandes hachées beaucoup plus sévèrement, cette intoxication alimentaire mortelle ne sera pas la dernière en Europe.

Le problème, c'est que le principe du steak haché consiste à mélanger des tonnes de carcasses et de les broyer ensemble, ce qui fait qu'un seul steak peut être constitué de viande de dizaines de vaches, et qu'une seule carcasse infectée va contaminer des tonnes de steaks.

Quand on sait que le steak haché incriminé lors du décès des enfants en 2011 était composé de 6 à 7 viandes différentes provenant d'au moins 4 pays différents, et qu'il était assemblé dans un pays et conditionné dans un autre, il est clair que la traçabilité devient compliquée. Les risques sont alors multipliés à l'infini.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle proposer une législation spécifique pour les viandes composées, voire, multi-composées?

2. J'avais émis l'idée, pour dissuader les entreprises productrices d'effectuer de tels bricolages alimentaires, de limiter réglementairement le nombre de viandes d'origine différente dans la pièce vendue au consommateur. Quelle est la position de la Commission à cet égard?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(12 avril 2013)

En vertu du principe établi, pour la viande, par la législation de l'UE en matière d'hygiène des denrées alimentaires ([1]), lorsque les contrôles officiels révèlent que les animaux vivants sont en bonne santé, la viande provenant de ceux-ci est considérée comme propre à la consommation humaine

Cela signifie que la viande provenant de l'ensemble des animaux qui ont donné satisfaction lors du contrôle officiel est propre à la consommation humaine. Du point de vue de la sécurité alimentaire, il n'est donc pas nécessaire de limiter le nombre d'animaux dont la viande peut être utilisée pour la fabrication de produits à base de viande.

Afin de garantir que la viande demeure propre à la consommation humaine après le contrôle officiel, tout au long de la chaîne alimentaire, des exigences en matière de température, de délai et de charge microbienne doivent être respectées ([2]). La mise en œuvre correcte de ces règles, qui incombe à l'opérateur de la filière alimentaire, permettra de garantir que la viande mise sur le marché ne présente aucun danger.

La Commission ne prévoit pas de proposer une nouvelle législation spécifique en ce qui concerne la fabrication de produits à base de viande provenant de plusieurs sources différentes ni d'imposer des limites juridiques au nombre d'animaux dont la viande peut être combinée dans un seul produit. Toutefois, en ce qui concerne l'étiquetage de l'origine, la Commission est heureuse d'informer l'Honorable Parlementaire qu'elle présentera, à l'automne 2013, un rapport sur la possibilité d'introduire un étiquetage de l'origine obligatoire pour tous les types de viande utilisés comme ingrédients dans les denrées alimentaires. Ce rapport servira de base à une discussion sur l'étiquetage de l'origine.

([1]) Règlement (CE) nº 854/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 29 avril 2004 fixant les règles spécifiques d'organisation des contrôles officiels concernant les produits d'origine animale destinés à la consommation humaine. JO L 226 du 25.6.2004, p. 83.

([2]) Règlement (CE) nº 853/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 29 avril 2004 fixant des règles spécifiques d'hygiène applicables aux denrées alimentaires d'origine animale JO L 226 du 25.6.2004, p. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001523/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Mechanically recovered meat: traceability of poor-quality meat

Two matters have led me to ask this question: the Findus meat affair and the case of two young French consumers who were killed by hamburgers they ate in 2011.

The production of mechanically recovered meat and of certain types of minced meat is an absolute disgrace, and consumers are still not given sufficient information. If the production of minced meat is not much more strictly regulated, this fatal case of food poisoning will not be the last in Europe.

The problem is that hamburger patties are made by mixing and grinding up tonnes of beef carcasses, which means that a single patty may contain beef from dozens of different animals. This means that one infected carcass may contaminate tonnes of different patties.

Given that the hamburger that caused the death of the two children in 2011 was made up of six or seven different types of meat from at least four different countries, and was prepared in one country and packed in another, it is evident that real traceability is almost impossible. Any risks are exponentially multiplied.

1. Does the Commission intend to propose specific legislation governing reformed meat from several different sources?

2. I have suggested deterring meat producers from coming up with such unpalatable mixtures by imposing legal limits on the number of animals whose meat can be combined in a single product marketed to the consumer. What is the Commission's position in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The principle of the EU food hygiene legislation ([1]) for meat is that when the live animals are found healthy during official inspections, the meat derived thereof is considered fit for human consumption.

This implies that meat from all animals which successfully passed official inspection is fit for human consumption. From a food safety point of view, there is therefore no need to limit the number of animals from which meat for the production of meat products may be used.

To ensure that the meat remains fit for human consumption after official inspection when it passes through the food chain, temperature, time and microbial requirements apply ([2]). Correct implementation of those rules, which is the responsibility of the food business operator, will ensure that meat placed on the market is safe.

The Commission is not planning to propose new specific legislation governing the production of meat products from several different sources or to impose legal limits on the number of animals whose meat may be combined in a single product. However regarding origin labelling the Commission is pleased to inform the Honourable Member that it will present a report on the possibility of mandatory origin labelling for all types of meat used as ingredients in foods in autumn 2013. This report will be the basis for a discussion on origin labelling.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption. OJ L 226 25.6.2004, p. 83.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 853 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin. OJ L 226 25.6.2004, p. 22.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001524/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Findus: contrôles des denrées alimentaires

À la suite de la découverte, dans des produits Findus, de viande de cheval dans des lasagnes censées ne contenir que du bœuf, la traçabilité européenne a été incriminée à tort. Dans ce cas précis, la traçabilité européenne n'est pas en cause. L'enquête déterminera les responsabilités de chacun. Par contre, nous devons renforcer les contrôles de sécurité alimentaire sans quoi nous finirons par manger du chien.

Il y a une tendance accrue à se reposer sur les contrôles effectués par les entreprises qui fabriquent ces produits. En effet, les services nationaux chargés de la répression des fraudes et des contrôles sanitaires ont de moins en moins de moyens pour effectuer des contrôles systématiques, notamment en raison de la diminution des enveloppes budgétaires et, souvent, de la réduction progressive des effectifs.

Force est de constater que tout le monde s'est tourné vers l'Europe pour trouver des solutions, ce qui est appréciable, mais la conclusion logique de cet épisode Findus est que les limites de l'autocontrôle ont été largement atteintes.

1. Quels sont les aides octroyées par la Commission aux autorités nationales dans le cadre de ces contrôles?

2. Les budgets alloués à ces organes de contrôle diminuent d'année en année. Quelle est l'attitude de la Commission face à cette évolution?

3. Dès lors, la Commission envisage-t-elle une augmentation de son aide?

4. À terme, la Commission envisage-t-elle de faire procéder à des contrôles pour faire face à un autocontrôle déficient et à des organes de contrôle nationaux de moins en moins efficaces à cause de la conjoncture qui risquent de mettre à nouveau en péril la sécurité alimentaire des citoyens?

5. La Commission dispose-t-elle d'une estimation du nombre annuel des fraudes alimentaires en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(2 avril 2013)

Les systèmes de contrôle permettant de faire appliquer la législation relative à la chaîne alimentaire relèvent des États membres. Toutefois, la Commission soutient et surveille la mise en œuvre de ces systèmes de contrôle en effectuant des audits sur le terrain.

La Commission s'emploie — tant sur le plan politique que technique — à coordonner les enquêtes en cours dans les États membres concernés afin de déterminer la prévalence de la fraude en question aussi rapidement que possible. À cette fin, elle a adopté une recommandation relative à un plan de contrôle coordonné ([1]) invitant tous les États membres de l'UE à effectuer des contrôles, d'une part, sur les denrées alimentaires commercialisées comme contenant du bœuf en vue de détecter les étiquetages frauduleux et, d'autre part, sur la viande de cheval afin de détecter la présence de phénylbutazone. Le plan est cofinancé par l'Union à hauteur de 75 %.

La proposition à venir concernant les contrôles officiels consolidera les contrôles existants en dotant les autorités compétentes d'un cadre juridique plus efficace et en renforçant les mesures d'exécution pour faire respecter la législation de l'Union européenne.

Sur la base des informations fournies à ce jour, aucun risque pour la santé n'a été mis en évidence.

La Commission ne tient pas de statistiques sur les cas de fraude alimentaire en Europe.

([1]) Recommandation de la Commission du 19 février 2013 relative à un plan de contrôle coordonné en vue d'établir la prévalence de pratiques frauduleuses dans la commercialisation de certains produits alimentaires (2013/99/UE), JO L 48 du 21.2.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001524/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Findus: food safety checks

When horsemeat was discovered in Findus-brand lasagne which were supposed to contain only beef, people wrongly pointed the finger at Europe's food traceability system. In this specific case the problem does not lie with the system, and the ongoing investigation will determine who was ultimately responsible for the horsemeat scandal. However, food safety checks should be made more stringent so that we do not end up eating dog meat.

We are becoming increasingly reliant on checks conducted by food manufacturers themselves, since the national anti-fraud and food safety authorities have fewer and fewer resources to carry out the systematic monitoring required, mainly as a result of budget cuts and, in many cases, a gradual reduction in staffing levels.

Whilst it is heartening that so many people have turned to Europe for solutions, the logical conclusion to be drawn from the Findus scandal is that there has been an over-reliance on self-regulation in the food industry.

1. How does the Commission support national authorities in carrying out food safety checks?

2. The budgets of food safety authorities are shrinking every year. What view does the Commission take on this?

3. Does it intend to step up its support for them?

4. Will it take steps to ensure that proper checks are carried out in order to address the latest scandal posing a threat to food safety, which has highlighted the shortcomings of self-regulation and the increasing ineffectiveness of national food safety authorities?

5. Can it put a figure on the number of cases of food fraud committed annually in Europe?

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

The control systems for enforcing food chain legislation lies with the Member States. However, the Commission supports and monitors delivery of the control systems through on the spot audits.

The Commission has been active — at both the political and technical levels — in coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned to identify the prevalence of the fraud at issue as soon as possible. To this end, the Commission adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([1]) calling for EU-wide controls on foods marketed as containing beef to detect fraudulent labelling, and on horse meat to detect phenylbutazone. The plan is being co-financed by the Union at a rate of 75%.

The forthcoming proposal on official controls will strengthen existing controls by providing competent authorities with a more efficient legal framework and stronger enforcement tools to ensure compliance with EU rules.

On the basis of the information provided so far no risk for health has been identified.

The Commission does not keep statistcs on the cases of food fraud committed in Europe.

([1]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001525/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 février 2013)

Objet: Passeport européen

L'élaboration du panorama européen des compétences est importante afin de donner une image complète des besoins en compétences de l'Union européenne.

1. Comment la Commission encourage-t-elle la mise en œuvre effective des cadres nationaux de qualifications pour encourager le développement de l'apprentissage tout au long de la vie?

2. Qu'entend faire la Commission pour la mise en place du passeport européen des compétences afin de garantir la transparence et de faciliter la mobilité transfrontalière des travailleurs?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(10 avril 2013)

La Commission considère que le Panorama européen des compétences constitue un outil important, qui fournit des informations sur l'offre et la demande de compétences et les inadéquations en la matière à travers l'Europe.

À cet égard, le cadre européen des certifications (CEC) et les cadres nationaux de certification (CNC) jouent également un rôle prépondérant dans la mise à jour et la reconnaissance des connaissances, compétences et aptitudes acquises par les citoyens tout au long de leur vie. Tous les États membres ont entrepris de référencer auprès du CEC leurs niveaux de certification nationaux. Actuellement, quinze États membres ainsi que la Croatie l'ont déjà fait, et les autres États prévoient de le faire d'ici fin 2013. Parmi d'autres actions destinées à aider ces pays, le Conseil, sur l'initiative de la Commission, a adopté en décembre 2012 une recommandation sur la validation de l'apprentissage non formel et informel. Elle invite les États membres à prendre des dispositions pour valider l'apprentissage non formel et informel à l'horizon 2018, en liaison avec le CEC et les CNC.

Le passeport européen des compétences est disponible depuis décembre dernier. Il permet aux demandeurs d'emploi d'améliorer la présentation de leur CV en fournissant la preuve des qualifications et compétences qu'ils y font figurer. Le passeport multipliera leurs chances de trouver un emploi et aidera les employeurs à trouver du personnel qualifié. Disponible en 26 langues sur le portail Europass ([1]), il complète le CV Europass déjà utilisé par plus de 24 millions d'Européens.

Plus tard dans l'année, la Commission présentera au Conseil et au Parlement européen des rapports sur les évaluations externes portant sur le CEC et Europass.

([1]) http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/fr/home

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001525/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: European Skills Passport

The EU Skills Panorama is an important tool as it provides a comprehensive overview of the skills currently sought by employers in the European Union.

1. What is the Commission doing to encourage the effective implementation of the National Qualifications Frameworks as a tool for promoting the development of lifelong learning?

2. What will it do to establish the European Skills Passport scheme, which would ensure greater transparency and promote cross-border mobility for workers?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The Commission considers the EU Skills Panorama to be an important tool providing intelligence on skills demand, supply and mismatches throughout Europe.

Linked to that, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) are crucial for updating and recognising citizens' knowledge, skills and competences acquired during their lifetime. All Member States have engaged in the process of referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF. Currently 15 Member States and Croatia have done so and those remaining intend to do so by end of 2013. Among other actions to support countries, the Council, upon the initiative of the Commission, adopted a recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning in December 2012. It invites Member States to set up arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2018, linked to the EQF/NQFs.

The European Skills Passport has been available since last December. It enables people to improve the presentation of their CV by providing evidence for the qualifications and skills declared in their CV. It will help job-seekers to improve their chances on the labour market and employers to find qualified personnel. Available in 26 languages on the Europass portal ([1]), it complements the Europass CV used by more than 24 million Europeans.

Later this year, the Commission will present reports to the Council and the European Parliament on the external evaluations of both the EQF and Europass.

([1]) http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/home?loc=en_GB.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001526/13
alla Commissione
Marco Scurria (PPE) e Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Conflitto di interessi

Il 16 novembre.2011 il Senatore Mario Monti, ex commissario europeo responsabile della concorrenza, è stato nominato Presidente del Consiglio del governo italiano.

Con la costituzione del governo, il Presidente Monti ha nominato come portavoce sua personale e del governo tutto, la Signora Elisabetta Olivi. La suddetta risulta già funzionaria della Commissione europea, attualmente in servizio presso la DG DGA, come appare dal sito ufficiale della Commissione europea.

Può una funzionaria della Commissione ricoprire incarichi politici presso il governo di uno Stato membro?

Si può ravvedere un conflitto d'interessi tra il ruolo svolto presso la Commissione, organo indipendente rispetto ai governi nazionali, ed un ruolo di primo piano alle dipendenze dell'esecutivo di uno stato nazionale?

Risposta di Maroš Šefčovič a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-000832/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001526/13
to the Commission
Marco Scurria (PPE) and Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Conflict of interest

On 16 November 2011 Mr Mario Monti, formerly European Commissioner responsible for Competition, was appointed as Italy's Prime Minister.

When forming his government, Mr Monti appointed Ms Elisabetta Olivi as both his own and the government's spokesperson. Ms Olivi is an official at the European Commission who is, according to the Commission's official website, currently posted to DG DGA.

Is it possible for a Commission official to hold political posts in the government of a Member State?

Might there be a conflict of interests between the role at the Commission, a body that is independent of national governments, and an important role in the employ of the executive body of a national state?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000832/2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001527/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Abuso di immatricolazioni di auto italiane in Romania: intervenga l'UE

In Italia, molti hanno compreso che, immatricolando l'auto in Romania, si possono risparmiare soldi, eludendo il fisco italiano. Infatti, con un'auto immatricolata all'estero grazie ad un prestanome o ad una società di leasing non si paga il bollo e la vettura non può essere ricompresa nel temuto redditometro. Con un'auto straniera, non si perdono i punti sulla patente in caso di infrazione perché risulta essere intestata a soggetti terzi rispetto al conducente che non compare nei documenti di circolazione (che tra l'altro sono scritti in rumeno). Inoltre, quando si prende una multa con questi veicoli è quasi impossibile giungere alla reale riscossione della stessa perché si dovrebbe avviare una procedura internazionale, molto onerosa e con scarse possibilità di successo. Questo con gravi ripercussioni per le casse dei comuni italiani.

In campo assicurativo, le tariffe sono nettamente più basse di quelle italiane, si parla di un ribasso di circa il 90 %. Chi resta coinvolto in un incidente con un veicolo con targa e assicurazione straniera deve rivolgersi all'U.C.I. (Ufficio centrale Italiano), non essendo possibile utilizzare la constatazione amichevole né attivare i canali assicurativi tradizionali. L'UCI si occupa di gestire le problematiche relative al risarcimento dei danni causati sul territorio italiano da veicoli immatricolati o registrati in Stati esteri che circolano temporaneamente in Italia e, con alcune particolarità, anche degli incidenti subiti all'estero da veicoli italiani (compresi lo Stato città del Vaticano e la Repubblica di San Marino). I tempi sono sicuramente più lunghi e gravano sulle casse dello Stato perché in caso di irreperibilità, assicurazioni false e veicoli privi del tagliando sarà proprio l'UCI a liquidare direttamente il sinistro.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione sopra descritta?

2. Come intende intervenire anche a tutela dei consumatori?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2013)

1. La Commissione non è a conoscenza dei fatti esposti dall'onorevole parlamentare.

2. Per quanto riguarda le tasse automobilistiche dei veicoli privati, l'armonizzazione è molto limitata e gli Stati membri sono liberi di esercitare la loro competenza fiscale in tale materia. Tuttavia, una persona, di regola, deve immatricolare il proprio veicolo nello Stato membro in cui risiede normalmente, ai sensi della direttiva 83/182/CEE ([1]), ossia, in sostanza, nel luogo in cui dimora abitualmente a motivo di legami personali e/o professionali. In caso di leasing, la Corte di giustizia ([2]) ha statuito che qualora un veicolo concesso in leasing venga in realtà utilizzato sulla rete stradale di un altro Stato membro, quest'ultimo può disporre l'obbligo di immatricolazione sul suo territorio del veicolo stesso; la riscossione delle imposte dell'immatricolazione e del consumo dev'essere proporzionale alla durata del contratto di leasing o alla durata dell'uso. Inoltre, la Corte ha osservato che per ottenere informazioni sull'identità del conducente in un determinato momento sarebbe sufficiente che il veicolo sia immatricolato a nome dell'impresa di leasing con indicazione delle coordinate dell'utilizzatore nello Stato membro in cui il veicolo è utilizzato ([3]). Tale veicolo dev'essere assicurato presso un assicuratore autorizzato, eventualmente nello Stato membro in cui il veicolo è utilizzato.

Spetta agli Stati membri verificare che tali norme siano correttamente applicate, comprese le norme contro gli abusi e in particolare quelle che mirano a combattere la guida senza assicurazione sul territorio nazionale da parte di automobilisti residenti.

([1]) Direttiva 83/182/CEE del Consiglio, del 28 marzo 1983, relativa alle franchigie fiscali applicabili all'interno della Comunità in materia d'importazione temporanea di taluni mezzi di trasporto, GU L 105 del 23.4.1983, pag. 59.

([2]) Causa C-451/99, Cura Anlagen, punti 42 e 69. Ordinanze della Corte nella causa C-242/05, Van Coevering, punto 24 e la giurisprudenza in essa citata, e la causa C-91/10, VAV-Autovermietung, punto 20 e segg.

([3]) Cura Anlagen, citata, punto 51.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001527/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU action on abusive registration of cars from Italy in Romania

Many people in Italy have realised that they can save money by registering their car in Romania, thereby evading the taxation office in Italy. If a car is registered abroad through a figurehead or a leasing company there is no road tax to pay and the vehicle cannot be included in the dreaded income assessment system. Motorists do not lose points on their driving licences if they commit an offence while driving a foreign registered car because the vehicle is registered to a third party and the driver's name does not appear on the car's papers (which apart from anything else are printed in Romanian). What is more, it is almost impossible to collect any fines incurred by drivers of these cars because to do so an international procedure must be instigated that is very onerous and has little chance of success. This has serious repercussions on the coffers of Italian municipalities.

Turning to car insurance, rates are said to be around 90% less than in Italy. Anyone who is involved in an accident with a foreign registered and insured vehicle has to contact the U.C.I. (Ufficio Centrale Italiana) as the normal 'agreed statement' is not possible and nor can traditional insurance channels be used. The UCI handles problems with claims for damage caused on Italian territory by vehicles temporarily circulating in Italy but licensed and registered in other countries and also, with some specific features, claims arising from accidents suffered by Italian vehicles outside of Italy (including in the Vatican City State and the Republic of San Marino). This assuredly takes much longer and is a heavy drain on the State's coffers because it will be the UCI itself that settles the claim for damages when insurance papers prove to be false or the vehicles are not registered or cannot be untraced.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. What action does it intend to take, including in terms of consumer protection?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

1. The Commission is not aware of the facts to which the Honourable Member refers.

2. There has been very little harmonisation in relation to the taxation of private vehicles and Member States are free to exercise their powers of taxation in this area. Nevertheless, motorists must ordinarily register their vehicles in the Member State in which they have their normal residence, within the meaning of Directive 83/182/EEC ([1]), that is, in most cases, in the place where they usually live because of personal and occupational ties. In the case of leasing, the Court of Justice has ruled that, where a vehicle leased from a company established in one Member State is actually used on the road network of another Member State, the latter may impose an obligation for that vehicle to be registered in its territory ([2]); any tax relating to registration or consumption must be proportionate to the length of the leasing contract or the vehicle's use. Furthermore, the Court has held that, in order to obtain information on the identity of the driver at a given moment, it would be sufficient for the leased vehicle to be registered in the Member State in whose territory it is driven in the name of the leasing undertaking, while providing the particulars of the lessee in that Member State ([3]). Such a vehicle must be insured with an authorised insurer, where necessary in the State in which it is driven.

It is for Member States to check that these rules are correctly enforced, including the anti-abuse rules, particularly those drawn up to prevent vehicles from being used in their territory without insurance by resident motorists.

([1]) Council Directive 83/182/EEC of 28 March 1983 on tax exemptions within the Community for certain means of transport temporarily imported into one Member State from another, OJ L 105, 23.4.1983, p. 59.

([2]) Case C-451/99 Cura Anlagen, paragraphs 42 and 69. Orders of the Court in Case C-242/05 Van Coevering, paragraph 24 and the case-law referred to therein, and in Case C-91/10 VAV-Autovermietung, paragraphs 20 et seq.

([3]) Cura Anlagen, referred to above, paragraph 51.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001528/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Controverso progetto di svincolo con stazione di esazione lungo l'Autostrada A27 Mestre-Belluno a Santa Lucia di Piave (TV)

Autostrade per l'Italia S.p.A. realizzerà un nuovo svincolo con stazione di esazione lungo l'Autostrada A27 Mestre-Belluno, ubicato a Santa Lucia di Piave (TV); tale opera, oltre ad apparire superflua (stante l'attuale presenza di 3 caselli in un percorso di meno di 30 km, che saliranno a 4 con lo svincolo della realizzanda superstrada Pedemontana Veneta) necessita della creazione di una complessa rete di viabilità di collegamento — che sarà realizzata dalla Provincia di Treviso — al fine di consentire agli utenti di fruirne. Il complesso degli interventi interessa un'area di centinaia di ettari a ridosso (quanto alla progettata viabilità complementare, in un punto addirittura in tangenza) del SIC IT 3240030 «Grave del Piave, Fiume Soligo, Fosso di Negrisia» e della ZPS IT 3240023 «Grave del Piave», avente significativa vocazione ambientale, elevata e integra naturalità nonché pregiata destinazione agricola; si fregia in particolare di eccellenti produzioni vitivinicole (Raboso del Piave, Prosecco e altri vini DOC) e orticole (Asparago Bianco di Cimadolmo IGP). I due progetti, benché riguardino un unitario sistema infrastrutturale, sono stati concepiti e istruiti come distinti; grazie a questo escamotage giocato sul diverso regime di competenza (statale quanto al nuovo casello, provinciale quanto alla viabilità complementare), la verifica di assoggettabilità a VIA, conclusasi con l'esclusione della stessa ([1]), è stata eseguita dal Ministero dell'Ambiente-Direzione Generale Valutazioni Ambientali in merito al solo progetto di nuovo casello (meno impattante se singolarmente considerato) ([2]). Nel prosieguo dei due paralleli iter burocratici, tuttavia, entrambi i progetti hanno registrato il parere paesaggistico negativo della competente autorità ([3]), con conseguente mancato raggiungimento della necessaria intesa tra Amministrazioni, rendendosi infine paradossalmente indispensabile la riunificazione dei due procedimenti e l'emanazione di apposito decreto del Presidente della Repubblica Italiana al fine di risolvere la situazione di stallo amministrativo ([4]) (provvedimento questo, peraltro, di dubbia legittimità).

Sulla base di quanto esposto, la Commissione non ritiene che l'originaria scelta di dividere i due iter procedimentali fosse in contrasto con la costante giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia CE ([5]), secondo la quale la normativa in materia di VIA non può essere aggirata mediante un frazionamento dei progetti con perdita della visione d'insieme? Non ritiene quindi opportuno valutare la corretta applicazione delle direttive «VIA» 85/337/CEE (ora 2011/92/UE), «Habitat» 92/43/CEE e «VAS» 2001/42/CE?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2013)

La Commissione contatterà le autorità italiane per verificare il rispetto della direttiva 2011/92/UE ([6]) (direttiva relativa alla valutazione dell'impatto ambientale o direttiva VIA) e della direttiva 92/43/CEE ([7]) (direttiva Habitat) in relazione alla nuova stazione di esazione a Santa Lucia di Piave (TV) e al relativo svincolo autostradale. Per quanto riguardo la direttiva VIA, le informazioni richieste riguarderanno la considerazione degli impatti cumulativi in linea con la relativa giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea.

La direttiva 2001/42/CE ([8]) (direttiva sulla valutazione ambientale strategica) si applica ai piani e programmi e non è rilevante nel presente caso.

([1]) Esclusione disposta con determinazione direttoriale DVA-2010-0019248 del 2.8.2010; anche la Commissione VIA/VAS, peraltro, precisava in tale circostanza la necessità di esecuzione contestuale dei due progetti per la messa in esercizio della viabilità.

([2]) È stata in seguito commissionata dai comuni di Santa Lucia di Piave, Mareno di Piave e Vazzola (TV) una VINCA che ha escluso la possibilità che si verifichino effetti ambientali negativi. Cfr.http://www.comune.vazzola.tv.it/statico/PATI/VINCA.pdf

([3]) Reso su delega del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali italiano, in occasione delle due conferenze di servizi convocate rispettivamente presso la Provincia di Treviso in data 4.3.2011 in relazione al progetto «viabilità di collegamento» e presso il Ministero delle Infrastrutture e dei Trasporti in Roma in data 10.03.2011 in relazione al progetto «nuovo casello».

([4]) Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica italiana 30 luglio 2012, n. 65663.

([5]) Confrontare: CE, 2° sez., 28.2.2008, causa C-2/07 e CE, 5° sez., 21.9.1999, causa C-392/96.

([6]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.

([7]) GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.

([8]) GU L 197 del 21.7.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001528/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Controversial plan for a junction with a toll station at Santa Lucia di Piave (TV) on the A27 Mestre-Belluno motorway

Autostrade per l'Italia S.p.A. is planning to build a new junction complete with toll station at Santa Lucia di Piava (TV) on the A27 Mestre-Belluno motorway. Apart from being to all intents and purposes superfluous — there are already three toll booths here along a stretch of road less than 30 km long and this will rise to four with the completion of the junction with the Pedemontana Veneta superhighway — in order for users to benefit from this new junction a complex road link must be built, work the Province of Treviso will do. Together, these two sets of road construction works will affect an area of approximately one hundred hectares which backs onto (and in the case of the ancillary road link even at one point borders) SCI IT 3240030 'Grave del Piave, Fiume Soligo, Fosso di Negrisia' and SPA IT 3240023 'Grave del Piave'. This is an environmentally important area of outstanding and untouched natural beauty. It is also valuable agricultural land, with the area able to boast in particular of the excellence of its wine (Raboso del Piave, Prosecco and other DOC winces) and the quality of its horticultural produce (Asparago Bianco di Cimadolmo IGP).

Although the two road construction plans are both for the same infrastructure system, they have been devised and submitted to the different bodies responsible (state body for the new toll booth, provincial body for the ancillary road system) as separate systems. As a result of this subterfuge, it was only the the plan for a new toll booth (whose impact is less when viewed on its own) that the Environmental Assessment Directorate-General of the Ministry of the Environment subjected to a check on whether an environmental impact assessment (EIA) was necessary. The conclusion was that it was not ([1]) ([2]). However, in the course of their transit through parallel bureaucratic procedures, both plans received a negative opinion on landscaping from the authority concerned ([3]). This failure to obtain the agreement needed among the administrations meant that paradoxically, in the end, the two procedures had to be reunited and the appropriate decree issued by the President of the Italian Republic to resolve the administrative stalemate ([4]) (a procedure, moreover, whose legitimacy is questionable).

In light of the above, does the Commission consider that the original decision to split the plans into two procedures went against settled case-law of the European Court of Justice ([5]), according to which legislation on EIA may not be bypassed by breaking projects down and thereby losing sight of the overall plan?

Would it therefore agree that an assessment needs to be carried out into whether EIA Directive 85/337/EEC (now Directive 2011/92/EU), the Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive No 2001/42/EC were correctly implemented?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission will contact the Italian authorities to verify compliance with Directives 2011/92/EU ([6]) (Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA) and 92/43/EEC ([7]) (Habitats) for the new toll station at Santa Lucia di Piava (TV) and the related ancillary road link. With regard to the EIA Directive, information will be requested concerning the consideration of cumulative impacts in line with the relevant Case Law of the European Court of Justice.

([1]) See Determinazione Direttoriale DVA-2010-0019248 of 2.8.2010; the 'EIA/SEA Committee' stated also that the circumstances were such that the two projects should be executed concomitantly to bring the road system into operation.
([2]) A 'VINCA' assessment, assessing implications for the site, was commissioned immediately by the municipalities of Santa Lucia di Piave, Mareno di Piave and Vazzola (TV). This excluded checking for negative environmental impacts.
See: http://www.comune.vazzola.tv.it/statico/PATI/VINCA.pdf
([3]) Given on behalf of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities, during two departmental conferences at the Province of Treviso on 4.3.2011 in regard to the planned link road and at the Ministry for Infrastructure and Transport in Rome on 10.03.2011 in regard to the planned new toll booth.
([4]) Decree of the President of the Italian Republic of 30 July 2012, No 65663.
([5]) See: ECJ 2nd Chamber, 28.2.2008, Case C-2/07 and ECJ, 5th Chamber, 21.9.1999, Case C-392/96.
([6]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([7]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

Directive 2001/42/EC ([8]) (Strategic Environment Assessment) applies to plans and programmes and is not relevant in this case.

([8]) OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001529/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: L'UE intervenga contro la contraffazione dei prodotti della moda

Premesso che l'UE vuole dare una spinta al settore della moda, che rappresenta quasi il 3 % del PIL e il 10 % delle esportazioni dell'UE, sulla base di 850 mila imprese e 5 milioni di posti di lavoro, riconoscendo tale industria a livello internazionale per il suo carattere che unisce tradizione e avanguardia, in quanto coniuga creatività, patrimonio, sforzi, tecnologia e innovazione per creare prodotti di alta qualità e ad alto valore aggiunto;

assodato che l'UE ha la consapevolezza che i prodotti della moda sono i più colpiti dalla contraffazione, essendo pari al 50 % di tutti i casi segnalati e sequestrati dalle dogane dell'UE nel 2011;

potrebbe la Commissione indicare con quali concrete misure e iniziative di contrasto intende combattere la contraffazione dei prodotti della moda?

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

Come osservato dall'onorevole parlamentare, il settore della moda è soggetto a violazioni dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale (DPI). Secondo una recente relazione della Commissione ([1]) le principali categorie di articoli sequestrati dalle autorità doganali dell'UE sono le seguenti (ordinate per valore): orologeria, abbigliamento, borse, portafogli e portamonete, calzature non sportive e calzature sportive, per un totale di oltre il 50 %. Poiché sono in termini di valore, queste statistiche comprendono beni di lusso, cosa che spiega le elevate cifre registrate. Questo non implica necessariamente che il settore in oggetto sia il solo coinvolto, perché, se si considera il numero di articoli sequestrati nello stesso anno, le principali categorie di beni sequestrati sono le seguenti: medicinali, materiali da imballaggio e sigarette. Inoltre, i sequestri sono essi stessi un indicatore parziale in quanto sono influenzati dall'efficacia e dall'importanza di politiche di applicazione delle norme diverse. La Commissione ha quindi incaricato una società specializzata di sviluppare una metodologia adeguata per quantificare il problema ([2]).

Per risolvere questo problema, il legislatore UE ha istituito l'Osservatorio europeo sulle violazioni dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale. Fra i suoi compiti rientrano la promozione di una maggiore collaborazione fra i soggetti pubblici e privati interessati alla lotta contro le violazioni dei DPI. Sul fronte normativo la Commissione sta attualmente consultando i soggetti portatori d'interesse sull'efficacia dei sistemi di rimedio civili in materia di proprietà intellettuale nell'UE, prima di valutare se sia necessario intervenire ulteriormente.

La Commissione è impegnata in un dialogo con i principali partner internazionali quali la Cina, la Russia, il Brasile, la Turchia o l'India. L'obiettivo è rafforzare la cooperazione tecnica per la lotta contro la contraffazione e uniformare meglio i quadri legislativi. Per contrastare la contraffazione dei beni che arrivano nell'UE vengono inoltre adottate azioni doganali congiunte.

([1]) «Relazione sull'azione delle dogane UE per la tutela dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale — risultati alle frontiere 2011» disponibile sul sito web della Commissione:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/customs/customs_controls/counterfeit_piracy/statistics/2012_ipr_statistics_en.pdf

([2]) Misurare le violazioni dei DPI nel mercato interno: sviluppo di una nuova metodologia per stimare l'impatto delle violazioni sulle vendite. Disponibile sul sito web della Commissione:
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/iprenforcement/docs/ipr_infringment-report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001529/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU action against counterfeit fashion goods

The fashion industry, with its 850 000 companies and 5 million jobs, accounts for almost 3% of EU GDP and 10% of its exports. The industry is recognised internationally for the way it blends tradition and the avantgarde, combining creativity, heritage, hard work, technology and innovation to produce high quality goods with high added value.

Fashion is, as the EU is aware, the industry that suffers most from counterfeiting. Fifty per cent of all the fake goods reported to and seized by EU customs officials in 2011 were fashion items.

Since the EU wishes to boost the fashion industry, what specific measures and counteraction will the Commission take to combat counterfeiting of fashion items?

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

As noted by the Honourable Member, the fashion industry suffers from IP infringements. According to a recent Commission report ([1]) the top categories of seizures by EU customs authorities, were, by value: watches followed by clothing, bags, wallets and purses, non-sports shoes and sports shoes leading to a total of over 50%. Since these statistics are by value, the inclusion of luxury items within them explains the high values recorded. This does not necessarily imply that this industry is the only one affected, because, if one takes the number of articles seized for the same year, the top categories of seizures are: medicines followed by packaging material and cigarettes. Moreover, seizures are themselves a partial indicator since they are influenced by the effectiveness and prioritisation of differing enforcement policies. The Commission therefore engaged a specialised company to develop a suitable methodology for quantifying the problem ([2]).

To address this problem, the EU legislator established the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights. Its tasks include encouraging greater collaboration between public and private stakeholders in the fight against IPR infringements. On the regulatory front, the Commission is currently consulting stakeholders on the effectiveness of IP civil redress systems within the EU before considering whether further action should be taken.

The Commission is engaged in international dialogues with key partners such as China, Russia, Brazil, Turkey or India, the objective being to enhance technical cooperation to fight against counterfeiting and to better align legislative frameworks. Joined customs actions are also taken to counteract counterfeit goods entering into the EU.

([1]) 'Report on EU customs enforcement of intellectual property rights — results at the border 2011' is available at the Commission's website: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/customs/customs_controls/counterfeit_piracy/statistics/2012_ipr_statistics_en.pdf

([2]) 'Measuring IPR infringements in the internal market Development of a new approach to estimating the impact of infringements on sales' is available at the Commission's website: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/iprenforcement/docs/ipr_infringment-report_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001530/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(13 februari 2013)

Betreft: Commissieambtenaar in Den Haag

De Commissie heeft sinds kort in meerdere lidstaten European Semester Officers gestationeerd om toe te zien op de beleidsbepaling. In de Nederlandse Tweede Kamer is de benoeming van een dergelijke ambtenaar met gemengde gevoelens ontvangen. In dit kader stel ik de volgende vragen aan de Commissie.

1. Waarom is, in de visie van de Commissie, het nodig om een ambtenaar te belasten met toezicht op de Nederlandse regering? Heeft Nederland fouten gemaakt?

2. Welke macht en welk mandaat heeft deze ambtenaar? Kan Nederland deze ambtenaar de toegang weigeren tot de kantoren van de diverse ministeries?

3. Hoeveel ambtenaren gaan het uiteindelijk worden, per lidstaat? Is het de bedoeling om op termijn een ambtenaar per ministerie te benoemen, wellicht per directoraat-generaal, of zelfs per directie?

4. Zal deze ambtenaar weer worden teruggetrokken als lidstaten zich houden aan de richtlijnen van de Commissie? Zo ja, welke richtlijnen zijn dat? Zo nee, betekent dit dat het toezicht van de Commissie voor eeuwig is?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(11 april 2013)

1. Naar aanleiding van de crisis hebben het Europees Parlement en de Raad overeenstemming bereikt over maatregelen om de economische governance te versterken. In dit verband is het Europees Semester opgericht om te zorgen voor beter toezicht op het economisch beleid en bij te dragen tot de verwezenlijking van de gemeenschappelijke doelstellingen van slimme, duurzame en inclusieve groei, zoals uiteengezet in de Europa 2020-strategie.

Om de uitvoering van de Europa 2020-strategie dichter bij de lidstaten te brengen en meer nadruk te leggen op de landspecifieke dimensie van de nieuwe Europese economische governanceregelingen, wordt er bij de vertegenwoordigingen van de Commissie een ambtenaar voor het Europees Semester (*European Semester Officer*) benoemd.

2. De ambtenaar voor het Europees Semester heeft als taak, de landenspecifieke kennis van de Commissie op sociaal-economisch gebied te verdiepen en bovendien het begrip van het doel en de werking van het Europees Semester te verbeteren.

Bij hun werkzaamheden plegen de ambtenaren voor het Europees Semester overleg met alle betrokkenen in de hele samenleving, zowel op nationaal als op regionaal niveau, met sociale partners en andere belangengroepen.

3. Er komt één ambtenaar voor het Europees Semester per lidstaat.

4. Het geachte Parlementslid kan informatie vinden over het Europees Semester, met inbegrip van landenspecifieke aanbevelingen, op de website van de Commissie ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001530/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Commission official in The Hague

The Commission has recently appointed European Semester Officers in a number of Member States to monitor policy-making. In the Netherlands House of Representatives, the appointment of such an official has been received with mixed feelings.

1. Why does the Commission consider it necessary to appoint an official to supervise the Netherlands Government? Has the Netherlands been making mistakes?

2. What powers and what mandate does this official have? Can the Netherlands deny this official access to the offices of the various ministries?

3. How many officials will ultimately be appointed per Member State? Is it intended that in due course one official should be appointed per ministry, or perhaps per directorate-general or even per directorate/department?

4. Will this official be withdrawn again if Member States comply with the Commission's guidelines? If so, what are the guidelines? If not, does this mean that Commission supervision will continue for ever?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

1. As one consequence out of the crisis, the European Parliament and the Council have agreed on measures to enhance economic governance. In this regard, the European Semester was set up to ensure closer surveillance of economic policies and contribute to the common objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, as set out in the Europe 2020 strategy.

To help bringing the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy closer to the Member States and step up the country-specific dimension of the new European economic governance arrangements, a European Semester Officer will be assigned to Commission's Representations.

2. The role of the European Semester Officer is to deepen the Commission's country-specific knowledge in the socioeconomic sphere and, on the other hand, to promote understanding of the purpose and functioning of the European Semester.

In their work, the European Semester Officers engage with all relevant actors across society, both on the national and regional level, with social partners and other interest groups.

3. There will be one European Semester Officer per Member State.

4. The Honourable Member can find information on the European Semester, including country-specific Recommendations on the Commission's website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001531/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(13 februari 2013)

Betreft: Steun aan banken door het ESM

Het Nederlandse ministerie van Financiën heeft op grond van een recente wet kunnen besluiten om SNS te nationaliseren. Dat is gebeurd vanwege verliezen op vastgoedinvesteringen. SNS had in een eerder stadium al staatssteun gekregen. Door de nationalisatie zal deze eerdere steun niet meer terugbetaald worden.

Het ESM kan ook gebruikt worden voor directe steun aan in problemen geraakte banken. Daarmee is het hierboven geschetste scenario, waarbij kapitaalsteun verloren gaat, vaker mogelijk. In dit kader de volgende vragen.

1. Onder welke voorwaarden kan het ESM rechtstreeks banken herkapitaliseren?

2. Vindt er een risico-inventarisatie plaats? Zo ja, wanneer wordt het risico op deconfiture te groot geacht om door het ESM gedragen te worden?

3. Blijft de lidstaat waar de bank gevestigd is verantwoordelijk voor de terugbetaling? Zo nee, wie is er dan verantwoordelijk voor?

4. Als, na steun, de bank toch niet te redden is, wie betaalt dan de rekening?

5. Kan steun aan een bank geweigerd worden? Kan dat ook als het een zogenaamde „systeembank" is?

6. Is het de bedoeling om het ESM onderdeel te maken van de verdragen? Zo ja, op welke termijn?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(2 april 2013)

Tijdens de top van de eurozone van 29 juni 2012 hebben de leiders bevestigd dat „de vicieuze cirkel tussen de banken en de overheden absoluut moet worden doorbroken". Ze zijn overeengekomen dat het Europees stabiliteitsmechanisme (ESM) de bevoegdheid krijgt om banken rechtstreeks te herkapitaliseren zodra het gemeenschappelijk toezichtmechanisme is ingevoerd. Het ESM-verdrag dat op 11 juli 2011 is ondertekend, biedt de mogelijkheid om nieuwe instrumenten te creëren (artikel 19), maar voorziet in zijn huidige vorm niet in de mogelijkheid van rechtstreekse herkapitalisaties.

De rechtstreekse herkapitalisaties hebben ten doel het risico van besmetting van de overheidssector door de financiële sector weg te nemen, de negatieve terugkoppeling te verminderen en zo de financiële stabiliteit van de eurozone als geheel of van haar lidstaten, in stand te houden. Tegelijkertijd vormt ook het behoud van ESM-middelen een belangrijke prioriteit. Het is een uitdaging om het juiste evenwicht te vinden tussen deze twee fundamentele kwesties.

De praktische uitvoering van rechtstreekse herkapitalisaties door het ESM staat nog ter discussie. De lidstaten zijn het echter over het algemeen eens dat een dergelijk instrument moet worden ingezet voor systeemrelevante instellingen waarvan de levensvatbaarheid op lange termijn kan worden hersteld met behulp van het herkapitalisatie- en herstructureringsproces, dat wordt uitgevoerd op basis van een nauwgezette waardebepaling van de desbetreffende instelling.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001531/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Support for banks from the ESM

On the basis of a recent law, the Netherlands Ministry of Finance has been able to decide to nationalise SNS. It did so on account of losses on real estate investments. SNS had already received state aid at an earlier stage. As a result of the nationalisation, this previous aid will no longer be repaid.

The ESM can also be used to provide direct support for banks which are experiencing problems. This means that the above scenario, in which a capital injection from the public purse is lost, is more frequently possible.

1. On what conditions can the ESM directly recapitalise banks?

2. Are the risks assessed? If so, when is the risk of bankruptcy considered too great to be borne by the ESM?

3. Does the Member State where the bank is based remain liable for the repayment? If not, who is liable for it?

4. If, after receiving aid, the bank still cannot be saved, who foots the bill?

5. Can aid to a bank be refused? Can it also be refused in the case of a so-called 'systemic bank'?

6. Is it intended that provisions should be inserted in the Treaties concerning the ESM? If so, how soon?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

On the occasion of the Euro area Summit held on 29 June 2012, leaders recognised the 'imperative' need to 'break the vicious circle between banks and sovereign'. They thus agreed to allow the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) to recapitalise banks directly, once the Single Supervisory Mechanism is established. The ESM Treaty signed on 11 July 2011 allows for the possibility to create new instruments (Article 19); as such, no possibility to conduct direct recapitalisations.

The aim of the direct recapitalisations is to remove the risk of contagion from the financial sector to the sovereign, reducing the negative feedback loop and thus preserving the financial stability of the euro area as a whole or of its Member States. At the same time, the need to preserve ESM resources is also an important priority. The challenge is to strike the right balance between these two fundamental issues.

As regards the practical implementation, of ESM direct recapitalisation is still under discussion. That said, Member States generally agree that such an instrument should be used to address systemically relevant institutions whose long-term viability can be ensured via the recapitalisation and restructuring process, which will be conducted based on a rigorous valuation of the institution concerned.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001533/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Konsekwencje zmian w dyrektywie tytoniowej

Sektor tytoniowy jest dla Polski ważną częścią gospodarki, kreuje ponad 60 tysięcy miejsc pracy w rolnictwie i przetwórstwie tytoniu. Branża ta zapewnia około 9 % wszystkich dochodów do budżetu Polski, co więcej, nasz kraj jest siedzibą największej ilości zakładów tytoniowych w Europie. Aktualnie Komisja pracuje nad rewizją dyrektywy 2001/37/WE. Niestety z informacji przekazanych przez posła na Sejm RP Piotra Szeligę wynika, że proponowane zapisy wywołają głębokie, negatywne skutki natury społecznej i gospodarczej, szczególnie mocno uderzając w rolników z regionu lubelskiego oraz małopolskiego. Dlatego proszę Komisję Europejską o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy proponowane zaostrzenia nie łamią zasady subsydiarności i proporcjonalności?

2. Czy zaproponowane rozwiązania będą rzeczywiście sprzyjać zmniejszeniu spożycia tytoniu? Jaki wpływ będą miały na jakość tytoniu w papierosach, zakładając zwiększenie szarej strefy, a co za tym idzie zdrowie palących?

3. Czy Komisja posiada symulacje dotyczące ewentualnego wpływu proponowanych zmian na napływ do Polski i Europy wyrobów tytoniowych niewiadomego pochodzenia oraz zmniejszenie konkurencyjności europejskich upraw tytoniu względem zagranicy?

4. Polska to wiodący producent tytoniu w Europie. Jakie według Komisji będą koszty wprowadzenia proponowanych zmian w dyrektywie tytoniowej dla poszczególnych krajów Europy?

5. Jak zakaz sprzedaży papierosów mentolowych oraz smakowych wpłynie na producentów odmiany Burley, którą uprawia ponad 40 % plantatorów w Polsce?

6. Proszę o podział według państw członkowskich środków, jakie Komisja zamierza przeznaczyć na pomoc plantatorom rezygnującym z uprawy tytoniu w latach 2014-2020?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(27 marca 2013 r.)

Cele wniosku Komisji w sprawie zmiany dyrektywy o wyrobach tytoniowych z dnia 19 grudnia 2012 r. i obecnej dyrektywy są takie same. Jak potwierdził Europejski Trybunał Sprawiedliwości ([1]), postanowienia Traktatu dotyczące rynku wewnętrznego są odpowiednią podstawą prawną dla unijnych przepisów dotyczących wyrobów tytoniowych. Celem tych przepisów jest bowiem usunięcie przeszkód w funkcjonowaniu rynku wewnętrznego wynikających z rozbieżnych regulacji krajowych oraz zapobieżenie obchodzeniu przepisów rynku wewnętrznego.

Do wniosku dołączono dogłębną analizę przewidywanych skutków gospodarczych, rynkowych, społecznych i zdrowotnych. Zgodnie z dostępną literaturą i zdobytym doświadczeniem, oczekuje się, że w ciągu pięciu lat proponowane środki doprowadzą do spadku konsumpcji wyrobów tytoniowych o 2 %. Środki te nie powinny wpłynąć na wzrost nielegalnego handlu.

Komisja przedstawiła wyniki obliczeń skutków, jakie mogą wywrzeć proponowane środki, w specjalnej części oceny skutków (część 6). Skutki te są ograniczone i proporcjonalne. Zgodnie z wytycznymi Komisji dotyczącymi oceny skutków, ocena ta dotyczyła skutków w skali całej UE. Przeprowadzenie oceny skutków dla poszczególnych państw członkowskich lub ich regionów jest możliwe, jeżeli środki mają nieproporcjonalny wpływ na dane państwo członkowskie. W ocenie Komisji warunek ten nie został spełniony, ponieważ w proponowanej dyrektywie nie wprowadza się rozróżnienia odmian tytoniu, które miałoby charakter dyskryminacyjny, i dopuszcza się stosowanie dodatków, które są konieczne do produkcji wyrobów tytoniowych ze względów technologicznych.

([1]) Sprawa 491/01, BAT.

W ramach działań dotyczących rozwoju obszarów wiejskich, które stanowią drugi filar wspólnej polityki rolnej, przewiduje się wiele możliwości pomocy rolnikom, którzy decydują się na podjęcie strukturalnych zmian produkcji, w tym rolnikom produkującym tytoń.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001533/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Consequences of amendments to the Tobacco Directive

For Poland the tobacco sector is an important part of the economy. It provides over 60 000 jobs in tobacco farming and processing. This sector accounts for around 9% of all budget revenues in Poland, which is home to the largest number of tobacco plants in Europe. The Commission is currently working on a revision of Directive 2001/37/EC. Unfortunately, according to the Polish MP Peter Szeliga, the proposed provisions will have a profound and negative social and economic impact, hitting the farmers of the Lublin and Małopolskie regions especially hard. Can the Commission therefore please answer the following questions:

1. Do the proposed tightened regulations not infringe the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality?

2. Will the proposed solutions actually bring about a reduction in tobacco use? What impact will they have on the quality of tobacco in cigarettes — assuming an increase in black market sales — and thus on smokers' health.

3. Does the Commission have any simulations of the potential impact from the proposed changes on tobacco products of unknown origin coming into Poland and other parts of Europe, and on the reduction in competitiveness of European tobacco production compared to foreign competitors?

4. Poland is the leading tobacco producer in Europe. What does the Commission believe will be the cost of implementing the proposed amendments to the Tobacco Directive for individual European countries?

5. How will the ban on sales of menthol cigarettes and other flavoured cigarettes affect producers of Burley tobacco, which is grown by more than 40% of tobacco farmers in Poland?

6. Please provide a breakdown by Member State of the funds which the Commission intends to allocate to support farmers who abandon tobacco farming in the period 2014-2020.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive of 19 December 2012 pursues the same aims as the current Directive. As confirmed by the European Court of Justice ([1]), the internal market article of the Treaty provides an appropriate legal base for EU Tobacco Products law to remove obstacles to the internal market from divergent national regulatory developments, and to prevent circumvention of internal market rules.

The proposal is accompanied by a thorough analysis of the estimated economic, market, social and health impacts. In line with available literature and experience, it is expected that the measures proposed would to lead to a decrease in the consumption of tobacco products of 2% in five years. The measures foreseen in the proposal are not expected to increase illicit trade.

The Commission has calculated the expected effects of the measures in a dedicated part of the impact assessment (Part 6). The effects are limited and proportionate. In line with the Commission's Impact Assessment guidelines, the assessment focused on the impacts for the EU as a whole. Assessments of impacts for individual Member States, or regions thereof, are only foreseen if a given Member State is affected in a disproportionate manner. In the Commission's assessment this is not the case, in particular as the proposed Directive does not discriminate between tobacco varieties and allows the use of additives technically necessary to manufacture a tobacco product.

Rural Development action, which is the second pillar of the common agricultural policy, offers numerous possibilities to help farmers who decide to undertake structural changes in production, tobacco farmers included.

([1]) Case 491/01, BAT.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001534/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Nałożenie obciążeń podatkowych

Poseł na Sejm RP Piotr Szeliga poinformował o decyzji rządu polskiego, który od 1 stycznia 2013 r. obłożył akcyzą nieprzetworzone liście tytoniu.

Od 1 stycznia 2013 r. w Polsce nieprzetworzone liście tytoniowe podlegają opodatkowaniu podatkiem akcyzowym, a ich sprzedaż w Polsce dozwolona jest wyłącznie w opakowaniu oznaczonym banderolą. Zgodnie z nowymi przepisami, które wprowadził rząd polski liście tytoniowe sprzedawane z przeznaczeniem m.in. do celów ogrodniczych, farmaceutycznych lub jako odświeżacz powietrza, środek bakteriobójczy czy też podściółka dla gołębi podlegają podatkowi akcyzowemu. Rolnicy będą mogli sprzedawać liście tytoniowe bez konsekwencji podatkowych, tylko gdy są one wyprodukowane przez danego plantatora i sprzedawane do podmiotów prowadzących składy podatkowe i pośredniczących podmiotów tytoniowych. W sytuacji naruszenia obowiązków oznaczania znakami akcyzy suszu tytoniowego ustalono karną stawkę akcyzy w wysokości 436,8 zł za 1 kilogram.

W związku z powyższym proszę o dodatkowe wyjaśnienia.

1. Czy decyzja rządu polskiego nie łamie zasady konkurencyjności wewnątrz Unii Europejskiej?

2. Czy Komisja posiada informacje, w jakich krajach Unii Europejskiej dozwolony jest handel nieprzetworzonymi liśćmi tytoniu do wyżej wymienionych celów bez opodatkowania akcyzą?

3. Czy w związku z tym plantatorzy tytoniu w innych krajach Unii Europejskiej nie stoją na uprzywilejowanej pozycji w stosunku do plantatorów z Polski?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(8 kwietnia 2013 r.)

1. Komisja wie o tym, że władze polskie oraz władze innych państw członkowskich napotykają problemy z komercjalizacją nieprzetworzonego tytoniu, który jest następnie poddawany obróbce w celu uzyskania produktów przeznaczonych do palenia. Zgodnie z odpowiednimi przepisami wspólnotowymi podatkowi akcyzowemu mogą podlegać jedynie produkty przeznaczone do palenia w stanie niezmienionym i bez dalszej obróbki przemysłowej. Jednak zgodnie z art. 1 ust. 3 dyrektywy Rady 2008/118/WE państwa członkowskie mogą nakładać podatki na produkty inne niż towary podlegające podatkowi akcyzowemu. Nakładanie takich podatków nie może powodować zwiększenia formalności przy przekraczaniu granic w handlu pomiędzy państwami członkowskimi.

Mimo iż reguły konkurencji stosuje się jedynie do przedsiębiorstw, państwa członkowskie mają na mocy art. 4 ust. 3 TUE obowiązek powstrzymywania się od podejmowania wszelkich środków, które mogłyby zagrażać urzeczywistnieniu celów Unii. W wyjątkowych okolicznościach środek krajowy może naruszać reguły konkurencji UE. Niemniej jednak przedstawione informacje nie wskazują, by przedmiotowy krajowy środek naruszał reguły konkurencji UE.

2. Służby Komisji nie posiadają takich informacji. Zasadniczo państwa członkowskie nie są zobowiązane do udzielania informacji dotyczących niezharmonizowanych podatków pośrednich, za wyjątkiem informacji wymaganych na mocy dyrektywy 98/34/WE (przepisy techniczne).

3. Przedmiotowy podatek ma zastosowanie zarówno do produktów krajowych, jak i produktów z innych państw członkowskich, zatem nie działa na niekorzyść polskich producentów tytoniu na polskim rynku. Jednak służby Komisji nie są w stanie ocenić skutków, jakie może mieć zastosowanie krajowych podatków dla konkurencyjności polskich producentów tytoniu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001534/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Excise duty on tobacco leaves

I have been informed by Piotr Szeliga, a member of the Sejm, of the Polish Government's decision to levy excise duty on uncut tobacco leaves as of 1 January 2013.

This means that since 1 January 2013, excise duty has been levied on uncut tobacco leaves in Poland. Furthermore, uncut tobacco leaves may only be sold in Poland in packaging displaying an excise stamp. Under the new rules introduced by the Polish Government, tobacco leaves sold for horticultural or pharmaceutical purposes, for use as air fresheners, in anti-bacterial products, as nesting material for pigeons, etc., will be subject to excise duty. Farmers will only be exempt from excise duty if the leaves are produced by a given grower and sold to undertakings that run tax warehouses or to tobacco intermediaries. Any failure to comply with the requirements regarding the excise labelling of dried tobacco will result in the application of a punitive tax rate of PLN 436.8 per kilo.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Polish Government's decision not constitute a breach of internal EU competition rules?

2. Does the Commission have information on which Member States permit the sale of uncut tobacco leaves for the above purposes without levying excise duty?

3. Given this situation, will tobacco growers in other Member States not have an advantage over their counterparts in Poland?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

1. The Commission is aware that the Polish authorities as well as authorities in other Member States encounter problems with the commercialisation of unmanufactured tobacco which is subsequently processed for obtaining smoke able products. In accordance with the relevant Community provisions, only products which can be smoked as they are and without further industrial processing can be subject to excise duties. However, in accordance with Article 1(3) of Council Directive 2008/118/EC Member States may levy taxes on products other than excise goods. The levying of such taxes may not, in trade between Member States, give rise to formalities connected with the crossing of frontiers.

Although the rules on competition apply only to undertakings, Member States have a duty under Article 4(3) TEU to refrain from taking any measure which could jeopardise the attainment of the Union's objectives. In exceptional circumstances, a national measure could infringe EU competition rules. However, from the information provided, there are no indications that the national measure at stake would breach EU competition rules.

2. The Commission services are not in possession of such information. In general Member States are not obliged to provide information on non-harmonised indirect taxes with the exception of the information required under Directive 98/34/EC (technical standards).

3. The tax in question is applicable to both domestic products and products from other Member States and should thus not disadvantage Polish tobacco producers on the Polish market. However the Commission services are not in a position to assess the effect on the competitiveness of Polish tobacco producers resulting from the application of national taxes.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001535/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Pobieranie opłaty tzw. surcharge w poszczególnych krajach UE

Obecnie na rynku usług płatniczych surcharge to dodatkowa opłata pobierana przez odbiorcę od płatnika za płatność instrumentem płatniczym, bądź przez właścicieli bankomatów za wypłatę gotówki w bankomacie.

W przypadku płatności kartą, w założeniu, opłata tzw. surcharge ma odbiorcy umożliwić pokrycie koniecznych nakładów i wydatków ponoszonych w związku z nabywaniem oraz utrzymaniem technologii i urządzeń pozwalających na dokonywanie płatności przy użyciu określonego rodzaju instrumentów płatniczych.

Nawet te z państw, w których wskaźnik liczby płatności zrealizowanych przy użyciu kart płatniczych jest bardzo wysoki, wprowadziły zakaz nakładania opłaty tzw. surcharge. Przykładem może być Szwecja, w której wskaźnik ten jest jednym z najwyższych w państwach UE.

W związku z tym kieruję do Komisji pytanie, czy i jakie działania zamierza podjąć celem ujednolicenia pobierania opłat tzw. surcharge w poszczególnych krajach UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(12 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Kwestię opłat obowiązujących z tytułu korzystania z danego instrumentu płatniczego (powszechnie zwanych „opłatami *surcharge*") reguluje obecnie dyrektywa w sprawie usług płatniczych ([1]). Zgodnie z art. 52 ust. 3 państwa członkowskie mogą według własnego uznania zabronić pobierania tych opłat lub ograniczyć to prawo, biorąc pod uwagę potrzebę pobudzania konkurencji i propagowania korzystania z wydajnych instrumentów płatniczych. Kwestię pobierania tych dodatkowych opłat uregulowano ponadto w niedawno przyjętej dyrektywie w sprawie praw konsumentów ([2]). W art. 19, którego przepisy państwa członkowskie są zobowiązane zacząć stosować nie później niż dnia 13 czerwca 2014 r., ograniczono możliwość pobierania opłat *surcharge* do kosztów poniesionych przez przedsiębiorców. Ponadto, zgodnie z pkt 4 zalecenia Komisji dotyczącego zakresu i skutków statusu banknotów i monet euro jako prawnego środka płatniczego w przypadku płatności gotówkowych w euro nie powinny być pobierane żadne dopłaty ([3]).

Co więcej, zgodnie z komunikatem „Akt o jednolitym rynku II" ([4]) Komisja zamierza przedstawić, najpóźniej w czerwcu 2013 r., wniosek dotyczący zmiany dyrektywy w sprawie usług płatniczych. We wniosku tym, jeśli zostanie to uznane za konieczne, mogą zostać wprowadzone nowe przepisy regulujące pobieranie opłat typu *surcharge*. Decyzja w tej sprawie podjęta zostanie w oparciu o wyniki analizy przeprowadzonej w ramach towarzyszącej wspomnianemu wnioskowi oceny skutków, która jest obecnie finalizowana przez Komisję.

([1]) Dyrektywa 2007/64/WE w sprawie usług płatniczych w ramach rynku wewnętrznego, Dz.U. L 319 z 5 grudnia 2007, s. 1.
([2]) Dyrektywa 2011/83/UE w sprawie praw konsumentów, Dz.U. L 304 z dnia 22 listopada 2011 r., s. 64.
([3]) Zalecenie dotyczące zakresu i skutków statusu banknotów i monet euro jako prawnego środka płatniczego, 2010/191/UE, Dz.U. L 83 z dnia 30 marca 2010 r., s. 70.
([4]) COM (2012) 573 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001535/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Surcharges levied in individual EU countries

In the payment services market a surcharge is an additional fee currently charged to the payer by the recipient for payments made using a payment instrument, or charged for cash withdrawals at an ATM by the owner of the ATM.

In the case of card payments, the surcharge is supposed to allow the recipient to cover the expenditure incurred in connection with the purchase and maintenance of the technologies and devices making it possible to pay using a specific type of payment instrument.

Even in countries where the rate of payments made using payment cards is very high, a ban has been imposed on levying surcharges. One example is Sweden, where the rate is one of the highest in the EU.

In this regard, does the Commission intend to take action, and if so, what action, to harmonise charges in individual EU countries?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The issue of charges applicable for the use of a given payment instrument (commonly referred as 'surcharging') is currently regulated by the Payment Services Directive ([1]). In accordance with Article 52(3) Member States may autonomously decide to limit or forbid surcharging, taking into account the need to encourage competition and promote the use of efficient payment instruments. Surcharging is further addressed by the recent Consumer Rights Directive ([2]). Article 19, which have to be applied by Member States by 13 June 2014 at the latest, limits the possibility of surcharging to the costs borne by merchants. Finally, according to item 4 of the Commission Recommendation on the scope and effects of legal tender of euro banknotes and coins no surcharges should be imposed on payments with euro cash ([3]).

Furthermore, in accordance with the communication on Single Market Act II ([4]), the Commission intends to table a proposal for the revised Payment Services Directive by June 2013. The revised proposal may include new rules on surcharging, if found necessary. The decision will be based on the analysis undertaken in the impact assessment accompanying the revised proposal, which is currently being finalised by the Commission.

([1]) Directive 2007/64/EC on payment services in the internal market, OJ L 319/p.1, 5 December 2007.
([2]) Directive 2011/83/EU on consumer rights, OJ L 304/p.64, 22 November 2011.
([3]) Recommendation on the scope and effects of the legal tender of euro banknotes and coins, 2010/191/EU, OJ, L 83/p.70, 30 March.2010.
([4]) COM(2012) 573 final.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001536/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wyrównywanie poziomu życia w UE

Zgodnie z rankingiem Eurostatu dotyczącym dobrobytu w państwach Unii Europejskiej, w oparciu o poziom PKB na głowę mieszkańca mierzony parytetem siły nabywczej, Polska wśród krajów UE znalazła się w nim na odległym 24. miejscu. Za Polską znalazły się tylko Łotwa, Rumunia i Bułgaria. Poziom dobrobytu w Polsce stanowi tylko 64 proc. poziomu średniej unijnej.

W związku z powyższym uprzejmie proszę Komisję o odpowiedź na pytanie, jakie działania są podejmowane, aby poziom życia mieszkańców między poszczególnymi państwami Unii Europejskiej był porównywalny i nie było tak dużych dysproporcji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(12 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Jednym z ważnych celów Unii Europejskiej jest promowanie spójności ekonomicznej, społecznej i terytorialnej oraz solidarności pomiędzy państwami członkowskimi. W tym kontekście polityka spójności jest głównym narzędziem służącym zmniejszaniu nierówności pomiędzy regionami Europy, dlatego też w dalszym ciągu będzie skupiać się ona na mniej rozwiniętych regionach i państwach członkowskich, wspierając równocześnie tworzenie miejsc pracy, konkurencyjność, wzrost gospodarczy, poprawę jakości życia i zrównoważony rozwój w całej Unii.

Te priorytety zostały zagwarantowane we wniosku Komisji w sprawie wieloletnich ram finansowych na lata 2014-2020 oraz znalazły odzwierciedlenie w konkluzjach Rady Europejskiej z 7-8 lutego 2013 r., według których ponad 71 % środków na inwestycje na rzecz wzrostu gospodarczego i zatrudnienia przeznaczone zostanie na wsparcie dla mniej rozwiniętych regionów i państw członkowskich.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001536/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Levelling out the standard of living in the EU

On Eurostat's EU prosperity ranking, which lists the Member States in order of GDP per capita based on purchasing power parity, Poland is in 24th place, ahead of only Latvia, Romania and Bulgaria. The level of prosperity in Poland is only 64% of the EU average.

With this in mind, can the Commission state what steps are being taken to address the current situation, which is characterised by such major discrepancies, and to ensure instead that living standards in the individual Member States are brought into line with each other?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

One important objective of the European Union is to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among Member States. Cohesion policy is the main tool in this respect to reduce disparities between Europe's regions, and will therefore continue to concentrate on the less developed regions and Member States, while at the same time supporting job creation, competitiveness, economic growth, improved quality of life and sustainable development across the Union.

This concentration has been guaranteed in the Commission's proposal for the MFF 2014-2020, and is also reflected in the conclusions of the European Council of 7/8 February 2013, according to which more than 71% of the resources for the investment for growth and jobs goal will be dedicated to support for the less developed regions and Member States.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001537/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Bezrobocie wśród osób poniżej 25. roku życia w Europie

Z danych Eurostatu wynika, że w Polsce bez pracy jest już prawie co trzeci młody człowiek. Natomiast w Hiszpanii i Grecji pracy nie ma blisko 60 proc. osób poniżej 25. roku życia. Stopa bezrobocia wśród osób poniżej 25. roku życia wzrosła w grudniu 2012 r. do 23,4 proc. wśród 27 krajów należących do UE i do 24 proc. w strefie euro. W grudniu 2011 r. wskaźnik ten wynosił odpowiednio 22,2 proc. i 21,7 proc.

W związku z powyższym uprzejmie proszę Komisję o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Jakie działania podejmuje Komisja, aby zmniejszyć bezrobocie wśród młodych ludzi?

2. Czy działania podejmowane przez Komisję są skuteczne i przynoszą oczekiwane rezultaty?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(11 kwietnia 2013 r.)

1. W dniu 5 grudnia 2012 r. Komisja przyjęła pakiet na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych ([1]), który zawiera wniosek dotyczący zalecenia Rady w sprawie ustanowienia gwarancji dla młodzieży. Rada osiągnęła porozumienie polityczne co do tego zalecenia w dniu 28 lutego 2013 r. Komisja zaapelowała do państw członkowskich o zapewnienie wszystkim młodym ludziom poniżej 25. roku życia dobrej jakości oferty zatrudnienia, dalszego kształcenia, stażu lub przyuczenia do zawodu w ciągu czterech miesięcy od zakończenia nauki lub od utraty pracy.

W ramach wspomnianego pakietu zainicjowano również konsultacje z partnerami społecznymi na temat ram jakości dla staży, tak aby odbycie stażu naprawdę pomagało młodym ludziom w znalezieniu pracy. Jako że partnerzy społeczni postanowili nie prowadzić negocjacji w celu zawarcia porozumienia na podstawie art. 155 TFUE, Komisja przedstawi swój własny wniosek przed końcem 2013 r.

W ramach pakietu na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych ogłoszono również powstanie europejskiego sojuszu na rzecz przygotowania zawodowego oraz zaproponowano szereg środków mających zwiększyć mobilność młodych pracowników.

Wdrażanie omawianego pakietu, szczególnie gwarancji dla młodzieży, wsparte zostanie przez Inicjatywę na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych, ustanowioną przez Radę Europejską z dnia 7 i 8 lutego. W ramach wspomnianej inicjatywy udostępnia się 6 mld EUR na wsparcie środków przewidzianych w pakiecie na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych. Z funduszy tych korzystać będą mogły regiony, w których odsetek bezrobocia osób młodych przekracza 25 %.

2. Jeżeli chodzi o rezultaty i skuteczność wcześniejszych inicjatyw, w omawianym pakiecie przewidziano też przeprowadzenie przeglądu wykorzystania w każdym państwie członkowskim inicjatywy „Szanse dla młodzieży" ([2]) z 2011 r.

([1]) COM (2012)727-728-729 final z dnia 5.12.2012 r.
([2]) SWD(2012) 406 final z dnia 512.2012 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001537/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among the under-25s in Europe

Eurostat figures show that almost one in three young people in Poland are without work. And in Spain and Greece around 60% of under-25s are jobless. The unemployment rate among under-25s rose to 23.4% in December 2012 across the 27 EU Member States, and to 24% in the eurozone. The corresponding figures in December 2011 were 22.2% and 21.7%.

In connection with this, would the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What action is the Commission taking to reduce unemployment among young people?

2. Have the measures taken by the Commission proved to be effective in producing the expected results?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

1. On 5 December 2012, the Commission adopted a Youth Employment Package (YEP) ([1]), which includes a proposal for a Council recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee. The Council reached a political agreement on this recommendation on 28 February 2013. Member States are called upon to ensure that all young people under 25 receive a good quality offer of a job, further education, a traineeship or an apprenticeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed.

The YEP also launched a social partner consultation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships to ensure that traineeships really serve as a stepping stone to a job. Since Social Partners decided not to negotiate towards an agreement under Article 155 TFEU, the Commission will present its own proposal by end of 2013.

Furthermore, the YEP announced the launch of a European Alliance for Apprenticeships, and proposed several measures to enhance young workers' mobility.

The implementation of the YEP, and in particular of the Youth Guarantee, will be supported by the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), created by the European Council of 7-8 February. It makes available EUR 6 billion in support of measures set out in the YEP and will be open to all regions with levels of youth unemployment above 25%.

2. As for the outcomes and effectiveness of earlier initiatives, the YEP also includes an overview per Member States of the implementation of the Youth Opportunities Initiative ([2]) of 2011.

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final of 5 December 2012.
([2]) SWD(2012) 406 final of 5 December 2012.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001538/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Problem korupcji w poszczególnych krajach UE

Zgodnie z badaniem Eurobarometru korupcja jest jednym z głównych problemów w poszczególnych krajach Unii Europejskiej. Prawie połowa obywateli Wspólnoty uważa, że w ostatnich trzech latach zjawisko to w ich kraju nasiliło się i, że występuje ona na wszystkich szczeblach administracji.

W związku z powyższym uprzejmie proszę Komisję o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Jakie działania podejmuje i zamierza podjąć Komisja, aby zapobiegać korupcji w poszczególnych krajach Unii Europejskiej?

2. Czy działania podejmowane przez Komisję są skuteczne i przynoszą oczekiwane rezultaty?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(26 marca 2013 r.)

Jak zapewne Szanownemu Panu Posłowi wiadomo, w komunikacie Komisji w sprawie zwalczania korupcji w UE z 6 czerwca 2011 r. (COM(2011) 308 final) ([1]) zapowiedziano, że począwszy od 2013 r. co dwa lata publikowane będzie sprawozdanie o zwalczaniu korupcji w UE, w którym starania państw członkowskich na rzecz zwalczania korupcji będą podlegać regularnej ocenie ([2]). Członek Komisji odpowiedzialny za sprawy wewnętrzne przedstawił metodologię prac w zakresie opracowywania sprawozdania o zwalczaniu korupcji w UE na otwartym posiedzeniu Parlamentu Europejskiego we wrześniu 2011 r. Za sprawozdanie o zwalczaniu korupcji odpowiedzialna jest Komisja i obejmować ono będzie wszystkie 27 państw członkowskich oraz Chorwację. Sprawozdanie zawierać będzie zarówno zalecenia przekrojowe, jak i odnoszące się do poszczególnych państw.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/news/intro/docs/110606/308/1_en_act_part1_v121.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/pdf/com_decision_2011_3673_final_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001538/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Corruption problems in the Member States

Research carried out for Eurobarometer has shown that corruption is one of the major problems affecting the EU Member States. Almost half of all EU citizens think that corruption in their country has increased over the last three years, and that it affects all levels of administration.

In connection with the above:

1. What steps is the Commission taking, and what steps does it intend to take, to prevent corruption in the Member States?

2. Is the action being taken by the Commission effective, and has it produced the desired results?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

As the Honourable Member may be aware, the Commission Communication on Fighting Corruption in the EU of 6 June 2011 (COM(2011) 308 final) ([1]) announced an EU Anti-Corruption Report to be issued every two years, starting with 2013, through which Member States' anti-corruption efforts will be assessed on a regular basis ([2]). The Member of the Commission responsible for Home Affairs presented the working methodology for the EU Anti-Corruption Report in the public hearing at the European Parliament in September 2011. The EU Anti-Corruption Report is managed by the Commission and will cover all 27 EU Member States and Croatia. The report will comprise both cross-cutting and country-specific recommendations.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/news/intro/docs/110606/308/1_en_act_part1_v121.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/pdf/com_decision_2011_3673_final_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001539/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Eliminação dos cigarros de tamanho regular

Tendo em conta que:

— A 19 de dezembro de 2012, a Comissão Europeia aprovou uma Proposta de revisão da Diretiva relativa aos Produtos de Tabaco.

— Segundo a referida proposta, algumas das opções apresentadas pela Comissão suscitam alguma preocupação e não têm em linha de conta as especificidades de consumo nalguns Estados-Membros, como é o caso de Portugal.

— A proposta da Comissão prevê ainda que as dimensões mínimas absolutas previstas para as advertências em texto e advertências de saúde combinadas correspondem praticamente a 100 % da área útil dos maços de cigarros de «tamanho regular», maços esses que têm 69 mm de altura, 54 mm de largura e 21,5 mm de espessura.

— Considera-se que não existirá espaço suficiente para aposição de marca ou elementos de marca, bem como da estampilha fiscal obrigatória, o que conduziria ao possível aumento do mercado paralelo devido à não-comprovação do produto em causa;

— Esta proposta poderá ainda levar ao desaparecimento desta categoria de cigarros, que representa uma dimensão muito significativa do mercado legal de cigarros em Portugal, atingindo a sua maior expressão na Região Autónoma dos Açores (onde ainda existem agricultores de tabaco e estão localizadas duas das quatro fábricas de produtos de tabaco existentes no território nacional), com cerca de 30 % do mercado local, mas revestindo também expressões significativas em Portugal Continental (fábrica em Albarraque/Sintra) e na Madeira (fábrica no Funchal) com quotas de mercado respetivamente de 13 % e 6 %.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Por que razão a Comissão desrespeita as preferências dos consumidores portugueses pelos cigarros de «tamanho regular»?

2. A Comissão dispõe de alguma evidência de que estes cigarros são mais nocivos do que os outros cigarros de maior comprimento ou outros produtos de tabaco?

3. Está consciente de que a progressiva eliminação do consumo desta categoria de cigarros poderá levar ao despedimento de milhares de trabalhadores no território português?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2013)

A proposta de revisão da Diretiva relativa a Produtos de Tabaco ([1]) é sustentada por uma cuidadosa análise das provas científicas de base para as medidas propostas, assim como dos impactos económicos, no mercado interno, sociais e na saúde ([2]). A Comissão realizou consultas exaustivas às partes interessadas, incluindo aos fabricantes e aos produtores de tabaco e considerou cuidadosamente as preocupações expressas.

A proposta de forma alguma proíbe os cigarros «regulares». A proposta prevê um tamanho mínimo para a dimensão das advertências em matéria de saúde, por forma a assegurar a visibilidade e eficácia dessas advertências. Com base no tamanho dos maços de cigarros normais ([3]), que é predominantemente o maço de cigarros no mercado da UE, a superfície máxima total do maço regulamentada pela Diretiva seria de cerca de 70 % da superfície do maço. As marcas comerciais podem continuar a ser colocadas na superfície restante.

([1]) COM(2012) 788 final.
([2]) SWD(2012) 452 final.
([3]) Cerca de 8,8 cm de altura, 5,5 cm de largura, 2,2 cm de profundidade.

Além de melhorar o funcionamento do mercado interno, as regras propostas irão contribuir para reforçar a sensibilização dos cidadãos para os riscos para a saúde decorrentes do consumo de tabaco. Isto é especialmente importante para desencorajar os jovens de iniciar o consumo de produtos de tabaco.

Com base numa possível queda no consumo de tabaco de 2 % nos cinco anos seguintes à entrada em vigor da diretiva, estima-se que se percam 5 700 postos de trabalho (a nível da UE) no setor do tabaco. Contudo, é estimado que estas perdas sejam compensadas pela criação de aproximadamente 8 000 novos postos de trabalho noutros setores, em resultado do aumento das despesas dos ex-fumadores noutros bens ou serviços que necessitam de mais empregados que a produção automatizada de cigarros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001539/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Elimination of regular size cigarettes

On 19 December 2012, the Commission approved a proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive.

Some of the options put forward by the Commission in its proposal give cause for concern and do not take into consideration the specific characteristics of tobacco consumption in some Member States, such as Portugal.

The Commission's text also proposes that the absolute minimum dimensions of the written warnings and combined health warnings should be virtually 100% of the useable surface of 'regular size' cigarette packets, which measure 69mm by 54mm by 21.5 mm.

This will leave no space for the brand name or logo, or for the compulsory tax stamp, which could well lead to an increase in the parallel market, due to the lack of any guarantee of authenticity.

This proposal could lead to the disappearance of this category of cigarettes, which enjoys a large share of the legal cigarette market in Portugal, particularly in the autonomous Region of the Azores (where tobacco is still farmed and two of Portugal's four tobacco products factories are located), where it accounts for over 30% of the local market. Cigarettes of this type are also popular in mainland Portugal (with a factory in Albarraque/Sintra) and Madeira (with a factory at Funchal), where they account for13% and 6% of the market, respectively.

1. Why does the Commission not respect Portuguese consumers' preference for regular size cigarettes?

2. Does the Commission have any evidence to show that cigarettes of this type are more harmful than other, longer cigarettes or other tobacco products?

3. Is the Commission aware that the gradual elimination from the market of this type of cigarette is likely to lead to thousands of workers being laid off in Portugal?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive ([1]) is underpinned by a thorough analysis of the scientific evidence base for the measures proposed as well as economic, internal market, social and health impacts ([2]). The Commission has carried out extensive stakeholder consultations, including with tobacco growers and manufacturers and has carefully considered the concerns expressed.

The proposal does not ban regular cigarettes in any way. The proposal foresees a minimum size for the dimension of health warnings to ensure the visibility and effectiveness of the health warnings. Based on the size of a standard cigarette package ([3]), which is the predominant package for cigarettes on the EU market, the total maximum surface of the package regulated under the directive would amount to about 70% of the package. Trademarks can continue to be put on the remaining surfaces.

Next to improving the functioning of the internal market, the proposed rules will contribute to improve citizens' awareness about the health risks stemming from tobacco consumption. This is particularly important to discourage young people from starting to use tobacco products.

Based on a possible drop in tobacco consumption of 2% in five years after the entry into force of the directive, it is estimated that 5700 jobs (EU wide) would be lost in the tobacco sector. However, it is estimated that this would be compensated by the creation of approximately

([1]) COM(2012) 788 final.
([2]) SWD (2012) 452 final.
([3]) Approximately 8.8 cm height, 5.5 cm width, 2.2 cm depth.

8 000 new jobs in other sectors as a result of ex-smokers' increased expenditure in other goods or services that require more workers than the automated production of cigarettes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001540/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Importância dos avisos de saúde no tabaco

Tendo em conta que:

— A 19 de dezembro de 2012, a Comissão Europeia aprovou uma proposta de revisão da Diretiva relativa aos produtos de tabaco;

— Algumas das opções apresentadas pela Comissão suscitam alguma preocupação e não têm em linha de conta as especificidades de consumo nalguns Estados-Membros, como é o caso de Portugal;

— A proposta da Comissão prevê nomeadamente a proibição de cigarros mentolados (artigo 6.º), a proibição de cigarros com diâmetro inferior a 7,5 mm (artigo 12.º) e principalmente a imposição de embalagens uniformizadas (artigo 13.º), com advertências de saúde combinadas, nomeadamente com dimensões não inferiores a 64 mm de altura e 55 mm de largura e ocupando 75 % da área externa (frente e verso) (artigos 8.º e 9.º);

— A Comissão propõe regras de rotulagem diferenciadas para outros produtos de tabaco (30 %/40 %), que não cigarros e tabaco de enrolar (75 %/75 %);

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Por que razão avisos de saúde de dimensões inferiores são considerados suficientes e apropriados para uns produtos de tabaco e já não o são para outros?

2. Será que, pelo facto de ostentarem avisos de saúde de dimensões mais pequenas, podem ser considerados produtos de tabaco menos nocivos?

3. Que factos ou dados concretos apontam para uma relação entre a proibição de determinada categoria de cigarros e uma redução do consumo de tabaco e da prevalência de doenças relacionadas com o tabagismo?

4. De que forma a proibição de cigarros de «tamanho regular», de cigarros mentolados e de cigarros com diâmetro inferior a 7,5 mm «adiciona valor» ou «produz benefício» para a União?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(12 de abril de 2013)

Tal como salientado na resposta à pergunta parlamentar E-001539/2013 ([1]), a proposta de revisão da Diretiva relativa aos Produtos de Tabaco ([2]) é sustentada por uma análise aprofundada das provas científicas que servem de fundamentação para as medidas propostas, bem como do seu impacto no mercado interno e nos setores económico, social e da saúde ([3]). A proposta de revisão da Diretiva relativa aos Produtos de Tabaco não proíbe, de modo algum, os cigarros normais.

A proposta de diretiva pretende proteger os jovens contra o início do tabagismo, tendo em conta que 70 % dos fumadores começam a fumar antes dos 18 anos de idade. Assim, as disposições apresentadas na proposta da Comissão centram-se sobre os produtos do tabaco predominantemente utilizados pelos jovens e que servem de porta de entrada para o consumo, nomeadamente os cigarros, o tabaco de enrolar e os produtos do tabaco sem combustão, que representam 95 % do mercado da UE. Além disso, a proposta aborda as características do tabaco que se concluiu tornarem os seus produtos particularmente apelativos para os jovens, tais como a embalagem e os aromas, e que induzem os consumidores em erro sobre os efeitos sobre a saúde, como é o caso dos cigarros «*slim*».

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pt/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2012) 788 final.
([3]) Documento de trabalho SWD(2012) 452 final.

Embora todos os produtos do tabaco sejam abrangidos pela proposta da Comissão, alguns produtos, tais como o tabaco para cachimbo, os charutos e as cigarrilhas, não são consumidos em grande quantidade pelos jovens, representando pequenos segmentos de mercado e revelando uma diminuição do consumo. Por conseguinte, a proposta sugere regras menos rigorosas para esses produtos. Contudo, essa isenção será suprimida se houver uma alteração substancial das circunstâncias (em termos de volume de vendas ou de consumo pelos jovens).

A Comissão espera que todas as medidas propostas reduzam o consumo do tabaco e a prevalência desse consumo na UE até 2 % no prazo de cinco anos, o que corresponde a 2,4 milhões de fumadores.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001540/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Importance of health warnings on tobacco

On 19 December 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive. Some of the options put forward by the Commission have raised concern and are not geared to the specific features of consumption in some Member States such as Portugal. In particular, the Commission proposal contains a ban on menthol cigarettes (Article 6), a ban on cigarettes with a diameter of less than 7.5 mm (Article 12) and mandatory standard packaging (Article 13), with combined health warnings not less than 64 mm in height and 55 mm in width which must cover 75% of the external area of the packet (front and back) (Articles 8 and 9). The Commission is proposing different labelling rules for tobacco products other than cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco (30%/40% instead of 75%/75%).

1. Why are smaller health warnings considered sufficient and appropriate for some tobacco products but not for others?

2. Can tobacco products displaying smaller health warnings be considered less harmful?

3. What specific facts or figures indicate a link between banning a certain category of cigarettes and a reduction in tobacco consumption and the prevalence of smoking-related illnesses?

4. How will a ban on 'regular size' cigarettes, menthol cigarettes and cigarettes with a diameter of less than 7.5 mm add value or produce benefits for the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

As outlined in the reply to Parliamentary Question E-001539/2013 ([1]), the proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive ([2]) is underpinned by a thorough analysis of the scientific evidence base for the measures proposed as well as economic, internal market, social and health impacts ([3]). The proposal to revise the Tobacco products Directive does not, in any way, ban regular cigarettes.

The proposed Directive aims at protecting young people against smoking initiation considering that 70% of smokers start below the age of 18. Therefore, the provisions put forward in the Commission proposal focus on those tobacco products that are predominantly used by young people and serve as an entry gate for tobacco consumption, i.e. cigarettes, roll-your own-tobacco and smokeless tobacco products, which account for 95% of the EU market. Furthermore, the proposal addresses characteristics that were found to make products particularly attractive to young people such as packaging and flavourings, and that mislead consumers about health effects such as slim cigarettes.

While all tobacco products are covered by the Commission proposal, some products such as pipe tobacco, cigars and cigarillos are not consumed to a large extent by young people, represent small markets, and show a decline in consumption. Therefore, the proposal suggests less stringent rules for these products. This exemption, however, would be removed if there is a substantial change in circumstances in terms of sales volumes or consumption by young people.

The Commission expects that all measures proposed will reduce smoking consumption and prevalence in the EU by 2% within five years, which corresponds to 2.4 million smokers.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2012) 788 final.
([3]) SWD (2012) 452 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001541/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Utilização abusiva de atos delegados na legislação sobre o tabaco

Tendo em conta que:

— A 19 de dezembro de 2012, a Comissão Europeia aprovou uma proposta de revisão da Diretiva relativa aos produtos de tabaco;

— Algumas das opções apresentadas pela Comissão suscitam alguma preocupação e não têm em linha de conta as especificidades de consumo nalguns Estados-membros, como é o caso de Portugal;

— A proposta da Comissão prevê ainda que as dimensões mínimas absolutas previstas para as advertências em texto e advertências de saúde combinadas correspondam praticamente a 100 % da área útil dos maços de cigarros de «tamanho regular», maços esses que têm 69 mm de altura, 54 mm de largura e 21,5 mm de espessura;

— Não existirá espaço suficiente para aposição de marca ou elementos de marca, bem como da estampilha fiscal obrigatória, o que conduziria ao possível aumento do mercado paralelo devido à não comprovação do produto em causa;

— Na sua proposta, a Comissão sugere igualmente uma futura delegação de poderes a seu favor em 16 situações de grande relevância, não deixando o Parlamento Europeu pronunciar-se sobre o assunto referido, podendo assim adotar determinados atos de importância para o desenvolvimento das políticas relativas ao tabaco;

— Este facto tem semelhanças com as várias propostas apresentadas pela Comissão Europeia na área dos futuros regulamentos da Política de Coesão para o período 2014-2020, sendo que o Parlamento já se pronunciou contra a utilização abusiva de tal legislação;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Por que razão coloca restrições ao desenvolvimento de produtos de risco reduzido que podem constituir uma alternativa com benefícios para a saúde face aos produtos de tabaco convencionais?

2. Qual a explicação da Comissão para o elevado número de atos delegados e a respetiva amplitude?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(4 de abril de 2013)

A proposta da Comissão sobre a revisão da Diretiva dos Produtos de Tabaco ([1]) distingue entre produtos para o abandono do tabagismo e produtos de consumo, tais como cigarros, tabaco para enrolar, tabaco para cachimbo, charutos e produtos de tabaco sem fumo. A proposta não estabelece diferentes níveis de risco nos produtos de tabaco pois todos os produtos de tabaco são comprovadamente malignos para a saúde. A proposta prevê ainda que os novos produtos de tabaco sejam notificados antes de serem colocados no mercado.

Para a Diretiva estar plenamente operacional, tendo em conta os desenvolvimentos técnicos, científicos e internacionais na manufatura, no consumo e na regulamentação dos produtos de tabaco, foi considerado necessário delegar o poder para adotar atos em conformidade com o artigo 290.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia. As delegações de poder na proposta preveem critérios claros e concisos, dando margem de decisão limitada à Comissão. A preparação desses atos envolverá os Estados-Membros e assegurará a transmissão simultânea, atempada e adequada dos documentos relevantes ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho.

([1]) COM(2012) 788 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001541/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Abusive use of delegated acts in tobacco legislation

On 19 December 2012, the Commission approved a proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive.

Some of the options put forward by the Commission give cause for concern and do not take into consideration the specific characteristics of tobacco consumption in some Member States, such as Portugal.

The Commission's text also proposes that the absolute minimum dimensions of the written warnings and combined health warnings should be virtually 100% of the useable surface of 'regular size' cigarette packets, which measure 69mm by 54mm by 21.5 mm.

This will leave no space for the brand name or logo, or for the compulsory tax stamp, which could well lead to an increase in the parallel market, due to the lack of any guarantee of authenticity.

In its proposal, the Commission also recommends that powers be delegated to it in 16 highly significant areas, without leaving Parliament any scope for expressing an opinion, thereby enabling it to make important decisions concerning the development of tobacco policy.

This situation bears similarities with the various proposals put forward by the Commission concerning future cohesion policy regulations for the 2014-2020 period. Parliament has already condemned the abusive use of this legislation.

1. Why is the Commission placing restrictions on the development of reduced-risk products which could present a healthier alternative to conventional tobacco products?

2. How does the Commission explain the large number of delegated acts and the breadth of their scope?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2013)

The Commission proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive ([1]) distinguishes products for smoking cessation, and consumer products such as cigarettes, roll your own tobacco, pipe tobacco, cigars and smokeless tobacco products. The proposal does not distinguish different levels of risk within tobacco products because all tobacco products are proven to be harmful to health. The proposal further foresees that novel tobacco products are notified before they are put on the market.

To make this directive fully operational in view of technical, scientific and international developments in the manufacture, consumption and regulation of tobacco products, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU has been deemed necessary. The delegations of power in the proposal provide for clear and concise criteria, giving limited discretion to the Commission. The preparation of these acts will involve the Member States and will ensure a simultaneous, timely and appropriate transmission of relevant documents to the European Parliament and Council.

([1]) COM(2012) 788 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001542/13
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Funding stream query — Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) Worker Directors Group

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions Worker Directors Group is interested in making contact with similar groups in Europe. They are interested in travelling to meet with these groups to compare experiences and see if the idea of workers on company boards could be developed within the EU. They would also like European directors to come to Ireland and compare experiences.

Could the Commission identify a funding stream which might be appropriate for the delivery of these objectives?

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

The Commission intends publishing three calls for proposals in the first half of 2013 for the co-financing of:

— projects relating to transnational cooperation between workers' and employers' representatives in respect of employee involvement within companies operating in more than one Member State and the negotiation of transnational company agreements, under budget heading 04 03 03 03 (Information, consultation and participation of representatives of undertakings);

— projects for information and training measures for workers' organisations in accordance with Article 154 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, under budget heading 04 03 03 02 (Information and training measures for workers' organisations);

— projects for improving expertise in the field of industrial relations and/or promoting social dialogue at cross-industry and sectoral level in accordance with Article 154 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, under budget heading 04.03.03.01 (Industrial Relations and Social Dialogue).

The project to which the Honourable Member refers could fall within the scope of one of these calls for proposals, which will be published on the website of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion ([1]). Each call will specify the eligibility, selection and award criteria applying.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&langId=en

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-001543/13
till kommissionen
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(13 februari 2013)

Angående: Djurtransporter

1. Vad får kommissionen att tro att medlemsstaterna kommer att driva igenom riktlinjer för god praxis, vilka inte är rättsligt bindande, med tanke på att inte ens rådets förordning (EG) nr 1/2005, som är rättsligt bindande, har genomförts än?

2. Med tanke på att riktlinjer för god praxis inte är rättsligt bindande, hur kan kommissionen tro att ”skillnaden mellan kraven i lagstiftningen och de tillgängliga vetenskapliga rönen […] bäst hanteras genom antagandet av riktlinjer för god praxis”?

3. Anser inte kommissionen att rekommendationerna från Europeiska myndigheten för livsmedelssäkerhet (Efsa) bör omfattas av en översyn av rådets förordning (EG) nr 1/2005, så att kontrollmyndigheterna åtminstone har en chans att driva igenom dem?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(25 mars 2013)

1. Riktlinjer för god praxis ska i de allra flesta fall inte drivas igenom av medlemsstaterna utan syftar till att hjälpa producenter och näringsidkare att införa, genomföra och upprätthålla kraven i gällande lagstiftning.

2. Huruvida riktlinjer är bindande eller inte är inte den enda faktor som avgör om de kommer att följas. Inom livsmedelslagstiftningen används ofta sådana riktlinjer som ett komplement till den befintliga lagstiftningen och många aktörer anser att de gör det lättare att förstå lagstiftningen. Detta är ett viktigt steg för att se till att lagstiftningen genomförs på rätt sätt.

3. Kommissionen har inga planer på att föreslå någon ändring av förordning (EG) nr 1/2005 om skydd av djur under transport ([1]). Dessutom föreslår kommissionen inte ny lagstiftning enbart på grundval av ett vetenskapligt yttrande. **Innan någon ny lagstiftning införs måste man göra en ingående konsekvensbedömning för att få en fullständig bild av effekterna av de eventuella ändringarna.**

([1]) EUT L 3, 5.1.2005, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001543/13
to the Commission
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Transport of animals

1. What makes the Commission believe that guides to good practice, which are not legally binding, will be enforced by the Member States, given that so far not even Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, which is legally binding, has been enforced?

2. Given that guides to good practice are not legally binding, how can the Commission believe that 'the gap between the requirements of the legislation and available scientific evidence […] is best addressed by the adoption of guides to good practices'?

3. Does the Commission not believe that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recommendations should be included in a revision of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, so that the inspection authorities at least have some chance of enforcing them?

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

1. Guides to good practices are, in most cases, not to be enforced by Member States but aim to assist producers and operators to put in place, implement and maintain the requirements of existing legislation.

2. The legal status of a document is not the sole factor that determines whether its content will be adhered to. In the area of food legislation such guides are widely used as a complement to existing legislation and they are by many considered as a contribution to improve the level of understanding of the requirements of legislation among stakeholders. This is an important step in ensuring its proper implementation.

3. The Commission is not planning to propose any changes to Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]). In addition, the Commission would not propose new legislation based solely on a scientific opinion. Before any new legislation is introduced, an in-depth impact assessment is necessary to obtain a full picture of the impact of possible changes.

([1]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-001545/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(13 Feabhra 2013)

Ábhar: Easnamh ar Bhuiséad na gClár Erasmus do chách

Is gné de chlár an AE don fhoghlaim ar feadh an tsaoil é an clár Erasmus agus leithdháiltear thart ar 45 % de bhuiséad na foghlama ar feadh an tsaoil air. Faoi dheireadh na bliana acadúla 2012-2013 beidh 3 mhilliún mac léinn i ndiaidh páirt a ghlacadh sa scéim Erasmus ó cuireadh ar bun í 25 bliain ó shin. De bharr éiginnteacht an chreata airgeadais ilbhliantúil don tréimhse 2014-2020, tá fógartha ag an gCoimisiún go bhfuil seans maith ann go mbeidh easnamh buiséadach EUR 90 milliún ann i mbliana.

Is dócha gur laghdú ar na háiteanna ollscoile Erasmus atá ar fáil don dara seimeastar sa bhliain 2013 a bheidh mar thoradh ar an easnamh buiséadach sin agus is féidir freisin go mbeidh mic léinn ó limistéir faoi mhíbhuntáiste thíos leis. An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún figiúirí a thabhairt maidir leis an méid mac léinn a bheidh buailte ag an easnamh agus eolas a thabhairt faoin méid atá á dhéanamh aige chun an tsaincheist seo a chur ar bharr an chláir oibre?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Vassiliou thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(15 Márta 2013)

I nDeireadh Fómhair 2012, d'iarr an Coimisiún Eorpach ar na Ballstáit agus ar Pharlaimint na hEorpa vótáil ar son EUR 9 mbilliún de bhuiséad breise le haghaidh íocaíochtaí. D'iarr sé sin ionas go mbeadh creidmheasanna íocaíochta ar fáil a riarfadh ar dhóigh ní b'fhearr do mhéid na ngealltanas ar vótáil an tÚdarás Buiséadach ar a son i mbuiséad 2012. D'iarr an Coimisiún, go háirithe, EUR 180 milliún breise le cur ionsar an gClár Foghlama ar Feadh an tSaoil ionas go bhféadfar na riachtanais i ndáil le híocaíochtaí i leith an Chláir sin a chomhlíonadh ó seo go dtí deireadh na bliana 2012. Meastar go dteastóidh EUR 90 milliún do na híocaíochtaí a bhaineann le Erasmus. Tá fáil ar Dhréacht an Bhuiséid Leasaithigh seo ag: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/2012/2012_fr.cfm

Seachnaíodh an bhagairt a bhí ar chlár Erasmus, agus ar chláir eile de chuid an AE, a bhuí leis an gcomhaontú a rinne an tÚdarás Buiséadach i lár mhí na Nollag 2012 maidir le Buiséad Leasaithe 6/2012 agus maidir le Dréachtbhuiséad leasaithe 2013 a ghlac an Coimisiún i Samhain 2012.

Cé nár oibríodh amach fós mionsonraí na n-impleachtaí a ghabhann leis an gcomhaontú a rinne an Chomhairle Eorpach le déanaí maidir leis an gCreat Airgeadais Ilbhliantúil, tá an Coimisiún muiníneach go ndaingneofar na moltaí atá déanta aige méadú suntasach a dhéanamh ar an infheistíocht atá dírithe ar thacú le hoideachas agus oiliúint agus le soghluaiseacht (amhail Erasmus) foghlaimeoirí tríd an gclár Erasmus do Chách.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001545/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: The Erasmus programme is facing a budget deficit

The Erasmus programme is an aspect of the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme and approximately 45% of the Lifelong Learning Programme's budget is allocated to it. By the end of the academic year 2012-2013 three million students will have participated in the Erasmus scheme since it was first established 25 years ago. Owing to the uncertainty surrounding the future of the Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2014-2020 the Commission has announced there may be a budget deficit of EUR 90 million this year.

As a result of this budget deficit, there will be a reduction in the number of places available on Erasmus programmes and it is most likely students from disadvantaged areas who will be adversely affected. Could the Commission provide figures concerning the number of students who will be affected by this deficit and information regarding what is being done to give this issue priority?

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

In October 2012 the European Commission asked the Member States and the European Parliament to vote an additional budget of EUR 9 billion for payments so that the available payment credits would match more closely the level of commitments already voted by the Budgetary Authority in the 2012 budget. In particular, the Commission requested an additional EUR 180 million for the Lifelong Learning Programme to ensure meeting payment needs until the end of 2012. The share for Erasmus was estimated at EUR 90 Million. This Draft Amending Budget 6/2012 can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/2012/2012_en.cfm.

With the mid-December 2012 agreement by the Budgetary Authority (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/134073.pdf) on the Amending Budget 6/2012 and on the revised Draft Budget 2013 adopted by the Commission in November 2012, the threat to the Erasmus and other EU programmes was averted.

While the detailed implications of the European Council's recent agreement on the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework remain to be worked out, the Commission is confident that its proposals for a significant increase in investment in support for education and training and for Erasmus-type learning mobility through the Erasmus for All Programme will be confirmed.

(An t-eagrán Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-001546/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(13 Feabhra 2013)

Ábhar: Sáruithe leanúnacha i dtaca le Saothar Leanaí san Úisbéiceastáin

D'fhoilsigh an Fóram Úisbéic-Ghearmánach um Chearta an Duine (UGF), i gcomhpháirtíocht leis an *Cotton Campaign*, tuarascáil an 20 Nollaig 2012 maidir leis na cleachtais saothair a bhí i bhfeidhm le linn fhómhar an chadáis san Úisbéiceastáin. Tuairiscítear ann gur chuir rialtas na hÚisbéiceastáine iallach ar mhilliún duine sa tír, idir pháistí agus daoine fásta, dul i mbun cadáis a bhaint, faoi bhagairt pionóis. Bhí cur síos freisin sa tuarascáil ar an gcaoi a bhfuil an rialtas ag diúltú i gcónaí don mhonatóireacht neamhspleách.

Cad atá á dhéanamh ag an gCoimisiún chun áitiú ar rialtas na hÚisbéiceastáine deireadh a chur leis an saothar éigeantach agus ceadú don Eagraíocht Idirnáisiúnta Saothair (EIS) monatóireacht a dhéanamh le linn fhómhar na bliana seo?

Tá rialtas na hÚisbéiceastáine ag diúltú i gcónaí comhoibriú leis an EIS, mar is léir ón mbealach ina bhfuiltear ag leanúint de shaothar éigeantach leanaí agus ón athrú nua déimeagrafach i dtreo leanaí níos sine. Chuige sin, an bhféadfadh an Coimisiún sonraí a thabhairt maidir lena bhfuil á dhéanamh chun cainteanna éifeachtacha a chur ar bun le rialtas na hÚisbéiceastáine?

D'eagraigh an Lárionad Eorpach um Chearta Bunreachtúla agus Cearta an Duine (ECCHR) painéal ag Seó Faisin Eiticiúil Bheirlín an 16 Eanáir 2013 a tharraing aird ar an tslí a bhfuil cadás a bhaintear le saothar leanaí in úsáid san earnáil faisin.

Céard atá á dhéanamh ag an gCoimisiún chun dul i ngleic le hearraí a dhéantar le saothar leanaí a bheith in úsáid agus á ndíol ar an margadh idirnáisiúnta?

Freagra ón Ard-Ionadaí/Leas-Uachtarán Ashton thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(5 Aibreán 2013)

Pléitear ceist an tsaothair leanaí san Úisbéiceastáin i ngach cruinniú a reáchtáiltear idir an tAontas Eorpach agus an Úisbéiceastáin faoin gComhaontú um Chomhpháirtíocht agus um Chomhar.

Chun feasacht a chothú maidir le saothar leanaí san Úisbéiceastáin, tionóladh seimineár in Tashkent i mí na Bealtaine 2012 faoi chur chun feidhme choinbhinsiúin na hEagraíochta Idirnáisiúnta Saothair (EIS), seimineár inar ghlac an EIS agus an AE araon páirt. Thug an AE suntas don mhórlaghdú a tháinig ar shaothar leanaí le linn fhómhar an chadáis 2012, bliain ina raibh níos lú leanaí óga ag obair sna goirt agus inar tugadh cead do chuid acu dul ar scoil. Is eol dúinn mar sin féin go bhfuil go leor fós le déanamh maidir leis na leanaí atá níos sine. D'fhonn an forás sin a dhaingniú, tá an AE fós ag moladh tús a chur an athuair le clár comhair leathan idir an Úisbéiceastáin agus an EIS, cur chun feidhme éifeachtach na gcoinbhinsiún ábhartha san áireamh.

A fhad a bhaineann lena chaidreamh trádála, níl an Coimisiún i bhfabhar cur chuige atá bunaithe go hiomlán ar smachtbhannaí. Ina ionad sin, téann sé ar iontaoibh an chomhair, na trédhearcachta agus an idirphlé, ar uirlisí éifeachtacha iad chun cuspóirí an AE a bhaint amach, chun tacú leis an bhforbairt agus chun tíortha comhpháirtíochta a spreagadh aird níos mó a thabhairt ar na prionsabail atá cumhdaithe i gcoinbhinsiúin idirnáisiúnta maidir le cearta an duine agus cearta saothair.

Chuige sin, tá an AE ag féachaint le caidreamh comhair ábhartha a chothú leis an Úisbéiceastáin. Síníodh clár Forbartha Tuaithe ar fiú EUR 10 milliún é i lár na bliana 2012, d'fhonn éagsúlú talmhaíochta a chur chun cinn agus an spleáchas ar mhonashaothrú an chadáis a laghdú.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001546/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Child labour in Uzbekistan

The Uzbek-German Forum for Human Rights (UGF), in partnership with the Cotton Campaign, published a report on 20 December 2012 on working practices during the cotton harvest season in Uzbekistan. The report detailed how the government of Uzbekistan forced one million children and adults to harvest cotton under threat of punishment. It also reported that the government is still refusing independent monitoring.

What is the Commission doing to persuade the government of Uzbekistan to end this compulsory labour and to allow the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to monitor labour during this year's harvest season?

The government of Uzbekistan is still refusing to cooperate with the ILO as is clear from the way in which child labour is still compulsory and there is also a new demographic shift towards older children. Could the Commission provide details on how it plans to start constructive talks with the government of Uzbekistan?

The European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) launched panel discussions at the Ethical Fashion Show in Berlin on 16 January 2013 which drew attention to the fact that cotton harvested through child labour is used in the fashion industry.

What is the Commission doing to address the fact that goods made by child labour are being used and sold on the international market?

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

The issue of child labour in Uzbekistan is addressed in every meeting held between the EU and Uzbekistan under the partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA).

In order to raise awareness on child labour in Uzbekistan, a dedicated seminar on the implementation of the ILO conventions was convened in Tashkent in May 2012, in which both the ILO and the EU actively participated. The EU took note that the 2012 cotton harvest marked a decrease in the recourse to child labour as less young children were in the fields and some of them could now attend school. We are also aware that a lot remains to be done with the elder part of the youth. With a view to consolidating this evolution, the EU has kept advocating the resumption of a broad-based cooperation agenda between Uzbekistan and the ILO, including on the effective implementation of the relevant conventions.

In its trade relations, the Commission does not favour a purely sanction-based approach, relying instead on cooperation, transparency and dialogue as more efficient tools to achieve the EU's objectives, support development and encourage partner countries to advance towards a better respect of principles enshrined in international conventions on human and labour rights.

In this spirit, the EU has sought to develop relevant cooperation responses with Uzbekistan. A 10 million EURO Rural Development programme was signed in mid-2012, with a view to promoting i.a. agriculture diversification and diminishing the country's reliance on cotton monoculture.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001547/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Fondi degli oligarchi russi nelle banche cipriote

Premesso che Cipro necessita, entro giugno, di 17,7 miliardi di euro di aiuto esterno, di cui circa 10 miliardi sono destinati a rafforzare il capitale delle banche cipriote;

che vi risultano essere depositati fondi liquidi di oligarchi e uomini d'affari russi per circa 20 miliardi di euro;

la Commissione, prima di concedere un ulteriore sostegno finanziario a Cipro, non intende ottenere che venga fatta piena chiarezza sull'origine di questi ingenti capitali russi di possibile provenienza mafiosa o, in ogni caso, illegale?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(2 aprile 2013)

La Commissione sta lavorando a diretto contatto con le autorità cipriote, in stretta collaborazione con la Banca centrale europea e con il Fondo monetario internazionale, per ultimare un programma di assistenza finanziaria nel più breve tempo possibile.

Quanto ai capitali depositati presso le banche cipriote da titolari russi, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole deputato alla risposta data all'interrogazione scritta E-486/2013 presentata dall'onorevole Papadopoulou ([1]).

L'importanza attribuita dalla Commissione ai provvedimenti contro il riciclaggio di denaro è evidenziata dalla recente proposta di una quarta direttiva in materia di antiriciclaggio ([2]), che rafforzerà ulteriormente il quadro di lotta contro il riciclaggio dell'Unione europea, già robusto. La troika è oggi impegnata attivamente nei negoziati con Cipro per garantire che i provvedimenti legislativi e le relative procedure di esecuzione siano in vigore, aggiornati ed efficaci. La Commissione, infine, rimanda l'onorevole deputato alle dichiarazioni dell'Eurogruppo su Cipro del 4, del 16 e del 18 marzo 2013. ([3])

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2013)45 final.
([3]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/newsroom/news/2013/03/eurogroup-statement-on-cyprus/.
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/135809.pdf
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136190.pdf
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136246.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001547/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Russian oligarch funds held in Cypriot banks

Cyprus is in need of EUR 17.7 billion in foreign aid by June 2013. EUR 10 billion of that aid will be used to bolster the capital position of Cypriot banks.

At the same time it seems that Russian oligarchs and businessmen have deposited cash assets in those banks to the value of around EUR 20 billion.

Before granting further financial aid to Cyprus, does the Commission not intend to seek full clarifications on the origin of these enormous amounts of Russian capital, which may be the proceeds of organised crime, and in any case are illicit?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

The Commission is working closely with the Cypriot authorities, in close cooperation with, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to finalise a financial assistance programme as soon as possible.

Regarding assets deposited in Cypriot banks by Russian beneficiaries, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-486/2013 by Mr Papadopoulou ([1]) .

The importance that the Commission places on Anti-Money Laundering measures is exhibited by its recent proposal for a Fourth Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Directive ([2]), which will further enhance the already-robust EU AML framework. The Troika is currently actively involved in talks with Cyprus to ensure that its legislative measures and associated enforcement procedures are in place, up-to-date, and effective. Finally, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the 4, 16 and18 March 2013 Eurogroup statements on Cyprus ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2013)45 final.
([3]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/newsroom/news/2013/03/eurogroup-statement-on-cyprus/.
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/135809.pdf
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136190.pdf
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136246.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001550/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(13 februari 2013)

Betreft: Vlootcapaciteit lidstaten

In haar speciaal verslag nr. 12/2011 gaf de Europese Rekenkamer aan dat vaak onduidelijk is in hoeverre lidstaten zich houden aan de correcte regelgeving op het gebied van het buiten gebruik stellen van vissersschepen. Ook de Commissie begrotingscontrole komt nu tot deze conclusie (2013/2015(DEC)). Zij adviseert bovendien om het Europees visserijbeleid te regionaliseren. In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Is er sinds het uitkomen van bovengenoemd speciaal verslag van de Rekenkamer een lijst opgesteld door de Commissie met daarin het effectieve plafond voor de vissersvlootcapaciteit per lidstaat? Zo ja, kan ik deze ontvangen als bijlage? Zo nee, waarom (nog) niet?

2. In welke specifieke lidstaten is er sprake van een overcapaciteit aan vissersschepen? Hebben deze specifieke lidstaten reeds een schema ingeleverd met voorstellen tot buitengebruikstelling van deze overcapaciteit?

3. Welke specifieke lidstaten voldoen niet aan het correct en tijdig rapporteren van het vlootregister? Welke sancties heeft de Commissie daarop toegepast en/of kan ze daarop (alsnog) toepassen?

4. Deelt de Commissie de aanbeveling van de Commissie begrotingscontrole om het Europees visserijbeleid te regionaliseren? Zo nee, waarom niet?

5. De Commissie begrotingscontrole is van mening dat er sprake is van „verschillende types ineffectieve subsidiëring" in het Europees visserijbeleid. Deelt de Commissie deze mening? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Damanaki namens de Commissie
(22 april 2013)

De Commissie controleerde reeds voor de publicatie van het speciaal verslag van de Rekenkamer of de lidstaten voldoen aan hun wettelijke verplichtingen inzake de maxima voor de vissersvlootcapaciteit in combinatie met de regeling voor toevoeging/onttrekking aan de vloot.

Naar aanleiding van het speciaal verslag van de Rekenkamer heeft de Commissie haar inspanningen om een evenwicht tussen de vangstcapaciteit en de vangstmogelijkheden in de lidstaten te bevorderen, opgevoerd.

De Commissie heeft onlangs haar jaarverslag aan het Parlement en de Raad gepubliceerd waarin het evenwicht tussen de vangstcapaciteit en de vangstmogelijkheden in elke lidstaat wordt geanalyseerd. In het verslag worden de vlootprestaties op biologisch, technisch en economisch vlak geanalyseerd en wordt geconcludeerd dat de naleving van nationale maxima voor de vlootcapaciteit niet voldoende is om een dergelijk evenwicht te garanderen en dat aanzienlijke verbeteringen nodig zijn.

Uit het verslag blijkt eveneens dat Roemenië de enige lidstaat is die voor 2011 geen vlootrapport heeft ingediend. De Commissie is deze kwestie op dit moment aan het bespreken met de Roemeense autoriteiten.

De Commissie heeft de aanbevelingen van de Rekenkamer en van de Commissie begrotingscontrole opgenomen in haar voorstellen aan de Raad en het Europees Parlement voor een hervormd gemeenschappelijk visserijbeleid (GVB) en voor een nieuw Europees Fonds voor maritieme zaken en visserij (EFMZV). Zij heeft met name voorgesteld om EFMZV-steun te verschuiven van ondoeltreffende maatregelen als een tijdelijke of definitieve stopzetting van de visserijactiviteiten naar meer doeltreffende maatregelen ter bescherming van mariene ecosystemen in het algemeen en van visbestanden in het bijzonder.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001550/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Fleet capacity of Member States

In its special report No 12/2011, the European Court of Auditors indicates that it is frequently unclear to what extent Member States are complying with the rules concerning the decommissioning of fishing vessels. The Committee on Budgetary Control comes to the same conclusion (2013/2015(DEC)), calling for European fisheries policy to be conducted at regional level.

In view of this:

1. Since the publication of the special report by the Court of Auditors, has the Commission drawn up a list indicating effective fishing fleet capacity limits for each Member State? If so, can it attach it to its answer? If not, why not?

2. Which specific Member States have excess fishing fleet capacity? Have they already submitted proposals for the decommissioning thereof?

3. Which specific Member States are failing to submit prompt and adequate reports regarding their fleet registers? What penalties has the Commission imposed and/or can it (till) impose if appropriate?

4. Does the Commission concur with the recommendation from the Committee on Budgetary Control that European fisheries policy be conducted at regional level? If not, why not?

5. Does the Commission agree with the Committee on Budgetary Control regarding the ineffectiveness of certain types of European fisheries subsidies? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

Even before the publication of the special report by the Court of Auditors, the Commission was checking that Member States (MS) were respecting their legal obligations in terms of fishing fleet capacity ceilings in combination with the entry-exit regime.

Following the special report of the Court of Auditors, the Commission has reinforced its effort to promote a balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities in the MS.

The Commission has recently published its annual report to the Parliament and the Council which analyses the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities in each MS. The report analyses fleet performance in biological, technical and economic terms and concludes that compliance with national capacity ceilings is not sufficient to guarantee such a balance and that significant improvements are needed.

This report also shows that Romania is the only MS which did not submit a fleet report for 2011. The Commission is currently addressing the issue with the Romanian authorities.

The Commission integrated the recommendations of the Court of Auditors and of the Committee on Budgetary Control into its proposals to the Council and European Parliament for a reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and for a new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). It has proposed, in particular, to redirect EMFF support from ineffective measures such as temporary or permanent cessation of fishing activities, towards more effective measures for the protection of marine ecosystems in general and of fisheries resources in particular.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001551/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανεξέλεγκτη αύξηση της ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τα πρόσφατα δημοσιοποιημένα στοιχεία της Eurostat για το ποσοστό ανεργίας στην Ευρώπη το Δεκέμβριο του 2012, η Ελλάδα (επικαιροποιημένα στοιχεία μέχρι τον Οκτώβριο) εμφανίζει τα υψηλότερα ποσοστά στην Ευρωζώνη τόσο στην ανεργία του γενικού πληθυσμού με 26,8%, όσο και στους νέους κάτω των 25 ετών με 57,6%. Η χώρα μας, μάλιστα, σημείωσε μέσα σε ένα χρόνο τη μεγαλύτερη αύξηση ανεργίας (από 19,7% σε 26,8%), μια παρατήρηση που ισχύει και για όλο σχεδόν το διάστημα από την υπαγωγή της στο Μεικτό Μηχανισμό Στήριξης. Αξίζει να σημειωθεί πώς η έλλειψη απασχόλησης, πέρα από τις επώδυνες κοινωνικές συνέπειες και τον καταστροφικό αντίκτυπο στις ικανότητες των εργαζομένων, εμφανίζει ιδιαίτερα δυσάρεστες προεκτάσεις, μεταξύ άλλων, στην πραγματική οικονομία, αλλά και στη βιωσιμότητα και επάρκεια του Συστήματος Κοινωνικής Ασφάλισης. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, ως μέλος και της τρόικας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Εκτιμά ότι το λάθος στον πολλαπλασιαστή του Ελληνικού Δημοσιονομικού Προγράμματος, όπως ομολογήθηκε από το ΔΝΤ, επηρέασε, άμεσα ή έμμεσα, αρνητικά τη διακύμανση του ποσοστού ανεργίας;

2. Πώς εκτιμά το ενδεχόμενο τα κράτη μέλη που αντιμετωπίζουν τα μεγαλύτερα προβλήματα ανεργίας να λειτουργήσουν ως «πιλότοι», με την άμεση εφαρμογή των μέτρων καταπολέμησής της;

3. Ποια είναι η εκτίμησή της για την εξέλιξη των ποσοστών ανεργίας μέχρι το τέλος του 2013;

4. Πώς αξιολογεί την πρόταση για την καθιέρωση ενός συστήματος των φοροαπαλλαγών στις επιχειρήσεις, με βασικό συντελεστή και κριτήριο τη δημιουργία θέσεων πλήρους απασχόλησης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Μαΐου 2013)

1. Πρόσφατες μελέτες σχετικά με τον δημοσιονομικό πολλαπλασιαστή είναι περιορισμένης χρησιμότητας προκειμένου να αξιολογηθούν οι επιπτώσεις της δημοσιονομικής πολιτικής στην ελληνική αγορά εργασίας. Με δημοσιονομικό έλλειμμα ύψους 15,6% το 2009, οι αγορές δεν ήταν πλέον διατεθειμένες να χρηματοδοτήσουν το υψηλό επίπεδο χρέους της χώρας. Η συνεχιζόμενη αβεβαιότητα και τα προβλήματα σχετικά με την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος καθυστέρησαν τη βελτίωση του κλίματος εμπιστοσύνης. Οι αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στο κλίμα εμπιστοσύνης γίνονται πλέον αισθητές και εναπόκειται στις ελληνικές αρχές να διασφαλίσουν, μέσω της αποφασιστικής εφαρμογής του προγράμματος μεταρρυθμίσεων, ότι η εμπιστοσύνη θα συνεχίσει να αυξάνεται.

2. Η ΕΕ καταπολεμά την ανεργία και στηρίζει τη δημιουργία βιώσιμων θέσεων εργασίας μέσω των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων (ΔΤ). Ορισμένα μέτρα έχουν ήδη εφαρμοστεί με χρηματοδότηση του ΕΚΤ ([1]) στην Ελλάδα, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του ειδικού διετούς προγράμματος για την προώθηση της απασχόλησης μέσω επιδότησης των εισφορών κοινωνικής ασφάλισης με 25 000 θέσεις και του συστήματος κουπονιών για τους νέους, το οποίο θα εγκαινιαστεί πολύ σύντομα, με 45 000 θέσεις.

3. Σύμφωνα τις χειμερινές προβλέψεις της Επιτροπής για το 2013, το ποσοστό ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα προβλέπεται ότι θα ανέλθει στο 27,0% (πρότυποι δείκτες της ΕΕΔ ([2])) το 2013 και θα μειωθεί σε 25,7% το 2014.

4. Το πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής περιλαμβάνει ήδη ένα πλήρες φάσμα μέτρων με στόχο τη βελτίωση των επιχειρηματικών συνθηκών, την ενίσχυση των θεσμικών φορέων της αγοράς εργασίας και την εξυγίανση των εισφορών ασφάλισης, ενόψει της ανάγκης να εξασφαλιστεί η βιωσιμότητα των δημοσίων οικονομικών.

([1]) Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο.
([2]) Έρευνα για το εργατικό δυναμικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001551/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Uncontrolled rise in unemployment in Greece

According to the recent Eurostat figures on the unemployment rate in Europe in December 2012, Greece (figures updated to October) is shown to have the highest rates in the Eurozone both for unemployment among the general population (running at 26.8%), and for young people under 25 years of age (running at 57.6%). In fact in one year Greece has experienced the largest increase in unemployment (from 19.7% to 26.8%), an observation that applies to almost the entire period since the Joint Support Mechanism was introduced. It is worth noting how the lack of jobs in Greece is not only having painful social consequences and a devastating impact on employee skills, but also has very unpleasant ramifications in particular for the real economy and the viability and adequacy of Social Security System. In this context, will the Commission, as a member of the Troika, say:

1. Does it consider that the error in the multiplier of the Greek Fiscal Programme, as the IMF has admitted, has adversely influenced the unemployment rate, whether directly or indirectly?

2. How does it consider the possibility that those Member States experiencing the highest unemployment will serve as 'pilots' for the immediate implementation of measures to combat this unemployment?

3. How high does it estimate the unemployment rates will be by the end of 2013?

4. How does it view the proposal to introduce a system of tax breaks for companies, with the key factor and criterion for qualifying for these breaks being the creation of full-time jobs?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

1. Recent studies on the fiscal multiplier are of limited use in assessing the impact of fiscal policy on the Greek labour market. With a 15.6% fiscal deficit in 2009, markets were no longer willing to finance the country's high debt level. Persistent uncertainty and problems with the implementation of the programme delayed the improvement in confidence. The confidence effects are now materialising and it is up to Greek authorities to ensure through determined implementation of the reform programme that this confidence continues to grow.

2. The EU is fighting unemployment and supporting sustainable job creation through Structural Funds (SFs). A number of measures have already been implemented using ESF ([1]) financing in Greece, including the Special Biennial Programme to promote employment by subsidising social security contributions with 25 000 places and the soon-to-be-launched youth voucher scheme with 45 000 places.

3. According to the Commission's 2013 Winter Forecast, the unemployment rate in Greece is projected to reach 27.0% (LFS ([2]) standard) in 2013, and fall to 25.7% in 2014.

4. The adjustment programme includes already a whole range of measures aimed at improving business conditions, strengthening labour market institutions and reforming solid security contributions, also in view of the need to achieve sustainable public finances.

([1]) European Social Fund.
([2]) Labour Force Survey.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001552/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ελληνικά νοικοκυριά σε οικονομικό αδιέξοδο

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατη έρευνα του Ιδρύματος Οικονομικών και Βιομηχανικών Ερευνών (ΙΟΒΕ), οι Έλληνες αναφορικά με τις οικονομικές τους προοπτικές παραμένουν σταθερά οι πιο απαισιόδοξοι στην Ευρώπη των 27. Συγκεκριμένα, τη στιγμή πού η καταναλωτική εμπιστοσύνη κινείται ανοδικά συνολικά σε 20 ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, τον Ιανουάριο το ποσοστό των Ελλήνων καταναλωτών που δηλώνει ότι «μόλις τα βγάζει πέρα» διευρύνεται περαιτέρω, στο 59%.

Παράλληλα, το 74% των ερωτηθέντων στην Ελλάδα κρίνει ότι το επόμενο διάστημα η οικονομική τους κατάσταση θα επιδεινωθεί, ενώ το 76% προβλέπει επιδείνωση για την οικονομική κατάσταση της χώρας το προσεχές 12μηνο, με την ανεργία να αυξάνεται αισθητά. Επίσης, 9 στα 10 ελληνικά νοικοκυριά θεωρούν μη πιθανή την αποταμίευση δηλώνοντας παράλληλα ότι δεν είναι καθόλου πιθανό να πραγματοποιήσουν σημαντικές σχετικές δαπάνες το προσεχές διάστημα.

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι ο μισός πληθυσμός κινδυνεύει να βρεθεί στο οικονομικό περιθώριο, καθώς δεν διαθέτει επαρκές εισόδημα για την κάλυψη των υποχρεώσεών του και για λόγους αδυναμίας, αποφεύγει ή καθυστερεί να καλύψει φορολογικές υποχρεώσεις, λογαριασμούς κοινής ωφελείας, χρωστάει δάνειο, αγοράζει αγαθά χαμηλότερης ποιότητας, πώς πιστεύει η Επιτροπή, ως μέλος της τρόικα, και με τα επίσημα στατιστικά που διαθέτει, ότι μια τέτοια κατάσταση θα επηρεάσει την πορεία του οικονομικού προγράμματος της χώρας;

2. Δεδομένων των έντονων δυσκολιών που αντιμετωπίζουν οι Έλληνες, προβλέπεται παράταση και αναπροσαρμογή των στόχων του προγράμματος;

3. Σε τι επίπεδα διαμορφώνονται τα ποσοστά υλικής υστέρησης στην Ελλάδα και στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη για το 2013;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Απριλίου 2013)

Προκειμένου να διευκολυνθεί η επιστροφή της ελληνικής οικονομίας σε μακροπρόθεσμη βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη υιοθετήθηκε το δεύτερο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα. Το πρόγραμμα αυτό προβλέπει αύξηση της χρηματοδότησης υπό το πρίσμα των συνεχιζόμενων δυσκολιών της ελληνικής οικονομίας. Λόγω της βαθύτερης και πιο παρατεταμένης ύφεσης σε σχέση με το αναμενόμενο, τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, η πορεία της δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής παρατάθηκε κατά δύο έτη έως το 2016 και οι στόχοι του προγράμματος προσαρμόστηκαν αντίστοιχα.

Η κατάσταση στην ελληνική οικονομία παραμένει εύθραυστη, αν και ήδη έγιναν σημαντικά βήματα προς την επίτευξη της οικονομικής σταθερότητας μέσω του προγράμματος. Λόγω της συνεχιζόμενης προσαρμογής της οικονομίας και της μεγαλύτερης ανταγωνιστικότητας, οι προβλέψεις στις οποίες βασίζεται το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής διαβλέπουν ανάκαμψη ως το τέλος του 2013, που θα οδηγήσει σε ετήσιους ρυθμούς ανάπτυξης της τάξης του 0,6% το 2014, 2,9% το 2015 και 3,7% το 2016.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001552/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Greek households on the verge of bankruptcy

According to recent research by the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOVW), as regards their economic prospects Greeks are consistently the most pessimistic in EU-27. More specifically, while consumer confidence is generally on the rises in 20 EU Member States, in January the percentage of Greek consumers stating that 'just manage to get by' has further risen to 59%.

Furthermore, 74% of respondents in Greece believe that ahead their economic situation will worsen in the immediate future, while 76% expect a deterioration in Greece's economic situation in the coming 12 months, with unemployment rising markedly. Also, 9 out of 10 Greek households consider it improbable that they will make savings, while stating that it is not at all likely that they will make significant spending in the near future.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Bearing in mind that half the population is at risk to be found in financial difficulties, since they do not have sufficient income to meet their obligations and through lack of money, are avoiding or delaying to cover tax liabilities, utility bills, are taking out loans, buying inferior quality products, how does the Commission, as a member of the Troika, in view of the official statistics available to it, believe that such a situation will influence the course of the country's economic programme?

2. Given the intense difficulties facing Greeks, is any provision being made for an extension of adjustment of the programme's objectives?

3. By what percentage are Greece and the other Member States lagging behind materially in 2013?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

In order to facilitate the return of Greek economy to long term sustainable growth, the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece was arranged. This programme envisages increased financing in light of ongoing difficulties in the Greek economy. Owing to the deeper and longer-than-expected recession, in December 2012, the fiscal adjustment path was extended by two years to 2016 and the programme targets were adjusted correspondingly.

The situation in Greek economy still remains fragile, although important steps towards economic stabilisation have been taken already through the programme. Due to the ongoing adjustment in the economy and increased competitiveness, the projections behind the economic adjustment programme forecast recovery by the end of 2013, leading to annual growth rates of 0.6% in 2014, 2.9% in 2015 and 3.7% in 2016.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001553/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Contributori e beneficiari netti del bilancio europeo — 2012

Facendo riferimento al 2012, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Può illustrare con chiarezza, una volta compensati gli importi ricevuti da ciascuno Stato dai Fondi strutturali con i rispettivi pagamenti effettuati al bilancio UE, quali Stati membri risultino contributori netti e quali beneficiari netti e in generale quale sia la posizione, rispetto agli altri, di ciascuno Stato membro?

2. Quali Stati membri hanno ricevuto in assoluto di più dai Fondi strutturali e quali meno?

3. Prendendo in considerazione, invece, come fattore di ponderazione il numero di abitanti, quali paesi hanno ricevuto il maggiore e il minore stanziamento dei Fondi strutturali?

4. Quali Stati membri hanno contribuito in assoluto di più al bilancio UE e quali meno?

5. Prendendo in considerazione, invece, come fattore di ponderazione il numero di abitanti, quali paesi hanno contribuito di più al bilancio UE e quali meno?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001554/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Contributori e beneficiari netti del bilancio europeo — Periodo di programmazione 2007-2013

Facendo riferimento al periodo di programmazione della politica di coesione 2007-2013, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Può illustrare con chiarezza, una volta compensati gli importi ricevuti da ciascuno Stato dai Fondi strutturali con i rispettivi pagamenti effettuati al bilancio UE, quali Stati membri risultino contributori netti e quali beneficiari netti e in generale quale sia la posizione, rispetto agli altri, di ciascuno Stato membro?

2. Quali Stati membri hanno ricevuto in assoluto di più dai Fondi strutturali e quali meno?

3. Prendendo in considerazione, invece, come fattore di ponderazione il numero di abitanti, quali paesi hanno ricevuto il maggiore e il minore stanziamento dei Fondi strutturali?

4. Quali Stati membri hanno contribuito in assoluto di più al bilancio UE e quali meno?

5. Prendendo in considerazione, invece, come fattore di ponderazione il numero di abitanti, quali paesi hanno contribuito di più al bilancio UE e quali meno?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001555/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Contributori e beneficiari netti del bilancio europeo considerati anche i contributi PAC e PCP — 2012

Facendo riferimento al 2012, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Può illustrare con chiarezza, una volta compensati gli importi ricevuti da ciascuno Stato dai Fondi strutturali, dai contributi della politica comune agricola (PAC) e della politica comune della pesca (PCP), con i rispettivi pagamenti effettuati al bilancio UE, quali Stati membri risultino contributori netti e quali beneficiari netti e in generale quale sia la posizione, rispetto agli altri, di ciascuno Stato membro?

2. Quali Stati membri hanno ricevuto in assoluto di più dai Fondi strutturali, contributi PAC e PCP e quali meno?

3. Prendendo in considerazione, invece, come fattore di ponderazione il numero di abitanti, quali paesi hanno ricevuto il maggiore e il minore stanziamento dei Fondi strutturali, contributi PAC e PCP?

4. Quali Stati membri hanno contribuito in assoluto di più al bilancio UE e quali meno?

5. Prendendo in considerazione, invece, come fattore di ponderazione il numero di abitanti, quali paesi hanno contribuito di più al bilancio UE e quali meno?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001556/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Contributori e beneficiari netti del bilancio europeo considerati anche i contributi PAC e PCP — Periodo di programmazione 2007-2013

Facendo riferimento al periodo di programmazione della politica di coesione 2007-2013, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Può illustrare con chiarezza, una volta compensati gli importi ricevuti da ciascuno Stato dai Fondi strutturali, dai contributi della politica comune agricola (PAC) e della politica comune della pesca (PCP), con i rispettivi pagamenti effettuati al bilancio UE, quali Stati membri risultino contributori netti e quali beneficiari netti e in generale quale sia la posizione, rispetto agli altri, di ciascuno Stato membro?

2. Quali Stati membri hanno ricevuto in assoluto di più dai Fondi strutturali, contributi PAC e PCP e quali meno?

3. Prendendo in considerazione, invece, come fattore di ponderazione il numero di abitanti, quali paesi hanno ricevuto il maggiore e il minore stanziamento dei Fondi strutturali, contributi PAC e PCP?

4. Quali Stati membri hanno contribuito in assoluto di più al bilancio UE e quali meno?

5. Prendendo in considerazione, invece, come fattore di ponderazione il numero di abitanti, quali paesi hanno contribuito di più al bilancio UE e quali meno?

Risposta congiunta di Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(9 aprile 2013)

1.-4. Secondo quanto stabilito dall'articolo 20 del regolamento finanziario ([1]), tutte le entrate e le spese devono essere iscritte integralmente, indipendentemente dalla struttura interna, e senza contrazioni fra di esse (la «regola della non contrazione»). I saldi finanziari operativi possono essere calcolati solo nell'ottica globale del bilancio UE, prendendo in considerazione le spese operative e i contributi nazionali complessivi. Non è possibile illustrare i saldi relativi a ogni singola politica.

I saldi finanziari operativi sono pubblicati ogni anno (in settembre) nella relazione sul bilancio dell'UE. I dati specifici per ogni Stato membro per il periodo 2000-2011 sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm.

2. Le tabelle riportate al suddetto indirizzo contengono informazioni relative alle spese assegnate agli Stati membri a titolo dei fondi strutturali (rubrica 1), della politica agricola comune e della politica comune della pesca (entrambe nella rubrica 2). Ulteriori informazioni sono reperibili online ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/regulations/syn_pub_rf_modex_en.pdf

([2]) — Fondo di coesione: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/funding/index_it.cfm; — Agricoltura — sostegno diretto: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=GU:L:2009:030:0016:0099:it:PDF (Allegato VIII).
— Agricoltura — sviluppo rurale: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=GU:L:2007:142:0021:0022:it:PDF (Allegato).
— Fondo europeo per la pesca: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=GU:L:2008:229:0005:0009:it:PDF (Allegato I).

3.-5. Le entrate, le spese, i contributi nazionali e i saldi finanziari operativi non sono calcolati per abitante. Siffatto indicatore presupporrebbe che un euro di spesa UE nei Paesi Bassi abbia lo stesso impatto economico di un euro speso in Bulgaria. La misura economicamente corretta consiste nell'esprimere le spese UE in percentuale dell'RNL o del PIL.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001553/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU budget 2012 — Net contributors and net beneficiaries

With reference to 2012, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Can it clearly illustrate, once the amounts received by each country from the Structural Funds have been offset by the respective payments made to the EU budget, which Member States are net contributors and which are net beneficiaries, and, in general what the position of each Member State is in relation to the others?

2. Which Member States have received the most from the Structural Funds and which have received the least?

3. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, as a weighting factor, which countries have received the most and which the least from the Structural Funds?

4. Which Member States have contributed the most to the EU budget and which the least?

5. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, as a weighting factor, which countries have contributed the most to the EU budget and which the least?

Question for written answer E-001554/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU budget, programming period 2007-2013 — Net contributors and net beneficiaries

With reference to the 2007-2013 programming period for cohesion policy, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Can it clearly illustrate, once the amounts received by each country from the Structural Funds have been offset by the respective payments made to the EU budget, which Member States are net contributors and which are net beneficiaries, and, in general what the position of each Member State is in relation to the others?

2. Which Member States have received the most from the Structural Funds and which have received the least?

3. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, as a weighting factor, which countries have received the most and which the least from the Structural Funds?

4. Which Member States have contributed the most to the EU budget and which the least?

5. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, as a weighting factor, which countries have contributed the most to the EU budget and which the least?

Question for written answer E-001555/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU budget 2012 — net contributors and net beneficiaries, taking into account CAP and CFP contributions

With reference to 2012, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Can it clearly illustrate, once the amounts received by each country from the Structural Funds, the common agricultural policy (CAP) contributions and the common fisheries policy (CFP) have been offset by the respective payments made to the EU budget, which Member States are net contributors and which are net beneficiaries, and, in general what the position of each Member State is in relation to the others?

2. Which Member States have received the most from the Structural Funds and from CAP and CFP contributions and which have received the least?

3. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, as a weighting factor, which countries have received the most and which the least from the Structural Funds and from CAP and CFP contributions?

4. Which Member States have contributed the most to the EU budget and which the least?

5. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, as a weighting factor, which countries have contributed the most to the EU budget and which the least?

Question for written answer E-001556/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: EU budget 2012 — net contributors and net beneficiaries, taking into account CAP and CFP contributions — programming period 2007-2013

With reference to the 2007-2013 programming period for cohesion policy, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Can it clearly illustrate, once the amounts received by each country from the Structural Funds, the common agricultural policy (CAP) contributions and the common fisheries policy (CFP) have been offset by the respective payments made to the EU budget, which Member States are net contributors and which are net beneficiaries, and, in general what the position of each Member State is in relation to the others?

2. Which Member States have received the most from the Structural Funds and from CAP and CFP contributions and which have received the least?

3. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, as a weighting factor, which countries have received the most and which the least from the Structural Funds and from CAP and CFP contributions?

4. Which Member States have contributed the most to the EU budget and which the least?

5. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, as a weighting factor, which countries have contributed the most to the EU budget and which the least?

Joint answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

1 and 4. According to Article 20 of the Financial Regulation ([1]), all revenue and expenditure must be entered in full without distinction as to internal structure and without any adjustment against each other (the 'gross budget rule'). Operating budgetary balances (OBB) can only be calculated from an overall perspective of the EU budget taking into account overall operating expenditures and national contributions. It is not possible to illustrate OBB for each particular policy.

OBB are published every year in the financial report of the EU budget (September). Detailed data per Member State for the period 2000-2011 is at:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm

2. Tables under the abovementioned link contain information regarding the expenditures allocated to Member States from the Structural Funds (H1), Common Agricultural Policy and Common Fishery Policy FP (both in H2). Further information can be found on websites ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/regulations/syn_pub_rf_modex_en.pdf

([2]) — Cohesion Funding: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/funding/index_en.cfm
— Agriculture — Direct Support:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:030:0016:0099:en:PDF
(Annex VIII).
— Agriculture — Rural Development:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:142:0021:0022:EN:PDF
(annex).
— European Fisheries Fund:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:229:0005:0009:EN:PDF
(Annex I).

3 and 5. Revenues, expenditures, national contributions, and OBB are not calculated per inhabitant. Such an indicator would assume that one euro of EU expenditure in the Netherlands would have the same economic impact as one euro spent in Bulgaria. The economically correct measure is to express EU expenditures as a percentage of GNI or GDP.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001557/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Hamburger di manzo sofisticati con altre carni: necessità di una normativa sulla tracciabilità della filiera dei preparati alimentari trasparente per i consumatori

A fine gennaio, rilievi effettuati dall'Autorità sulla sicurezza alimentare irlandese (FSAI) su hamburger in vendita in una nota catena di supermercati, sia in Irlanda sia nel Regno Unito, hanno rivelato che la loro composizione non era 100 % carne di manzo, ma vi erano percentuali di carne di cavallo e di maiale senza alcuna indicazione sull'etichetta. La catena di distribuzione in questione ha affermato che la responsabilità era da imputarsi ai propri fornitori, che non si erano attenuti agli standard produttivi richiesti, e ha ritirato dal mercato tutti i prodotti da essi forniti.

Come per gli altri scandali recenti che hanno colpito la grande distribuzione e le preparazioni alimentari a base di carne, anche in questo caso, dalle indagini poste in essere per rintracciare la provenienza delle materie prime utilizzate per questi prodotti, è risultato che essa aveva seguito una fitta rete di scambi che hanno toccato la Francia, Cipro e infine la Romania.

1. Può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. Quali misure intende mettere in campo per tutelare i consumatori europei da frodi di questo tipo?

3. Considerando il caso di specie, non reputa necessario introdurre una normativa più stringente in materia di etichettatura?

4. Considerando il caso sopra descritto e anche gli altri scandali simili scoppiati in questi giorni nei territori dell'UE, non ritiene sia arrivato il momento di predisporre una legislazione capace di creare una tracciabilità della filiera dei preparati alimentari, in modo da dare la certezza al consumatore, al momento dell'acquisto, sulla provenienza degli stessi?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2013)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza di questa frode che interessa l'etichettatura degli alimenti.

2. La Commissione si è attivata sia a livello politico che tecnico per coordinare le indagini in corso. Essa ha adottato una raccomandazione relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo ([1]) in cui sollecita controlli su scala unionale degli alimenti commercializzati in quanto contenenti carni bovine per individuare le etichettature fraudolente e degli alimenti contenenti carni equine destinate al consumo umano per individuare la presenza di fenilbutazone, un medicinale veterinario il cui uso è consentito soltanto negli animali non destinati alla produzione alimentare. Una sintesi di tutti i risultati sarà disponibile entro l'aprile 2013. La Commissione prepara inoltre una proposta sui controlli ufficiali volta a rafforzare ulteriormente il sistema attuale, compresa l'introduzione di sanzioni.

3. La legislazione sull'etichettatura già copre questo tipo di eventi. In forza delle regole vigenti ([2]), l'etichettatura degli alimenti non deve trarre in inganno il consumatore quanto alla loro natura e al loro contenuto, tutti gli ingredienti alimentari devono essere indicati sull'etichetta e l'etichettatura degli alimenti contenenti carni deve anche indicare le specie animali in questione. Tali regole sono state recentemente rivedute e rafforzate dal Parlamento e dal Consiglio. ([3])

([1]) 2013/99/UE: raccomandazione della Commissione, del 19 febbraio 2013, relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo volto a stabilire la prevalenza di pratiche fraudolente nella commercializzazione di determinati prodotti alimentari, GU L 48 del 21.2.2013, pag. 28.

([2]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 marzo 2000, relativa al ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri concernenti l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità, GU L 109 del 6.5.2000, pag. 29.

([3]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e (CE) n. 1925/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e abroga la direttiva 87/250/CEE della Commissione, la direttiva 90/496/CEE del Consiglio, la direttiva 1999/10/CE della Commissione, la direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, le direttive 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE della Commissione e il regolamento (CE) n. 608/2004 della Commissione, GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag. 18. Il regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 diventa applicativo il 13 dicembre 2014.

4. Come regola generale, la legislazione unionale prescrive l'indicazione d'origine sull'etichetta degli alimenti in tutti i casi in cui la sua omissione potrebbe trarre in inganno i consumatori. ([4]) Il regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 mantiene tale principio e introduce anche l'obbligo di etichettatura d'origine per le carni suine, di pollame, ovine e caprine, oltre alle regole che si applicano alle carni bovine. In aggiunta a quanto detto sopra, anche per quanto concerne gli aspetti relativi ai requisiti di tracciabilità per gli alimenti di origine animale e all'etichettatura d'origine obbligatoria, la Commissione desidera rinviare l'onorevole deputata alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta P-01731/2013. ([5])

([4]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001557/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Beefburgers adulterated with other types of meat: need for a transparent set of rules on traceability in the food preparations sector for consumers

At the end of January, checks carried out by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) on burgers on sale in a well-known supermarket chain in Ireland and the United Kingdom revealed that they were not made entirely from beef, but contained a percentage of horsemeat and pork, with no indication on the label. The supermarket chain concerned claimed that its suppliers were to blame, since they had failed to comply with the required production standards, and withdrew all the products they supplied from sale.

In this case, as with the other recent scandals affecting supermarkets and meat-based food preparations, the investigations carried out to trace the origin of the raw materials used for these products have revealed an extensive network of exchanges stretching to France, Cyprus and, ultimately, Romania.

1. Can the Commission state whether it is aware of the facts described above?

2. What measures does it intend to take in this regard in order to protect European consumers from this kind of fraud?

3. Given the present case, does it not see a need to introduce stricter legislation on labelling?

4. Given the case described above and the other similar scandals that have recently come to light throughout the EU, does it not believe that the time has come to draft legislation providing for traceability in the food preparations sector, so that consumers can be certain about the origin of those preparations when they purchase food products?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of this fraud in food labelling.

2. The Commission has been active both on political and technical levels in coordinating pending investigations. It adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([1]) calling for EU-wide controls on foods marketed as containing beef to detect fraudulent labelling and on horse meat destined for human consumption to detect phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013. The Commission is also preparing a proposal on official controls which will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

3. The legislation on labelling already covers this kind of occurrence. Under existing rules, ([2]) the labelling of foods must not mislead the consumer as to their nature and content, all food ingredients must be indicated on the label and the labelling of foods containing meat must also indicate the animal species concerned. These rules have been recently reviewed and strengthened by the Parliament and the Council ([3]).

([1]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

([2]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and 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.

([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 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 enters into application on 13 December 2014.

4. As a general rule the EU legislation requires the origin on the label of foods in all cases where its omission could mislead the consumer ([4]). Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 maintains this principle and also introduces mandatory origin labelling for meat of pig, poultry, sheep and goats, in addition to existing rules on beef. In addition to the above, including aspects of traceability requirements for foods of animal origin and mandatory origin labelling, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-01731/2013 ([5]).

([4]) Directive 2000/13/EC.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001559/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Lasagne surgelate contenenti carne di cavallo: normativa sull'etichettatura, tutela dei consumatori e lotta all'Italian sounding

I test condotti dall'Autorità per la sicurezza alimentare britannica (FSA) hanno messo in evidenza che molti prodotti surgelati venduti come «Lasagne alla bolognese» e commercializzati in Inghilterra da una nota multinazionale del settore, anziché usare carne di manzo, impiegano carne di cavallo in percentuali variabili fra il 60 % e il 100 % senza darne segnalazione alcuna nella loro etichetta. Le indagini effettuate successivamente per rintracciare la provenienza dei prodotti hanno seguito una fitta rete di scambi che, toccando Cipro e la Francia, hanno infine condotto in Romania.

La Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. Come vuole agire per tutelare la salute e la sicurezza dei consumatori europei?

3. Considerando che attualmente la normativa europea prevede l'obbligatorietà dell'etichettatura d'origine solo per le carni bovine, non ritiene urgente la predisposizione di una legislazione più trasparente in materia di etichettatura della carne, che permetta ai consumatori di conoscere da dove proviene e cosa contiene quello che stanno acquistando?

4. Preso atto che, anche in quest'occasione, il cittadino veniva invogliato all'acquisto attraverso il fenomeno dell'*Italian sounding*, giacché sulla confezione dei prodotti si trovava la denominazione «Lasagne alla bolognese» (chiaro richiamo a prodotti tipicamente italiani confezionati con carne di manzo, ma che con la ricetta tradizionale, la qualità, la sicurezza di questo prodotto non avevano nulla a che fare), non ritiene urgente tutelare le eccellenze agroalimentari italiane, nel mercato interno e nei mercati extra-UE, laddove i cittadini sono costantemente frodati a causa della mancanza di una normativa chiara capace di tutelare i prodotti del nostro Paese, proprio come è avvenuto in questo caso?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questi fatti. A tutt'oggi la questione rimane un caso di etichettatura fraudolenta e non comporta un problema di sicurezza. In forza della normativa vigente ([1]), l'etichettatura degli alimenti non deve trarre in inganno i consumatori e deve indicare tutti gli ingredienti. Le etichette degli alimenti contenenti carne devono anche indicare le specie animali.

La Commissione si è attivata sia a livello politico che tecnico per coordinare le indagini in corso. Essa ha adottato una raccomandazione relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo ([2]) con cui sollecita controlli su scala unionale degli alimenti commercializzati in quanto contenenti carni bovine per individuare le etichettature fraudolente nonché controlli sulle carni equine destinate al consumo umano al fine di individuare la presenza di fenilbutazone, un medicinale veterinario il cui uso è consentito esclusivamente negli animali non destinati alla produzione alimentare. Una sintesi di tutte le risultanze sarà disponibile entro l'aprile 2013.

Il ricorso a un'etichettatura d'origine obbligatoria non è uno strumento atto a prevenire l'etichettatura fraudolenta. La frode in oggetto avrebbe potuto verificarsi anche se fosse stato in atto un sistema obbligatorio di etichettatura d'origine.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 marzo 2000, relativa al ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri concernenti l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità, GU L 109 del 6.5.2000, pag. 29.

([2]) 2013/99/UE: raccomandazione della Commissione, del 19 febbraio 2013, relativa a un piano coordinato di controllo volto a stabilire la prevalenza di pratiche fraudolente nella commercializzazione di determinati prodotti alimentari, GU L 48 del 21.2.2013, pag. 28.

L'indicazione d'origine degli alimenti è prescritta qualora la sua omissione possa trarre in inganno il consumatore ([3]), ad esempio a motivo di elementi apposti sull'etichetta (simboli, bandiere) che facciano pensare a un'origine falsa. Il regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 ([4]) introduce un'etichettatura d'origine obbligatoria per le carni non trasformate di ovini, caprini, pollame e suini e fa obbligo alla Commissione di presentare una relazione sull'etichettatura d'origine obbligatoria per gli ingredienti carnei. Tale relazione dovrebbe essere disponibile entro l'autunno 2013. Il regolamento stabilisce inoltre le regole per evitare che i consumatori vengano tratti in inganno: laddove l'origine indicata di un alimento e l'origine dei suoi ingredienti primari non coincidano, quest'ultima deve essere indicata.

I produttori possono invocare la protezione degli alimenti tipici italiani ricorrendo a designazioni d'origine, indicazioni geografiche o indicazioni di specialità tradizionali in forza del regolamento (UE) n. 1151/2012 ([5]). Non è pervenuta nessuna domanda relativa alle «lasagne alla bolognese».

([3]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE.

([4]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e (CE) n. 1925/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e abroga la direttiva 87/250/CEE della Commissione, la direttiva 90/496/CEE del Consiglio, la direttiva 1999/10/CE della Commissione, la direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, le direttive 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE della Commissione e il regolamento (CE) n. 608/2004 della Commissione, GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag. 18.

([5]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1151/2012 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 21 novembre 2012, sui regimi di qualità dei prodotti agricoli alimentari, GU L 343 del 14.12.2012, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001559/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Frozen lasagne containing horsemeat: labelling legislation, consumer protection and combating the 'Italian sounding' phenomenon

Tests conducted by the UK Food Safety Authority (FSA) have shown that many frozen products sold as Lasagne Bolognese and marketed in the UK by a well-known multinational, have been using horsemeat, instead of beef, in percentages varying between 60% and 100%, without mentioning it at all on their labels. The investigations subsequently carried out to trace the origin of the goods followed a complex trading network which, passing through Cyprus and France, eventually led to Romania.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of these facts?

2. What action will it take to protect the health and safety of European consumers?

3. Given that at present EU legislation provides for mandatory labelling of origin only for beef and veal, does it not consider it a matter of urgency to draw up more transparent legislation regarding meat labelling, so that consumers can know the origin and content of what they are buying?

4. Noting that, yet again, citizens are being enticed to purchase 'Italian sounding' products, since the product packaging contained the words 'Lasagne Bolognese' (a clear reference to typical Italian products made with beef, but the traditional recipe, quality and safety of which have nothing to do with the product in question), does the Commission not consider it urgent to protect the excellence of Italian food, both in the internal market and externally, when, just as in this case, citizens are constantly being defrauded due to the lack of clear legislation to protect Italian products?

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

The Commission is aware of these facts. To date, the issue remains one of fraudulent labelling not one of safety. Under existing law ([1]), food labelling must not mislead the consumer and must indicate all ingredients. Labels of foods containing meat must also indicate the animal species.

The Commission has been active both on political and technical levels in coordinating pending investigations. It adopted a recommendation on a coordinated control plan ([2]) calling for EU-wide controls on foods marketed as containing beef to detect fraudulent labelling and on horse meat destined for human consumption to detect phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug whose use is allowed only in non-food producing animals. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013.

Mandatory origin labelling is not a tool to prevent fraudulent labelling. This fraud could have occurred, even if there was a mandatory origin labelling.

Origin indication of foods is required if its omission could mislead the consumer ([3]), i.e. via elements on the label (symbols, flags) suggesting a false origin. Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([4]) introduces mandatory origin labelling for unprocessed sheep, goat, poultry and pig meat and requires the Commission to submit a report on the mandatory origin labelling for meat ingredients This report should be available by Autumn 2013. The regulation also sets rules to prevent misleading consumers; where the indicated origin of a food and the origin of its primary ingredients are not the same, the latter must be indicated.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and 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]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.
([3]) Directive 2000/13/EC.
([4]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 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.

Producers may seek protection of typical Italian food as designations of origin, geographical indications or traditional specialties under Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 ([5]). No application for 'Lasagne Bolognese' has been received.

([5]) Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p.1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001560/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Scandali dei preparati alimentari nell'UE: agevolazione per il «km zero»

I recenti scandali delle preparazioni surgelate a base di carne, che hanno coinvolto Gran Bretagna, Francia e Cipro, hanno evidenziato il persistere della vulnerabilità dei cittadini europei rispetto alle produzioni dei preparati alimentari che poggiano su lunghe filiere produttive.

Gli alimenti «a km zero» o «a filiera corta» sono prodotti locali venduti o somministrati nelle vicinanze del luogo di produzione a un prezzo contenuto dovuto ai ridotti costi di trasporto e di distribuzione, all'assenza di intermediari commerciali, ma anche allo scarso ricarico del venditore che spesso è lo stesso agricoltore o allevatore. Alcuni studi hanno messo in luce quanto sia inefficiente, da un punto di vista energetico, il sistema di produzione alimentare industriale, mentre altri dimostrano come invece la filiera corta riduca drasticamente le emissioni. I prodotti «a km zero», oltre a provenire da una specifica zona di produzione, offrono maggiori garanzie di freschezza e genuinità proprio per l'assenza, o quasi, di trasporto e di passaggio. Incentivando questo tipo di acquisto si valorizzano inoltre i produttori locali, i gusti e i sapori tipici nonché le tradizioni gastronomiche.

1. Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se non ritiene urgente agevolare la diffusione della filiera corta, sostenendo i consumatori europei nella creazione dei «gruppi di acquisto» o in tutte le altre pratiche che riducono la distanza tra agricoltore e/o allevatore e il consumatore per acquistare i loro prodotti?

2. Non intende aprire un tavolo di consultazione che avvicini la produzione e la trasformazione alimentare industriale ai produttori di materie prime locali per capire quali nuove forme di collaborazione possano essere implementate, al fine di dar vita a un nuovo sistema di produzione più sostenibile sotto il profilo energetico e più sicuro per i cittadini europei?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2013)

La Commissione incoraggia la cooperazione tra i vari attori della filiera produttiva, dal «campo alla tavola», in quanto vantaggiosa per tutti.

Nelle proposte della Commissione che gettano le basi della politica post 2013 in materia di sviluppo rurale, le filiere corte e i mercati locali figurano come precise priorità. La Commissione ha anche proposto una serie di misure inerenti, tra cui il sostegno esplicito a questo tipo di filiere e mercati nell'ambito della misura «cooperazione».

I problemi sollevati dall'onorevole deputato devono però essere abbordati da vari fronti: al pari delle filiere lunghe, le filiere corte possono funzionare più o meno bene e non costituiscono necessariamente la soluzione.

Si segnala il progetto di ricerca GLAMUR ([1]), che, avviato nel febbraio 2013, ha come obiettivo generale di integrare le nuove conoscenze scientifiche sull'impatto delle filiere alimentari con l'applicazione di tali conoscenze alla pratica, allo scopo di aumentare la sostenibilità delle filiere alimentari mediante politiche pubbliche e strategie private.

Il Forum di alto livello per un migliore funzionamento della filiera alimentare, istituito dalla Commissione europea, riunisce i rappresentanti dei produttori agricoli, dell'industria alimentare e del commercio al dettaglio e opera per rendere la filiera più competitiva. Il Forum ha contribuito a introdurre un approccio olistico alle politiche che si ripercuotono sulla catena del valore agroalimentare e a prendere in esame le politiche che incidono sul settore, tra cui la sostenibilità.

Infine, entro il 4 gennaio 2014 la Commissione presenterà una relazione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio sull'opportunità di istituire un nuovo regime di etichettatura relativo all'agricoltura locale e alla vendita diretta al fine di assistere i produttori nella commercializzazione dei loro prodotti a livello locale ([2]).

([1]) Global and Local food chain Assessment: a Multidimensional performance based approach.
([2]) Articolo 55 del regolamento (UE) n. 1151/2012 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sui regimi di qualità dei prodotti agricoli e alimentari (GU L 343 del 14.12.2012).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001560/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Food product scandals in the EU: towards a 'zero food miles' approach

The recent frozen meat product scandals involving the United Kingdom, France and Cyprus have shown that Europeans are still vulnerable when it comes to food products with long supply chains.

Foods with zero food miles or short supply chains are local products that are sold or supplied near the place of production at a reasonable price due not only to the low transport and distribution costs and the lack of commercial intermediaries, but also to the low markup charged by the seller, who is often the farmer or breeder, too. Several studies have revealed how inefficient the industrial food production system is in energy terms, while others show that short supply chains, by contrast, drastically reduce emissions. In addition to being sourced from a specific production area, local produce offers greater guarantees of freshness and authenticity precisely because there is little or no transport and transit involved. Encouraging this kind of purchase also promotes local producers, typical tastes and flavours, and culinary traditions.

1. In the light of this, can the Commission say whether it believes there is an urgent need to facilitate the widespread use of short supply chains by supporting European consumers in the creation of 'purchasing groups' or in any other practices that reduce the distance between farmers and/or breeders and consumers so that their goods can be purchased?

2. Does it plan to create a forum for bringing together industrial food production and processing companies and local raw material producers so as to work out which new forms of cooperation can be implemented with a view to creating a new production system that is more sustainable in energy terms as well as safer for European citizens?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission encourages cooperation along the supply chain that provides benefits for all actors along the chain, from 'farm to fork'.

In its proposals for a post-2013 rural development policy, the Commission has explicitly identified the development of short supply chains and local markets among the priorities for that policy. It has also proposed a number of relevant measures — including explicit support for supply chains and markets of this type under the 'cooperation' measure.

However, the problems raised by the Honourable Member must be addressed through various means: like longer supply chains, short supply chains can function well or less well and they do not constitute a fail-safe solution.

Attention is drawn to the GLAMUR research project ([1]) that started in February 2013. Its general objective is to integrate advancement in scientific knowledge about the impact of food chains with application of knowledge to practice, to increase food chains sustainability through public policies and private strategies.

The High Level Forum on a Better Functioning of Food Supply Chain set up by the European Commission reunites agricultural producers, the food industry and retail representatives in a work for a more competitive food supply chain. The Forum has enabled a holistic approach to policies impacting the food value chain and allowed for the examination of policies impacting the sector, including sustainability.

Finally, no later than 4 January 2014, the Commission shall present a report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the case for a new local farming and direct sales labelling scheme to assist producers in marketing their produce locally ([2]).

([1]) Global and Local food chain Assessment: a Multidimensional performance based approach.
([2]) Article 55 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, OJ L 343, 14.12.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001561/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Alternative alla delocalizzazione: risultati della consultazione sul Libro Verde «Ristrutturare ed anticipare i cambiamenti»

Nella risposta all'interrogazione E-004567/2012 avente ad oggetto la «Delocalizzazione Cargill», il Commissario Andor ha affermato che «*La consultazione pubblica che la Commissione ha avviato attraverso il Libro verde "Ristrutturare e anticipare i cambiamenti: quali insegnamenti trarre dall'esperienza recente?" intende identificare le pratiche e le politiche rivelatesi efficaci in tale ambito al fine di promuovere l'occupazione, la crescita e la competitività e di migliorare le sinergie tra tutti gli attori. La Commissione prenderà le mosse dalle risposte al Libro verde per diffondere le buone pratiche e assicurare un adeguato seguito al Libro verde.*» Lo stesso richiamo al Libro Verde é stato fatto nelle risposte che la Commissione ha fornito alle interrogazioni E-001532/2012, E-004097/2012, E-005245/2012 ed E-008124/2012 in cui venivano sollevati i problemi per il territorio derivanti dalla scelta di delocalizzazione delle aziende: *Redi HT* di Barbarano (VI), *Intercast* di Parma, *Filivivi* di Piovene Rocchette (VI), *Bayer Material* di Mussolente (VI).

In tema di ristrutturazioni aziendali, dopo la consultazione avviata dal Libro Verde, quali pratiche e politiche si sono rivelate efficaci come sostitutive alla scelta di delocalizzazione?

Come intende la Commissione sostenere dette politiche per evitare che la delocalizzazione resti una scelta possibile a discapito del territorio e dei suoi lavoratori?

Quale esito ha avuto l'applicazione delle buone pratiche individuate, per contrastare gli episodi di delocalizzazione e dumping sociale che stano portando ad una progressiva deindustrializzazione dei nostri territori?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(4 aprile 2013)

Nelle risposte al Libro verde «Ristrutturare ed anticipare i cambiamenti» sono state evocate diverse buone pratiche ([1]). Esse non riguardano specificamente la delocalizzazione, ma sottolineano la necessità di un intervento proattivo e di una pianificazione strategica di lungo termine che tenga conto dei problemi legati alle risorse umane, di un efficace dialogo sociale e della necessità di negoziati permanenti tra gli stakeholder in modo da preservare e sviluppare la competitività delle imprese e l'occupazione.

La Commissione si è adoperata a fondo per sollecitare le imprese e tutti gli stakeholder a gestire in modo proattivo le ristrutturazioni ([2]) e riflette ora sui passi successivi da compiere in seguito al Libro verde e all'adozione, ad opera del Parlamento europeo, della relazione Cercas.

Le parti sociali hanno ribadito l'importanza del coinvolgimento degli stakeholder regionali in tutte le fasi dei processi di ristrutturazione come mezzo per evitare soluzioni drastiche (come, ad esempio, chiusure di impianti e delocalizzazioni) o quale strumento per preparare con anticipo le ristrutturazioni allorché inevitabili. Queste autorità sono elementi chiave nel processo decisionale per quanto concerne le politiche di investimento socioeconomiche locali nonché le infrastrutture di istruzione e formazione. Esse svolgono anche un ruolo importante nell'incoraggiare la cooperazione e i partenariati sul loro territorio istituendo osservatori dell'occupazione o organismi permanenti incaricati di monitorare il cambiamento. Esse possono inoltre recare sostegno alle imprese mediante misure concrete (riduzione delle imposte locali, distacco temporaneo dei dipendenti…) o mobilitando i fondi disponibili.

([1]) Per le risposte e un sommario si rinvia all'indirizzo http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.
([2]) CES, CEEP e UNICE/UEAPME (novembre 2003), all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2750&langId=en. Commissione europea (2009), all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2741&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001561/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Alternatives to relocation: results of the consultation on the Green Paper 'Restructuring and anticipation of change'

In the answer to question E-004567/2012 on the relocation of the Cargill plant, Commissioner Andor stated that: 'The public consultation which the Commission launched through the Green Paper "Restructuring and anticipation of change: What lessons from recent experience?" sought to identify successful practice and policy in this field with a view to promoting employment, growth and competitiveness and improving synergy between all the actors. The Commission will base itself on the replies to its Green Paper to disseminate best practice and will follow up the Paper appropriately.' The same reference to the Green Paper was made in the Commission's answers to questions E-001532/2012, E-004097/2012, E-005245/2012 and E-008124/2012, which raise the problems faced by the region as a result of the decision to relocate the following companies: Redi HT in Barbarano (Vicenza), Intercast in Parma, Filivivi in Piovene Rocchette (Vicenza) and Bayer Material in Mussolente (Vicenza).

With regard to company restructuring, following the consultation launched by the Green Paper, which practice and policy was found to be a successful alternative to the relocation option?

How does the Commission intend to support that policy so that relocation, which harms regions and their workers, is no longer an option?

What was the outcome of applying the best practice identified in terms of tackling the cases of relocation and social dumping that are resulting in the gradual deindustrialisation of our regions?

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

Various good practices have been highlighted in the replies to the Green Paper on anticipation of change and restructuring ([1]). These do not address specifically relocation but highlight the need for proactivity and long-term strategic planning encompassing human resources issues, effective social dialogue and permanent negotiation between the stakeholders so as to preserve and develop companies' competitiveness and employment.

The Commission carried out important work urging companies and all stakeholders to anticipate restructuring ([2]) and is now reflecting on the way forward following the Green Paper and the adoption by the European Parliament of the Cercas report.

The Social Partners recalled the importance of close involvement of regional stakeholders at all stages of restructuring processes as a useful mean of either avoiding drastic solutions (like closures and relocations) or preparing them well in advance when unavoidable. These authorities are key elements in deciding on the local economic or social investment policies as well as on education and training infrastructures. They also have an important role in enhancing cooperation and partnerships in their territory by setting observatories on employment or permanent bodies to monitor change. Also, they can bring support to companies through concrete measures (local tax reductions, temporary secondment of employees…) or by mobilising available funds.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.
([2]) ETUC, CEEP and UNICE/UEAPME (November 2003), at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2750&langId=en. European Commission (2009), at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2741&langId=en.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001562/13
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2013 m. vasario 13 d.)

Tema: Europos prieinamumo aktas

Labai svarbu visiems Europos Sąjungos piliečiams sudaryti vienodas sąlygas dalyvauti visuomeniniame gyvenime, naudotis fizine infrastruktūra, transportu, informacinėmis ir ryšių technologijomis. Europos Komisija jau seniai paskelbė apie savo ketinimus įgyvendinti „Europos be kliūčių“ idėją ir pateikti pasiūlymą dėl Europos prieinamumo akto (angl. *European Accessibility Act*).

Kada Komisija planuoja pateikti šį pasiūlymą? Kokie numatomi šio dokumento įgyvendinimo valstybėse narėse terminai? Ar jis apims prekių ir paslaugų prieinamumo tik neįgaliems asmenims aspektą, ar įtrauks ir kitas papildomas prieinamumo poreikius turinčias gyventojų grupes, ypač nėščias moteris, pagyvenusius žmones, žmones su mažais vaikais? Tūkstančiams neįgalių žmonių šis dokumentas sudarytų prielaidas kokybiškesniam gyvenimui, užtikrintų galimybę tapti visaverčiais visuomenės dalyviais.

Komisijos narės V. Reding atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. balandžio 3 d.)

Vienas iš 2010-2020 m. Europos strategijoje dėl negalios ([1]) numatytų veiksmų – pasiūlyti Europos aktą dėl prieinamumo. Jis buvo įtrauktas į Komisijos 2012 m. darbų planą (99 punktas). Vykdant minėto akto rengimo darbus jau pasistūmėta į priekį, tačiau panašu, kad tai užtruks kiek ilgiau nei planuota. Atsižvelgiame į įvairių suinteresuotųjų šalių – įmonių, neįgaliųjų, valdžios institucijų – reikalavimus ir atidžiai nagrinėjame potencialaus teisinio pagrindo poveikį.

Europos aktu dėl prieinamumo bus siekiama pašalinti dabartines prekybos ES viduje kliūtis, užkirsti kelią naujų kliūčių atsiradimui ir taip suteikti daugiau galimybių gauti būtiniausias prekes ir paslaugas. Taip bus atsiliepiama į augančią tokių prekių ir paslaugų paklausą ir sudaromos palankesnės sąlygos neįgaliesiems (o drauge ir daugeliui kitų piliečių, turinčių nuolatinių ar laikinų specialių reikmių, pavyzdžiui, vyresnio amžiaus asmenims ar nėščiosioms) dalyvauti visuomenės gyvenime ir integruotis į ją. Kol kas tebenagrinėjama, kokios prekės ir paslaugos bus įtrauktos į pasiūlymą.

([1]) COM(2010) 636 galutinis ir SEC(2010) 1324 galutinis (pridedamas aiškinamasis dokumentas).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001562/13
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Legislation on accessibility in the European Union

It is very important to provide all EU citizens, under equal conditions, with the opportunity to participate in public life and to use infrastructure, transport and information and communication technologies. A long time ago the Commission expressed its intention to give effect to the idea of a 'Europe without barriers' and to bring forward a European Accessibility Act.

When does the Commission plan to present this proposal? What would be the time frame for its implementation in the Member States? Will it only concern access by disabled people to goods and services, or will it also encompass other categories of people with accessibility needs, including pregnant women, the elderly and people accompanying small children? This legislation would offer thousands of people with disabilities a better quality of life and the opportunity to take an active part in society.

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

As a part of the actions foreseen in the Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]), the European Accessibility Act was included in the Commission Work Plan for 2012 (item 99). The preparatory work for this proposal is progressing well but is taking somewhat longer than initially foreseen. We are taking into account the requirements of different stakeholders, including businesses, persons with disabilities and public authorities, and we are carefully considering the implications of the legal basis to be chosen.

The European Accessibility Act will aim to tackle existing barriers to intra-EU trade and to prevent the creation of new ones, thus facilitating the provision of accessible mainstream goods and services. In this way, it will also address the growing demand of consumers for such accessible goods and services, facilitating the participation and integration of persons with disabilities in society, but also of many other citizens with permanent or temporary accessibility needs like older persons or pregnant women. The specific goods and services to be included in the proposal are still under thorough examination.

([1]) 'COM(2010) 636 final' and 'SEC(2010) 1324 final' (accompanying background document).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001563/13
ao Conselho
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Segurança nos passaportes biométricos

Em janeiro de 2009, o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho aprovaram, em processo de codecisão, alterações ao Regulamento de 2004 que pretendia melhorar e harmonizar as normas de segurança relativas à proteção dos passaportes e documentos de viagem dos cidadãos da UE contra a sua utilização fraudulenta e, ao mesmo tempo, proceder à introdução de elementos de identificação biométricos.

Na altura, o PE chamou a atenção para o facto de ainda ser muito reduzido o nível de experiência relativo ao uso destas novas tecnologias e de ser necessário encontrar as respostas mais adequadas para as preocupações existentes relativamente:

— à credibilidade e utilidade do uso de impressões digitais de crianças e pessoas mais idosas; ao nível de confiança no processo de recolha de dados biométricos; ao nível das taxas de falsas rejeições e a necessidade de se criarem regras comuns relativas ao processo de «matching» nas fronteiras; às disparidades existentes entre Estados-Membros no que diz respeito aos documentos («breeder documents») que podem ser utilizados para servir de base à emissão de passaportes;

Foi, assim, estipulada uma cláusula de revisão, de 3 anos, de forma a permitir que os estudos previstos no Regulamento, bem como os questionários necessários (de acordo com o estipulado na declaração conjunta anexa) fossem efetuados e, caso necessário, servissem de base para a revisão do Regulamento.

Passados mais de 3 anos, são muitos os casos detetados devido à circulação de um elevado número de passaportes falsos, emitidos com base em documentos falsos (ex. em França) e devido ao facto de em inúmeros casos ser impossível fazer a verificação das impressões digitais, quer por terem sido recolhidas de forma errada, o que as torna inúteis, quer por não ser possível verificá-las nas fronteiras, devido à falta de compatibilidade entre as tecnologias utilizadas pelos diversos Estados-Membros, quer por falta de comunicação das chaves de acesso.

Gostaria de saber se o Conselho já dispõe das respostas aos questionários enviados aos Estados-Membros (relativos à questão dos «breeder documents») de acordo com o previsto na Declaração conjunta anexa ao Regulamento.

Resposta
(7 de maio de 2013)

As questões a que o Senhor Deputado se refere foram analisadas por ocasião da adoção do Regulamento (CE) n.° 444/2009 ([1]) que altera o Regulamento (CE) n.° 2252/2004 que estabelece normas para os dispositivos de segurança e dados biométricos dos passaportes e documentos de viagem emitidos pelos Estados Membros.

O artigo 5.° A do Regulamento (CE) n.° 2252/2004, com a redação que lhe foi dada pelo Regulamento (CE) n.° 444/2009, estipula que «*a Comissão apresenta ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho, até 26 de junho de 2012, um relatório baseado num vasto estudo aprofundado, realizado por uma autoridade independente e supervisionado pela Comissão, que analise, nomeadamente mediante uma avaliação da precisão dos sistemas em uso, a fiabilidade e a viabilidade técnica da utilização de impressões digitais de crianças com idade inferior a 12 anos para efeitos de identificação e verificação, e inclua um estudo comparativo das taxas de rejeição injustificadas em cada Estado-Membro e, com base nos resultados deste estudo, uma análise da necessidade de regras comuns para o processo de comparação. O relatório deve ser acompanhado, se necessário, de propostas de adaptação do presente regulamento*.». Este relatório ainda não foi apresentado ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho.

Além disso, numa declaração conjunta do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho sobre a adoção do Regulamento (CE) n.° 444/2009, o Conselho comprometeu se a preparar um questionário destinado aos Estados Membros, a fim de poder comparar os procedimentos e os tipos de documentos exigidos em cada Estado-Membro para a emissão de um passaporte ou de um documento de viagem. Este estudo deveria permitir avaliar a eventual necessidade de estabelecer princípios ou linhas de orientação comuns sobre as melhores práticas neste domínio.

([1]) JO L 142 de 6.6.2009, p. 1.

Durante o último semestre de 2011, foi lançada uma iniciativa na instância competente do Conselho, que consistiu no envio de um questionário aos Estados-Membros com a finalidade de recolher informação, por um lado sobre os tipos e formatos de documentos de filiação selecionados e emitidos pelos Estados Membros, como certidões de nascimento ou de casamento, autorizações de trabalho e convites oficiais, e por outro lado sobre elementos de segurança, métodos possíveis de personalização, prazos de validade e datas de expiração. Com base nas respostas apresentadas pelas delegações, foi transmitida aos Estados-Membros uma série de recomendações iniciais.

Como seguimento desta iniciativa, estão atualmente a decorrer debates na instância competente do Conselho sobre novas recomendações possíveis para o estabelecimento de normas mínimas comuns de segurança relativamente aos documentos de filiação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001563/13
to the Council
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Security of biometric passports

In January 2009, the European Parliament and the Council adopted amendments under the co-decision procedure to the 2004 regulation on biometric passports, the aim of which was to improve and harmonise security standards so as to protect EU citizens' passports and travel documents against fraudulent use and introduce biometric identifiers.

At the time, Parliament warned that the use of these new technologies had not yet been tried or tested and the most suitable responses needed to be found to concerns surrounding, in particular:

— the reliability and feasibility of using the fingerprints of children and elderly people; confidence in the process of collecting biometric data; false rejection rates and the need to introduce common rules on the matching process at borders; and the disparities among the Member States as regards the breeder documents on the basis of which passports are issued.

Accordingly, a three-year review clause was included with the aim of ensuring that the studies provided for in the regulation and the questionnaires referred to in the joint statement annexed thereto were indeed carried out and that, where necessary, they would provide the basis for revising the regulation.

More than three years have now passed, and the many cases detected reveal that a high number of false passports are in circulation that were issued on the basis of falsified documents (e.g. in France). It has often proved impossible to verify fingerprints, either because they have been wrongly collected (which makes them unusable), or because they cannot be matched at borders because the technologies used by Member States are incompatible, or because access protection keys have not been passed on.

Has the Council now received replies to the questionnaires sent to the Member States (on the issue of breeder documents) in accordance with the joint statement annexed to the regulation?

Reply
(7 May 2013)

The issues to which the Honourable Member refers arose in connection with the adoption of Regulation 444/2009 ([1]) amending Regulation 2252/2004 on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by Member States.

Article 5a of Regulation 2252/2004, as amended by Regulation 444/2009, provides that 'the Commission shall, not later than 26 June 2012, submit to the European Parliament and the Council a report based on a large scale and in-depth study carried out by an independent authority and supervised by the Commission, which shall examine the reliability and technical feasibility, including through an evaluation of the accuracy of the systems in operation, of using the fingerprints of children under the age of 12 for identification and verification purposes, including a comparison of the false rejection rates occurring in each Member State and, based on the results of that study, an analysis of the need for common rules regarding the matching process. If necessary, the report shall be accompanied by proposals to adapt this regulation'. This report has not yet been submitted to the European Parliament and the Council.

In addition, in a Joint Statement of the European Parliament and the Council on the adoption of Regulation 444/2009, the Council undertook to prepare a questionnaire for the Member States in order to be able to compare the procedures and documents required in each Member State for the issuing of a passport or travel document. This analysis should assess whether there is a need for common principles or guidelines on best practice to be established in this area.

([1]) OJ L 142, 6.6.2009, p. 1.

During the last semester of 2011, an initiative was launched within the competent Council body whereby a questionnaire was sent to Member States aiming at gathering information, on the one hand, on types and formats of selected breeder documents issued by Member States as birth and marriage certificates, work permits and official invitations and, on the other hand, on security features, possible methods of personalisation, validity period and expiry dates. On the basis of the replies provided by delegations, a series of initial recommendations have been addressed to Member States.

As a follow-up to this initiative, discussions are currently being held in the competent Council body on possible further recommendations for setting common minimum security standards in relation to breeder documents.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001564/13
à Comissão
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Segurança nos passaportes biométricos

Em janeiro de 2009, o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho aprovaram, em processo de codecisão, alterações ao Regulamento de 2004 que pretendia melhorar e harmonizar as normas de segurança relativas à proteção dos passaportes e documentos de viagem dos cidadãos da UE contra a sua utilização fraudulenta e, ao mesmo tempo, proceder à introdução de elementos de identificação biométricos.

Na altura, o PE chamou a atenção para o facto de ainda ser muito reduzido o nível de experiência relativo ao uso destas novas tecnologias e de ser necessário encontrar as respostas mais adequadas para as preocupações existentes relativamente:

— à credibilidade e utilidade do uso de impressões digitais de crianças e pessoas mais idosas; ao nível de confiança no processo de recolha de dados biométricos; ao nível das taxas de falsas rejeições e a necessidade de se criarem regras comuns relativas ao processo de «matching» nas fronteiras; às disparidades existentes entre Estados-Membros no que diz respeito aos documentos («breeder documents») que podem ser utilizados para servir de base à emissão de passaportes;

Foi, assim, estipulada uma cláusula de revisão, de 3 anos, de forma a permitir que os estudos previstos no Regulamento, bem como os questionários necessários (de acordo com o estipulado na declaração conjunta anexa) fossem efetuados e, caso necessário, servissem de base para a revisão do Regulamento.

Passados mais de 3 anos, são muitos os casos detetados devido à circulação de um elevado número de passaportes falsos, emitidos com base em documentos falsos (ex. em França) e devido ao facto de em inúmeros casos ser impossível fazer a verificação das impressões digitais, quer por terem sido recolhidas de forma errada, o que as torna inúteis, quer por não ser possível verificá-las nas fronteiras, devido à falta de compatibilidade entre as tecnologias utilizadas pelos diversos Estados-Membros, quer por falta de comunicação das chaves de acesso.

Gostaria, assim, de saber se já estão disponíveis os resultados dos estudos efetuados e que iniciativas é que a Comissão está a pensar apresentar na sequência desses resultados.

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(8 de abril de 2013)

O artigo 5.°-A do Regulamento (CE) n.° 2252/2004 do Conselho que estabelece normas para os dispositivos de segurança e dados biométricos dos passaportes e documentos de viagem emitidos pelos Estados-Membros, inserido pelo Regulamento (CE) n.° 444/2009 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, solicita à Comissão que apresente:

— «um relatório baseado num vasto estudo aprofundado, realizado por uma autoridade independente e supervisionado pela Comissão, que analise, nomeadamente mediante uma avaliação da precisão dos sistemas em uso, a fiabilidade e a viabilidade técnica da utilização de impressões digitais de crianças com idade inferior a 12 anos para efeitos de identificação e verificação, e inclua um estudo comparativo das taxas de rejeição injustificadas em cada Estado-Membro e, com base nos resultados deste estudo, uma análise da necessidade de regras comuns para o processo de comparação.»

A Comissão solicitou ao Centro Comum de Investigação que efetuasse um estudo sobre a fiabilidade e viabilidade da utilização das impressões digitais de crianças. Na ausência de dados de teste fiáveis e em quantidade suficiente (por exemplo, várias impressões digitais da mesma criança, recolhidas em diferentes ocasiões, entre os 6 e os 12 anos), o relatório intercalar deste estudo (de julho de 2012) não chegou a quaisquer conclusões claras. O CCI continua a tentar reunir novos dados de teste de modo a finalizar o seu relatório depois do verão de 2013.

Relativamente aos documentos de filiação (*breeder documents*), remete-se o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à sua pergunta E-12609/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-012609&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001564/13
to the Commission
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Security of biometric passports

In January 2009, the European Parliament and the Council adopted amendments under the co-decision procedure to the 2004 regulation on biometric passports, the aim of which was to improve and harmonise security standards so as to protect EU citizens' passports and travel documents against fraudulent use and introduce biometric identifiers.

At the time, Parliament warned that the use of these new technologies had not yet been tried or tested and the most suitable responses needed to be found to concerns surrounding, in particular:

— the reliability and feasibility of using the fingerprints of children and elderly people; confidence in the process of collecting biometric data; false rejection rates and the need to introduce common rules on the matching process at borders; and the disparities among the Member States as regards the breeder documents on the basis of which passports are issued.

Accordingly, a three-year review clause was included with the aim of ensuring that the studies provided for in the regulation and the questionnaires referred to in the joint statement annexed thereto were indeed carried out and that, where necessary, they would provide the basis for revising the regulation.

More than three years have now passed, and the many cases detected reveal that a high number of false passports are in circulation that were issued on the basis of falsified documents (e.g. in France). It has often proved impossible to verify fingerprints, either because they have been wrongly collected (which makes them unusable), or because they cannot be matched at borders because the technologies used by Member States are incompatible, or because access protection keys have not been passed on.

Are the results of the studies that were carried out now available? What initiatives is the Commission planning to put forward in response to these studies?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

Article 5a of Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004 on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by Member States, inserted by Regulation (EC) No 444/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, requests the Commission to submit:

'a report based on a large scale and in-depth study carried out by an independent authority and supervised by the Commission, which shall examine the reliability and technical feasibility, including through an evaluation of the accuracy of the systems in operation, of using the fingerprints of children under the age of 12 for identification and verification purposes, including a comparison of the false rejection rates occurring in each Member State and, based on the results of that study, an analysis of the need for common rules regarding the matching process'.

The Commission requested the Joint Research Centre to perform a study concerning the reliability and feasibility of using the fingerprints of children. In the absence of reliable and sufficient test data (i.e. several fingerprints from the same child, on different occasions between the age of 6 and 12), the interim report of this study (dated July 2012) did not arrive at any clear findings. The JRC is seeking further test data in order to finalise the report after the summer of 2013.

On breeder documents, the Honourable Member is referred to the answer to his Question E-12609/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-012609&language=EN.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001565/13
adresată Comisiei
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(13 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Becuri fluorescente — efecte negative asupra pielii

Becurile fluorescente sunt utilizate în număr crescut datorită beneficiilor de natură economică, respectiv datorită consumului redus de energie. Ultimele studii indică, totuși, că radiațiile ultraviolete emise de aceste becuri eficiente ar putea avea, pe termen lung, un efect cancerigen asupra pielii. Doresc să întreb Comisia dacă are mai multe date cu privire la efectele negative pe care radiațiile ultraviolete emise de acest tip de becuri le au asupra celulelor epidermei. De asemenea, care sunt măsurile luate până în prezent, dar și cele viitoare pentru a soluționa această problemă?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(9 aprilie 2013)

Efectele radiațiilor UV emise de becurile fluorescente asupra pielii au fost evaluate de Comitetul științific pentru riscuri sanitare emergente și noi (CSRSEN) în avizul său din 2012 ([1]). CSRSEN a considerat că, în scenariul cel mai pesimist, cu corpuri de iluminat profesionale care nu sunt utilizate în gospodării, astfel de radiații UV ar adăuga la media anuală a dozei de radiații UV echivalentul a trei până la cinci zile de vacanță într-o zonă însorită. CSRSEN a considerat că aceasta nu reprezintă decât o mică creștere a riscului de cancer de piele, chiar și în scenariul cel mai pesimist, cu corpuri de iluminat profesionale. CSRSEN a subliniat că emisiile de raze UV ale lămpilor fluorescente se situează, în mod normal, sub nivelul avut în vedere în acest scenariu pesimist, echivalând, prin urmare, numai cu cel mult o zi de expunere la soare în plus pe an. Mai mult decât atât, CSRSEN a concluzionat că, în cazul iluminatului locuințelor, expunerea la razele UV, inclusiv la radiațiile provenite de la lămpi fluorescente compacte, este neglijabilă.

Pentru persoanele care suferă de boli de piele asociate expunerii la lumină, CSRSEN a considerat că este rezonabil să se presupună că radiațiile UV din orice sursă pot să contribuie la agravarea simptomelor, lumina solară fiind declarată drept principalul factor declanșator al bolii. Pacienții respectivi ar trebui să utilizeze, de preferință, becuri cu înveliș dublu, deoarece aceste becuri emit în general mult mai puține radiații UV. CSRSEN a confirmat astfel avizul emis în 2008 ([2]).

Prin urmare, Comisia nu intenționează să ia nicio măsură, cu excepția cazului în care noi dovezi științifice vor face necesară reevaluarea acestei chestiuni.

([1]) Aviz privind efectele luminii artificiale asupra sănătății, 19 martie 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_o_035.pdf

([2]) Aviz privind sensibilitatea la lumină, 23 septembrie 2008, http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_019.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001565/13
to the Commission
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Fluorescent light bulbs and their harmful effects on skin

Fluorescent light bulbs are being used to an increasing extent for economic reasons, given their relatively low energy consumption. However, recent studies suggest that ultraviolet rays emitted by them could, in the long term, be a cause of skin cancer. Does the Commission have any further information regarding the harmful effect on skin cells of ultraviolet rays from this type of bulb? What measures have been taken and will be taken with a view to resolving this problem?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The effects of UV radiation from fluorescent light bulbs on the skin were assessed by the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) in its opinion of 2012 ([1]). SCENIHR considered that in a worst case scenario with professional lighting not used in households such UV radiation could add up to the equivalent of three to five days of vacation in a sunny location to the average annual UV dose. SCENIHR qualified this to be only a small increase in skin cancer risk even under a worst-case scenario only in professional lighting. SCENIHR stressed that the UV output of fluorescent lamps is normally well below this worst case assumption, and thus corresponds to one extra day of sunbathing per year at most. Furthermore, SCENIHR concluded that in household lighting UV exposure is negligible, including the radiation from compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs).

For individuals suffering from light-associated skin disorders, SCENIHR considered it reasonable to assume that UV radiation from any source may contribute to the aggravation of symptoms, with sunlight being reported as the main trigger of disease activity. Those patients should preferably use double-envelope light bulbs because such bulbs generally emit much less UV radiation. SCENIHR thus confirmed its 2008 opinion ([2]).

The Commission therefore does not intend to take any measure unless new scientific evidence would lead it to reconsider the matter.

([1]) Opinion on Health Effects of Artificial Light of 19 March 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_o_035.pdf

([2]) Opinion on Light Sensitivity of 23 September 2008, http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_019.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001566/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Applicabilità dell'art. 22 del reg. (CE) n. 1/2005: ingiustificati tempi di attesa nei porti per le ispezioni frontaliere — follow up alla risposta della Commissione all'interrogazione E-005039/2012

L'art. 22 del reg. (CE) n. 1/2005 stabilisce «l'autorità competente adotti le misure necessarie per prevenire o ridurre al minimo i ritardi durante il trasporto o la sofferenza degli animali allorché circostanze imprevedibili impediscono l'applicazione del presente regolamento. L'autorità competente assicura che disposizioni specifiche siano prese nel luogo di trasferimento, ai punti di uscita e ai posti d'ispezione frontalieri per dare priorità al trasporto di animali». La norma prevede, inoltre, un tempo di attesa massimo di 2 ore e l'obbligo a carico dell'autorità competente di assicurare che siano prese disposizioni appropriate per la cura degli animali e, se necessario, per la loro alimentazione, l'abbeveraggio, scarico e sistemazione.

La precedente interrogazione E-005039/2012 già indicava come i tempi di attesa nei porti e punti di uscita dell'UE spesso arrivassero a superare le due ore. A titolo esemplificativo, si era evidenziata la situazione del porto spagnolo di Algeciras, da dove bovini provenienti da alcuni Stati membri vengono esportati in Marocco. Dal 2010 le ONG Anda ed Animals' Angels hanno denunciato alle autorità spagnole competenti un tempo di attesa per il trasporto di animali al porto di Algeciras superiore di gran lunga alle 2 ore prescritte dalla normativa europea e, inoltre, hanno informato la Commissione della situazione.

Nella risposta all'interrogazione E-005039/2012, si afferma che il FVO, ossia il servizio d'ispezione della Commissione, non ha rilevato irregolarità da parte delle autorità competenti degli Stati membri nell'attuazione delle specifiche disposizioni di cui all'art. 22 citato.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. tenendo presente che nei rapporti e nelle inchieste pubblicate e denunciate alla Commissione dalle citate ONG vi sono dati inconfutabili che dimostrano una palese violazione della normativa europea, non ritiene la Commissione che tali dati siano sufficienti presupposti per avviare una fase di indagine da parte del FVO?

2. In particolare, nel rispetto del principio di apertura e trasparenza, può la Commissione, per il tramite del FVO, riferire sulla situazione del porto di Algeciras, mediante controllo delle registrazioni del sistema di navigazione satellitare dei veicoli che attraversano il porto?

3. Può la Commissione dire se ritiene opportuno, in applicazione dell'art. 28 del reg. (CE) n. 1/2005, effettuare controlli in loco secondo le procedure di cui all'art. 45 del reg. (CE) n. 882/2004?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(18 aprile 2013)

1. e 3. La Commissione ha chiuso una procedura d'infrazione ([1]) relativa alla presunta mancata applicazione, da parte della Spagna, del regolamento (CE) n. 1/2005 sulla protezione degli animali durante il trasporto ([2]). La procedura è stata aperta nel 2005 e chiusa nel febbraio 2012. In quest'arco di tempo l'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario (UAV) facente capo alla Direzione generale Salute e consumatori della Commissione ha effettuato diversi audit in Spagna che hanno riguardato anche il benessere durante il trasporto ([3]).

La Commissione continuerà a seguire la situazione in Spagna per quanto concerne il benessere degli animali durante il trasporto.

Si noti che, in risposta alle raccomandazioni degli esperti della Commissione a seguito degli audit di cui sopra, le autorità competenti spagnole hanno apportato diversi miglioramenti in relazione all'applicazione delle norme UE.

Alla luce di quanto sopra la Commissione per il momento non intende avviare un'indagine sulla base delle informazioni raccolte nel 2010 e nel 2011 né condurrà audit addizionali o controlli in loco in Spagna.

([1]) 2005/4355-2007/4819.
([2]) GU L 3 del 5.1.2005, pag. 1.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm.

2. I controlli dei printout dei sistemi di navigazione alla fine di un viaggio sono eseguiti essenzialmente dall'autorità competente del luogo di partenza. L'UAV ha il compito di assicurare che uno Stato membro disponga di adeguati sistemi di controlli ufficiali per verificare l'ottemperanza alle norme e alle disposizioni in tema di benessere degli animali, ma non quello di effettuare i controlli.

L'UAV terrà ovviamente conto dei controlli effettuati dalle autorità nazionali sui dati di navigazione allorché sottoporrà a audit gli Stati membri di partenza degli animali e riferirà sulle risultanze e sulle eventuali carenze riscontrate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001566/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Applicability of Article 22 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005: unjustified waiting times at ports for border inspections — follow-up to the Commission's answer to Question E-005039/2012

Article 22 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 lays down that 'the competent authority shall take the necessary measures to prevent or reduce to a minimum any delay during transport or suffering by animals when unforeseeable circumstances impede the application of this regulation. The competent authority shall ensure that special arrangements are made at the place of transfers, exit points and border inspection posts to give priority to the transport of animals.' Moreover, the regulation stipulates a maximum waiting time of two hours and requires the competent authority to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the care of the animals and, where necessary, their feeding, watering, unloading and accommodation.

As already explained in my previous question, E-005039/2012, waiting times at EU ports and exit points often exceed two hours. By way of example, the question highlighted the situation at the port of Algeciras, in Spain, from where cattle from certain Member States are exported to Morocco. Since 2010, the non-governmental organisations Anda and Animals' Angels have been complaining to the competent Spanish authorities about the waiting time for animal transport at the port of Algeciras, which is far longer than the two hours laid down by EU legislation, and, furthermore, they have informed the Commission of this situation.

In its answer to Question E-005039/2012, the Commission stated that its inspection service, the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), had not found any irregularities on the part of the competent authorities of the Member States in their implementation of the specific provisions of the abovementioned Article 22.

1. Bearing in mind that the reports and investigations published by the abovementioned NGOs and sent to the Commission contain irrefutable data demonstrating a clear breach of EU legislation, does the Commission not believe that these data constitute sufficient grounds to launch an investigation by the FVO?

2. In particular, in accordance with the principle of openness and transparency, can the Commission, through the FVO, report on the situation at the port of Algeciras, by checking the records of the satellite navigation systems of vehicles transiting the port?

3. Can the Commission say whether it believes that, under Article 28 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, on-the-spot checks should be carried out in accordance with the procedures referred to in Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

1 and 3. The Commission has closed an infringement procedure ([1]) regarding the alleged failure of Spain to properly enforce Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([2]). The procedure was opened in 2005, and closed in February 2012. During this time period, the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) carried out a number of audits to Spain where welfare during transport was included ([3]).

The Commission will continue to monitor progress of the situation in Spain as regards animal welfare during transport.

It is to be noted that in response to the recommendations made by the Commission experts following the audits referred to above, the competent authorities of Spain made a number of improvements in relation to the application of EU rules.

In the light of the above, the Commission will not start an investigation based on information collected in 2010 and 2011, nor carry out additional audits or on-the-spot checks in Spain for the time being.

([1]) 2005/4355-2007/4819.
([2]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm

2. Checks of printouts from navigation systems after the completion of a journey are mainly performed by the competent authority of the place of departure. The role of the FVO is to ensure that a Member State has proper official control systems in place to verify compliance with animal welfare rules and requirements, not to perform these controls itself.

The FVO will of course also take into account the controls carried out by national authorities on navigation data when auditing Member States of departure of animals and report about its findings and any possible shortcoming identified.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001567/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Arrestare la crescita di cellule tumorali e limitare gli effetti collaterali: quali prospettive?

La lotta contro i tumori è incentrata sulla sinergia di competenze mediche, scientifiche e tecnologiche; è stata, infatti, messa a punto un'applicazione informatica dedicata ai pazienti affetti da cancro al polmone che permetterà di accedere via cloud al sistema da un tablet, chiedendo all'applicazione una consulenza sul paziente. La ricerca scientifica è sempre più incentrata sull'analisi di nuovi trattamenti che possano migliorare in modo significativo la sopravvivenza dei pazienti.

Uno studio pubblicato su Nature Medicine ha dimostrato per la prima volta che l'impiego di un virus speciale mirato contro il tumore può arrestarne la crescita neoplastica e migliorare la vita dei pazienti. Lo studio è stato condotto in America e in Asia su pazienti con tumore avanzato e inoperabile al fegato, quindi già con un'aspettativa di vita molto breve. Il trattamento è stato eseguito come se si facesse un ago-biopsia, senza anestesia generale, somministrando il virus JX-594 a due gruppi di pazienti: un gruppo ha ricevuto basse dosi dimostrando una sopravvivenza mediana di 6,7 mesi, mentre al gruppo a cui la somministrazione è stata fatta ad alte dosi, la sopravvivenza mediana riscontrata è stata di 14,1 mesi, più del doppio. Questi risultati dimostrano che un'efficace replicazione del virus all'interno delle cellule tumorali consente la distruzione di queste, nonché l'induzione di una reazione immunitaria generalizzata specifica contro il tumore. Ciò che stupisce è soprattutto che una dose maggiore di virus non abbia causato un incremento degli effetti indesiderati. Infatti, la terapia è stata ben tollerata dai pazienti e sono stati registrati sintomi simili a quelli influenzali solamente per un paio di giorni.

Si tenga presente che:

— un trattamento locale mini-invasivo ha permesso di indurre, per la prima volta, una reazione immunitaria contro tutte le cellule neoplastiche, comprese quelle bersaglio;

— è stata dimostrata l'efficacia sul tumore bersaglio e anche sull'organismo del paziente;

— il 15 febbraio ricorre la Giornata Mondiale contro il cancro infantile.

Può la Commissione dire se ritiene importante e indispensabile:

1. incentivare ricerche che possano portare a simili risultati anche su altre tipologie di tumori;

2. vagliare ipotesi che possano tentare di agire in maniera così incisiva in stadi non ancora terminali della malattia;

3. incentivare ricerche mirate a quelle forme di tumore che interessano pazienti in età pediatrica, sempre più vulnerabili e bisognosi di cure?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(5 aprile 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole degli incoraggianti risultati delle sperimentazioni cliniche di fase I e II con il virus oncolitico JX-594 in pazienti con carcinoma epatocellulare in stato avanzato condotte dall'Università statale di Pusan, dalla società Jennerex e da varie altre istituzioni ([1]), ([2]). La sicurezza e l'efficacia del JX-594 sono state testate su pazienti con altri tumori, con il coinvolgimento delle istituzioni di diversi Stati membri ([3]).

([1]) Park et al. (2008) Lancet Oncology 9: 533-42.
([2]) Heo et al. (2013) Nature Medicine doi:10.1038/nm.3089.
([3]) http://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/home

1. La Commissione ha reso la ricerca traslazionale sul cancro una priorità costante nel sesto e settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (PQ6, 2002-2006; PQ7, 2007-2013). Benché non sia stata finanziata la ricerca sull'impiego del JX-594 in pazienti affetti da epatocarcinoma, 103 milioni di EUR sono stati destinati ad approcci immunoterapeutici simili, destinati a combattere varie neoplasie, come TRASTUZUCRAD ([4]), PEDIAVIR ([5]) e GAPVAC ([6]).

2. Con il settimo programma quadro la Commissione ha finanziato la ricerca traslazionale sulla prevenzione, sulla diagnosi precoce e sulla prognosi del cancro, per un totale di 217 milioni di EUR.

3. Nell'ambito del settimo programma quadro, la Commissione ha destinato 135 milioni di EUR alla ricerca di frontiera e traslazionale sulle neoplasie infantili, in particolare per quanto concerne la diagnosi, la prognosi e il trattamento delle neoplasie ematologiche, cerebrali, embrionali e dei tessuti connettivi.

([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=10167688

([5]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_LANG=IT&PJ_RCN=11948010&pid=438&q=2D2FAA8BD56D7B091CE67BB014675D61&type=adv

([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_LANG=EN&PJ_RCN=13295541&pid=0&q=E8E5041FB964E2D2B234615EE476BD3C&type=sim

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001567/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Halting the growth of tumour cells and limiting side effects: future prospects

The fight against tumours is based on the synergy between medical, scientific and technological skill. Indeed, a computer application has been created dedicated to lung-cancer sufferers, enabling doctors to access the system from a tablet device via the cloud, and ask the application for advice regarding patients. Scientific research is increasingly focused on analysing new treatments which could significantly improve patient survival.

A study published in *Nature Medicine* has shown, for the first time, that targeting a tumour with a special virus can halt its neoplastic growth and improve the patient's life. The study was carried out in the US and in Asia on patients with advanced, inoperable liver tumours, who therefore had a very low life expectancy. The treatment was carried out in the same way as a needle biopsy, without a general anaesthetic. Virus JX-594 was administered to two groups of patients: one group received low doses, and had a median survival of 6.7 months, while the other group, which received high doses, had a median survival of 14.1 months, more than twice as long. These results show that by effectively replicating inside tumour cells, the virus can destroy them, as well as trigger a generalised immune response specifically against the tumour. The most surprising thing is that a higher dose of the virus did not lead to greater side effects. In fact, the patients tolerated the treatment well, only suffering flu-like symptoms for a couple of days.

It should be remembered that:

— a minimally invasive local treatment has triggered, for the first time, an immune response against all neoplastic cells, including those targeted;

— its efficacy on target tumours and also on patients' bodies has been demonstrated;

— 15 February is International Childhood Cancer Day.

Can the Commission state whether it believes it important and essential to:

1. encourage research which could lead to similar results, including on other kinds of tumours;

2. consider ways of trying to act this incisively on the illness before it becomes terminal;

3. promote research targeting forms of tumours that affect children, who are more vulnerable and in need of treatment?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the encouraging phase I and II clinical trial results with oncolytic virus JX-594 in advanced hepatocellular carcinoma patients, conducted by the Pusan National University, the company Jennerex and several other institutions ([1]) ([2]). The clinical safety and efficacy of JX-594 are being assessed in patients with other tumours, involving institutions in various Member States ([3]).

1. The Commission has made translational cancer research a constant priority throughout the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006; FP7, 2007-2013). Although research on JX-594 in liver cancer patients has not been supported, EUR 103 million has been devoted on similar immunotherapeutic approaches tackling various cancer indications, such as TRASTUZUCRAD ([4]), PEDIAVIR ([5]) and GAPVAC ([6]).

([1]) Park et al. (2008) Lancet Oncology 9: 533-42.
([2]) Heo et al. (2013) Nature Medicine doi:10.1038/nm.3089.
([3]) http://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/home
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=10167688
([5]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_LANG=EN&PJ_RCN=11948010&pid=438&q=2D2FAA8BD56D7B091CE67BB014675D61&type=adv
([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13295541

2. Under FP7 the Commission has supported translational cancer research into prevention, early diagnosis and prognosis for a total of EUR 217 million.

3. Under FP7 the Commission has devoted EUR 135 million to frontier and translational research on childhood cancers, including diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of haematological, brain, embryonic and connective tissue cancers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001568/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Studi su cementificazione e rischio idrogeologico

Negli ultimi decenni l'ambiente e il panorama italiani sono stati modificati dal continuo e inarrestabile processo di cementificazione. Secondo la Commissione europea circa il 2,3 % del territorio continentale è ricoperto da cemento.

Una recente ricerca ISPRA ha analizzato i valori concernenti la quota di superficie «consumata» e ha rilevato che negli ultimi anni il consumo di suolo in Italia è cresciuto ad una media di 8 m2 al secondo. Si è passati dal 2,8 % del 1956 al 6,9 % del 2010, con un incremento di quattro punti percentuali. In altre parole, sono stati consumati, in media, più di 7 m2 al secondo, per oltre 50 anni e ogni anno viene cementificata una superficie pari al territorio dei comuni di Milano e Firenze, ossia circa 280 km2. In termini assoluti, l'Italia è passata da poco più di 8.000 km2 di consumo di suolo del 1956 a oltre 20.500 km2 di consumo nel 2010. Nello studio non sono state contemplate le aree urbane ed è risaputo che riducendo l'assorbimento di pioggia — in casi estremi impedendolo completamente — si rischia una serie di effetti diretti sul ciclo idrologico e indiretti sul microclima, producendo un aumento del rischio inondazioni oltre a ridurre in modo significativo anche l'evaporotraspirazione. La conferenza nazionale sul rischio idrogeologico ha evidenziato che l'82 % dei Comuni italiani è a rischio idrogeologico e in ben dieci regioni si raggiunge supera il 98 %, mentre la superficie italiana di aree ad alta criticità geologica si estende a 29.517 km2, ossia il 9,8 % del territorio nazionale.

Considerato che:

— lo studio descritto esclude le aree urbane mentre l'impermeabilizzazione di per sé diminuisce molti degli effetti benefici del suolo;

— i fenomeni meteorologici intensi sono ormai frequenti e gli effetti si riscontrano soprattutto negli alti rischi e disagi che la popolazione deve affrontare;

— la perdita di suolo agricolo determina anche la riduzione di prodotti indispensabili per la catena alimentare;

può la Commissione riferire se ritiene opportuno:

1. condurre uno studio per indagare e vagliare il quadro europeo del fenomeno della cementificazione nell'ultimo decennio;

2. sensibilizzare verso politiche che mettano in luce la necessità di pianificare e programmare interventi sul territorio per gli anni futuri che permettano la conservazione e la salvaguardia del territorio e del paesaggio europeo;

3. tutelare le aree e i terreni agricoli, valorizzando le zone rurali circostanti e promuovendo la produzione agricola di materie prime fondamentali per il mantenimento della catena alimentare?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 marzo 2013)

Nell'Unione europea sono stati condotti numerosi studi sull'entità e gli effetti dell'occupazione di terreno, incluso per l'urbanizzazione, ad esempio dall'Agenzia europea dell'ambiente (AEA) ([1]) e dalla Commissione ([2]). La Commissione prevede inoltre di avviare ulteriori studi nel contesto del seguito da dare alla tabella di marcia verso un'Europa efficiente nell'impiego delle risorse per quanto riguarda la terra in quanto risorsa.

([1]) Agenzia europea dell'ambiente: Uso dei terreni — valutazione tecnica SOER 2010, La frammentazione del paesaggio in Europa (relazione n. 3/2011) e Urban Atlas (http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/urban-atlas).

([2]) G. Prokop et al (2011), Panoramica delle migliori pratiche per limitare l'impermeabilizzazione del suolo o per attenuarne gli effetti nell'UE a 27 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/sealing.htm).

La Commissione ha proposto che un nuovo programma generale di azione per l'ambiente si prefigga di garantire che entro il 2020 i terreni siano gestiti in maniera sostenibile, il suolo sia adeguatamente protetto e la bonifica dei siti contaminati ben avviata ([3]). Il programma stabilisce che per raggiungere questi obiettivi occorre intensificare gli sforzi per ridurre l'erosione del suolo e aumentarne il contenuto in materia organica, nonché per bonificare i siti contaminati e migliorare l'integrazione degli aspetti legati all'uso del suolo in processi decisionali coordinati che coinvolgano tutti i livelli di governo interessati. La proposta ([4]) di revisione della direttiva sulla valutazione dell'impatto ambientale ([5]) include riferimenti specifici alla necessità di procedere a valutare l'impatto di progetti pubblici e privati sui terreni, in particolare quelli agricoli, preliminarmente alla loro autorizzazione.

Recentemente, i servizi della Commissione hanno pubblicato gli «Orientamenti in materia di buone pratiche per limitare, mitigare o compensare l'impermeabilizzazione del suolo» ([6]) allo scopo di fornire informazioni sull'entità del consumo di suolo nell'UE e sui suoi effetti, nonché esempi di buone pratiche messe in atto dalle autorità nazionali, regionali e locali per affrontare il problema.

([3]) Paragrafo 26, lettera e).
([4]) COM(2012)628 dell'8.3.2011.
([5]) Direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati, GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.
([6]) SWD(2012)101 final/2 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/sealing_guidelines.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001568/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Study on urbanisation and hydro-geological risk

In recent decades, the environment and landscape in Italy have been altered by the continuous and inexorable process of urbanisation. According to the Commission, around 2.3% of the European continent is now under concrete.

Recent research conducted by the Higher Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA) has assessed the figures for the surface area under concrete and shows that, in Italy, the land loss rate has risen to an average of 8m^2 per second in recent years. Between 1956 and 2010 there was a four percentage point increase from 2.8% to 6.9%. In other words, on average, over 7m^2 of land was lost per second during a period of over 50 years, while each year an area the size of the municipalities of Milan and Florence (around 280 km^2) is concreted over. In absolute terms, the land loss rate in Italy rose from a little over 8 000 km^2 in 1956 to over 20 500 km^2 in 2010. The study does not cover urban areas themselves, and it is well known that in reducing rain absorption — and in extreme cases preventing it completely — urbanisation triggers the risk of a range of direct effects on the hydrological cycle and indirect effects on microclimates, leading to an increased risk of flooding and a significant reduction in evapotranspiration. The national conference on hydro-geological risk has demonstrated that 82% of Italian municipalities are at hydro-geological risk, while in a good ten regions the percentage is as high as 98%. At the same time, areas totalling 29 517 km^2 (9.8% of the surface area of Italy) are at high geological risk.

Since:

— the study in question excludes urban areas, when urbanisation in itself limits many of the beneficial effects of soil;

— extreme weather events have now become frequent and their main effects are felt by the populations concerned, in the form of the risks and hardships they have to face;

— the loss of farmland also reduces the availability of products essential to the food chain;

Would the Commission not consider it appropriate to:

1. Conduct a study to research and assess the phenomenon of urbanisation in Europe in the past decade;

2. Prompt policies that show the need to plan and programme future actions on the ground that enable land and landscapes in Europe to be preserved and safeguarded;

3. Protect agricultural areas and farmland, develop surrounding rural areas and promote the production of the primary agricultural products key to preserving the food chain?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2013)

There are many studies on the extent and impacts of land take, including urbanisation, in the EU, for example by the EEA ([1]) and the Commission ([2]). The Commission also plans to launch further studies in the context of follow-up work to the Resource Efficiency Roadmap on land as a resource.

([1]) European Environment Agency: Land use — SOER 2010 technical assessment, Landscape fragmentation in Europe (Report No 3/2011) , and the Urban Atlas (http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/urban-atlas).
([2]) G. Prokop et al (2011), Overview of best practices for limiting soil sealing or mitigating its effects in EU-27 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/sealing.htm).

The Commission has proposed that a new General Action Programme for the Environment aims to ensure that by 2020 land is managed sustainably, soil is adequately protected and the remediation of contaminated sites is well underway ([3]). The Programme indicates that this will require increased efforts to reduce soil erosion, increase soil organic matter, remediate contaminated sites and to enhance the integration of land use aspects into coordinated decision-making involving all relevant levels of government. The proposal ([4]) for a review of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive ([5]) includes specific references on the need to consider land impacts, including on agricultural land, before authorising public and private projects.

The Commission services have recently published 'Guidelines on best practice to limit, mitigate or compensate soil sealing' ([6]) to provide information on the magnitude of land take in the EU, its impacts, and best practice examples of how local, regional and national authorities are addressing the problem.

([3]) Paragraph 26(e).
([4]) COM(2012) 628.
([5]) Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (OJ L 26, 28.1.2012).
([6]) SWD(2012) 101 final/2 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/sealing_guidelines.htm).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001569/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Colle eco-compatibili per scarpe italiane a basso impatto ambientale

L'artigianato nel settore delle calzature in Italia si unisce al rispetto per l'ambiente nella creazioni di scarpe «green» Il progetto è nato grazie al supporto di finanziamenti regionali e alla collaborazione tra una delle maggiori associazioni a tutela dell'artigianato e il Dipartimento di scienze ambientali di un'Università: l'obiettivo è di trovare la colla per le calzature che riduce l'impatto ambientale.

Le ricerche e le prove condotte in laboratorio hanno portato alla formulazione di diversi prototipi di colle che hanno fatto conseguire ottimi risultati preliminari su tomaie e, in generale, nell'incollaggio di pelli impiegate nel settore calzaturiero. Il passo successivo sarà quello di applicare il know-how universitario di questi solventi nel campo della produzione di scarpe.

I solventi innovativi fanno parte della famiglia dei dialchilcarbonati, composti non pericolosi secondo la normativa OCSE, e si sostituiscono a quelli attualmente usati (che spesso sono dannosi per la salute e l'ambiente). Lo studio non solo ha evidenziato una soglia minima di tossicità, ma è arrivato a dimostrare come si possono raggiungere qualità superiori rispetto a quelle comunemente rilevate, impiegando una minore quantità di solvente.

Considerato che:

— la eventuale messa in produzione di questi «solventi ecologici» per le scarpe consentirebbe di sviluppare una maggiore responsabilità sociale delle aziende più sensibili agli aspetti ecologici e all'impatto ambientale dei propri prodotti;

— non sono da sottovalutare i benefici in termini economici che deriverebbero dall'eliminazione o dal ridimensionamento degli impianti di aspirazione, con risparmio di costi fissi legati sia all'energia che alla manutenzione,

può la Commissione precisare se intende sensibilizzare ulteriormente questo tipo di iniziative artigianali verso una produzione eco-sostenibile, mettendo a disposizione programmi specifici e adeguati canali di finanziamento?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2013)

La Commissione non può promuovere un determinato prodotto o processo produttivo.

Di calzature ecocompatibili si occupa nello specifico il regolamento sul marchio Ecolabel UE ([1]) e i criteri per ottenere questo marchio di qualità ecologica sono disponibili all'indirizzo:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/products-groups-and-criteria.html.

È attualmente in corso la revisione di tali criteri e in questa fase è prevista un'ampia consultazione che coinvolge tutti i portatori di interesse, quali produttori, organizzazioni commerciali, industrie dell'indotto, organizzazioni dei consumatori e ONG.

Tutte le informazioni generali, nonché le comunicazioni relative alla convocazione di riunioni, sono disponibili sul sito web del progetto:

http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/footwear/index.html.

I fondi che forniscono assistenza alle PMI ai fini della promozione di prodotti o processi ecocompatibili sono previsti nel quadro del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR).

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 66/2010 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 novembre 2009, relativo al marchio di qualità ecologica dell'Unione europea (Ecolabel UE), GU L 27 del 30.1.2010.

Le strategie di intervento del FESR nelle regioni italiane per il periodo 2007-2013 sono indicate nel programma operativo regionale 2007-2013 e, in base al principio di gestione condivisa applicato alla gestione dei fondi strutturali, la responsabilità per la loro attuazione fa capo alle autorità nazionali e regionali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001569/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Eco-friendly glue for Italian shoes with low environmental impact

Craftsmanship in the footwear sector in Italy is combining with respect for the environment to create 'green' shoes. The project has come about thanks to support from regional funds and collaboration between one of the most important associations protecting the craft sector and the department of environmental science of a university: the goal is to find glue for footwear with a reduced environmental impact.

Laboratory research and tests have given rise to various prototypes of glues giving excellent preliminary results on uppers and, in general, on the gluing of leathers used in the footwear industry. The next step will be to apply the university's know-how on these solvents to the shoe production sector.

The innovative solvents are part of the dialkylcarbonate family, compounds which are not dangerous according to OECD regulations, and which can replace those currently in use (often harmful to health and the environment). Not only has the study found a very low toxicity threshold, but it has even shown that a higher quality than normal can be obtained, using less solvent.

Given that:

— the potential production of these eco-friendly solvents for shoes would allow companies attentive to the ecological aspects and environmental impact of their products to develop greater social responsibility;

— we should not underestimate the economic benefits which would be gained by eliminating or downsizing exhaust systems, saving on fixed costs in terms of energy and maintenance,

can the Commission state whether it intends to further raise awareness of this kind of craft-sector initiative, which seeks to achieve environmentally sustainable production, by making available specific programmes and appropriate funding channels?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

The Commission is not in the position to promote any specific product or production process.

Environmentally friendly footwear is specifically addressed under the EU Ecolabel Regulation ([1]).

The environmental EU Ecolabel criteria for footwear can be found here:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/products-groups-and-criteria.html

The revision process of these criteria is currently ongoing. In this context, a wide stakeholder consultation is foreseen with all concerned parties, such as manufacturers, trade bodies, the supply chain industry, consumer organisations and NGOs.

All background information, as well as announcements of meetings are available at the project's website: http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/footwear/index.html.

Funds for assistance to SMEs for the promotion of environmentally friendly products or processes may be available under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The strategies for ERDF assistance in the Italian Regions for 2007-2013 are set out in the regional Operational Programme 2007-2013. In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of Structural Funds, the responsibility to implement the strategies falls within the remit of the National and Regional Authorities.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009, on the EU Ecolabel, OJ L 27, 30.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001570/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Gioco d'azzardo: il decreto legge n. 138 del 13.8.2011 in Italia e possibile discriminazione indiretta delle famiglie meno abbienti

In Italia, come in diversi Stati membri, i giochi d'azzardo legali rappresentano una percentuale rilevante delle entrate tributarie: ad esempio, solo tra il 1999 e il 2009 hanno fatto incassare in media il 4 per cento sul totale delle imposte indirette e hanno contribuito alle casse statali con una media di 9,2 miliardi di euro all'anno. Alcuni recenti dati forniti dall'AAMS (Amministrazione autonoma dei monopoli di Stato), nel periodo gennaio-ottobre 2012, evidenziano che la raccolta complessiva, ossia l'insieme lordo del denaro ricavato dai giochi, è stata di circa 70 miliardi. Le voci che compongono tale raccolta sono diverse: quota dovuta all'erario, costi di concessione, costi di distribuzione e la parte che torna ai giocatori in forma di vincite. Dall'analisi emerge chiaramente che il meccanismo di redistribuzione tra giocatori e Stato contribuisce a riprodurre disparità già esistenti, dato che lo Stato trattiene una quota delle giocate sotto forma di tassazione. Tali conclusioni sono avvalorate da più di uno studio (in primis, Beckert, J. e Mark Lutter, M. 2009, The Inequality), che fornisce il quadro distorto della spesa in giochi d'azzardo delle famiglie italiane secondo la loro posizione socioeconomica: le famiglie con redditi più bassi spendono una percentuale del loro reddito più alta rispetto a quelle più ricche.

Considerato che:

— il gioco d'azzardo legale consente allo Stato di incrementare con le entrate erariali e di regolamentare un settore ad alto rischio di infiltrazione da parte della criminalità organizzata;

— a livello individuale il gioco d'azzardo riveste anche un ruolo ludico e di intrattenimento per i giocatori;

— non possono essere sottovalutati i costi e le ripercussioni sociali che il gioco d'azzardo comporta;

— rimane tuttora aperto il problema delle ludopatie;

— agendo come tassa regressiva, i giochi di azzardo creano ingiuste disparità economiche, soprattutto per le famiglie più povere;

— in Italia tali effetti discriminatori sono aumentati con l'approvazione dell'articolo 2 del decreto legge n. 138 del 13.8.2011;

può la Commissione verificare se, nel rispetto dell'articolo 6 TUE e del principio di territorialità fiscale, la legislazione nazionale vigente in Italia, nell'intento di liberalizzare il settore, non abbia invece introdotto discriminazioni con effetti indiretti di natura economica e sociale sui cittadini italiani, in particolare sulle famiglie più povere?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che le autorità italiane hanno messo in atto una serie di provvedimenti nel settore del gioco d'azzardo intesi a tutelare i cittadini dall'insorgere di problematiche legate al gioco d'azzardo e dai rischi di frode e riciclaggio del denaro. La Commissione non è in possesso di informazioni specifiche riguardo alla portata degli eventuali effetti economici e sociali indiretti di tali questioni in Italia.

Gli Stati membri possono, entro i limiti stabiliti dalla Corte di giustizia dell'UE, fissare gli obiettivi della loro politica in materia di gioco d'azzardo. Anche l'attuazione delle misure per la tutela dei consumatori spetta principalmente alle autorità nazionali. Tuttavia nella sua comunicazione «Verso un quadro normativo europeo approfondito relativo al gioco d'azzardo on-line» ([1]) la Commissione riconosce che è necessario che gli Stati membri attuino la legislazione nazionale in modo efficace — il cui prerequisito di base è la conformità al diritto dell'UE — per assicurare il conseguimento degli obiettivi di interesse generale delle loro politiche in materia di gioco d'azzardo. Inoltre, la Commissione adotterà due raccomandazioni con l'obiettivo di fornire un elevato livello di protezione comune ai consumatori dei servizi connessi al gioco d'azzardo e di garantire una pubblicità del gioco d'azzardo socialmente responsabile.

([1]) COM(2012)596 final.

Infine, la normativa UE vigente cerca di tutelare gli interessi economici dei consumatori vulnerabili, anche per quanto riguarda i giochi d'azzardo on-line. Ad esempio la direttiva 2005/29/CE ([2]) (fatte salve altre norme UE e nazionali sulle condizioni di stabilimento e i regimi di autorizzazione relativi al gioco d'azzardo) vieta una vasta gamma di pratiche commerciali ingannevoli o aggressive.

([2]) Direttiva sulle pratiche commerciali sleali tra imprese e consumatori (GU L 149 dell'11.6.2005, pag. 22).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001570/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Gambling: Decree-Law No 138 of 13 August 2011 in Italy and possible indirect discrimination against low-income families

In Italy, as in many other Member States, legal gambling accounts for a significant percentage of tax revenue: for example, between 1999 and 2009 alone, 4% of total indirect taxes were collected, on average, from it, and it contributed an average of EUR 9.2 billion per year to the public purse. Recent data from the Autonomous Administration of State Monopolies (AAMS), for the period January-October 2012, show that the total amount collected, or the gross sum of the money made from gambling, was approximately EUR 70 billion. That amount consists of several items: the proportion owed to the tax authority, licensing costs, distribution costs and the share given back to gamblers as winnings. Analysis of the data clearly shows that the system of redistribution between gamblers and the State helps to increase the existing disparities, given that the State deducts a share of all bets in the form of taxation. These conclusions are confirmed by more than one study (the main one being *The Inequality* by J. Beckert and Mark Lutter (2009)), which shows the distorted situation with regard to gambling expenditure by Italian families according to their socioeconomic position: lower-income families spend a higher percentage of their income compared with richer families.

Given that:

— legal gambling enables the State to expand as a result of the tax revenues collected and to regulate a sector in which the risk of infiltration by organised crime is high;

— at individual level gambling also acts as a leisure and entertainment activity for gamblers;

— the social costs and repercussions of gambling cannot be underestimated;

— the problem of gambling addiction remains unresolved;

— as a regressive tax, gambling creates unfair economic disparities, especially for the poorest families;

— in Italy such discriminatory effects have increased with the adoption of Article 2 of Decree-Law No 138 of 13 August 2011;

can the Commission ascertain whether, in accordance with Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union and with the principle of fiscal territoriality, the domestic legislation in force in Italy, in seeking to liberalise the sector, has not instead given rise to discrimination with indirect economic and social effects on Italian citizens, in particular on the poorest families?

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

The Commission is aware that as regards gambling a range of measures are pursued by the Italian authorities with a view to protecting citizens against the development of problem gambling, fraud or money laundering. The Commission is not in possession of specific information regarding the scale of the possible indirect economic and social effects of these issues in Italy.

Member States may, within the limits established by the Court of Justice of the EU, set the objectives of their gambling policies. The implementation of consumer protection measures is also primarily the responsibility of national authorities. However, in its communication 'Towards a Comprehensive European Framework for Online Gambling' ([1]), the Commission recognises that effective enforcement by Member States of their national legislation — an essential prerequisite of which is compliance with EC law — is necessary for the attainment of the public interest objectives of their gambling policy. Furthermore, the Commission will adopt two recommendations with the aim of providing a high level of common protection of consumers of gambling services and gambling advertising which is socially responsible.

([1]) COM(2012) 596 final.

Lastly, existing EU legislation seeks to protect the economic interest of vulnerable consumers, including as regards online gambling. For example, Directive 2005/29/EC ([2]) (without prejudice to other EU and national rules on the conditions of establishment and authorisation regimes relating to gambling) bans a wide range of misleading or aggressive business practices.

([2]) Directive on Unfair Business-to-Consumer Commercial Practices, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001571/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Tutela dei consumatori sui prodotti alimentari trasformati

Nel corso di conferenze stampa sul recente scandalo delle lasagne alla carne di cavallo, il portavoce della Commissione ha dichiarato che la stessa ha in atto «una riflessione» circa la tracciabilità dei prodotti alimentari trasformati per stabilire se e come realizzarla.

Oltre all'ampia casistica, recentemente emersa attraverso lo scandalo citato che riguarda prodotti di origine carnea, un altro prodotto alimentare risulta essere oggetto di una trasformazione che, in realtà, porta sulle tavole dei consumatori qualcosa di molto diverso da ciò che viene indicato nell'etichettatura.

Infatti, enormi quantitativi di pomodori «made in China» giungono in Italia — secondo alcune stime 80 milioni di pezzi all'anno — per essere lavorati industrialmente ed essere poi commercializzati come pelati «made in Italy».

Quali misure intende attuare la Commissione a tutela del diritto dei consumatori dei prodotti lavorati realmente originati dal pomodoro italiano e, come tali, commercializzati?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(14 marzo 2013)

L'indicazione di origine sull'etichetta del prodotto deve ottemperare all'articolo 36, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 450/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2008, che istituisce il Codice doganale comunitario ([1]), il quale recita che le merci alla cui produzione hanno contribuito due o più paesi o territori sono considerate originarie del paese o territorio in cui hanno subito l'ultima trasformazione sostanziale.

Per quanto concerne l'informazione dei consumatori, tale indicazione di origine rientrerà nel campo d'applicazione dell'articolo 26, paragrafo 3, del regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori ([2]) una volta che questo sarà divenuto applicativo il 13 dicembre 2014, a seguito dell'adozione delle regole attuative.

Questa disposizione recita «Quando il paese d'origine o il luogo di provenienza di un alimento è indicato e non è lo stesso di quello del suo ingrediente primario:

(a) è indicato anche il paese d'origine o il luogo di provenienza di tale ingrediente primario; oppure

(b) il paese d'origine o il luogo di provenienza dell'ingrediente primario è indicato come diverso da quello dell'alimento».

Obiettivo di tale disposizione è prevenire informazioni fuorvianti e ingannevoli per i consumatori sull'origine o sulla provenienza di un alimento etichettato quale originario di un determinato luogo ma contenente un ingrediente primario di diversa origine.

([1]) GU L 145 del 4.6.2008, pag. 1.
([2]) GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag.18.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001571/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Consumer protection and processed food products

During press conferences on the recent scandal over lasagne made with horsemeat, the Commission's spokesperson said that the Commission was deliberating on whether and how to implement traceability of processed food products.

Besides the vast number of cases that have come to light recently as a result of the recent scandal over processed meat products, there is another food product whose processing also places on consumers' tables something that is far from being the product stated on the label.

Enormous quantities of 'made in China' tomatoes — some estimates put this at 80 million per year — arrive in Italy to be processed and then marketed as tinned peeled tomatoes 'made in Italy'.

What steps will the Commission take to protect the right of consumers of processed food to purchase products that are genuinely based on Italian tomatoes and sold as such?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2013)

The indication of origin on the label of the product must comply with Article 36(2) of Regulation (EC) No 450/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 laying down the Union Customs Code ([1]), which states that goods the production of which involved more than one country or territory shall be deemed to originate in the country or territory where they underwent their last substantial transformation.

Regarding consumers information, such indication of origin will fall under Article 26(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, on the provision of food information to consumers ([2])once it will have entered into application on 13 December 2014, following adoption of implementing rules.

That provision states that 'Where the country of origin or the place of provenance of a food is given and where it is not the same as that of its primary ingredient:

(a) the country of origin or place of provenance of the primary ingredient in question shall also be given; or

(b) the country of origin or place of provenance of the primary ingredient shall be indicated as being different to that of the food.'

The objective of that requirement is to prevent misleading or deceptive consumer information on the origin or provenance of a food, labelled as originating from a given place, but containing a primary ingredient from a different origin.

([1]) OJ L 145, 4.6.2008, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 304 22.11.2011 p. 18.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001572/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Autorización de explotación de Gas en el Parque Natural de Doñana

El 29 de enero de 2013 el Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente del Gobierno español dio el visto bueno al proyecto presentado por la compañía Petroleum Oil Gas-España, filial de la multinacional Gas Natural-Fenosa, para comenzar con la explotación de gas natural y el posterior almacenamiento subterráneo del mismo en una zona dentro del Parque Natural de Doñana.

Gas Natural-Fenosa ya goza de autorizaciones concedidas por el Gobierno en los años 80 y 90 para la explotación de yacimientos de hidrocarburos. La empresa parece muy interesada en explotar los recursos energéticos que se encuentran alojados en el subsuelo del emblemático Parque Natural, una de las más importantes reservas naturales de toda Europa y con una complejísima biodiversidad que puede resultar amenazada fácilmente. La realización de los proyectos que dicha empresa pretende llevar a cabo puede someter a riesgos a la totalidad de dicho parque.

El pasado 15 de enero, el Gobierno aprobó la Declaración de Impacto Ambiental (DIA), concluyendo que no existen riesgos para el medio ambiente en la zona, pero la complejidad de las estructuras subterráneas y las nuevas técnicas de extracción que se han aprobado a nivel europeo pueden suponer la posterior introducción de métodos como el *gas fracking* para la explotación de las reservas de gas situadas bajo el Parque con incalculables riesgos para su exuberante biodiversidad.

A esta Declaración del Gobierno central se le suma la autorización que en 2010 el Consejo de Participación de Parque Natural de Doñana otorgó al proyecto de la Compañía. Esta autorización fue entregada apenas meses antes de que el ex-presidente del Consejo fuese contratado como Consejero de Gas Natural, la misma compañía que promocionó el proyecto. Esto supone un claro caso de «puerta giratoria» que ha actuado en favor de la compañía energética y que debe ser puesto en conocimiento de los tribunales competentes en este tipo de casos de tráfico de influencias e incluso corrupción.

1. ¿Ha estudiado la Comisión si la DIA de este proyecto cumple todos los requisitos expuestos en la Directiva 85/337/CEE?

2. ¿Considera que la localización en un espacio de la Red Natura 2000 y en una reserva natural de esta importancia no basta para detener dicho proyecto y evitar el riesgo inherente para el patrimonio biológico de la humanidad?

3. ¿Está la Comisión trabajando en la instauración de una normativa comunitaria dirigida a impedir estos casos de «puertas giratorias»?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de abril de 2013)

1. y 2. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta conjunta a las preguntas escritas E-000988/2013 y E-001228/2013, relativas a este proyecto y a la aplicación del Derecho medioambiental de la UE.

3. Es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros nombrar a las autoridades competentes encargadas de las decisiones sobre planificación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001572/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Gas extraction authorisation in Doñana National Park

On 29 January 2013 the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment approved a plan submitted by Petroleum Oil Gas-España, a subsidy of the multinational Gas Natural-Fenosa, to begin drilling for gas and for the subsequent underground storage of gas in an area within the Doñana Natural Park.

Gas Natural-Fenosa already has valid permits for the extraction of underground hydrocarbon deposits that the government granted in the 80s and 90s. The company seems keen to exploit underground energy in the iconic natural park, one of the most important nature reserves in Europe which is home to a very complex biodiversity that can be easily threatened. In proceeding with these projects company would be jeopardising the unique nature of the entire park.

On 15 January 2013 the government approved the environmental impact declaration, concluding that the project presented no risks for local environment. However, the complexity of the underground structures beneath the park and the new extraction techniques that have been approved at European level may mean that methods such as fracking could be used in the future to extract the park's underground gas reserves, which would risk causing incalculable damage to its abundant biodiversity.

In addition to this government decision, in 2010 the national park's participation council approved the company's project. The council granted its approval a mere matter of months after its former chairman was appointed as an adviser to Gas Natural, the very company that was behind the project. This is a clear case of a company benefiting from the 'revolving door', and a matter which should be brought to the attention of the courts which deal with influence peddling and even corruption.

1. Has the Commission examined whether the environmental impact declaration for this project fulfils all the requirements set out in Directive 85/337/EEC?

2. Does the Commission not think that the project's location in a Natura 2000 protected area and in such an important nature reserve is enough for it to be refused, thus protecting the park against inherent risks to world's biological heritage?

3. Is the Commission working on introducing EU rules to outlaw such 'revolving door' appointments?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its joint answer to written questions E-000988/2013 and E-001228/2013, regarding this project and the application of EU environmental law.

3. Member States are responsible for the appointments made to competent authorities charged with making planning decisions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001573/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Inminente riesgo de muerte de Samer Issawi. Fin de las detenciones administrativas y mejora de las condiciones infrahumanas que sufren los palestinos encarcelados

Tal y como ha alertado en estos días el Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja, Samer Issawi, prisionero palestino encarcelado en Israel, se encuentra en estado crítico tras más de 200 días en huelga de hambre.

Samer Issawi, de 33 años de edad, fue uno de los más de mil presos palestinos que fueron liberados, en octubre de 2011, tras un acuerdo entre Israel y las autoridades palestinas de Gaza, pero el pasado 7 de julio de 2012 fue detenido de nuevo al intentar abandonar Jerusalén. Numerosas organizaciones de la sociedad civil denuncian que, a pesar de que no existe ningún cargo contra él, Issawi continúa detenido mientras los fiscales israelíes buscan la manera de cancelar la amnistía pactada y por la que fue liberado para conseguir que cumpla su condena previa.

Estas mismas organizaciones denuncian que hay cerca de 5 000 palestinos encarcelados en prisiones israelíes, buena parte de ellos presos políticos, y que, en el escaso mes y medio que llevamos de 2013, han sido encarcelados cerca de 200 palestinos bajo la figura de la detención administrativa, es decir, sin cargos pero también sin derecho a la asistencia legal necesaria. Además, según un importante estudio de una organización israelí, alrededor del 20 % (un 40 % en el caso de los hombres) de los palestinos residentes en los territorios ocupados han sido arrestados en algún momento de su vida.

La detención administrativa es una práctica militar que permite a las autoridades detener a personas durante un tiempo indefinido, aun sin existir cargos ni pruebas contra ellas y sin la celebración de ningún juicio.

Teniendo en cuenta que las detenciones administrativas y las condiciones infrahumanas impuestas a los presos palestinos suponen el incumplimiento por parte de Israel del Derecho internacional, incluidos los Convenios de Ginebra, y a todas luces demuestran el escaso respeto de las autoridades de este país por los derechos humanos y los principios democráticos básicos:

1. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante pronunciarse públicamente para presionar y exigir al Gobierno de Israel que evite la muerte de Samer Issawi?

2. ¿Ha trasladado, o piensa trasladar, la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante al Gobierno de Israel su preocupación por la situación de este preso palestino cuya vida corre peligro?

3. ¿Ha llevado a cabo la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante alguna medida concreta para conseguir que el Gobierno de Israel ponga fin a las detenciones administrativas y mejore las condiciones a las que están sometidos los presos palestinos en las cárceles israelíes de acuerdo a lo establecido por el Derecho internacional y a los derechos humanos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de abril de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta ha estado muy atenta a la cuestión de las huelgas de hambre palestinas a lo largo de 2012 y sigue estándolo. El tema de la detención administrativa en general, así como el caso concreto de Samer Issawi, se ha planteado con frecuencia durante las conversaciones con el Gobierno de Israel, inclusive en la reunión del subcomité UE-Israel sobre el diálogo político de 11 de diciembre de 2012. La posición de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta con respecto a él y otros detenidos figura también en las respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-000405/2013 y E-000621/2013. El 5 de febrero de 2013, el portavoz de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta emitió, asimismo, una declaración sobre el caso de Samer Issawi.

Por lo que se refiere a la cuestión de la detención administrativa en general, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta ha tomado nota de la Resolución del Parlamento Europeo, de 5 de julio de 2012, sobre Cisjordania y Jerusalén y, en particular, su llamamiento para que se ponga fin a la detención administrativa sin acusación ni juicio formales. La detención administrativa debe seguir siendo una medida excepcional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001573/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Life of Samer Issawi hanging in the balance: the need to end the practice of administrative detention and improve the subhuman living conditions endured by Palestinian prisoners

The International Committee of the Red Cross recently warned that Samer Issawi, a Palestinian being detained in an Israeli prison who has been on hunger strike for over 200 days, is now in a critical condition.

Samer Issawi, 33, was one of over 1 000 Palestinian prisoners released in October 2011 under an agreement concluded by Israel and the Palestinian authorities in Gaza; however, he was re-arrested on 7 July 2012, as he was trying to leave Jerusalem. Issawi's detention has been condemned by a number of civil society organisations because he is still being held despite the fact that no charges have been brought against him. In the meantime, Israeli prosecutors are trying to find a way to cancel the amnesty pact which secured his 2011 release and thus ensure that he serves his previous sentence.

Civil society organisations also allege that around 5 000 Palestinians — many of them political prisoners — are currently being held in Israeli prisons, and that since the start of 2013 alone, close to 200 Palestinians have been placed in 'administrative detention', i.e. detained without charge or access to a lawyer. Moreover, according to a major study conducted by an Israeli organisation, around 20% of all Palestinians living in the occupied territories have been arrested at least once, a figure which rises to 40% for Palestinian men.

Administrative detention is a military practice under which state authorities can detain an individual indefinitely without trial, even if no charges have been brought against the individual concerned and there is no evidence that he/she has committed a criminal offence.

Israel's practice of administrative detention and holding Palestinian prisoners in subhuman conditions violates international law, including the Geneva Conventions, and shows a blatant disregard for human rights and basic democratic principles on the part of the Israeli authorities. In the light of this, could the High Representative/Vice-President answer the following questions:

1. Is the High Representative/Vice-President planning to speak out publicly about this issue with a view to exhorting and putting pressure on the Israeli Government to prevent the death of Samer Issawi?

2. Has the High Representative/Vice-President communicated her concerns about Samer Issawi, whose life is now in danger, to the Israeli Government? If not, does she intend to do so?

3. Has the High Representative/Vice-President taken practical steps towards ensuring that the Israeli Government puts an end to the practice of administrative detention and improves the conditions under which Palestinians are being held in Israeli prisons, in line with international law and human rights?

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

The HR/VP closely followed the issue of Palestinian hunger strikers throughout 2012 and continues to do so. The issue of administrative detention in general, as well as the specific case of Samer Issawi, has been frequently raised with the government of Israel, including in the EU-Israel sub-committee on political dialogue on 11 December 2012. The HR/VP's position with regard to him and other detainees can also be found in answers to written questions E-000405/2013 and E-000621/2013. The spokesperson of the HR/VP also issued a statement addressing the case of Samer Issawi on 5 February 2013.

As regards the question of administrative detention in general, the HR/VP has taken note of the EP resolution of 5 July 2012 on the West Bank and Jerusalem, and in particular its call for an end to administrative detention without formal charge or trial. Administrative detention should remain an exceptional measure.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001575/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Standard sugli alimenti cinesi per la tutela della salute

La Cina è diventata uno dei maggiori esportatori di alimenti a livello mondiale, con l'UE che nel 2010 ha assorbito prodotti alimentari per 3.830 miliardi di euro. Tuttavia permangono problemi seri legati alle differenti norme sanitarie e all'abuso di sostanze pesticide e tossiche utilizzate dai cinesi per soddisfare le richieste di produzione, oltre a casi di sofisticazione alimentare. Fino ad ottobre 2012 erano stati segnalati dal sistema di allerta dell'UE sugli alimenti e sui mangimi ben 262 carichi provenienti dalla Cina.

Molte aziende hanno deciso di sospendere gli approvvigionamenti dalla Cina o di imporre in loco standard produttivi occidentali. Ma permangono casi di intossicazioni alimentari in Europa provocati da alimenti provenienti dalla Cina, soprattutto a causa di prodotti alimentari freschi di origine vegetale non soggetti in genere ad alcun controllo.

1. Intende la Commissione applicare un sistema armonizzato di controlli per gli alimenti cinesi?

2. Ritiene opportuno proporre un accordo di mercato per sancire le regole alimentari per le importazioni?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(12 aprile 2013)

Il sistema dei controlli degli alimenti importati nell'UE è già pienamente armonizzato.

Sulla base dei dati e delle informazioni in merito ai rischi sanitari esistenti o emergenti la Commissione può decidere di sottoporre gli alimenti e i prodotti alimentati a un livello accresciuto di controlli prima della loro introduzione nell'UE ([1]). Attualmente, i seguenti prodotti e rischi d'origine cinese sono soggetti a controlli rafforzati:

— paste essiccate per individuare la presenza di alluminio;

— fragole (congelate) per individuare la presenza di Norovirus e epatite A;

— brassica oleracea (altre brassiche commestibili, broccoli cinesi), pomeli, thè (aromatizzato o meno) per individuare i residui di pesticidi.

La Commissione ritiene che i controlli summenzionati offrono le garanzie necessarie quanto alla sicurezza degli alimenti importati in provenienza dalla Cina.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 669/2009, GU L 194 del 25.07.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001575/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Standards on Chinese food for health protection purposes

China has become one of the world's major food exporters, with the European Union having consumed food worth EUR 3.830 billion in 2010. However, there remain serious problems with regard to the different health rules and the abuse of pesticides and toxic substances by the Chinese in order to meet production demands, as well as cases of food adulteration. Up to October 2012 the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed had reported some 262 loads from China.

Many companies have decided to suspend procurement from China or to impose Western production standards on site. However, there are still cases of food poisoning in Europe caused by food coming from China, and they are mainly due to fresh food products derived from plants which are generally not subject to any control.

1. Does the Commission intend to apply a harmonised system of controls for Chinese food?

2. Does it believe that a market agreement should be proposed in order to establish the rules on food imports?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2013)

The system of controls for imported food into the EU is already fully harmonised.

On the basis of data and information on existing or emerging risks for health, the Commission may decide to subject food and feed commodities to an increased level of controls prior to their introduction in the EU ([1]). At present, the following commodities and risks from China are subject to reinforced controls:

— Dried noodles for the presence of aluminium;

— Strawberries (frozen) for the presence of Norovirus and hepatitis A;

— Brassica oleracea (other edible Brassica, Chinese Broccoli), Pomelos, Tea (whether or not flavoured) for the presence of pesticide residues.

The Commission considers that the abovementioned controls provide the necessary guarantees about the safety of food imported from China.

([1]) Regulation (EC) 669/2009, OJ L 194, 25.7.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001576/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Controllo della Commissione sulla situazione economica e sociale nello Zimbabwe

A fine gennaio nelle casse dello Zimbabwe rimanevano 217 dollari per far fronte ai pagamenti dei salari degli impiegati pubblici. Tale situazione s'inserisce in un contesto in cui, secondo l'ONU, 1,7 milioni di abitanti sono già minacciati dalla carestia in seguito a cattivi raccolti agricoli. Inoltre, a fine marzo è previsto un referendum per il rinnovo della Costituzione, il cui costo è di circa 104 milioni di dollari.

1. La Commissione ha già approntato un piano di emergenza nel caso di una carestia nello Zimbabwe?

2. Ha intrapreso azioni finanziarie per l'aiuto al paese?

3. Intende inviare per il referendum osservatori che garantiscano il rispetto delle norme elettorali democratiche?

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

Ogni anno il governo dello Zimbabwe e l'ONU valutano congiuntamente la situazione del paese dal punto di vista della sicurezza alimentare e della sua vulnerabilità alle crisi alimentari. Dalla valutazione condotta nel 2012 risultava che il 19 % delle famiglie nelle zone rurali era a rischio di grave insicurezza alimentare, senza però essere a rischio di carestia. Per far fronte alla sicurezza alimentare l'UE sostiene, con un contributo di 3 milioni di EUR al Programma alimentare mondiale (PAM), un intervento d'emergenza che si concluderà alla fine di marzo 2013 e che l'UE continuerà a sovvenzionare, con altri 2 milioni di EUR tramite il PAM e l'UNICEF, per prolungarlo in una prospettiva più a lungo termine, anche con l'istituzione di reti di sicurezza e programmi di nutrizione e prevenzione. L'UE sovvenziona inoltre programmi a più lungo termine mediante la FAO (8 milioni di EUR) ed ONG internazionali e locali (23 milioni di EUR), a favore della sicurezza alimentare per i nuclei famigliari più vulnerabili.

Per quanto riguarda il referendum, l'UE si è dichiarata pronta a considerare ogni richiesta di sostegno a un referendum credibile, anche mediante l'invio di osservatori elettorali. Per l'UE è importante che il referendum sulla costituzione si svolga in maniera pacifica, trasparente e credibile. La presenza di osservatori internazionali può concorrere a garantire che il referendum sia credibile ed è perciò che l'UE accoglie con favore l'impegno del SADC di mettere a disposizione una consistente missione di osservazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001576/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Monitoring by the Commission of the economic and social situation in Zimbabwe

At the end of January, the sum remaining in Zimbabwe's Treasury to cover salary payments to public employees was USD 217. This situation has arisen in a context where, according to the UN, 1.7 million inhabitants are already at risk of famine due to poor harvests. Moreover, at the end of March a referendum is to be held on a revision of the Constitution, which will cost approximately USD 104 m.

1. Has the Commission drafted an emergency plan in preparation for a possible famine in Zimbabwe?

2. Has it taken financial action to assist the country?

3. Will it send observers for the referendum to ensure that democratic electoral standards are complied with?

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

A joint Government/UN food security and vulnerability assesment is carried out every year in Zimbabwe. While the 2012 assessment stated that 19% of the rural households were at risk of acute food insecurity, the risk of food insecurity was not associated to the risk of famine. To address food insecurity the EU supports an emergency operation through WFP (EUR 3 million) that will be completed at the end of March 2013. In addition, the EU will also allocate EUR 2 million through WFP and Unicef to continue the operation through a longer term perspective including safety nets and nutrition prevention programmes. Moverover, the EU provides support to longer-term programmes through FAO (EUR 8 million) and International and local NGOs (EUR 23 million) to promote food security in vulnerable households.

With regard to the referendum the EU has expressed its readiness to consider any request for support to a credible referendum, including with election observation. For the EU it is important that the referendum on the constitution is peaceful, transparent and credible. International observation can help to provide assurances that the referendum is credible. In this regard the EU welcomes the commitment by SADC to deploy a robust observation mission.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001577/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Tutela dei diritti degli studenti residenti

In Belgio e in Austria le autorità locali hanno istituito delle quote universitarie destinate ai residenti per le facoltà mediche e paramediche, prese d'assalto da studenti stranieri penalizzati nei loro paesi d'origine da selezioni rigide e limitata disponibilità di numero di iscrizioni. Questi due Stati membri hanno una posizione particolare, poiché sono piccoli Stati che condividono la stessa lingua di Stati confinanti più vasti.

La Corte di giustizia europea ha già statuito che limitare gli accessi a studenti stranieri costituisce una violazione, anche se sussiste la problematica, per Stati così piccoli, di tutelare la formazione di personale sanitario locale per evitare problemi nel sistema sanitario pubblico.

Pur tutelando la mobilità degli studenti europei, intende la Commissione permettere che nel caso di facoltà dove vige il regime del «numero chiuso» siano permesse tutele a favore degli studenti residenti?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2013)

La Commissione desidera rammentare che la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea ha statuito, nella sentenza del 13 aprile 2010 ([1]), che gli articoli 18 e 21 del TFUE ostano ad una normativa nazionale che limiti il numero di studenti non residenti nel paese ospitante che possono iscriversi per la prima volta in corsi di formazione medica e paramedica di istituti di istruzione superiore, salvo che le massime autorità dello Stato, in esito ad una valutazione di tutti i pertinenti elementi presentati dalle autorità competenti, non constatino che tale normativa risulti giustificata con riguardo all'obiettivo della tutela della salute pubblica.

Conformemente a tale sentenza la Commissione ha sospeso le procedure d'infrazione contro il Belgio e l'Austria al fine di consentire a questi due paesi di raccogliere prove atte a stabilire se la sostenibilità dei loro sistemi sanitari sia effettivamente minacciata. La sospensione è condizionata al fatto che entrambi i paesi effettuino un attento monitoraggio della situazione ed intende consentire di adottare una decisione informata alla fine del 2016.

([1]) Causa C-73/08, Nicolas Bressol e altri e Céline Chaverot e altri contro Gouvernement de la Communauté française.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001577/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Protection of resident students' rights

In Belgium and Austria the local authorities, besieged by foreign students who are penalised in their countries of origin by strict selection procedures and a limited number of available places, have introduced quotas for those students in their universities' medical and paramedical faculties. Those two Member States are in a unique position, since they are small states that share the same language as larger neighbouring states.

The Court of Justice of the European Union has already ruled that restricting access to foreign students represents a violation, even though such small states still have the problem of ensuring that local healthcare workers receive training in order to prevent problems in the public health system.

While still protecting the mobility of European students, does the Commission intend to allow the protection of resident students in the case of faculties that operate a quota system?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2013)

The Commission would like to recall that the Court of Justice of the European Union has ruled in its judgment of 13 April 2010 ([1]) that Articles 18 and 21 TFEU preclude national legislation which limits the number of students not regarded as resident in the host country who may enrol for the first time in medical and paramedical courses at higher education establishments, unless the highest State authorities, having assessed all the relevant evidence submitted by the competent authorities, finds that that legislation is justified in the light of the objective of protection of public health.

In accordance with such ruling, the Commission has suspended infringement proceedings against Belgium and Austria, in order to allow the two countries to gather evidence on whether the sustainability of their healthcare systems is actually under threat. The suspension is conditional on both countries carrying out a close monitoring of the situation and it is meant to allow the taking of an informed decision at the end of 2016.

([1]) Case C-73/08, Nicolas Bressol and Others and Céline Chaverot and Others v Gouvernement de la Communauté française.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001578/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Appello alla Commissione affinché protegga Pinar Selek

Pinar Selek è una sociologa perseguitata della giustizia turca. Da 14 anni viene processata per un reato che non ha commesso: è infatti accusata di essere l'artefice, insieme a un ragazzo curdo, dell'attentato al mercato delle spezie di Istanbul del 1998, in cui persero la vita 7 persone e oltre 100 restarono ferite. L'attentato, in realtà, non c'è mai stato: una perizia del 2000 ha dimostrato che l'esplosione era stata causata da una perdita di gas. Nell'attesa che venissero fatte le prime luci sul caso, Pinar Selek ha passato due anni e mezzo in galera, tra torture e tentativi di farle firmare una confessione e, soprattutto, di estorcerle i nomi di alcuni membri del PKK, con cui era venuta in contatto qualche tempo prima nel corso del suo lavoro di sociologa. In quell'occasione aveva intervistato una sessantina di attivisti curdi nel quadro di un progetto di raccolta della storia orale sulla guerra in Kurdistan.

Al momento Pinar Selek risiede in Francia, in attesa del giudizio sulla strage mai commessa.

1. In quale modo intende la Commissione tutelare Pinar Selek?

2. Intende indagare sui casi di abusi e tortura denunciati dall'interessata, anche in rapporto alla richiesta di adesione all'UE da parte della Turchia?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2013)

La Commissione continua a seguire da vicino, come fa da 15 anni, il caso di Pinar Selek.

La Commissione esprime profondo rammarico per il protrarsi del procedimento giudiziario e sottolinea l'importanza del diritto ad un equo processo entro un termine ragionevole, sancito dalla Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo.

La Commissione continua a sollevare la questione nei suoi contatti con le autorità turche nelle sedi opportune. I servizi della Commissione sono regolarmente in contatto con la signora Selek e i suoi legali. La Turchia, in quanto paese che sta negoziando l'adesione all'UE, deve garantire il rispetto dei diritti umani stabiliti nella Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo (CEDU) e dalla giurisprudenza della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001578/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Call on the Commission to protect Pinar Selek

Pinar Selek is a sociologist who is being persecuted by the Turkish judicial authorities. He has for 14 years been subject to legal proceedings for a crime he did not commit, and stands accused of perpetrating, along with a Kurdish boy, an attack on the Istanbul spice market in 1998 in which seven people died and over 100 were injured. In fact, no such attack ever took place. A report published in 2000 showed that the explosion had been caused by a gas leak. Before any light was cast on the case, Pinar Selek spent two and a half years in jail, where he was tortured and attempts were made to force him to sign a confession and, above all, to extract from him the names of members of the PKK with whom he had come into contact some time previously in his work as a sociologist. He had interviewed around sixty Kurdish activists as part of a project to record an oral history of the war in Kurdistan.

Pinar Selek is currently living in France, pending the verdict on a bloody attack that he never committed.

1. How does the Commission intend to protect Pinar Selek?

2. Does it plan to investigate the abuse and torture he has reported, not least in the light of Turkey's application to join the EU?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Commission continues to follow closely the case of Pinar Selek, and has done so since its beginning 15 years ago.

The Commission deeply regrets the prolongation of the court case and underlines the importance of the right to a fair trial within a reasonable period of time, as set out in the European Convention of Human Rights.

The Commission continues to raise the issue in its contacts with the Turkish authorities as appropriate. The Commission services are in regular contact with Ms Selek and her attorneys. Turkey, as a country negotiating its accession to the EU, needs to guarantee respect for human rights as set out in the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and by the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001579/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Tutela della genuinità della «mozzarella» italiana

In Europa, stante l'insufficiente prescrizione dei prodotti caseari attualmente in vigore, viene largamente commercializzata anche una cosiddetta «mozzarella» che non soltanto non risulta prodotta nel paese d'origine, ma addirittura in molti casi risulta essere stata realizzata con l'utilizzo, in luogo del latte fresco, di latte in polvere o anche di cagliate industriali, per lo più provenienti dall'Est Europa.

Come intende intervenire la Commissione a tutela dei consumatori che, in attesa delle programmate modifiche della regolamentazione sull'etichettatura dei prodotti alimentari, rischiano attualmente di essere indotti a consumare come genuina ed autentica mozzarella un prodotto diverso e sicuramente molto meno pregevole e pregiato?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2013)

Il termine «Mozzarella» è una designazione generica per il formaggio. È definito da una norma del Codex Alimentarius ([1]), che espone le materie prime da utilizzare nella produzione di mozzarella, latte e prodotti derivati.

Tuttavia, alcuni tipi specifici di prodotto hanno una descrizione più dettagliata della loro composizione e la loro denominazione specifica è protetta nell'Unione. La denominazione «Mozzarella di Bufala Campana» è registrata come denominazione di origine protetta e la denominazione «Mozzarella» è registrata come specialità tradizionale garantita (STG) dal regolamento (CE) n. 2527/98 ([2]). Tale denominazione è stata registrata senza riserve, ciò implica che la denominazione può ancora essere utilizzata per i prodotti che non rispettano il disciplinare registrato. Tuttavia, in questo caso, essi non possono recare un'etichetta con il logo dell'UE o l'indicazione «specialità tradizionale garantita» o l'abbreviazione «STG».

Il paese di origine è quello di produzione, non il paese di cui il nome è originario. Le materie prime possono provenire da uno Stato membro e la mozzarella può essere prodotta in un altro Stato membro.

([1]) CODEX STAN 262-2006.
([2]) GU L 317 del 26.11.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001579/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Protection of genuine Italian mozzarella

In Europe, given the current inadequate laws governing dairy products, a type of 'mozzarella' is being widely marketed. Not only is this 'mozzarella' not produced in its country of origin but, in many cases, it appears to have been made by using milk powder instead of fresh milk, or even industrial curd, mainly from eastern Europe.

What action will the Commission take to protect consumers who, pending the planned changes to the rules on food labelling, could currently be encouraged to consume as genuine and authentic mozzarella a different product that is certainly much less valuable and of lower quality?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The term 'Mozzarella' is a generic designation for cheese. It is defined by a Codex Alimentarius Standard ([1]) which sets out the raw ingredients to be used in the manufacture of mozzarella, milk and derivate products.

However, some specific types of product have a more detailed composition description and its denomination enjoys specific protection in the Union. The denomination 'Mozzarella di Bufala Campana' is registered as a protected designation of origin and the name 'Mozzarella' is registered as a Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) by Regulation (EC) No 2527/98 ([2]). This name was registered without reservation which implies that the name can still be used for products which do not comply with the registered product specification. However, in this case, they cannot be labelled with the EU logo or the indication 'Traditional Speciality Guaranteed' or the abbreviation 'TSG'.

The country of origin is the country of manufacture, not the country in which the name originated. The raw material may originate from one Member State and the mozzarella may be manufactured in another Member State.

([1]) CODEX STAN 262-2006.
([2]) OJ L 317, 26.11.1998.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001580/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Controlli da parte della Commissione anche sulla carne di agnello

In vista della Pasqua cristiana, è previsto l'afflusso da diversi paesi dell'Est di notevoli quantitativi di carne di agnello.

Il recente scandalo delle lasagne a base di carne di cavallo e, forse, anche di asino proveniente dalla Romania, fa presumere che possano essere similmente veicolati prodotti non tracciati di carne d'agnello.

Come intende tutelare la Commissione il diritto dei consumatori di conoscere l'origine della carne di agnello che consumeranno, in particolare, nella prossima Pasqua?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2013)

L'attuale legislazione dell'UE sull'etichettatura degli alimenti ([1]) prescrive l'indicazione d'origine degli alimenti sull'etichetta in tutti i casi in cui la sua omissione potrebbe trarre in inganno i consumatori. Attualmente, l'etichettatura d'origine delle carni è obbligatoria soltanto per le carni bovine e i prodotti a base di carni bovine freschi e congelati, non è quindi richiesta un'etichettatura d'origine per le carni d'agnello.

Recentemente, il Parlamento e il Consiglio hanno adottato il regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, ([2]) che diventa applicativo il 13 dicembre 2014 e introduce l'indicazione obbligatoria d'origine delle carni non trasformate di ovini, caprini, pollame e suini. Esso prescrive inoltre alla Commissione di presentare entro il 13 dicembre 2013 al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio una relazione sull'eventuale necessità di estendere l'indicazione obbligatoria d'origine alle carni usate quali ingredienti. A tal fine, si è affidata a un contraente esterno l'esecuzione di uno studio che dovrebbe essere concluso entro il luglio 2013. Tale studio costituirà la base della relazione. La relazione terrà conto della necessità di informare i consumatori, della fattibilità di riportare l'indicazione obbligatoria del paese d'origine o del luogo di provenienza e realizzerà anche un'analisi costi-benefici di tali misure e un'analisi dell'impatto giuridico e dell'impatto sugli scambi internazionali al fine di decidere la linea d'azione opportuna.

Si noti che sono le autorità nazionali ad avere la responsabilità di far rispettare la normativa alimentare dell'Unione.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 marzo 2000, relativa al ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri concernenti l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità, GU L 109 del 6.5.2000, pag. 29.

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e (CE) n. 1925/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, e abroga la direttiva 87/250/CEE della Commissione, la direttiva 90/496/CEE del Consiglio, la direttiva 1999/10/CE della Commissione, la direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, le direttive 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE della Commissione e il regolamento (CE) n. 608/2004 della Commissione, GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001580/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Commission inspection requirements, especially in respect of lamb

It is anticipated that considerable quantities of eastern European lamb will be imported for the Christian Easter festivities.

Following the recent scandal of lasagne discovered to contain Romanian horsemeat and possibly donkey meat also, there are fears that lamb products of unknown origin may also enter the market.

How does the Commission intend to uphold the right of consumers to be informed regarding the origin of lamb purchased by them, particularly over the forthcoming Easter period?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The existing EU food labelling legislation ([1]) requires the indication of origin of foods on the label in all cases where its omission could mislead the consumer. Today mandatory origin labelling of meat is only required for fresh and frozen beef and beef products, therefore no origin labelling is required for lamb.

Recently, the Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]), which enters into application on 13 December 2014, introducing mandatory indication of origin for unprocessed sheep, goat, poultry and pig meat. In addition, it requires the Commission to submit a report to the Parliament and the Council on the need to extend mandatory indication of origin to meat used as an ingredient by 13 December 2013. To this effect, an external contractor has been engaged to conduct a study, which is to be concluded by July 2013. This study will provide the basis for the report. The report will take into account the need of the consumer to be informed, the feasibility of providing the mandatory indication of the country of origin or place of provenance as well as a cost-benefit analysis of such measures, along with an analysis of the legal impact and impact on international trade in order to decide the appropriate course of action.

It should be noted that national authorities are responsible for enforcing Union food law.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and 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 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.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001581/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Endividamento excessivo das famílias europeias

Muitas famílias europeias endividaram-se em períodos de maior afluência de recursos, incentivadas a fazê-lo pelas entidades bancárias e mesmo por políticas fiscais dos Estados-Membros (nomeadamente aquelas que ofereciam benefícios à compra de casa própria). O resultado deste fenómeno é o seu sobre-endividamento, a dificuldade, ou mesmo a impossibilidade, de fazerem face aos encargos que assumiram noutras circunstâncias.

As diminuições salariais, as quebras de rendimentos e o aumento do desemprego que afetaram muitas destas famílias nos países mais atingidos pela crise económica e financeira têm causado preocupantes situações de insolvência pessoal, perda de bens, degradação social e mesmo de fome.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Dispõe de informações quanto aos níveis de endividamento das famílias na União Europeia?

2. Contribui, ou está disposta a contribuir, para que o acesso ao crédito seja concedido de modo mais criterioso pelas entidades bancárias que operam na União Europeia?

3. Acompanha, ou está em condições de acompanhar, juntamente com os Estados-Membros, a licitude das formas empregadas pelas entidades bancárias para angariar mais clientes?

4. Promove, ou está disponível para promover, campanhas que apelem à consciencialização dos cidadãos para os riscos inerentes ao endividamento excessivo?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia controla regularmente o nível de endividamento das famílias no âmbito do PDM ([1]), com a publicação anual do RMA ([2]) e do seu anexo estatístico. As estatísticas sobre o endividamento das famílias nos Estados-Membros são recolhidas pelo Eurostat no âmbito dos balanços financeiros. O BCE também fornece dados sobre os empréstimos concedidos pelas instituições monetárias e financeiras às famílias.

A legislação em vigor na UE impede a concessão irresponsável de empréstimos e protege os consumidores contra as práticas comerciais desleais. Nos termos da Diretiva 2008/48/CE relativa a contratos de crédito aos consumidores ([3]), os Estados-Membros devem assegurar que os mutuantes não procedam à concessão irresponsável de empréstimos e avaliem a solvabilidade dos consumidores com base em informações suficientes. A Diretiva 2005/29/CE ([4]) proíbe os operadores comerciais de distorcer o comportamento económico dos consumidores, induzindo-os a realizar transações que não teriam realizado de outro modo. Os operadores comerciais estão igualmente obrigados a fornecer de forma clara, inteligível e atempada as informações importantes que os consumidores necessitam para tomar decisões com pleno conhecimento de causa.

([1]) Procedimento relativo aos desequilíbrios macroeconómicos.
([2]) Relatório do Mecanismo de Alerta.
([3]) JO 133 de 22.5.2008, p. 66.
([4]) Diretiva 2005/29/CE relativa às práticas comerciais desleais, JO L 149 de 11.6.2005, p. 22.

A Comissão tem vindo a envidar esforços a estes dois níveis a fim de garantir uma aplicação eficiente da legislação em vigor. Um relatório sobre a aplicação da Diretiva 2005/29/CE, adotado em 14 de março de 2013 ([5]), apresenta uma lista das práticas comerciais desleais mais correntes e identifica as principais prioridades de ação. Além disso, em 2013, a Comissão irá apresentar um relatório sobre a aplicação da Diretiva 2008/48/CE e realizar uma campanha de informação numa série de Estados-Membros, sendo a tónica colocada nos direitos de informação aos consumidores, no direito de retractação durante um prazo de 14 dias e no direito de reembolso antecipado. A Comissão propôs igualmente uma diretiva relativa aos contratos de crédito para imóveis de habitação (atualmente em negociação) ([6]), com vista a promover a concessão de empréstimos responsável.

([5]) COM(2013) 139 final.
([6]) COM(2011) 142.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001581/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Excessive household debt in the EU

Many European families borrowed heavily during the boom years, having been encouraged to do so by the banks and even the Member States' fiscal policies (especially those offering incentives for home buyers). The result is excessive household debt, with many families struggling or unable to pay the debts that they took on before the boom went bust.

Lower salaries, loss of earnings and rising unemployment have affected many of these families in the countries hardest hit by the economic and financial crisis, leading to worrying situations of personal insolvency, loss of assets, social degradation and even hunger.

1. Does the Commission have any information on levels of household debt in the European Union?

2. Does it or is it willing to help ensure that banks operating in the European Union are more selective in granting access to credit?

3. Does it or is it able to monitor, alongside the Member States, the legality of the techniques used by banks to attract more customers?

4. Does it or is it willing to promote awareness campaigns to inform citizens of the risks of excessive debt?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The European Commission regularly monitors the level of household debt within the scope of the MIP ([1]), with the annual publication of the AMR ([2]) and its statistical annex. Statistics on household debt for MS are collected by Eurostat within the financial balance sheets accounts. The ECB also provides data on the Monetary and Financial Institutions loans to households.

There is EU legislation preventing irresponsible lending and protecting consumers against unfair marketing practices. According to Directive 2008/48/EC on credit agreements for consumers ([3]), MS shall ensure that creditors do not engage in irresponsible lending and assess the consumer's creditworthiness on the basis of sufficient information. Directive 2005/29/EC ([4]) prohibits traders from distorting the economic behaviour of consumers by inducing them to enter transactions they would not have entered otherwise. Traders are also required to provide in a clear, intelligible and timely manner material information that consumers need in order to make informed decisions.

The Commission is working on these two fronts to ensure an efficient implementation of the existing legislation. A Report on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC, adopted on 14 March 2013 ([5]) provides a list of the most common unfair commercial practices and identifying key priorities for action. Moreover, in 2013, the Commission will present a Report on the implementation of Directive 2008/48/EC and carry out an information campaign in a number of Member States, with a focus on information rights for consumers, the 14 day right of withdrawal and the early repayment right. The Commission has also proposed a directive on credit agreements relating to residential property (currently under negotiations) ([6]) with a view to promote responsible lending.

([1]) Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure.
([2]) Alert Mechanism Report.
([3]) OJ 133/66, 22.5.2008.
([4]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, OJ L149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([5]) COM(2013) 139 final.
([6]) COM(2011) 142.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001582/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Venda de carne na UE: assegurar a rastreabilidade e a qualidade

Recentemente, foram detetados produtos congelados da marca sueca Findus suspeitos de conterem carne de cavalo. Também no Reino Unido foram retirados do mercado produtos etiquetados como sendo integralmente de carne de vaca, mas que continham carne de equídeos.

Alegadamente, a empresa francesa Cogimel será responsável por boa parte destes produtos que terão sido preparados numa filial de Luxemburgo, com carne importada pelo distribuidor Spanghero, ambos do mesmo grupo francês de alimentação Poujol. Aquela indica que adquiriu a carne a um distribuidor cipriota, que a encomendou a um holandês, que, por seu turno, indicou ter comprado a carne a um matadouro romeno. Esta carne teria sido assinalada como sendo de vaca com o selo de qualidade «origem Europa».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apreciação faz dos factos conhecidos?

2. Contactou as autoridades dos países envolvidos e as empresas em questão? Que respostas obteve?

3. Não considera que situações como esta põem em causa a segurança dos consumidores e colocam em questão a eficácia da chamada política do «prado ao prato»?

4. Não crê que este encadeamento de intermediários dificulta uma apreciação cuidadosa da origem dos produtos alimentares vendidos e permite que a possibilidade de responsabilização dos mesmos quanto à sua qualidade se esvaneça ou, no mínimo, seja muito mais difícil?

5. Julga que devem ser reforçados os mecanismos de rastreabilidade da origem e da qualidade dos produtos alimentares vendidos na União Europeia, de modo a prevenir o surgimento de situações como a relatada?

6. Não acredita que uma das formas de obviar a situações de idêntico teor será através da promoção da venda de carne, nomeadamente a de denominações de origem protegida, pelas respetivas associações de produtores ou empresas locais e pelo maior rigor na etiquetagem empregada durante o seu processamento?

7. Que outras medidas tomou ou prevê tomar nesta matéria?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(2 de abril de 2013)

Até à data, não existe qualquer indicação neste domínio que suscite um problema de segurança. Assim sendo, a eficácia da chamada política «do prado ao prato» não está comprometida. As práticas fraudulentas no domínio da rotulagem dos géneros alimentícios ([1]) não teriam sido evitadas pela promoção de carne de denominações de origem protegida ou pela obrigatoriedade de uma rotulagem indicando a sua origem.

Na União Europeia ([2]), já está em vigor um sistema global de normas em matéria de segurança dos alimentos, que inclui requisitos relativos à responsabilidade dos operadores das empresas do setor alimentar e à rastreabilidade dos géneros alimentícios de origem animal ([3]). Os operadores das empresas do setor alimentar devem estar em condições de identificar o(s) fornecedor(es) e o(s) cliente(s) imediato(s) dos seus produtos. Assim sendo, o sistema permite detetar quais os produtos que foram fornecidos, por que fornecedores e a que clientes. Por conseguinte, é garantida a rastreabilidade, independentemente do número de intermediários envolvidos na cadeia alimentar. Graças a este sistema, a origem e o âmbito das práticas fraudulentas em questão foram rapidamente revelados.

([1]) Diretiva 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 20 de março de 2000, relativa à aproximação das legislações dos Estados-Membros respeitantes à rotulagem, apresentação e publicidade dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 109 de 6.5.2000.

([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 178/2002 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 28 de janeiro de 2002, que determina os princípios e normas gerais da legislação alimentar, cria a Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos e estabelece procedimentos em matéria de segurança dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 31 de 1.2.2002.

([3]) Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 931/2011 da Comissão, de 19 de setembro de 2011, relativo aos requisitos de rastreabilidade estabelecidos pelo Regulamento (CE) n.° 178/2002 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho para os géneros alimentícios de origem animal, JO L 242 de 20.9.2011, p. 2.

A Comissão está a coordenar ativamente os inquéritos pendentes nos Estados-Membros em causa, tanto no plano político como no plano técnico. Adotou recentemente uma recomendação ([4]) que insta à realização de controlos, no setor retalhista e à escala da UE, por forma identificar o grau das práticas fraudulentas relacionadas com a presença da carne de bovino, assim como para detetar eventuais resíduos de fenilbutazona, um medicamento veterinário cuja utilização em animais produtores de alimentos é ilegal. Uma síntese de todos os resultados estará disponível até abril de 2013.

A próxima proposta da Comissão sobre os controlos oficiais procurará reforçar o sistema existente, incluindo no que diz respeito a disposições em matéria de sanções.

([4]) Recomendação da Comissão, de 19 de fevereiro de 2013, relativa a um plano de controlo coordenado com vista a determinar a prevalência de práticas fraudulentas na comercialização de certos alimentos (2013/99/UE), JO L 48 de 21.2.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001582/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Sale of meat in the EU: ensuring traceability and quality

Traces of horsemeat were recently found in some frozen meals manufactured by the Swedish brand Findus. In the United Kingdom, some products labelled as '100% beef' were also removed from the shelves after tests revealed that they too contained horsemeat.

The French company Cogimel is reportedly responsible for most of these products which were made in a subsidiary in Luxembourg using meat imported by the distributor Spanghero, both of which belong to the French company Poujol. The company claims that it purchased the meat from a Cypriot distributor, who ordered it from a Dutch trader who, in turn, says that he bought the meat from a Romanian abattoir. This meat would have been labelled as beef with the 'European origin' quality mark.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the known facts?

2. Has it contacted the authorities in the countries involved and the companies concerned? What answers has it received?

3. Does it not believe that situations such as this jeopardise the safety of consumers and call into question the effectiveness of the so-called 'farm to fork' policy?

4. Does it not believe that this chain of middlemen makes it difficult to accurately establish the origin of food products sold and makes it much more difficult if not impossible to determine who is responsible for their quality?

5. Does it believe that mechanisms for tracing the origin and quality of food products sold in the European Union must be enhanced, to prevent similar situations from arising?

6. Does it not believe that a way to prevent similar situations is to promote the sale of meat, particularly meat of protected designations of origin, by respective producer associations and local businesses and to ensure greater accuracy in the labelling of such products?

7. What other measures has it taken or does it intend to take in this regard?

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

To date, there is no indication on the subject which raises a safety issue. As such, the effectiveness of the so-called 'farm to fork' policy is not jeopardised. The fraud in food labelling ([1]) would not have been prevented by the promotion of meat from protected designations of origin or by mandatory origin labelling.

A comprehensive system of food safety rules is already in place at Union level ([2]), including provisions on responsibilities of food business operators and traceability requirements for foods of animal origin ([3]). Food business operators must be able to identify the immediate supplier(s) and immediate customer(s) of their products. As such, the system allows identifying which products were supplied by which suppliers to which customers. Therefore, traceability is ensured regardless of the number of middlemen involved in the food chain. It is because of this system that the origin and extent of fraudulent actions in question were quickly identified.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the Parliament and 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.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the 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.

([3]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 931/2011 of 19 September 2011 on the traceability requirements set by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the Parliament and of the Council for food of animal origin, OJ L 242, 20.9.2011.

The Commission is actively coordinating the pending investigations in the Member States concerned both on a political and a technical level. It recently adopted a recommendation ([4]) which calls for EU-wide controls at retail level to identify the scale of the fraudulent practices as to the presence of beef as well as to detect possible residues of phenylbutazone, a veterinary drug, whose use in food producing animals is illegal. A summary of all findings will be available by April 2013.

The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

([4]) Commission Recommendation of 19 February 2013 on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices (2013/99/EU), OJ L 48, 21.2.2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001583/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Risco de insolvência de Chipre

Segundo a comunicação social, Joerg Asmussen, membro do Conselho Executivo do BCE, alertou para o facto de Chipre estar prestes a cair numa situação de insolvência, caso não receba apoio externo.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que comentário lhe merece este alerta?

2. Que consequências antevê para a União Europeia e, particularmente, para a Zona Euro, no caso de se confirmar a insolvência cipriota?

3. Tomou, ou prevê tomar, medidas a este respeito?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

Os problemas de Chipre têm vindo a acumular-se ao longo de muitos anos. No seu âmago encontra-se um setor bancário sobredimensionado, que se dedicou a atrair depósitos de estrangeiros com condições muito favoráveis. Estes fluxos de capitais também contribuíram para uma forte expansão do mercado imobiliário e a acumulação de desequilíbrios externos. A gravidade dos problemas da banca derivou das más práticas de gestão dos riscos. Com falta de supervisão adequada, os dois maiores bancos puderam crescer com uma concentração exagerada de exposições ao risco.

A Comissão já anteriormente tinha alertado Chipre para a existência de problemas. Foram incluídas advertências e orientações políticas nos relatórios e recomendações específicas por país no âmbito do Semestre Europeu em maio de 2011. Em novembro de 2011, a Comissão comunicou às autoridades que o recurso a um programa de assistência financeira seria inevitável, a menos que os problemas económicos persistentes foram imediatamente abordados.

Em março de 2013, a situação dos bancos deteriorou-se rapidamente, tornando-se claro que o segundo maior banco tinha de ser intervencionado. Existia, de facto, o risco bem real de um colapso completo de todo o sistema bancário que, por arrastamento, implicaria a perda dos depósitos e das poupanças e o incumprimento desordenado do emitente soberano.

Em 25 de março, o Eurogrupo chegou a um acordo com Chipre sobre os elementos essenciais de um programa tendo posteriormente, em 12 de abril em Moll, aprovado o acordo negociado a nível técnico.

Os objetivos prosseguidos pela Comissão ao longo de todo o processo negociação do programa foram ajudar Chipre a regressar a uma via de crescimento sustentável, preservar a estabilidade financeira em Chipre e na área do euro e proteger a integridade do euro e do mercado único.

Em 27 de março, a Comissão decidiu criar um grupo para apoiar Chipre na aplicação do programa de ajustamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001583/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Cyprus: risk of insolvency

According to the media, Jörg Asmussen, a member of the ECB Executive Board, has warned that Cyprus will slide into default if it receives no external support.

1. How does the Commission view this warning?

2. What are the likely consequences for the European Union, and particularly for the euro area, should Cyprus become insolvent?

3. Has the Commission taken or does it intend to take measures in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The problems of Cyprus built up over many years. At their heart was an oversized banking sector thriving on attracting foreign deposits with very favourable conditions. These capital inflows also contributed to a property boom and accumulation of external imbalances. The depth of banking problems stemmed from the poor risk management practices. Lacking adequate oversight, the two largest banks were allowed to build up too concentrated risk exposures.

The Commission had alerted Cyprus on its problems early on. Warnings and policy guidance were included in the reports and Country-Specific Recommendations under the European Semester in May 2011. In November 2011, the Commission communicated to the authorities that a financial assistance programme would be unavoidable, unless the persistent economic problems were immediately addressed.

In March 2013, the state of banks deteriorated rapidly. It became clear that the second biggest bank had to be resolved. The risk of a complete collapse of the entire banking system — and thus a sweeping loss of deposits and savings and a disorderly default of the sovereign — was indeed very real.

On 25 March, the Eurogroup has reached an agreement with Cyprus on the key elements for a programme and endorsed the staff-level agreement on the Moll on 12 April.

The Commission's goal during the whole process of agreeing a programme has been to help Cyprus to the path of sustainable growth, preserve financial stability in Cyprus and in the eurozone and to protect the integrity of the euro and the single market.

On 27 March, the Commission decided to set up a Support Group for Cyprus with the implementation of the adjustment programme.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001584/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: François Hollande — políticas comuns europeias orientadas para o crescimento económico

O presidente francês, François Hollande, dirigindo-se recentemente ao plenário do Parlamento Europeu, defendeu a necessidade de políticas comuns europeias orientadas para o crescimento económico. Não obstante, esta proposta não parece ter colhido apoio unânime entre os Estados-Membros.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que comentário lhe merece a posição do presidente francês?

2. Tomou ou prevê tomar medidas de idêntico sentido?

3. Considera que medidas semelhantes — que não sejam acompanhadas do saneamento das contas e dos défices públicos por parte dos Estados-Membros mais afetados pela crise económica e financeira — serão minimamente reproduzíveis?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(10 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão concorda com a posição do Presidente francês e defende a necessidade de políticas comuns europeias orientadas para o crescimento económico. A Estratégia Europa 2020 de criação de emprego e de crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo é a política de crescimento comum a longo prazo para a União Europeia. Em junho de 2012 foi complementada com o Pacto para o Crescimento e o Emprego. O Semestre Europeu de governação económica apoia a execução das políticas em matéria de crescimento, recomendando reformas estruturais adequadas nos Estados-Membros com o objetivo de melhorar a competitividade. É preciso tempo até as medidas propostas comecem a dar fruto e é fundamental uma forte aplicação a nível nacional para concretizar o crescimento. O restabelecimento da confiança na sustentabilidade das finanças públicas, em especial nos Estados-Membros mais afetados pela crise económica e financeira, é uma condição prévia para o crescimento sustentável a longo prazo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001584/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: François Hollande — common European policies for economic growth

In a recent address to Parliament, French President François Hollande advocated the need for common European policies for economic growth. However, this proposal does not appear to have received unanimous support from the Member States.

1. How does the Commission view the French President's position?

2. Has it taken or does it intend to take similar measures?

3. Does it believe that similar measures — which are not accompanied by fiscal consolidation in the Member States most affected by the economic and financial crisis — are even remotely possible?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The Commission agrees with the French President's position in advocating common European policies for economic growth. The Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs is the long-term common growth policy for the European Union. In June 2012, it has been complemented by the Compact for growth and jobs. The European Semester of economic governance supports the implementation of the growth policies by recommending appropriate structural reforms in Member States to improve competitiveness. It takes time until the proposed measures bear fruit and strong implementation at national level is key to deliver on growth. Restoring confidence in the sustainability of public finances, in particular in the Member States most affected by the economic and financial crisis, is a prerequisite for sustainable long-term growth.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001585/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Bulgária: Eventual participação do Hezbollah em atentado

O Hezbollah foi associado pelas autoridades búlgaras ao ataque suicida que ocorreu na cidade de Burgas no ano passado.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Que apreciação faz dos factos conhecidos?

2. Contactou as autoridades búlgaras?

3. Como avalia as informações que lhe foram prestadas pela Bulgária?

4. Contactou o Hezbollah a este respeito? Que respostas obteve?

5. A revelarem-se verdadeiras as acusações feitas pelas autoridades de Sófia, admite ponderar a inclusão daquela organização na lista de organizações terroristas?

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

A AR/VP respondeu ao anúncio dos resultados preliminares das investigações sobre o ataque de Burgas na declaração de 5 de fevereiro de 2013. Declarou que é necessário avaliar seriamente as implicações da investigação e que os terroristas que planearam e realizaram o ataque de Burgas devem ser entregues à justiça. Sublinhou a necessidade de encetar uma reflexão sobre os resultados da investigação e declarou que a UE e os Estados-Membros irão discutir a resposta adequada, com base em todos os elementos identificados pelos investigadores.

As autoridades búlgaras informaram que estão a cooperar com os seus homólogos do Líbano. Os líderes libaneses tinham manifestado o seu empenhamento em colaborar estreitamente na investigação. Cabe aos investigadores seguirem os procedimentos adequados e decidirem quais as pessoas ou organizações que pretendem contactar. As investigações prosseguem.

No que respeita à opção de designar o Hezbollah como organização terrorista, todas as alterações à lista de organizações terroristas da UE exigem uma decisão unânime dos Estados-Membros. Neste contexto, o Hezbollah foi discutido em diversas ocasiões no passado, mas nunca foi possível obter um consenso entre os Estados-Membros. Caso a investigação em curso e os processos judiciais tenham implicações para o Hezbollah, a UE considerará uma série de opções de resposta, que poderão incluir medidas no âmbito da cooperação de investigação e judiciária a nível da UE, bem como as possibilidades de alterações às listas de organizações, entidades e pessoas designadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001585/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Bulgaria: Hezbollah's possible involvement in attack

The Bulgarian authorities have linked Hezbollah to the suicide attack that took place in the city of Burgas last year.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's assessment of the known facts?

2. Has she contacted the Bulgarian authorities?

3. How does she view the information coming out of Bulgaria?

4. Has she contacted Hezbollah in this regard? What answers has she received?

5. Should the allegations made by the authorities in Sofia prove true, will she consider adding Hezbollah to the list of terrorist organisations?

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

The HR/VP responded to the announcement of the preliminary results of the Burgas attack investigations by means of a statement of 5 February 2013. She stated that the implications of the investigation need to be assessed seriously and the terrorists who planned and carried out the Burgas attack must be brought to justice. She underlined the need for a reflection over the outcome of the investigation and said the EU and Member States will discuss the appropriate response based on all elements identified by the investigators.

The Bulgarian authorities informed of their cooperation with their Lebanese counterparts. Lebanon's leaders had expressed their committment to close cooperation with the investigation. It is for the investigators to follow their procedures and decide with which persons or organisations they enter in contact. The investigations continue.

Regarding the option of designating Hizbullah as a terrorist organisation, all amendments to the EU list of terrorist organisations require a unanimous decision of Member States. Hizbullah was, in this context, discussed on several occasions in the past, but there has never been consensus among Member States. Should the ongoing investigative and judicial processes bear implications for Hizbullah, the EU will consider a range of options to respond, which could include steps in the framework of investigative and judicial cooperation at EU level; as well as possibilities of amendments to the lists of designated organisations, entities and persons.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001586/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia — ponto da situação e perspetivas

A Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia, que vigora desde 1 de abril de 2012, permite que os cidadãos dos Estados-Membros requeiram à Comissão que proponha nova legislação da competência da UE, desde que recolham um milhão de assinaturas num mínimo de sete Estados-Membros.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apreciação faz da Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia?

2. Que principais méritos lhe reconhece e que lacunas lhe aponta?

3. Quantas propostas já recebeu ao abrigo da Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia?

4. Que apreciação faz das mesmas de um ponto de vista técnico e de oportunidade política?

Resposta dada por Maroš Šefčovič em nome da Comissão
(19 de março de 2013)

1. A Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia entrou em vigor há menos de um ano, em 1 de abril de 2012. Por conseguinte, é demasiado cedo para se poder fazer uma avaliação adequada deste novo instrumento. Não obstante, a Comissão está extremamente satisfeita com o nível de interesse por este instrumento de democracia participativa demonstrado pelos cidadãos e pela sociedade civil.

2. Embora ainda não seja possível avaliar a influência dos cidadãos na elaboração da legislação da UE, as iniciativas de cidadania, pela sua própria natureza, geram debates transnacionais sobre questões que dizem respeito ou interessam aos cidadãos de toda a UE. Servem ainda para aproximar os cidadãos das questões relacionadas com as políticas da UE. É ainda prematuro retirar conclusões sobre as possíveis deficiências do instrumento.

3. Até à data, a Comissão recebeu 27 pedidos de registo de propostas de iniciativas de cidadania. Destas, catorze encontram-se já registadas pela Comissão ([1]). Estão igualmente disponíveis no sítio Web da ICE informações complementares sobre os pedidos de registo recusados e retirados.

4. A Comissão não pretende pronunciar-se sobre o conteúdo das propostas de iniciativas de cidadania antes de estas serem formalmente apresentadas à Comissão após a recolha das assinaturas.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/initiatives/ongoing?lg=pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001586/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: European Citizens' Initiative — state of play and perspectives

The European Citizens' Initiative, which came into force on 1 April 2012, enables citizens of Member States to request that the Commission propose new legislation within EU competence, provided that they collect a million signatures in at least seven Member States.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the European Citizens' Initiative?

2. What are the main merits and shortcomings of this initiative?

3. How many proposals has it received to date under the European Citizens' Initiative?

4. How does it assess these proposals from a technical standpoint and in terms of political opportuneness?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2013)

1. The European Citizens' Initiative entered into force on 1 April 2012, less than one year ago. It is therefore too early to provide a proper assessment of this new instrument. Nonetheless, the Commission is extremely pleased at the level of interest in this tool for participatory democracy among citizens and within civil society.

2. Although it is not yet possible to assess citizens' influence on EC law-making, citizens' initiatives, by their very nature, generate transnational debates on issues of concern or interest to citizens from across the EU. They also bring EU policy issues closer to citizens. It is too early to draw conclusions on possible shortcomings of the instrument.

3. To date, the Commission has received 27 requests for the registration of proposed citizens' initiatives; 14 of these are currently registered with the Commission (please see: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/initiatives/ongoing). Further information on refused requests for registration and on withdrawn initiatives is also available on the ECI website.

4. The Commission does not wish to comment on the substance of proposed citizens' initiatives before they are formally submitted to the Commission after the collection of the signatures.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001587/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — energia e clima

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que «A UE necessita de um quadro a longo prazo para as políticas nos domínios da energia e do clima, de modo a que os investimentos e as políticas visem a competitividade e a luta contra as alterações climáticas.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Em que medida a ausência de um quadro a longo prazo para as políticas nos domínios da energia e do clima tem constituído um prejuízo para a União Europeia?

2. Não crê que a rapidez com que vêm surgindo descobertas e novas tecnologias quanto à produção, gestão e limpeza da energia e quanto ao clima inviabiliza quadros demasiado rígidos e prioridades excessivamente estanques neste tocante?

3. Não teme que a competitividade europeia possa ser afetada por uma eventual planificação excessiva?

Resposta dada por Connie Hedegaard em nome da Comissão
(5 de abril de 2013)

1. O objetivo da UE de reduzir as suas emissões de gases com efeito de estufa de 80-95 % relativamente a 1990, no contexto das reduções que o IPPC considera necessárias para o conjunto dos países desenvolvidos, e o *Roteiro para uma economia hipocarbónica em 2050*, fornecem orientações gerais aos Estados-Membros e à comunidade empresarial sobre o caminho a seguir. O pacote «Clima e Energia» estabelece os objetivos concretos e as políticas a aplicar até 2020, proporcionando assim um quadro regulamentar claro para a década em curso.

Existem, contudo, vários motivos pelos quais importa iniciar já os trabalhos com vista ao estabelecimento de um quadro de políticas da UE no domínio do clima para 2030. Em primeiro lugar, é necessário facultar aos investidores a necessária segurança e previsibilidade regulamentar para os investimentos que terão de realizar ao longo de várias décadas nos sistemas de energia e transportes. Em segundo lugar, a comunidade internacional acordou em negociar, até 2015, um acordo sobre o clima, aplicável no período posterior a 2020. Neste contexto, a UE terá de estabelecer uma posição comum, que inclui a definição do seu nível de ambição.

2. Apresar da necessidade de proporcionar clareza e segurança regulamentar quanto às metas a longo prazo, o quadro político tem de ser flexível e adaptável, para poder responder à evolução tecnológica. Por exemplo, o regime de comércio de emissões da UE estabelece um limite para as emissões, mas confere ao mercado a flexibilidade necessária para procurar soluções rentáveis, sendo totalmente compatível com o mercado interno da energia.

3. A Comissão atribui grande importância à avaliação do impacto da legislação na competitividade. Assim, o atual pacote «Clima e Energia» contém medidas específicas destinadas a preservar e reforçar a competitividade da economia da UE. Além disso, a segurança regulamentar estimulará a I&D, a inovação e a criação de empregos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001587/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Commission Work Programme 2013 — energy and climate

In its Work Programme for 2013, the Commission says that 'The EU needs a long-term framework for energy and climate policies so that investment and policy target competitiveness and tackle climate change.'

1. To what extent has the absence of a long-term framework for energy and climate policies harmed the European Union?

2. Does the Commission not believe that the speed at which discoveries and new technologies relating to energy production and management, clean energy and climate change are emerging renders impractical frameworks that are too rigid and priorities that are too fixed?

3. Does it not fear that Europe's competitiveness could be affected by excessive planning?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

1. The EU objective that it should reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% compared to 1990, in the context of necessary reductions according to the IPCC by developed countries as a group, and the 2050 low-carbon Roadmap, provide general guidance towards Member States and the business community on the way forward. The Climate and Energy package sets out the concrete targets and policies up to 2020, thereby providing a clear regulatory framework in the current decade.

However, there are several reasons why it is important to start working now on a Climate and Energy Policy Framework for 2030. Firstly, we need to provide investors with the necessary regulatory certainty and predictability around the multi-decadal investments that need to be made in the energy and transport system. Secondly, the international community has agreed to negotiate towards an international climate agreement by 2015 for the period after 2020. In this context, the EU will need to develop a common position, including its own ambition level.

2. While we need to provide clarity and regulatory certainty on our long term targets, any policy framework needs to be flexible and adaptable in order to cope with technological change. For instance, the EU emission trading scheme sets out a cap on emissions, but leaves the market the flexibility needed to find cost-effective solutions, and is fully compatible with the internal energy market.

3. The Commission attaches great importance to assess the impact of legislation on competitiveness. Hence, the current Climate and Energy Package includes specific measures to preserve and enhance the competitiveness of the EU economy. Furthermore, regulatory certainty will stimulate R&D, innovation and job creation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001588/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — mudança radical na economia

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, assume que «a prioridade absoluta é fazer face à crise económica e voltar a colocar a União Europeia na via do crescimento sustentável. É esta a principal missão da atual geração de europeus. A realização desta missão exige uma Europa capaz de competir na economia mundial e remodelada para poder tirar proveito das oportunidades futuras. Necessita de um contexto macroeconómico estável que uma verdadeira união económica e monetária pode proporcionar. Requer uma mudança radical na economia, para se poder tirar partido dos numerosos pontos fortes que a Europa pode mobilizar para a economia do futuro, que se caracterizará pelo seu elevado grau de inovação e de competências.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como deverá operar esta mudança radical na economia?

2. Qual o papel que a Comissão assumirá nesta mudança?

3. Por que formas poderão a União e os Estados-Membros efetivamente aumentar a competitividade e mobilizar-se para a economia do futuro?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001589/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — Semestre Europeu

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que «Os progressos registados no Semestre Europeu ainda não alcançaram todo o seu potencial de tradução das recomendações em reformas estruturais na UE.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Quais os principais progressos registados pelo Semestre Europeu? Quais as principais lacunas que ainda urge colmatar?

2. Em seu entender, por que motivo os progressos registados no Semestre Europeu ainda não alcançaram todo o seu potencial de tradução das recomendações em reformas estruturais na UE? Quais as reformas estruturais que considera mais urgentes? Quais os efeitos benéficos que estas acarretariam para a União, para os Estados-Membros e, em última análise, para os próprios cidadãos?

Resposta conjunta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(15 de abril de 2013)

O processo do Semestre Europeu ajudou a definir uma visão integrada dos desafios e opções preferenciais das estratégias orçamental, financeira e macroestrutural. O semestre permite fornecer aos Estados-Membros aconselhamento em matéria de medidas a aplicar nos 12-18 meses subsequentes e acompanhá-las na próxima ronda de supervisão. Para melhorar a apropriação do aconselhamento que lhes é prestado, a Comissão estabeleceu contactos suplementares com os Estados-Membros, a nível técnico e político. A Comissão pretende fornecer um aconselhamento ainda mais específico e aferível em matéria de estratégias e medidas a aplicar.

A análise anual do crescimento de 2013, realizada pela Comissão, sublinhou que as reformas estruturais devem ter por objetivo reduzir os desequilíbrios macroeconómicos, melhorar a competitividade e/ou o funcionamento do mercado de trabalho. As reformas incluem o apoio à inovação e ao investimento e utilização das TIC. Há que tomar novas medidas para suprimir as restrições injustificadas e melhorar a concorrência nos mercados dos produtos e dos erviços, nomeadamente nos setores retalhista, das profissões regulamentadas, construção, turismo, serviços às empresas e indústrias de rede. Um melhor funcionamento do mercado único exige igualmente uma ação a nível da UE. Tendo em vista um ambiente empresarial mais favorável, as reformas essenciais abrangem o sistema judicial e um maior recurso à administração em linha e aos concursos públicos por via eletrónica. A fim de reforçar o mercado de trabalho, a carga fiscal sobre o trabalho deverá ser ainda mais reduzida e a legislação do trabalho simplificada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001588/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Commission Work Programme 2013 — a step change in the economy

In its Work Programme for 2013, the Commission says that 'Today's absolute imperative is to tackle the economic crisis and put the EU back on the road to sustainable growth. This is the number one task for this generation of Europeans. It calls for a Europe able to compete in the global economy, reshaped to seize the opportunities of the future. It requires the stable macroeconomic environment which true economic and monetary union can bring. It needs a step change in the economy, to release the many strengths Europe can bring to bear in tomorrow's economy of high innovation and high skills.'

1. How should this step change in the economy take place?

2. What role will the Commission play in this change?

3. How can the Union and the Member States effectively enhance their competitiveness and ensure that they are ready for tomorrow's economy?

Question for written answer E-001589/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Commission Work Programme 2013 — European semester

In its Work Programme for 2013, the Commission says that 'The progress made through the European semester has also not yet reached its potential in terms of carrying through recommendations into structural reforms in the EU.'

1. What has been the main progress made through the European semester? What major shortcomings still need urgent attention?

2. In the Commission's opinion, why has the progress made through the European semester not yet reached its potential in terms of carrying through recommendations into structural reforms in the EU? What structural reforms does it believe are the most urgent? How would these benefit the Union, the Member States and, ultimately, the citizens themselves?

Joint answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The European semester process has helped to build an integrated view of challenges and preferred policy options in fiscal, financial and macro-structural policy areas. The semester allows for policy advice to Member States, to be implemented within the following 12-18 months and followed up in the next surveillance round. For further increasing the ownership of Member States of the policy advice given to them, the Commission has established additional contacts with Member States, both at the technical and the political level. The Commission aims at formulating even more specific and measurable policy advice.

The Commission's Annual Growth Survey 2013 underlined that structural reforms should aim at reducing macroeconomic imbalances, improving competitiveness and/or the better functioning of the labour market. These include supporting innovation and investment in, and the use of ICT. Further action is needed to remove unjustified restrictions and improve competition in product and services markets, including in the areas of retail trade, regulated professions, construction, tourism, business services and network industries. The better functioning of the Single Market also requires action at EU level. For more favourable business environment, key reforms areas include judicial system and enhanced use of e-government and e-procurement. For improving the resilience of the labour market, the tax burden on labour should be further reduced and employment legislation simplified.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001590/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Antibióticos — risco de perda de efeitos

Agências noticiosas dão nota de que a Aliança Mundial Contra a Resistência aos Antibióticos alertou para a eventualidade da perda de eficácia de antibióticos devido ao «aumento drástico» da resistência aos mesmos devido ao seu «uso excessivo».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento deste alerta?

2. Dispõe de dados quanto a esta questão?

3. Que avaliação faz do mesmos?

4. Considera haver motivos de preocupação?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(5 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão está consciente de que os antibióticos podem perder a sua eficácia devido a uma utilização inadequada e excessiva de antibióticos, o que pode conduzir a um aumento das bactérias resistentes. A Comissão considera a resistência antimicrobiana um problema significativo de saúde pública e adotou um plano de ação de cinco anos contra a ameaça crescente da resistência antimicrobiana, em novembro de 2011 ([1]). Esse plano visa reforçar a prevenção e o controlo da resistência antimicrobiana em todos os setores e assegurar a disponibilidade de novos agentes antimicrobianos. Salienta igualmente a necessidade de assegurar que os agentes antimicrobianos são utilizados da forma mais adequada. O Parlamento Europeu esteve estreitamente associado ao debate.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/antimicrobial_resistance/policy/index_en.htm)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001590/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(13 February 2013)

Subject: Antibiotics — risk of loss of effectiveness

According to news agencies, the World Alliance Against Antibiotic Resistance has warned that antibiotics may lose their effectiveness as 'excessive usage' has caused a 'dramatic' increase in resistance to the drugs.

1. Is the Commission aware of this warning?

2. Does it have any information on this issue?

3. What is its assessment thereof?

4. Does it believe that there is cause for concern?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 April 2013)

The Commission is aware that antibiotics may lose their effectiveness because of inappropriate and excessive use of antibiotics that can lead to an increase in resistant bacteria. The Commission considers antimicrobial resistance a significant public health problem and adopted a five-year Action Plan against the Rising Threats from Antimicrobial resistance in November 2011 ([1]). This plan aims at strengthening the prevention and control of antimicrobial resistance across all sectors and at securing the availability of new antimicrobial agents. It also highlights the need to ensure that antimicrobials are used in the most appropriate way. The European Parliament has been closely involved in the debate.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/antimicrobial_resistance/policy/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001592/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Mutilação genital feminina em África

Segundo a comunicação social, líderes islâmicos da Guiné-Bissau pronunciaram, no Parlamento do país, uma fatwa proibindo a prática de excisão, que alegadamente afetaria cerca de 50 % de raparigas e mulheres.

Assistiram à leitura e adoção da fatwa elementos do corpo diplomático e o representante adjunto do secretário-geral das Nações Unidas, Gana Fofang, que é também o coordenador do PNUD (Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento) no país.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento deste facto?

— Crê que este bom exemplo das autoridades religiosas islâmicas guineenses poderia ser replicado noutros países africanos?

— Apoia ou seria capaz de apoiar outras iniciativas de idêntico teor, não apenas no continente africano mas também no território da União Europeia?

— Dispõe de informações quanto à prática da excisão genital feminina na União Europeia e em África?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente tem conhecimento da posição tomada pelos líderes islâmicos da Guiné-Bissau contra a excisão genital feminina, que muito enaltece e considera constituir um excelente exemplo que deve ser reproduzido noutros países.

A UE condena veementemente a mutilação genital feminina (MGF), que constitui uma violação inaceitável dos direitos fundamentais, continuando a abordar esta questão através de diferentes programas e ações, tanto no mundo em desenvolvimento como no interior das suas fronteiras.

Em 6 de março de 2013, o Instituto Europeu para a Igualdade de Género publicou o estudo «Mutilação genital feminina na UE e na Croácia ([1])», que sublinha a escassez de dados disponíveis sobre a MGF na Europa. A Comissão lançou uma consulta pública sobre a MGF, que estará aberta a contribuições até 30 de maio. As recomendações do relatório e os resultados da consulta serão tidos em conta na definição da política da Comissão em matéria de mutilação genital feminina em 2013.

([1]) http://www.eige.europa.eu/content/document/female-genital-mutilation-in-the-european-union-and-croatia-report

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001592/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Female genital mutilation in Africa

According to the media, Islamic leaders in Guinea-Bissau made a statement in the country's parliament issuing a fatwa against the practice of excision, which is believed to affect 50% of the country's women and girls.

Members of the diplomatic corps attended the presentation and adoption of the fatwa, as did the UN Secretary-General's deputy special representative for Guinea-Bissau, Gana Fofang, who is also the resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

— Is the Commission aware of this fact?

— Does it think that this good example set by Guinea-Bissau's Islamic religious authorities could be replicated in other African countries?

— Does it support, or would it be willing to support, other similar initiatives, not only in Africa but also within the territory of the EU?

— Does it have any information about the practice of female genital excision in the EU and in Africa?

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

The HRVP is aware of the position takeb by Guinea-Bissau Islamic leaders against excision. She commends their stance against female genital mutilation (FGM) and considers it an excellent example which should be replicated in other countries.

FGM is an unacceptable violation of fundamental rights; the EU has a strong stance against FGM, and continues to address the issue of FGM through different programmes and actions, both in the developing world and within its borders.

On 6/3/2013, the European Institute for Gender Equality released the study 'Female genital mutilation in the EU and Croatia ([1])' stressing that there is a lack of data on FGM in Europe. .The Commission has launched a public consultation on FGM, open until 30/05. The recommendations of the report and the results of the consultation will feed into the Commission's policy development on FGM in 2013.

([1]) http://www.eige.europa.eu/content/document/female-genital-mutilation-in-the-european-union-and-croatia-report.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001594/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: UE-China: 500 anos de encontro de culturas

No ano de 2013 assinalam-se os 500 anos da chegada à China dos primeiros europeus por via marítima — uma expedição liderada pelo português Jorge Álvares —, a consequente definição de rotas navais permanentes e o estabelecimento de relações duradouras e de trocas comerciais e culturais mutuamente profícuas entre a Europa e a China.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Pretende comemorar de alguma forma esta importante efeméride?

— Não considera que este encontro de culturas é um importante marco na história da humanidade e, em particular, na do relacionamento entre chineses e europeus?

— Estaria disponível para participar numa celebração tripartida que envolvesse, nomeadamente, a China, Macau e Portugal?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(11 de abril de 2013)

A Europa e a China têm um longo historial de relações comerciais e culturais. A importância destas relações foi reconhecida pela parceria estratégica UE-China, que celebra este ano o seu 10.° aniversário. Com o lançamento do «terceiro pilar» da parceria no ano passado, os intercâmbios culturais e interpessoais foram colocados em pé de igualdade com as questões económicas e políticas. Através do diálogo interpessoal de alto nível, o «terceiro pilar» pretende reforçar a compreensão mútua e os intercâmbios nos domínios da educação, da cultura e da juventude. Em 2012, as relações culturais entre a UE e a China foram objeto de maior promoção com a organização do Ano do Diálogo Intercultural UE-China.

A Comissão não está em posição de organizar um evento comemorativo do 500.° aniversário das primeiras relações comerciais marítimas Europa-China, mas está disposta a contribuir com contactos e a ponderar a possibilidade de participação num possível evento desta natureza, a fim de reconhecer a importância deste aniversário para as relações UE-China.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001594/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: EU-China: 500-year meeting of cultures

2013 marks the 500th anniversary of the arrival of the first Europeans to travel to China by sea, in an expedition led by the Portuguese explorer Jorge Álvares. This voyage paved the way for the mapping of permanent sea routes and the creation of lasting ties and mutually beneficial commercial and cultural exchanges between Europe and China.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

— Is it planning to commemorate this important anniversary in some way?

— Does it agree that this meeting of cultures represents a significant milestone in human history, and above all in the history of European-Chinese relations?

— Would it be willing to participate in a tripartite event to mark this anniversary, involving China, Macau and Portugal?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

Europe and China have a long history of commercial and cultural relations. The importance of these relations has been acknowledged by the EU-China Strategic Partnership, which will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year. With the launch of the Third Pillar of the Partnership last year, cultural and people-to-people exchanges have now been put on the same footing as political and economic issues. Through the High Level People to People Dialogue (HPPD), the Third Pillar aims at reinforcing mutual understanding and exchanges in the fields of education, culture and youth. EU-China cultural relations were further promoted in 2012 with the organisation of the EU-China Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

The Commission is not in a position to organise an event commemorating the 500th anniversary of the first Europe-China maritime trading links, but it is willing to help with contacts and to consider participation in any such event to acknowledge the importance of the anniversary for EU-China relations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001595/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão para 2013 — obstáculos à mobilidade

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que «os obstáculos à mobilidade continuam a ser uma das principais oportunidades perdidas do mercado único.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Quais os principais obstáculos à mobilidade?

— Que soluções ou propostas de solução apresenta para os mesmos?

— Não considera que, paradoxalmente, existem também poucos incentivos para a fixação das populações nas regiões europeias mais pobres e periféricas e que a sua ausência põe em causa a coesão europeia, a ocupação adequada do seu território e a mobilização das economias mais débeis?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2013)

Apesar da legislação da UE em matéria de livre circulação dos cidadãos da UE e membros da sua família, os cidadãos europeus ainda continuam a enfrentar obstáculos quando se deslocam dentro das fronteiras da UE. Muitos dos obstáculos são de natureza socioeconómica e cultural. Existem igualmente dados que indicam que os trabalhadores migrantes podem sofrer de discriminação com base na nacionalidade quando se candidatam a empregos. De acordo com a recente publicação em linha da Comissão em matéria de cidadania europeia ([1]), 74 % dos cidadãos sentem que não estão bem informados ou suficientemente bem informados sobre as possíveis medidas a tomar quando os seus direitos enquanto cidadãos europeus não são respeitados.

A Comissão está a seguir uma rigorosa política de aplicação da legislação para assegurar a completa e efetiva aplicação da Diretiva 2004/38/CE em todos os Estados-Membros. A Comissão está também a preparar uma proposta de diretiva destinada a garantir que os trabalhadores da UE exerçam dos seus direitos nos termos do Tratado e do Regulamento (UE) n.° 492/2011, através do reforço da informação e de meios de retificação a nível nacional. Além disso, o Conselho retomou os debates sobre a proposta revista de 2007 ([2]) da diretiva destinada a garantir que os trabalhadores móveis não sejam penalizados em termos dos seus direitos de reforma. Finalmente, depois de um primeiro relatório ([3]) em 2010, a Comissão planeia adotar o seu segundo relatório sobre a cidadania na UE, no qual apresentará novas ações-chave que irão tornar mais fácil a vida dos cidadãos na UE, em 8 de maio de 2013.

Quanto à migração proveniente de regiões marginalizadas, a política de coesão europeia é uma ferramenta importante a ter em conta: através desta política, as regiões menos desenvolvidas recebem recursos para investimentos (para infraestruturas e desenvolvimento empresarial, bem como para o capital humano), que de outra forma não estariam disponíveis, para que sejam criadas oportunidades de negócios e de emprego para os habitantes e as empresas dessas regiões.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/eu-citizen-brochure_pt.pdf
([2]) Proposta alterada de Diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa ao aumento da transferibilidade dos direitos à pensão complementar aos requisitos mínimos para uma maior mobilidade dos trabalhadores, melhorando a aquisição e a manutenção dos direitos à pensão complementar, COM(2007) 603 final, de 12.10.2007.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/com_2010_603_pt.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001595/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Commission work programme — obstacles to mobility

In its work programme for 2013, the Commission states that 'obstacles to mobility remain one of the main lost opportunities of the Single Market'.

Can the Commission answer the following:

— What are the main obstacles to mobility?

— What solutions, or proposed solutions, exist?

— Does it not feel that there are also, paradoxically, few incentives for people to remain in the poorest and most peripheral European regions and that the absence of such incentives is a threat to European cohesion, the proper use of its territory and the mobilisation of its most fragile economies?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

Despite the body of EU legislation on free movement of EU citizens and their family members, European citizens still face obstacles when moving across intra-EU borders. Many obstacles are of a cultural or socioeconomic nature. Evidence also shows that migrant workers can face discrimination on the basis of nationality when applying for jobs. According to the Commission's recent public online consultation on EU citizenship ([1]) 74% of citizens do not feel they are well or sufficiently well informed about possible courses of action when their rights as EU citizens are not respected.

The Commission is pursuing a rigorous enforcement policy to ensure the full and effective application of Directive 2004/38/EC in all Member States. The Commission is also preparing a proposal for a directive to help ensure EU workers to exercise their rights under the Treaty and Regulation 492/2011 through enhanced information and means of redress at national level . In addition, work on a 2007 revised proposal ([2]) for a directive to ensure that mobile workers are not penalised in terms of their occupational pension rights has also been resumed in the Council. Finally, after a first report ([3]) in 2010, the Commission plans to adopt its second EU Citizenship Report presenting new key actions to make citizens' lives easier in the EU, on 8 May 2013.

As regards the migration from marginalised regions, European cohesion policy is an important tool to bear in mind: Through this policy, less developed regions receive resources for investments (for infrastructure, business development as well as human capital) which would not otherwise be available, so that business and job opportunities are created for people and companies in these regions.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/eu-citizen-brochure_en.pdf
([2]) Amended proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on minimum requirements for enhancing worker mobility by improving the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights (COM(2007) 603 final/2 of 12 October 2007).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/com_2010_603_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001596/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Candidaturas a apoios europeus — divulgação e exemplos

Tenho sido, por diversas vezes, abordado por eleitores que se questionam acerca do modo como podem candidatar-se a apoios europeus nos mais diversos setores e quais as formas práticas de efetivamente o fazerem.

Não obstante os esforços já desenvolvidos pela Comissão para tornar disponíveis estas informações, creio, não obstante, que as mesmas permanecem pouco acessíveis e compreensíveis para o cidadão médio.

Estou em crer que muitos cidadãos europeus não se candidatam a fundos europeus por não considerarem suficientemente esclarecedor aquilo a que estes se destinam nem de que modo podem concretamente recorrer a eles.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Está disposta a simplificar e multiplicar as formas como divulga os fundos/apoios à disposição dos cidadãos, bem como o modo como exemplifica como se processam as candidaturas aos mesmos?

— Estaria disponível para apresentar on-line e noutros formatos exemplos/modelos concretos de candidaturas bem sucedidas e os documentos que as instruíram, de modo a permitir uma melhor compreensão prática da tramitação do processo a todos cidadãos?

Resposta dada por Janusz Lewandowski em nome da Comissão
(2 de abril de 2013)

1. Em complemento das medidas de simplificação introduzidas pelo novo Regulamento Financeiro bem como das propostas de legislação setorial, a Comissão está atualmente a trabalhar no sentido de melhorar a interface das páginas web que descrevem as oportunidades de financiamento ([1]). A Comissão tenciona concluir a médio prazo o desenvolvimento de um portal único com todas as subvenções concedidas pela UE que funcionará como um «balcão único». O novo portal apresentará as oportunidades de financiamento de um modo homogéneo, permitindo aos cidadãos interessados navegar e procurar convites à apresentação de propostas a partir de um ponto de acesso único, ajudando-os assim a encontrar possibilidades de subvenção entre diferentes programas da UE. Através deste portal, os processos de candidatura serão simplificados mediante uma só apresentação de documentos administrativos comprovativos e formulários de candidatura otimizados, embora um certo grau de adaptação seja inevitável de forma a ter em conta as diferenças entre programas.

2. No caso de vários programas (por exemplo, ambiente, investigação, educação e cultura), a informação relativa a projetos de sucesso já está disponível na página web «Europa». Contudo, a publicação de exemplos de candidaturas bem-sucedidas juntamente com os documentos comprovativos não parece ser viável: estes documentos são tratados de forma confidencial uma vez que incluem ideias, métodos e processos que continuam a ser propriedade dos candidatos. Além disso, poderia gerar a duplicação de propostas por parte dos candidatos sem qualquer mais-valia para os programas europeus. Por último, já estão disponíveis para muitos dos programas, guias que explicam aos candidatos como apresentar uma candidatura.

([1]) Atualmente: http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001596/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Applying for European funding — publicity and sample applications

I have been approached on several occasions by voters wishing to know how they can apply for European funding in a wide range of sectors and what practical formalities are required.

In spite of the efforts already made by the Commission to provide this information, it still appears to be somewhat inaccessible and hard to understand for the average citizen.

It seems to me that many European citizens do not apply for European funding because it is unclear exactly what is eligible and they are not sure how to go about submitting an application.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

— Is it prepared to simplify and expand the ways in which it publicises the funding and support that are available to citizens and the sample applications it provides to illustrate the procedure?

— Would it be prepared to make specific examples or models of successful applications and supporting documents available online and in other formats, to enable all citizens to gain a better understanding of how the procedure works in practice?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2013)

1. In addition to the simplification measures introduced in the new Financial Regulation as well as in proposals for sectorial legislation, the Commission is currently working on improving the interface of webpages with funding opportunities ([1]). The Commission intends to complete in the medium term the development of a single portal with all EU funded grants serving as 'one stop shop'. The new portal will present funding opportunities in a homogenous way and will enable interested citizens to navigate and search calls for proposals from a single entry point, helping them finding grant opportunities across different EU programmes. Through this portal, application processes will be simplified with single submission of administrative supporting documents and streamlined application forms, although a degree of customization is inevitable to take into account differences between the programmes.

2. For several programmes (e.g. environment, research, education and culture) information on successful projects is already available on Europa. However, publishing examples of successful applications together with supporting documents does not seem feasible: these documents are treated confidentially since they include ideas, methods or processes which remain the property of applicants. Furthermore, this could lead to a mere duplication of proposals by applicants without added value for European programmes. Finally, guides for applicants explaining how to apply are already available for many programmes.

([1]) Currently : http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001597/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — Contratos públicos e propriedade intelectual

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que «As evoluções tecnológicas oferecem grandes possibilidades, mas devem ser acompanhadas por novas estratégias em domínios como, por exemplo, os contratos públicos, as normas e a propriedade intelectual.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Em que medida as estratégias vigentes quanto aos contratos públicos, as normas e a propriedade intelectual se mostraram insuficientes para acompanhar adequadamente as evoluções tecnológicas entretanto verificadas?

— Quais os principais problemas que se lhe apresentam quanto aos contratos públicos? Que soluções estuda para lhes fazer face?

— No tocante à propriedade industrial e aos direitos de autor, por que formas pretende incrementar o esforço de proteção das atividades criativa e inventiva europeias a nível interno e externo?

— Considera que os criadores e inventores europeus dispõem de mecanismos adequados e suficientemente céleres e financeiramente acessíveis que possam ser acionados para proteger os seus direitos num mundo cada vez mais globalizado e em que, muitas vezes, não se distinguem as cópias dos originais e em que o respeito social pela atividade criadora se vem esbatendo em detrimento da ideia da posse comunitária e em rede dos produtos da criação e da invenção humanas?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

1. A Comissão considera que as disposições comunitárias em vigor no âmbito dos direitos de propriedade intelectual e dos contratos públicos são suficientemente flexíveis para serem executadas de maneira a poder ter em conta os problemas específicos. Também está consciente da necessidade de adaptar o quadro jurídico da UE a fim de acompanhar e incentivar a inovação sempre que haja provas sólidas de que tal é necessário.

2. A Comissão adotou propostas para modernizar as regras aplicáveis em matéria de contratos públicos ([1]), nomeadamente para permitir aos adquirentes públicos adquirirem produtos e serviços inovadores que promovam a evolução tecnológica. Essas propostas preconizam as parcerias para a inovação, um novo procedimento especial que combina o desenvolvimento e a subsequente aquisição de produtos, obras e serviços inovadores.

3-4. A Comissão elaborou uma estratégia para a criação de um mercado único para os direitos de propriedade intelectual ([2]). Em 27 de março de 2013, adotou propostas a fim de modernizar o sistema de marcas e garantir um acesso mais eficaz e menos oneroso à proteção de marcas mediante procedimentos mais eficazes. Foi publicado um estudo sobre indicações geográficas de produtos não agrícolas, tendo sido organizada uma audição em 22 de abril. No passado mês de dezembro, foi também adotado o pacote relativo às patentes, o qual deverá melhorar substancialmente o atual sistema de patentes que torna a proteção e a aplicação extremamente complexas e onerosas ([3]). A Comissão acompanhará de perto os progressos sobre a proteção da patente unitária e sobre o Tribunal Unificado de Patentes.

([1]) Proposta de diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa aos contratos públicos [COM(2011) 896 final]. Proposta de diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, relativa aos contratos públicos celebrados pelas entidades que operam nos setores da água, da energia, dos transportes e dos serviços postais [COM(2011) 895 final].

([2]) Um Mercado Único para os Direitos de Propriedade Intelectual — Encorajar a criatividade e a inovação de modo a garantir o crescimento económico, postos de trabalho de elevada qualidade e produtos e serviços de primeira classe na Europa. COM(2011) 0287 final.

([3]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1257/2012 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 17 de dezembro de 2012, que regulamenta a cooperação reforçada no domínio da criação da proteção unitária de patentes; Regulamento (UE) n. ° 1260/2012 do Conselho, de 17 de dezembro de 2012, que regulamenta a cooperação reforçada no domínio da criação da proteção unitária de patentes no que diz respeito ao regime de tradução aplicável e Acordo sobre o Tribunal Unificado de Patentes.

Na sua Comunicação sobre conteúdos no mercado único digital ([4]), a Comunicação anunciou um trabalho em duas «frentes de ação» paralelas em matéria de direitos de autor: a) conclusão do trabalho em curso para rever e modernizar o quadro legislativo da UE em matéria de direitos de autor; b) lançamento de um diálogo ([5]) com as partes interessadas, com o objetivo de encontrar soluções práticas, induzidas pelo setor, para um conjunto de problemas.

([4]) Comunicação da Comissão sobre conteúdos no mercado único digital — 18.12.2012.
([5]) «Licenças para a Europa».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001597/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Commission work programme for 2013 — public procurement and intellectual property

In its work programme for 2013, the Commission says that 'technological change offers huge possibilities, but it needs to be accompanied by new approaches in areas like procurement, standards, and intellectual property'.

Can the Commission answer the following:

— To what extent have the current approaches to procurement, standards and intellectual property failed to adequately accompany the technological changes which have taken place?

— What are the main problems faced with regard to procurement? What solutions is the Commission looking at?

— In terms of industrial property and copyright law, how does the Commission intend to increase efforts to protect European creative and inventive activities, both internally and externally?

— Does the Commission feel that European creators and inventors have adequate, sufficiently agile and financially accessible mechanisms at their disposal with which to protect their rights in an increasingly globalised world where copies are often indistinguishable from originals and in which social respect for creative activity is being displaced by the idea of common, online ownership of the products of human creativity and invention?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

1. The Commission believes that the existing EU rules in the area of IPR and public procurement are flexible enough to be implemented in a way that allows taking specific concerns into account. It is also mindful of the need to adapt the EU legal framework to accompany and stimulate innovation whenever solid evidence proves this be necessary.

2. The Commission adopted proposals to modernise the EU public procurement rules, ([1]) i.a. to enable public purchasers to buy innovative products and services fostering technological change. They provide the innovation partnership, a new special procedure combining the development and subsequent purchase of new innovative products, works and services.

3-4. The Commission has set out a strategy to create a single market for IPR ([2]). On 27 March 2013, it adopted proposals to modernise the trade mark system and ensure better and cheaper access to trademark protection under more efficient procedures. On geographical indications of non-agricultural products, a study has been published; a hearing was organised on 22 April. The patent package has also been adopted last December and will considerably improve the current patent system which renders protection and enforcement excessively complex and costly ([3]). The Commission will closely monitor the progress in the setting up of the unitary patent protection and the Unified Patent Court.

In its communication on 'content in the Digital Market' ([4]), the Commission announced a 'double track' of parallel actions on copyright: (a) the completion of its ongoing effort to review and to modernise the EU copyright legislative framework; (b) the launch of a stakeholder dialogue ([5]), with the objective of delivering practical industry led solutions to a number of issues.

([1]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on public procurement, COM(2011) 896 final; Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors, COM(2011) 895 final.

([2]) A Single Market for Intellectual Property Rights Boosting creativity and innovation to provide economic growth, high quality jobs and first class products and services in Europe, COM/2011/0287 final.

([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1257/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2012 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection; Council regulation (EU) No 1260/2012 of 17 December 2012 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection with regard to the applicable translation arrangements and the Agreement on the Unified Patent Court.

([4]) Communication from the Commission on content in the Digital Single Market. 18.12.2012.

([5]) 'Licences for Europe'.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001598/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — Economia de mercado social

A Comissão Europeia, na versão portuguesa do seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que «Graças à sua capacidade para combinar crescimento e inclusão, a nossa economia de mercado social constitui um dos maiores trunfos da Europa.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— O conceito enunciado — economia de mercado social — difere em alguma medida de outro mais amplamente divulgado e acolhido pela doutrina e discurso político europeus — economia social de mercado — ou trata-se de sinónimos?

— No primeiro caso, pode esclarecer em que medida um difere do outro?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(2 de abril de 2013)

No contexto da presente comunicação, a expressão *economia de mercado social* é sinónimo de *economia social de mercado*, como também é utilizada em documentos do Parlamento Europeu. No futuro, a Comissão utilizará *economia social de mercado* com o mesmo significado que o termo utilizado na comunicação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001598/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Commission work programme for 2013 — social market economy

The Commission's work programme for 2013, in its Portuguese version, says '*graças à sua capacidade para combinar crescimento e inclusão, a nossa economia de mercado social constitui um dos maiores trunfos da Europa*' ('through its capacity to combine growth and inclusiveness, our social market economy is one of Europe's greatest assets').

Can the Commission answer the following:

— Does the concept referred to — *economia de mercado social* — differ in any way from another concept more widely used and accepted in European political speech and thought — that of *economia social de mercado* — or are they synonymous?

— If they are different concepts, how do they differ from each other?

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

In the context of this communication, the expression *economia de mercado social* is synonymous with *economia social de mercado*, as also used in European Parliament documents. In future, the Commission will use *economia social de mercado* to mean the same as the term used in the communication.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001599/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — Inovação e espírito empresarial

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que «A Europa não corresponde às expectativas em matéria de inovação; subsistem obstáculos à criação de novos mercados e ao investimento nas tecnologias que mudarão a nossa forma de viver, bem como problemas mais vastos de atitude relativamente ao espírito empresarial e ao insucesso empresarial.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Quais considera serem os principais fatores que obstam a que a Europa possa atingir as expectativas em matéria de inovação?

— Que obstáculos impedem mais gravosamente a criação de novos mercados e o investimento em novas tecnologias?

— Em que radicam os problemas mais vastos de atitude relativamente ao espírito empresarial e ao insucesso empresarial? Por que formas pode contribuir para a alteração de mentalidades quanto aos mesmos? Não considera que um modelo social demasiado garantístico e assente em grandes administrações estatais e europeias constitui um fator de desincentivo a esse mesmo espírito empresarial? E que as regras excessivas impostas a nível nacional e comunitário quanto ao modo como são produzidos, acondicionados e vendidos determinados bens obstam ao desenvolvimento de pequenas e microempresas que poderiam dar novo ânimo à economia europeia?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(8 de abril de 2013)

A fim de maximizar as potencialidades da Europa, é necessário explorar os pontos fortes, como a nossa excelente base científica, e corrigir as insuficiências. Entre estas últimas, conta-se a conjuntura desfavorável, a escassez de capital de risco, a fragmentação dos esforços em prol da investigação e da inovação, a falta de empresários na área da tecnologia e os desfazamentos de competências que impedem as ideias de chegar aos mercados. Acresce que as respostas ao último inquérito Eurobarómetro sobre empreendedorismo dão conta do receio de falência como a principal razão para não se optar pela atividade por conta própria.

A iniciativa emblemática da Comissão na área da inovação ([1]) e a nova estratégia de política industrial ([2]) incluem várias medidas para ultrapassar estes obstáculos e acelerar o investimento em novas tecnologias e novos mercados. O Plano de Ação Empreendedorismo 2020 ([3]) propõe três pilares para revigorar a cultura empresarial na Europa: reforçar a educação para o espírito empresarial, prosseguir a redução das barreiras regulamentares e explorar as potencialidades empreendedoras de certos grupos específicos. A Comissão procura encorajar uma atitude mais positiva no sentido de se tirarem ensinamentos do insucesso empresarial e de oferecer uma segunda oportunidade às situações de falências honestas. Para promover um ambiente empresarial melhorado para as PME, a Comissão atende aos seus interesses em todas as propostas legislativas ([4]). A Comissão procura minimizar os encargos administrativos e regulamentares para as PME, ao mesmo empo que promove práticas nestes sentido nos Estados-Membros ([5]).

([1]) A comunicação que se anuncia sobre o estado da inovação da União em 2012, evidencia os progressos significativos feitos na definição do quadro politico para uma União da Inovação.

([2]) COM(2012) 582 «Reforçar a indústria europeia em prol do crescimento e da recuperação económica». O documento de acompanhamento SWD (2012) 297 contem mais informações sobre os grandes desafios para o investimento em novos mercados.

([3]) COM(2012) 795 «Plano de Ação Empreendedorismo 2020»: «Relançar o espírito empresarial na Europa».

([4]) Desde 2009, o Teste PME integra as orientações da Comissão para as avaliações de impacto. A partir de 2012, a Comissão passou a basear a sua abordagem na premissa de que as microentidades, sobretudo essas, deviam ser excluídas do âmbito de aplicação das propostas legislativas, a menos que possa ser demonstrada a proporcionalidade com que a legislação se lhes deve aplicar. Quando se não podem garantir isenções, será necessário procurar soluções adaptadas e mais ligeiras.

([5]) Um recente inquérito lançado pela Comissão junto de PME na Europa permitiu identificar as 10 medidas legislativas mais constrangedoras. Os comentários das PME estão a ser analisados pela Comissão, prevendo-se a apresentação antes do verão de propostas daí decorrentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001599/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Commission work programme for 2013 — innovation and entrepreneurial spirit

In its work programme for 2013, the Commission says that 'Europe falls short on innovation, with obstacles to building new markets and investing in the technologies that will change the way we live, as well as wider issues of attitudes to entrepreneurship and business failure'.

Can the Commission answer the following:

— What does it consider to be the main obstacles preventing Europe from matching its expectations in the field of innovation?

— What are the most serious obstacles to building new markets and investing in new technologies?

— What are the major attitude problems when it comes to entrepreneurship and business failure? How can the Commission help to change attitudes in these areas? Does it not feel that an over-protective social model based on large European and national administrations acts as a disincentive to said entrepreneurial spirit? Does it not also feel that excessive rules imposed at national and Community level, as to the way in which certain goods may be produced, prepared and sold, hinder the development of small and micro-enterprises which could breathe new life into the European economy?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

In order to make the most of Europe's potential, we must build on strengths such as our excellent research base and address weaknesses. The latter include adverse framework conditions, a shortage of risk and venture capital, the fragmentation of research and innovation efforts, a shortage of technology entrepreneurs and a mismatch of skills, which prevent good ideas from reaching the market. Furthermore, respondents to the latest Eurobarometer survey on entrepreneurship cite fear of bankruptcy as the single most important reason why they would not like to be self-employed.

The Commission's Innovation Union flagship initiative ([1]) and new Industrial Policy strategy ([2]) include various measures to overcome these obstacles and to accelerate investment in new technologies and new markets. The Commission's Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan ([3]) proposes three pillars for action to reignite entrepreneurial culture in Europe: increased entrepreneurship education, further reduction of regulatory burden and untapping the entrepreneurial potential of specific groups. The Commission seeks to encourage a more positive attitude towards learning from business failure and offering a second chance to honest bankruptcies. In order to promote a better business environment for SMEs, the Commission takes their interests into account in all legislative proposals ([4]). The Commission seeks to minimise the administrative and regulatory burden on SMEs and promotes the implementation of these practices in Member States ([5]).

([1]) The upcoming Commission communication 'State of the Innovation Union 2012' outlines the significant progress that has been made in setting up the policy framework for an Innovation Union.

([2]) COM(2012) 582 'A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery'. More information on the key challenges for investment in new markets are outlined in the accompanying SWD (2012) 297.

([3]) COM(2012) 795 'Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan: Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe'.

([4]) Since 2009, the SME Test is an integral element of the Commission Impact Assessment Guidelines. Since 2012, the Commission's approach is based on the premise that in particular micro-entities should be excluded from the scope of proposed legislation unless the proportionality of their being covered can be demonstrated. When exemptions cannot be granted, adapted solutions and lighter regimes will be sought.

([5]) A recent survey launched by the Commission towards SMEs in Europe has identified the 10 most burdensome legislative measures. SME comments are being examined by Commission services and proposals for follow-up will be made public before summertime.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001600/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — Galileo

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que a União «Precisa também de um quadro jurídico adequado para que o sistema Galileo evolua para uma utilização comercial.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Qual o custo, até à presente data, do projeto Galileo? Que receitas obteve do mesmo no mesmo período?

— Face à necessidade de proceder a cortes profundos nos orçamentos nacionais e comunitários, considera justificada a manutenção deste projeto? Em que medida e com que objetivo?

Resposta dada por António Tajani em nome da Comissão
(10 de abril de 2013)

O custo total dos programas de navegação por satélite (Galileo e EGNOS) até agora, incluindo a fase de desenvolvimento e definição do programa, elevou-se a aproximadamente 6 mil milhões de euros. Está incluído nesta quantia o valor de 3 405 mil milhões de euros referentes ao período de 1 de janeiro de 2007 a 31 de dezembro de 2013, necessários à implantação e exploração dos programas Galileo e EGNOS ([1]).

O programa EGNOS, que entrou na fase operacional em 2009, tem vindo a oferecer os seus serviços de forma gratuita, tal como os serviços de sistemas semelhantes de aumento de GPS, incluindo o equivalente norte-americano WAAS. Isto beneficia uma grande comunidade de utilizadores, não apenas na aviação, mas também na agricultura e nos transportes marítimos e rodoviários. Quanto ao programa Galileo, a Agência do GNSS Europeu estima que as receitas globais indiretas projetadas, incluindo o interesse público, ascendem a 90 mil milhões de euros para o período de 2010-2027, uma vez que o Galileo esteja operacional. É neste sentido que a Comissão está a promover um ambicioso cronograma de implantação que irá levar à primeira etapa em 2014, com a declaração de início dos serviços. Todos os serviços deverão estar disponíveis entre 2018 e 2020.

A Comissão considera que os programas europeus de navegação por satélite Galileo e EGNOS, enquanto projetos emblemáticos da União, são de importância crucial. A promoção dessa tecnologia, que é um poderoso motor para superar a crise atual, conjuga-se perfeitamente com a estratégia Europa 2020 e com as políticas para o desenvolvimento sustentável, e garante a independência europeia no que diz respeito aos outros sistemas GNSS. Ambos os programas EGNOS e Galileo têm sido continuamente apoiados pelo Parlamento e pelo Conselho Europeus.

([1]) Ver Regulamento (CE) n.° 683/2008, que entrou em vigor a 25 de julho de 2008 e que define o programa-quadro para a governação e o financiamento públicos dos programas Galileo e EGNOS no período 2007-2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001600/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Commission work programme for 2013 — Galileo

In its work programme for 2013, the Commission says that the Union 'also needs the right legal framework to move Galileo towards commercial operations'.

Can the Commission answer the following:

— What has been the cost of the Galileo project to date? What revenue did it provide during this period?

— In view of the need for far-reaching cuts in national and community budgets, does the Commission consider it justified to continue with this project? In what way and for what purpose?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The total cost of the European satellite navigations programmes (Galileo and EGNOS) so far, including the definition and development phase of the programme, has amounted to roughly EUR 6 billion. Included in this amount is EUR 3,405 billion for the period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013, required for the deployment and exploitation of the Galileo and EGNOS programmes ([1]).

The EGNOS programme, which entered into the operational phase in 2009, is providing its services free of charge, as are the services of similar GPS augmentation systems, including the US equivalent WAAS. This is benefiting a large community of users, not just in aviation, but also in agriculture, maritime and road. As far as the Galileo programme is concerned, the European GNSS Agency has estimated that the overall projected indirect revenues, including public benefit, amount to EUR 90 billion for the period 2010-2027, once Galileo becomes operational. That is why the Commission is pursuing an ambitious deployment schedule which will lead to a first milestone in 2014 with the declaration of early services. Full services are expected to become available between 2018 and 2020.

The Commission considers that the European satellite navigation programmes Galileo and EGNOS, as flagship projects of the Union, are of crucial importance. Promotion of this technology, which is a powerful driver to emerge from the current crisis, fits in perfectly with the Europe 2020 strategy and policies for sustainable development, and ensures the absence of European dependence on other GNSS systems. Both EGNOS and Galileo have been continuously supported by the Parliament and the European Council.

([1]) See Regulation (EC) No 683/2008, which entered into force on 25 July 2008 and which defines the framework for the public governance and financing of the Galileo and EGNOS programmes during the period 2007-2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001601/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — Mercado único e redes europeias

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que «Um mercado único europeu plenamente integrado e interligado que abranja as telecomunicações, a energia e os transportes é uma condição indispensável para a competitividade, o emprego e o crescimento. Para realizar este objetivo, são necessárias infraestruturas de redes abordáveis, acessíveis, eficientes e seguras.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Dos três elementos que referiu — as telecomunicações, a energia e os transportes — qual considera ser o que mais obsta à existência plena de um mercado único europeu plenamente integrado e interligado? Como pretende inverter esta situação? Através de que meios?

— Quais as suas prioridades no tocante às infraestruturas de redes?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(8 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão é de opinião que, para se criar um mercado interno que funcione plenamente, tal como descrito nomeadamente no Ato para o Mercado Único II, ([1]) os três setores necessitam de redes integradas. A título de exemplo, a Comissão propôs o mecanismo Interligar a Europa ([2]), um instrumento único para apoiar financeiramente o desenvolvimento das redes de transportes, energia e telecomunicações. Juntamente com o mecanismo Interligar a Europa, a Comissão propôs a revisão das orientações que definem as prioridades para os respetivos setores ([3]). Os quatro atos estão atualmente em curso de adoção por processo legislativo.

Se e quando adequado, o investimento em infraestruturas de rede terá de ser complementado por medidas a nível político e regulamentar, para promover o desenvolvimento de ofertas de serviços transfronteiras e pan-europeias com o objetivo de criar um mercado único que funcione verdadeiramente. No domínio das telecomunicações, em consonância com as conclusões do Conselho Europeu de 14 e 15 de março de 2013, a Comissão apresentará um relatório, muito antes do Conselho Europeu de outubro de 2013, sobre medidas concretas para a criação, com a maior brevidade possível, do mercado único no setor das tecnologias da informação e da comunicação.

Além disso, a integração do mercado interno da energia, o reforço da segurança do aprovisionamento energético da UE e a eliminação do isolamento energético de vários Estados-Membros só poderão ser alcançados com um reforço substancial das infraestruturas de transporte de energia. São também necessárias novas infraestruturas para permitir e promover a integração da energia proveniente de fontes renováveis em toda a UE, que é essencial para se alcançar os objetivos da Europa no domínio da energia e das alterações climáticas.

([1]) COM(2012) 573 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 655.
([3]) Transportes: COM(2011) 650, energia: COM(2011) 658, telecomunicações: COM(2011) 657.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001601/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Commission work programme for 2013 — Single Market and European networks

In its work programme for 2013, the Commission says that 'a fully integrated and interconnected European Single Market covering telecoms, energy and transport is a prerequisite for competitiveness, jobs and growth. Achieving this requires affordable, accessible, efficient and secure network infrastructure'.

Can the Commission answer the following:

— Of the three elements mentioned above — telecoms, energy and transport — which does it see as most hindering the complete existence of a fully integrated and interlinked European single market? How does it intend to correct this situation and by what means?

— What are its priorities in terms of network infrastructure?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The Commission is of the opinion that for achieving a fully functional internal market, as described notably in the Single Market Act II ([1]), all three sectors need integrated networks. As an illustration, the Commission has proposed the Connecting Europe Facility ([2]), as a single instrument to support financially the development of the transport, energy and telecom networks. Together with the Connecting Europe Facility, the Commission proposed the revision of the respective guidelines which set out the priorities for the respective sectors ([3]). The four acts are currently adopted by legislative procedure.

Where and when appropriate, investment in network infrastructure will have to be complemented by policy and regulatory measures to foster the development of cross-border and pan-European service offers so as to achieve a truly functioning Single Market. In the field of telecoms, in accordance with the conclusions of the European Council of 14-15 March 2015, the Commission will report well before the European Council of October 2013 about concrete measures to establish the Single Market in information and communication technology as early as possible.

Moreover, the integration of the internal energy market, the enhancement of Union security of energy supply and the elimination of energy isolation of several Member States will not be achieved without substantial reinforcements in energy transmission infrastructures. Furthermore new infrastructure is required to enable and foster the integration of energy from renewables sources across the EU which is essential if Europe's energy and climate change targets are to be met.

([1]) COM(2012) 573 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 655.
([3]) Transport: COM(2011)650, Energy: COM(2011)658, Telecom: COM(2011)657.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001602/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 de fevereiro de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de Trabalho da Comissão 2013 — Sistemas de educação

A Comissão Europeia, no seu plano de trabalho para o corrente ano, refere que «Os sistemas de educação e de formação não estão a acompanhar a evolução das necessidades do mercado de trabalho, o que dá origem a uma penúria de mão-de-obra em setores essenciais como as ciências, a matemática e a cultura digital. O ensino superior não está suficientemente ligado às atividades de investigação e inovação e é lento a criar capacidades em domínios como as TIC, o que reflete a falta de internacionalização e contribui para a mesma.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— O que advoga para melhorar o acompanhamento da evolução das necessidades do mercado de trabalho por parte dos sistemas de educação e de formação?

— Não considera que a excessiva especialização tem compartimentado o conhecimento em demasia, impedindo que a capacidade técnica dos trabalhadores em áreas específicas seja enriquecida por um conhecimento adequado e igualmente essencial da história, cultura, património e contexto respetivos?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(18 de março de 2013)

A responsabilidade pelos sistemas de educação e formação, incluindo a de os tornar mais capazes de responder à evolução do mercado de trabalho, está nas mãos dos Estados-Membros.

As competências desempenham um papel importante no âmbito da estratégia «Europa 2020». A Comissão instou os Estados-Membros a adaptar os seus sistemas educativos às realidades do mercado de trabalho, e muitas das recomendações específicas por país, elaboradas no âmbito do Semestre Europeu de 2012, dizem respeito a esta questão.

Em novembro de 2012, a Comissão lançou uma iniciativa política global que explora formas de melhorar o desempenho do sistema de educação e formação, a fim de assegurar que são obtidas as qualificações necessárias para o mercado de trabalho: «Repensar a educação — Investir nas competências para melhores resultados socioeconómicos» ([1]).

Esta comunicação incide sobre a necessidade de dotar as pessoas das competências essenciais e transversais necessárias, adotando, ao mesmo tempo, uma abordagem holística da aprendizagem e salientando a sua relação com a empregabilidade. A Comissão sublinha igualmente a importância das línguas estrangeiras, da competência digital e das competências empresariais, a necessidade de melhorar a qualidade das qualificações profissionais e de proporcionar oportunidades de aprendizagem no local de trabalho. Propõe igualmente uma nova iniciativa sobre a «abertura da educação», com o propósito de melhorar a aprendizagem baseada nas TIC e alargar o acesso à educação, através de recursos educativos abertos, um aspeto que será objeto ulteriormente de uma comunicação, em 2013.

([1]) COM(2012) 669 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001602/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Commission work programme for 2013 — education systems

In its work programme for 2013, the Commission says that 'education and training systems are not keeping up with changing labour market needs — resulting in shortages in key areas like science, mathematics and e-skills. Higher education is not sufficiently connected to research and innovation activities and is slow to build capacity in areas like ICT — which both reflects and contributes to a lack of internationalisation'.

Can the Commission answer the following:

— What does it recommend to improve the capacity of education and training systems to keep up with changing labour market needs?

— Does it not consider that over-specialisation has led to an excessive compartmentalisation of knowledge, which prevents workers' technical expertise in specific areas from being enriched by an equally necessary proper knowledge of their respective history, culture, heritage and context?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

The responsibility for education and training systems, including to make them more responsive to labour market developments, is in the hands of Member States.

Skills play an important role within the Europe 2020 strategy. The Commission has called on Member States to adjust their education systems to labour market realities, and many of the Country-specific Recommendations issued in under the European Semester of 2012 concern this issue.

In November 2012, the Commission launched a comprehensive policy initiative that explores ways to improve the performance of education and training system, to ensure they deliver the skills needed by the labour market: 'Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes' ([1]).

This communication focuses on the need to equip people with both basic and transversal skills, while providing a holistic approach to learning and emphasising the connection to employability. The Commission also stresses the importance of foreign languages, digital competence and entrepreneurial skills, the need to increase the quality of vocational skills and to provide work-based learning opportunities. It also proposes a new initiative on 'Opening Up Education' to enhance ICT based learning and broaden access through Open Educational Resources, which will be the subject of a communication later in 2013.

([1]) COM(2012)669 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001603/13
à la Commission
Jacky Hénin (GUE/NGL)
(14 février 2013)

Objet: Quatrième paquet ferroviaire

La Commission européenne a présenté, le 30 janvier 2013, une proposition de règlement relative au quatrième paquet ferroviaire.

Cette proposition ignore les conséquences dramatiques des trois paquets ferroviaires précédents: baisse du fret ferroviaire au profit du fret routier, diminution des conditions de sécurité, baisse de la qualité des services aux usagers, augmentation des coûts pour les usagers et remise en cause des conditions de travail des salariés.

Ce règlement propose aujourd'hui d'aller plus loin en séparant les gestionnaires d'infrastructures des opérateurs de transport. Il prévoit également «une obligation de mise en concurrence pour les contrats de service public à partir de décembre 2019». Cela exclut toute possibilité pour une collectivité territoriale ou un État de travailler prioritairement avec un transporteur public.

Le quatrième paquet ferroviaire prévoit également l'abrogation du règlement (CEE) n° 1192/69 du Conseil du 26 juin 1969 relatif aux règles communes pour la normalisation des comptes des entreprises de chemin de fer. Le nouveau règlement imposera aux États membres de verser une contribution d'équilibre relative aux cotisations de retraites des salariés des transports publics. Que propose la Commission pour faire face aux conséquences de cette abrogation pour les régimes de retraite des salariés?

La Commission a présenté, le 5 décembre 2012, une proposition de règlement (COM(2012)0730) afin de réviser les aides publiques attribuées au secteur du transport.

À la suite de la mise en place de ces réformes, dans quelle mesure les États membres et les collectivités pourront-ils agir pour garantir l'accès de tous à un service de transport ferroviaire de qualité et abordable, y compris en zone rurale?

En ce sens, le quatrième paquet ferroviaire est-il compatible avec le droit des États membres de décider de l'organisation des services de transport public, droit qui est garanti par le Protocole 26 du Traité de Lisbonne?

Ces réformes ne sont-elles pas une entrave au pouvoir discrétionnaire des autorités nationales, régionales et locales, de fournir, faire exécuter et organiser des services de transports d'une manière qui réponde autant que possible aux besoins des utilisateurs?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(12 mars 2013)

Le 30 janvier 2013, la Commission a présenté six propositions législatives dans le 4e paquet ferroviaire. Ces propositions ont été élaborées pour assurer une meilleure qualité et une plus grande liberté de choix en matière de services ferroviaires. La Commission a évalué avec le plus grand soin leurs incidences, leurs coûts et leurs avantages dans le cadre des analyses d'impact ([1]).

La Commission ne partage pas l'avis de l'Honorable Parlementaire sur la législation ferroviaire existante, qui, au contraire, a permis d'enrayer la baisse du fret ferroviaire et de garantir l'application de normes de sécurité élevées dans l'UE.

S'agissant de la proposition d'abrogation du règlement (CEE) n° 1192/69, la Commission souhaite attirer l'attention de l'Honorable Parlementaire sur l'exposé des motifs qui explique pourquoi un règlement de 44 ans est aujourd'hui incompatible avec un marché ferroviaire ouvert et pourquoi son abrogation n'aurait, dans l'ensemble de l'Union, qu'une incidence négligeable sur les cotisations de retraite.

La proposition d'ouvrir le marché national à la concurrence s'appuie en particulier sur les résultats encourageants de la Suède et du Royaume-Uni, qui montrent une amélioration de l'efficience, de la qualité des indicateurs et du nombre de voyageurs ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/01/fourth-railway-package_fr.htm
([2]) Au Royaume-Uni, le nombre de voyageurs a augmenté de plus de 50 % au cours des 10 dernières années.

Les propositions de la Commission préservent toutes les prérogatives des États membres en ce qui concerne l'organisation des services de transport public déjà réglementés par l'UE ([3]) et conformes aux traités de l'Union.

Elles rendent obligatoire l'attribution par adjudication des marchés publics de services, ce qui se traduira, pour les autorités compétentes, par une plus grande liberté de choix et par des économies de fonds publics (qui pourront être réinvestis ailleurs) et, pour les utilisateurs, par une amélioration de la qualité ([4]).

L'accessibilité des services publics, y compris dans les zones rurales, ne sera donc pas réduite. La possibilité d'attribuer directement à un opérateur interne les marchés inférieurs à un certain seuil et susceptibles de concerner les zones rurales sera maintenue ([5]).

([3]) Règlement (CE) nº 1370/2007 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 octobre 2007 relatif aux services publics de transport de voyageurs par chemin de fer et par route, JO L 315 du 3.12.2007.

([4]) En Allemagne, en Suède et aux Pays-Bas, des études ont montré que la mise en concurrence dans les marchés publics de services avait permis aux autorités compétentes de réduire leurs coûts, parfois de 20 à 30 %, et de consacrer les fonds ainsi économisés à d'autres tâches, notamment l'amélioration des services (évaluation de l'incidence sur les marchés nationaux de transport de voyageurs par chemin de fer).

([5]) Voir la proposition de modification de l'article 5, paragraphe 4, du règlement nº 1370/2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001603/13
to the Commission
Jacky Hénin (GUE/NGL)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Fourth Railway Package

On 30 January 2013, the Commission unveiled a proposal for a regulation on the Fourth Railway Package.

This proposal ignores the dramatic consequences of the previous three railway packages: a reduction in the volume of rail freight in favour of road freight, lower safety standards, poorer services for users, an increase in costs for users and challenges to employees' working conditions.

This regulation now proposes to go further, by separating infrastructure management from transport operators. It also provides for the 'mandatory tendering of public service contracts as of December 2019.'This precludes any possibility of a local authority or a State working as a matter of priority with a public carrier.

The fourth railway package also provides for the repeal of Regulation (EEC) No 1192/69 of 26 June 1969 of the Council on common rules for the normalisation of the accounts of railway undertakings. The new Regulation will require Member States to pay a balancing contribution to the pension contributions of public transport employees. What does the Commission intend to do to address the consequences of the repeal for employees' pension schemes?

On 5 December 2012, the Commission presented a proposal for a regulation (COM(2012) 0730) revising the amount of state aid to the transport sector.

Following the implementation of these reforms, to what extent will Member States and local authorities be able to act to ensure the access of all to a quality, affordable rail transport service, including in rural areas?

In this context, is the fourth railway package compatible with the right of Member States to decide on the organisation of public transport services — a right enshrined in Protocol 26 of the Lisbon Treaty?

Does it agree that these reforms form an obstacle to the discretionary powers of national, regional and local authorities to provide, implement and organise transport services in a manner that meets the needs of users as far as possible?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2013)

On 30 January 2013, the Commission put forward 6 legislative proposals in the 4th Railway Package. These initiatives have been designed to provide better quality and more choice in rail services. The Commission thouroughly evaluated their impacts, costs and benefits in the impact assessments ([1]).

The Commission does not share the Honourable Member's appreciation on the existing rail legislation which conversely has stopped rail decline and guaranteed high safety standards at EU level.

As regards the proposal to repeal Regulation No 1192/69, the Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the explanatory memorandum which sets out why 44 year old Regulation is now incompatible with an open rail market and why its impact on pension contributions would be negligible across the EU.

The proposal to open domestic market to competition relies in particular on positive experiences in Sweden or in the UK which have shown improvements in efficiency, quality indicators and passenger growth ([2]).

The Commission proposals fully preserve Member States' prerogatives for organising public transport services which are already subject to EU legislation ([3]) and in line with the EU Treaties.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/01/fourth-railway-package_en.htm
([2]) Over 50% increase in passengers in the UK over the last 10 years.
([3]) Regulation (EC) N°1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road, OJ L 315, 3.12.2007.

The proposals make the award of public service contracts by tendering procedure mandatory. This will actually provide more choice, savings of public funds to competent authorities (which can be reinvested elsewhere) and better quality to users ([4]).

The accessibility of public service including in rural areas will therefore not be restricted. The possibility to directly award contracts under a certain threshold and to an internal operator which are likely also to concern rural areas will be maintained ([5]).

([4]) Evidence of competition for PSCs in Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands has shown that tendering accrues savings for competent authorities, sometimes up to 20-30%, which can be re-invested to improve services or be used elsewhere (impact assessment on Domestic Passenger Rail Markets).

([5]) See proposed amendment to Article 5, paragraph 4 of Regulation 1370/2007.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001604/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(14. februar 2013)

Om: Tilladelse til salg og opdræt af genmodificeret laks i EU

De amerikanske fødevaremyndigheder har i december godkendt en genmodificeret (gensplejset) laks, der vokser dobbelt så hurtigt som normale laks, som værende sikker i forhold til miljøet og i forhold til menneskers sundhed ([1]).

Denne vurdering vil med al sandsynlighed betyde, at den genmodificerede laks inden for den nærmeste fremtid bliver tilladt til produktion og salg i USA. Det på trods af, at diverse ngo'er, der beskæftiger sig med miljøpolitik, har advaret mod at give en sådan tilladelse. Det skyldes blandt andet, at den genmodificerede laks, såfremt den slippes ud i miljøet, på grund af sin størrelse kan true andre laksearters overlevelse.

Hvis opdræt af den genmodificerede laks spredes til andre lande og regioner med mindre kontrol end i USA, vil risikoen for at laksen spredes til naturlige miljøer desuden forøges.

Kan Kommissionen garantere, at den genmodificerede laks, der her er tale om, ikke får en fremtidig tilladelse til salg og opdræt i EU på grund af de miljømæssige risici, der er forbundet med udbredelse af laksen?

Hvordan vil Kommissionen arbejde for, at opdræt af den genmodificerede laks ikke spreder sig fra USA til andre lande og regioner?

Kan Kommissionen oplyse, hvilke af EU's direktiver og forordninger — hvis nogen — der ville regulere en eventuel import af den genmodificerede laks, og kan Kommissionen garantere, at disse regler ville kræve, at laksen blev mærket, således at forbrugerne ville vide, at der er tale om genmodificeret laks?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(2. april 2013)

Den Europæiske Union har i sin lovgivning ([2]) fastsat sine egne strenge sikkerhedskriterier for risikovurdering og tilladelser af genetisk modificerede organismer (GMO), som er helt uafhængige af tilladelsesprocedurer i tredjelande. Ingen GMO'er kan importeres og anvendes i Unionen uden først at have fået tilladelse efter at have gennemgået denne strenge risiko-vurderingsproces. Endvidere sikrer lovgivningen om GMO, at forbrugerne underrettes om tilstedeværelsen af GMO'er i foder og fødevarer på omfattende vis gennem en særlig mærkning, som gør det muligt for dem at træffe et informeret valg om køb.

Navnlig med hensyn til genmodificerede dyr og for at forberede sig på eventuel fremtidig anvendelse er Den Europæiske Fødevareautoritet ved at udvikle en vejledning om dyrs og menneskers sundhed og om vurdering af miljørisikoen i forbindelse med genmodificerede dyr ([3]), herunder fisk.

Food and Drug Administration i USA har udarbejdet et udkast til miljøvurdering med henblik på at indhente kommentarer fra offentligheden i forbindelse med myndighedens fornyede undersøgelse af en ansøgning om en genmodificeret atlanterhavslaks, kaldet AquAdvantage Salmon. Kommissionen har fremsat bemærkninger inden for den angivne periode og anmodet om en garanti for kontrol af forsyningskæden i forbindelse med eksporten af fisk til Den Europæiske Union og om sikkerhed for, at der findes passende sporingsmetoder, der skal sikre, at der ikke importeres uautoriserede fisk til Unionen.

Unionen har kompetence til at regulere tilladelsen af GMO'er, men kun på sit eget territorium. Kommissionen har ingen kompetence til at intervenere over for tredjelandes beslutninger om, hvorvidt AquAdvantage Salmon kan tillades.

([1]) http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/22/business/gene-altered-fish-moves-closer-to-federal-approval.html
([2]) Forordning (EC) nr.1829/2003 og direktiv 2001/18/EF.
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/120621.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001604/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Authorisation for sale and breeding of GM salmon in the EU

In December 2012 the American Food and Drug Administration approved a genetically modified (gene-spliced) salmon, which grows twice as fast as normal salmon, as being safe for the environment and for human health ([1]).

In all probability this assessment means that the genetically modified salmon will be authorised for breeding and sale in the USA in the very near future, in spite of the fact that various environment NGOs have warned against giving such approval. This is partly because the GM salmon, if it escapes into the wild, could threaten the survival of other salmon species owing to its size.

Furthermore, if the breeding of GM salmon spreads to other countries and regions with less stringent controls than the USA, the risk of the salmon escaping into natural environments will increase.

Can the Commission guarantee that this GM salmon will not obtain authorisation for sale and breeding in the EU in future on the grounds of the environmental risks associated with its escape?

How will the Commission endeavour to ensure that breeding of this GM salmon does not spread from the USA to other countries and regions?

Can the Commission state which EU directives and regulations — if any — would govern the import of this GM salmon, and can the Commission guarantee that these rules would require the salmon to be labelled so that consumers know that it is genetically modified?

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

The European Union has set in law ([2]) its own strict safety criteria for risk assessment and authorisation of GMOs, which are fully independent of third countries' authorisation procedures. No GMO can be imported and used in the EU if it has not been granted an authorisation first, after successful completion of this stringent risk assessment process. Furthermore, the GMO legislation ensures that consumers are comprehensively informed via specific labelling on the presence of GMOs in feed and food, allowing them to make an informed purchasing choice.

As regards GM animals in particular, in order to prepare for possible future applications of this kind, the European Food Safety Authority is developing guidance on human and animal health and environmental risk assessment for GM animals ([3]), including fish.

The US Food and Drug Administration has issued for public comment a draft environmental assessment related to the agency's review of an application concerning AquAdvantage Salmon, a genetically engineered Atlantic salmon. The Commission has commented within the specified period requesting assurances on the supply chain controls for fish exports to the European Union, and the availability of appropriate detection methods, to ensure that no unauthorised salmon can be imported to the EU.

The EU is competent to regulate the authorisation of GMOs only on its own territory. The Commission has no competence to intervene as regards third countries' decisions on to whether or not to authorise the AquAdvantage Salmon.

([1]) http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/22/business/gene-altered-fish-moves-closer-to-federal-approval.html
([2]) Regulation (EC) No1829/2003 and Directive 2001/18/EC.
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/120621.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001605/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(14 février 2013)

Objet: L'Europe est-elle en train d'enterrer ses ambitions spatiales?

Les résultats des négociations sur le cadre financier pluriannuel sont décevants, notamment en ce qui concerne les dépenses liées à la compétitivité. S'il est une initiative dont les retombées bénéfiques sont garanties pour les Européens, pour nos entreprises et l'environnement, c'est bien Copernicus/GMES.

En effet, à quoi Copernicus/GMES correspond-il? Ce sont 83 000 emplois directs et indirects en plus d'ici 2030. On estime que ses retombées pourraient s'élever jusqu'à 70 milliards d'euros pour la période 2014-2030. Les chiffres sont clairs, le programme a besoin de 5,8 milliards d'euros sur 7 ans pour pouvoir réaliser ses ambitions; c'est là plus de 10 fois moins que les bénéfices attendus. Il est incompréhensible que l'Europe recule en l'occurrence.

Pourtant, cette incompréhension, cela fait longtemps que nous vous la révélons. Je suis particulièrement engagée pour la défense de ce programme, et je vous ai déjà interpellé à plusieurs reprises à ce sujet. Récemment encore, en janvier dernier, lors de la 5e conférence annuelle sur la politique spatiale de l'Union, les députés européens vous avaient clairement exprimé leurs attentes. Les États ont décidé de passer outre, en fixant le cap à 3,7 milliards d'euros.

En amputant ce programme, ce ne sont pas seulement nos espoirs de reprise économique que l'on met à mal: c'est évidemment notre capacité à surveiller et à gérer notre environnement, à soutenir notre biodiversité, à innover dans le domaine de l'observation de la Terre. Nos entreprises et les Européens sont les premiers concernés. C'est aussi toute l'industrie aérospatiale européenne qui va en pâtir, risquant de prendre un important retard sur ses concurrents mondiaux.

Ce programme devrait être pleinement opérationnel pour 2014. Sera-t-il à la hauteur des ambitions que nous nous sommes fixées? Au-delà des chiffres, nous souhaitons des réponses: comment comptez-vous, concrètement, garantir que ce programme pourra être mis en œuvre intégralement avec un budget réduit?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(8 avril 2013)

La Commission prend acte de la volonté partagée du Parlement et du Conseil d'inclure le programme Copernicus dans le cadre financier pluriannuel (CFP). La Commission a l'intention d'adopter dans les semaines qui viennent une proposition de règlement pour les futures opérations de Copernicus. Afin d'éviter toute discontinuité des activités en cours et d'être pleinement opérationnel en 2014, une adoption de ce règlement par le Parlement et le Conseil est souhaitable avant la fin de l'année 2013.

Copernicus est un système évolutif et qui peut donc être adapté en fonction du budget disponible. Les services de la Commission, en consultation avec ceux de nos partenaires, en particulier l'Agence Spatiale Européenne (ESA), sont en train de préparer un plan de déploiement mis à jour.

Même avec le budget réduit, on peut considérer que Copernicus reste un programme réaliste avec de hauts niveaux d'ambition et qu'avec Copernicus, l'Europe va bénéficier d'une capacité d'observation opérationnelle unique au monde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001605/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Is Europe shelving its space ambitions?

The results of the negotiations on the multiannual financial framework are disappointing, particularly as regards expenditure relating to competitiveness. If there is one initiative whose beneficial effects are guaranteed for Europeans, for our businesses and the environment, then it is Copernicus/GMES.

Copernicus/GMES will provide an additional 83 000 direct and indirect jobs between now and 2030. It has been estimated that it could generate up to EUR 70 billion over the period 2014-2030. The figures are clear: the programme needs EUR 5.8 billion over seven years to be able to achieve its ambitions. That is less than a tenth of the expected gain. It is incomprehensible that Europe should be cutting back this programme.

Yet this is a misunderstanding which we have been pointing out to you for a long time. I am a particularly committed to the defence of this programme, and I have already raised the issue with you a number of times. Recently, in January, at the 5th Annual Conference on EU Space Policy, MEPs made clear to you their expectations. But the Member States decided to ignore them by capping the programme at EUR 3.7 billion.

By cutting back this programme it is not only our hopes of economic recovery that are damaged, but also, clearly, our ability to monitor and manage our environment, to support our biodiversity, to innovate in the field of earth observation. It is our business and citizens that are most affected. And the entire European aerospace industry will suffer, as it risks falling well behind its global competitors.

This programme should be fully operational by 2014. Will it live up to the ambitions which we have set for it? Beyond the numbers, we want answers: how, specifically, do you intend to ensure that this programme can be fully implemented with a reduced budget?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

The Commission notes the willingness of Parliament and the Council to include the Copernicus programme in the multiannual financial framework (MFF). The Commission intends to adopt a proposal for a regulation within the next few weeks, covering future Copernicus operations. In order to avoid any disruption to ongoing activities and so as to be fully operational in 2014, it would be desirable for this regulation to be adopted by Parliament and the Council before the end of 2013.

Copernicus is a system which is evolving and which can therefore be adapted to the available budget. The Commission departments are in the process of preparing an updated deployment plan in consultation with our partners, in particular the European Space Agency (ESA).

Even with a reduced budget, Copernicus still remains a realistic programme with high ambitions, allowing Europe to benefit from an operational observation capacity that is unique in the world.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001606/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(14 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Los asesinatos de París y el terrorismo en Europa

El asesinato de tres activistas kurdas del Partido de los Trabajadores del Kurdistán (PKK) en París el pasado 9 de enero pone en duda la eficacia de las medidas antiterroristas en territorio europeo, además de amenazar el proceso de paz en Turquía entre el Gobierno y el PKK.

Considerado como grupo terrorista por Estados Unidos y la UE, el PKK cuenta con una fuerte implantación en Europa, sobre todo en Francia y Alemania, por medio de una extensa red de contactos y fuentes de financiación.

A la luz de lo expuesto:

¿Podría detallarnos la Comisión qué nivel de cooperación existe en materia antiterrorista entre la UE y el Gobierno turco en cuanto a las actividades del PKK en Europa? ¿Cómo evalúa la Comisión el nivel y la eficacia de la cooperación existente?

Según informaba ayer el rotativo turco *Today's Zaman* ([1]), tanto Alemania como Francia tenían conocimiento de la actividad de Sakine Cansız, una de las tres activistas ejecutadas en París y cofundadora del PKK, y, sin embargo, no tomaron medidas ni se mostraron cooperantes con las autoridades turcas. ¿De qué manera considera la Comisión que se debería reforzar la coordinación entre las autoridades y los servicios de inteligencia europeos con objeto de poner fin a dichas actividades criminales?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de abril de 2013)

Tal como señala Su Señoría, el Partido de los Trabajadores del Kurdistán (PKK) es una organización terrorista, cuyas actividades en el interior de la UE han sido objeto en muchas circunstancias de actuaciones policiales y judiciales por parte de las autoridades nacionales pertinentes. La Comisión denuncia enérgicamente los actos terroristas y expresa su solidaridad con las víctimas, tanto en Turquía como en la EU.

Las actividades operativas policiales y judiciales de la lucha contra el terrorismo competen esencialmente a los Estados miembros, aunque organismos de la UE como Europol y Eurojust también hacen una contribución importante, especialmente cuando las actividades terroristas se extienden a más de un Estado miembro.

La Comisión valora positivamente la cooperación política estratégica antiterrorista con Turquía, que ha participado en las reuniones pertinentes, por ejemplo, como componente de la troika antiterrorista UE-Turquía.

([1]) http://www.todayszaman.com/news-304528-strange-bedfellows-of-pkk-may-be-behind-paris-and-moscow-murders.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001606/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Killings in Paris and terrorism in Europe

The 9 January killing in Paris of three Kurdish activists from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) has raised questions about the effectiveness of counter-terrorism measures in Europe and threatens to undermine the peace process between the PKK and the Turkish Government.

The PKK, which is considered a terrorist group by the United States and the European Union, has a strong presence in Europe, particularly in France and Germany, on account of its extensive network of contacts and financial backers.

Can the Commission say what degree of counter-terrorism cooperation there is between the EU and the Turkish Government as regards the PKK's activities in Europe? How does it view the closeness and effectiveness of the existing cooperation arrangements?

According to an article ([1]) published in the Turkish newspaper *Today's Zaman* on 20 January 2013, both Germany and France were aware of the activities of Sakine Cansız, one of the murdered activists and co-founder of the PKK, and yet did not take any action or cooperate with the Turkish authorities. What does the Commission think should be done to strengthen coordination between European authorities and intelligent services in order to put a stop to these kinds of criminal activities?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

As pointed out by the Honourable Member, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) is a terrorist organisation whose activities within the EU have in numerous circumstances been the object of law enforcement and judicial action by relevant national authorities. The Commission vehemently denounces criminal terrorist acts and expresses solidarity with the victims whether in Turkey or in the EU.

Operational law enforcement and judicial activities in the fight against the terrorism are essentially under the competence of Member States, although EU agencies such as Europol and Eurojust make significant contributions, notably when the terrorist activities span more than one Member State.

The Commission greatly values strategic counter terrorism policy cooperation with Turkey, having participated in relevant meetings, for example as part of an EU-Turkey Counter Terrorism Troika.

([1]) http://www.todayszaman.com/news-304528-strange-bedfellows-of-pkk-may-be-behind-paris-and-moscow-murders.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001607/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(14 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Presencia de carne de caballo en diversos alimentos: un escándalo a nivel europeo

Pocos días más tarde de que varias asociaciones de consumidores españolas denunciasen la presencia de carne de caballo en hamburguesas elaboradas distribuidas en los supermercados (en enero, las autoridades irlandesas también detectaron carne de caballo en algunas tiendas), siete cadenas de distribución francesas han retirado lasañas y otros alimentos preparados de las marcas Findus y Comigel después de que las autoridades británicas descubrieran el fraude.

Este escándalo ha adquirido en los últimos días una dimensión europea que compromete seriamente las redes de distribución de la industria alimentaria dentro de la Unión Europea. Se calcula que puedan verse afectados hasta dieciséis países europeos.

Pese a que la carne de caballo no sea necesariamente perjudicial para la salud, el hecho de que no se advierta su contenido en el embalaje pone en duda las normas europeas de etiquetaje de carne. ¿Considera la Comisión que debería revisarse la legislación europea en este sentido?

Tampoco queda clara la procedencia de esta carne. Según una investigación inicial llevada a cabo por las autoridades francesas, la marca habría comprado la carne congelada a un comerciante chipriota que, a su vez, la habría recibido de un vendedor alemán, quien la había obtenido en dos mataderos rumanos. ¿Piensa la Comisión reforzar la trazabilidad de los productos alimentarios en vista de los sucesos anteriormente expuestos?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de abril de 2013)

Tal como indica Su Señoría, hasta la fecha nada indica que pueda existir una amenaza para la salud; sin embargo, la falsificación de etiquetas de productos alimentarios constituye un fraude del etiquetado de los alimentos.

Ya existe a nivel de la Unión un sistema global de normas en materia de seguridad alimentaria, lo que incluye requisitos de trazabilidad para los alimentos de origen animal ([1]); es precisamente gracias a este sistema que pudieron determinarse rápidamente el origen y el alcance de las acciones fraudulentas en cuestión.

El etiquetado de los alimentos, con arreglo a las normas vigentes ([2]), no debe inducir a error al consumidor en cuanto a su naturaleza y contenido, y deben etiquetarse todos los ingredientes alimentarios. Asimismo, el etiquetado de los alimentos que contienen carne también debe indicar la especie animal de que se trata. Se ha revisado recientemente el marco jurídico de la Unión en materia de información a los consumidores ([3]) y se siguen manteniendo todos estos requisitos.

([1]) Reglamento de Ejecución (UE) n° 931/2011 de la Comisión, relativo a los requisitos en materia de trazabilidad establecidos por el Reglamento (CE) n° 178/2002 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo para los alimentos de origen animal, DO L 242 de 20.9.2011, p. 2.

([2]) Directiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 20 de marzo de 2000, relativa a la aproximación de las legislaciones de los Estados miembros en materia de etiquetado, presentación y publicidad de los productos alimenticios, DO L 109 de 6.5.2000, p. 29.

([3]) Reglamento (UE) n° 1169/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, sobre la información alimentaria facilitada al consumidor y por el que se modifican los Reglamentos (CE) n° 1924/2006 y (CE) n° 1925/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, y por el que se derogan la Directiva 87/250/CEE de la Comisión, la Directiva 90/496/CEE del Consejo, la Directiva 1999/10/CE de la Comisión, la Directiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, las Directivas 2002/67/CE y 2008/5/CE de la Comisión, y el Reglamento (CE) n° 608/2004 de la Comisión, DO L 304 de 22.11.2011, p. 18. Este Reglamento entrará en vigor el 13 de diciembre de 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001607/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Presence of horsemeat in a range of foodstuffs: a European scandal

A matter of days after several Spanish consumer associations complained that horsemeat had been found in ready-made hamburgers sold in supermarkets (and after the Irish authorities had also detected horsemeat in a number of shops in January), seven French supermarket chains have now withdrawn lasagnes and other ready meals marketed by Findus and Comigel. This follows the British authorities' discovery of similar cases of fraud.

In the past few days this scandal has reached a European scale that seriously compromises the food industry's distribution networks within the European Union. It has been calculated that up to 16 European countries could be affected.

Even though the horsemeat contained in these foodstuffs may not necessarily be harmful to health, the fact that the labelling gave no indication of its presence casts doubt on the European rules on meat labelling. Does the Commission believe that the European legislation should be revised in this context?

The origin of this meat is also unclear. An initial investigation carried out by the French authorities indicated that the manufacturing company had purchased frozen meat from a Cypriot trader who had in turn received it from a German seller, who had originally obtained it from Romanian abattoirs. Does the Commission intend to strengthen the traceability of food products in view of these incidents?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

As the Honourable Member indicates, to date, there is no indication of safety concern; however, falsifying food labels constitutes fraud in food labelling.

A comprehensive system of food safety rules is already in place at Union level, including traceability requirements for foods of animal origin ([1]); it is because of this system that the origin and extent of the fraudulent actions in question were quickly identified.

The labelling of foods, under existing rules ([2]), must not mislead the consumer as to their nature and content and all food ingredients must be labelled. The labelling of foods containing meat must also indicate the animal species concerned. The Union legal framework on consumer information has been recently revised ([3]) and it maintains all these requirements.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 931/2011 on the traceability requirements set by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council for food of animal origin, OJ L 242, 20.9.2011, p. 2.

([2]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and 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.

([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 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. This regulation will enter into application on 13 December 2014.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001608/13
an die Kommission
Matthias Groote (S&D)
(14. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Umsetzung des EU-Energielabels

Bei der Umsetzung des EU-Energielabels kommt es zu einigen Problemen. Die Pflicht der Händler, das Etikett deutlich sichtbar an der Vorder- oder Oberseite zu tragen, führt zu erheblichen Problemen. Zum einen sind dies die Beschädigungen beim Anbringen des Labels und zum anderen die sehr unterschiedlich ausfallende Kontrolle in den verschiedenen Mitgliedsländern, was zu einer Ungleichbehandlung führt. Insbesondere Händler in Deutschland fühlen sich dadurch benachteiligt.

Wie sieht die Kommission diese Problematik?

Was gedenkt sie zu unternehmen, um diesen Misstand zu beseitigen?

Könnten die Kontrollen stärker reguliert werden?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(9. April 2013)

Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass die Vorgabe der Rechtsvorschriften, wonach das Energieetikett deutlich sichtbar auf der Vorder- oder Oberseite bestimmter Erzeugnisse angebracht sein muss, angemessen ist. Ansonsten wäre es möglich, dass die Verbraucher das Etikett und die darauf befindlichen grundlegenden Informationen nicht sehen. Es gibt geeignete Klebstoffe, die das Anbringen der Etiketten ermöglichen, ohne Schäden zu verursachen.

Für die Marktüberwachung der Energieverbrauchskennzeichnung sind die Mitgliedstaaten zuständig. Die Kommission unterstützt die Mitgliedstaaten bei der administrativen Zusammenarbeit, in deren Rahmen die jeweiligen Behörden Informationen austauschen und gemeinsame Konzepte für bestimmte Aspekte der Marktüberwachung entwickeln. Außerdem wird die Kommission geeignete Maßnahmen ergreifen, wenn die Mitgliedstaaten ihrer Marktüberwachungspflicht nicht in ausreichendem Maße nachkommen. Die Kommission wird die Richtlinie zur Energieverbrauchskennzeichnung ([1]), einschließlich der Marktüberwachungsaspekte, wie in der Richtlinie vorgesehen bis 2014 überprüfen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2010/30/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 19. Mai 2010 über die Angabe des Verbrauchs an Energie und anderen Ressourcen durch energieverbrauchsrelevante Produkte mittels einheitlicher Etiketten und Produktinformationen, ABl. L 153 vom 18.6.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001608/13
to the Commission
Matthias Groote (S&D)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Transposition of the EU energy label

There are some problems associated with the transposition of the EU energy label. The obligation imposed on distributors to ensure that the label is clearly visible on the front or top of products is causing major problems: the damage caused when fixing the labels on the one hand, and the wide discrepancies in how checks are conducted across the Member States on the other, which leads to unequal treatment. Distributors in Germany feel especially disadvantaged by this.

What is the Commission's view of this situation?

What does it intend to do to rectify this unsatisfactory state of affairs?

Could the checks be more stringently regulated?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

The Commission considers that the legislation is appropriate in specifying that the energy label has to be clearly visible on the front or top of certain products. Otherwise, consumers may not see the label and it is essential information. There exists appropriate adhesives to affix the labels without causing damage.

Market surveillance of energy labelling is the responsibility of Member States. The Commission is supporting Member States in administrative cooperation in which their authorities share information and find common approaches to market surveillance aspects. The Commission will also take appropriate action if Member States do not sufficiently exercise their duty of market surveillance. The Commission will review the Energy Labelling Directive ([1]) including its market surveillance aspects as indicated in the legislation by 2014.

([1]) Directive 2010/30/EU of the Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 on the indication by labelling and standard product information of the consumption of energy and other resources by energy related , OJ L 153, 18.6.2010.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001609/13
an die Kommission
Kerstin Westphal (S&D)
(14. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Verhinderung von Kilometerstandsfälschungen „Tachobetrug" bei Fahrzeugen der Klasse L

Die Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über die Genehmigung von zweirädrigen, dreirädrigen und vierrädrigen Fahrzeugen sowie über die entsprechende Marktüberwachung (KOM(2010)0542 endg.) ist kürzlich verabschiedet worden. Sie wird 2014 in Kraft treten; zur Zeit arbeitet die Kommission die in der Verordnung genannten delegierten Rechtsakte aus.

1. Ist der Kommission bewusst, dass Kilometerstandsfälschungen leicht und mithilfeeines im Handel erhältlichen Manipulationsgerätes vorgenommen werden können?

2. Sind der Kommission die Tragweite und der Umfang von Kilometerstandsfälschungen bekannt?

3. Erwägt die Kommission daher, bei der Ausarbeitung der delegierten Rechtsakte für die Hersteller von Fahrzeugen der Klasse L Anforderungen an Wegstreckenzähler festzuschreiben?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(8. April 2013)

Mit der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 168/2013 ([1]) über die Genehmigung und Marktüberwachung von zwei- oder dreirädrigen und vierrädrigen Fahrzeugen (Fahrzeuge der Klasse L) werden eine ganze Reihe von Anforderungen zur Erhöhung der Umweltverträglichkeit und funktionalen Sicherheit solcher Fahrzeuge festgelegt sowie die Anforderungen an die Fahrzeugauslegung dem neusten Stand angepasst. Diese Verordnung wird am 1. Januar 2016 in Kraft treten.

Die Kommission ist sich dessen bewusst, dass Tachobetrug bei Fahrzeugen der Klasse L technisch genauso möglich ist wie bei jedem anderen Fahrzeugtyp, und die Auswirkungen sind ihr durchaus klar. Um kostengünstige Maßnahmen gegen unbefugte Eingriffe vorschlagen zu können, wurde eine umfassende Studie ([2]) durchgeführt, in deren Rahmen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten und andere Interessenträger konsultiert und aufgefordert wurden, die Kommission auf mögliche nachteilige Auswirkungen solcher Eingriffe hinzuweisen. In diesem, rein auf Fahrzeuge der Klasse L beschränkten Zusammenhang wurde kein ordnungspolitischer Handlungsbedarf im Hinblick auf Tachometermanipulationen festgestellt.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 168/2013 über die Genehmigung und Marktüberwachung von zwei- oder dreirädrigen und vierrädrigen Fahrzeugen, ABl. L 60 vom 2.3.2013, S. 52.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/files/projects/report-trl-ppr634_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001609/13
to the Commission
Kerstin Westphal (S&D)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Prevention of tachometer fraud involving L-category vehicles

The regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approval and market surveillance of 2- or 3-wheel vehicles and quadricycles (COM(2010)0542 final) was recently adopted and will enter into force in 2014. The Commission is currently drawing up the delegated acts referred to in the regulation.

1. Is the Commission aware that tachometer fraud can easily be carried out by manipulating the tachometer using a commercially available device?

2. Is the Commission aware of the scale of tachometer fraud and its implications?

3. Is the Commission therefore thinking of incorporating into the delegated acts requirements concerning tachometers which would apply to the manufacturers of L-category vehicles?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 ([1]) on approval and market surveillance of two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles (L-category vehicles), sets out a whole range of requirements that will improve the environmental performance and functional safety of such vehicles as well as update the vehicle construction requirements. This regulation will apply as of 1 January 2016.

The Commission is aware that tachograph fraud on L-category vehicles could be done by using the same technical ways and means as for any other vehicle type and the implications are well understood. For the purpose of proposing cost-effective anti-tampering measures, a comprehensive study ([2]) was conducted in which Member State authorities and other stakeholders were consulted and invited to bring any adverse effects of vehicle tampering to the attention of the Commission. In this context and limited to L-category vehicles, tachograph tampering was not raised as a possible issue requiring regulatory action.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 on approval and market surveillance of two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles, OJ L 60, 2.3.2013, p. 52.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/files/projects/report-trl-ppr634_en.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001611/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(14 lutego 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – umieszczenie Hezbollahu na czarnej liście organizacji terrorystycznych

W wyniku śledztwa trwającego prawie pół roku władze Bułgarii doszły do wniosku, że Hezbollah ponosi odpowiedzialność za atak na autobus w miejscowości Burgas, który miał miejsce w lipcu 2012 r. i w którym zginęło pięciu izraelskich turystów i bułgarski kierowca autobusu, a rannych zostało ponad 30 innych Izraelczyków. Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel Catherine Ashton podkreśliła potrzebę zastanowienia się nad wynikiem śledztwa, a jej rzecznik oświadczył, że umieszczenie Hezbollahu na liście organizacji terrorystycznych to jedna z kilku opcji branych pod uwagę przez UE.

Dlaczego UE wciąż nie chce nazwać Hezbollahu po imieniu i zaliczyć go do organizacji terrorystycznych?

Co konkretnie nie pozwala UE umieścić Hezbollahu na sporządzonej przez nią czarnej liście?

Co to za opcje, o których wspomniał rzecznik Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel?

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel uważa, że środki, którym daleko do uznania Hezbollahu za organizację terrorystyczną, wystarczą, aby położyć kres przemocy i śmiercionośnej działalności tej grupy?

Czy UE wzięła pod uwagę, że nasza niezdolność do właściwego określenia Hezbollahu pozwala temu ugrupowaniu terrorystycznemu na działalność w Europie i wykorzystywanie państw członkowskich jako bazy do prania pieniędzy i gromadzenia środków finansowych?

Koordynator UE ds. zwalczania terroryzmu, Gilles de Kerchove, oświadczył, że udział w ataku terrorystycznym nie oznacza automatycznego umieszczenia na czarnej liście oraz że pod uwagę bierze się nie tylko wymogi prawne, ale również polityczną ocenę sytuacji i czas zdarzenia.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zgodziłaby się, że z uwagi na brutalność ataku w Bułgarii, będącej państwem członkowskim UE, oraz śmierć niewinnych osób „sytuacja i czas zdarzenia" są odpowiednie, aby Hezbollah uznać wreszcie za organizację terrorystyczną?

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

Unia Europejska, której znane są przeszłość i pochodzenie organizacji Hezbollah, zgodnie z rezolucją Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ 1701 popiera wezwanie do rozbrojenia wszystkich zbrojnych ugrupowań w Libanie.

UE potępia wszelkie akty terrorystyczne, niezależnie od tego, gdzie mają one miejsce, oraz podkreśla swoje zaangażowanie w zwalczanie terroryzmu, bez względu na to, kto jest za niego odpowiedzialny. Terroryści, którzy zaplanowali i przeprowadzili zamach w Burgas, muszą zostać postawieni przed sądem. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca przyjmuje do wiadomości ujawnione przez bułgarskiego ministra spraw wewnętrznych w dniu 5 lutego 2013 r. wstępne wyniki dochodzenia w sprawie przeprowadzonego w dniu 18 lipca 2012 r. ataku terrorystycznego w Burgas Wyniki dochodzenia muszą zostać ocenione i podjąć należy działania następcze.

W przypadku, gdyby prowadzone dochodzenie i postępowania sądowe oznaczały konsekwencje dla Hezbollahu, UE rozważy szereg możliwości odpowiedniego działania. Będą one obejmować czynności w ramach współpracy sądowej i organów śledczych na szczeblu UE (agencje Europol i Eurojust), w tym związane z praniem brudnych pieniędzy, kwestiami technicznymi, środkami bezpieczeństwa i działalnością wywiadowczą, jak również z możliwością zmiany wykazów wskazanych organizacji, podmiotów i osób.

Przy umieszczaniu w takim wykazie organizacji na mocy wspólnego stanowiska Rady 2001/931/WPZiB, musi być wydana przez właściwy organ decyzja. Po odpowiednim wniosku złożonym zgodnie zasadami wspólnego stanowiska CP931, dotyczącym ujęcia w wykazie podmiotów objętych ograniczeniami, w ramach odpowiedniej grupy roboczej Rady ustali się, czy decyzja taka zostanie podjęta. Biorąc pod uwagę, że trwają działania następcze, komentowanie wypowiedzi z 5 lutego 2013 r. nie byłoby wskazane.

Dyrektywa w sprawie przeciwdziałania praniu pieniędzy 2005/60/WE ([1]) ustanawia zasady dotyczące unikania udziału w działaniach związanych z praniem pieniędzy oraz finansowaniem terroryzmu.

([1]) Dyrektywa 2005/60/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 26 października 2005 r. w sprawie przeciwdziałania korzystaniu z systemu finansowego w celu prania pieniędzy oraz finansowania terroryzmu (Tekst mający znaczenie dla EOG) (Dz.U. L 309 z 25.11.2005).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001611/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Blacklisting Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation

After an investigation that took almost six months, the Bulgarian authorities have concluded that Hezbollah was behind the July 2012 bus attack in Burgas that killed five Israeli tourists, and their Bulgarian driver and wounded more than 30 other Israelis. Vice-President/High Representative Ashton has stressed 'the need for a reflection over the outcome of the investigation', and her spokesperson has stated that adding Hezbollah to the terror list is one of 'several options' that the EU is considering.

Why does the EU remain reluctant to call Hezbollah by its proper name: a terrorist organisation?

What in particular is preventing the EU from blacklisting Hezbollah?

What are the other 'several options' that were mentioned by the Vice-President/High Representative's spokesperson?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that measures which fail to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation will be enough to reduce that group's violent and deadly attacks?

Has the EU considered the fact that our failure to properly define Hezbollah allows that terrorist group to operate in Europe and use our Member States as bases for money-laundering and fundraising?

The EU's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Gilles de Kerchove, has been cited as saying: 'There is no automatic listing just because you have been behind a terrorist attack. […] It's not only the legal requirement that you have to take into consideration, it's also a political assessment of the context and the timing'.

Would the Vice-President/High Representative agree that considering the brutal attack in Bulgaria, an EU Member State, and the loss of innocent lives, the 'context and the timing' are now right to finally label Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation?

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

The EU is aware of the history and origins of Hezbollah and supports the call for the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon as required by UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

The EU condemns all terrorist acts, wherever they take place, and emphasises that the EU is committed to the fight against terrorism, whoever is responsible for it. The terrorists who planned and carried out the Burgas attack must be brought to justice. The HR/VP takes note of the preliminary results of the investigation into the Burgas terrorist attack of 18 July 2012 announced by the Bulgarian Minister of the Interior on 5 February 2013. The implications of the investigations need to be assessed and a further follow-up pursued.

Should the ongoing investigative and judicial processes bear implications for Hezbollah, the EU will consider a range of options how to respond appropriately. This includes steps in the framework of investigative and judicial cooperation at EU level (the Europol and Eurojust agencies), including in relation to money laundering, technical, security and intelligence measures, as well as possibilities of amendments to the lists of designated organisations, entities and persons.

For the designation of an organisation under Council Common Position 2001/931/CFSP, there needs to be a decision of a competent authority. The appropriate Council working group will establish whether such a decision has been taken after a listing is proposed under the CP931 restrictive measures regime. Given that follow-up work is being undertaken it would be inappropriate to comment in this regard on the statement made on 5 February 2013.

The anti-money laundering Directive 2005/60/EC ([1]) sets the rules for avoiding being used for money laundering and terrorist financing purposes.

([1]) Directive 2005/60/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2005 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing Text with EEA relevance, OJ L 309, 25.11.2005.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001612/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(14 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Pubblicazione della lista dell'EFSA sulle dichiarazioni sulle etichette degli alimenti

La crescente diffusione di prodotti alimentari che, sulle loro etichette, vantano virtù salutari ha spinto l'EFSA a stilare una lista delle dichiarazioni sulle etichette degli alimenti che sono veramente sostenute da tesi scientifiche.

Su 4.637 dichiarazioni che accompagnano numerosi alimenti, soltanto 241 risultano avere effetti «benefici». Sotto la lente d'ingrandimento ci sono soprattutto i microrganismi, pubblicizzati per potenziare le difese immunitarie: nel 2012, su 74 prodotti presentati, nessuno ha superato l'esame.

La Commissione, nell'ottica della trasparenza e delle tutela dei consumatori, non ritiene opportuno rendere nota la lista degli alimenti che contengono queste «false» dichiarazioni sui benefici per la salute?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2013)

Il regolamento (CE) n. 1924/2006 ([1]) e i rispettivi atti di esecuzione stabiliscono il quadro giuridico inteso assicurare che le indicazioni sanitarie riportate sugli alimenti siano veritiere, chiare, affidabili e utili per i consumatori.

Il registro unionale delle indicazioni nutrizionali e sulla salute consultabile pubblicamente sul sito web della DG SANCO ([2]) elenca tutte le indicazioni autorizzate, non autorizzate e in attesa di decisione. Ciò assicura la chiarezza e agevola le attività di controllo delle autorità nazionali competenti che hanno la responsabilità di far rispettare le pertinenti regole sul loro territorio nazionale.

L'applicazione corretta delle regole entro le date previste dovrebbe far scomparire dal mercato quegli alimenti la cui etichetta riporta informazioni «false».

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:IT:PDF.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/nuhclaims/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001612/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Publication of the EFSA list of claims made in food labelling

In response to the increasing prevalence of food products whose labels make health claims, EFSA has decided to issue a list of claims on food product labels for which there is genuine scientific evidence.

Of 4 637 claims made concerning numerous food products, only 241 have been found to be justified in that the product has 'beneficial effects'. Particular scrutiny has been devoted to micro-organisms which are supposed to boost the immune system: in 2012, of 74 products submitted, none passed the test.

In the interests of transparency and consumer protection, does the Commission not consider it desirable to publish the list of foods whose labelling includes 'false' claims of health benefits?

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

Regulation (EC) 1924/2006 ([1]) and its on going implementing acts establish the legal framework to ensure that health claims made on foods are truthful, clear, reliable and useful for the consumer.

The EU Register of Nutrition and Health Claims, publicly available on the website of DG SANCO ([2]), lists all authorised, non-authorised and 'on hold' claims. This ensures clarity and facilitates the control activities of national competent authorities which are responsible for the enforcement of the relevant rules in their national territories.

The correct application of the rules by the foreseen dates should lead to the disappearance from the market of foods whose labelling includes 'false' claims.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:EN:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/nuhclaims/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001613/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Februar 2013)

Betrifft: Verstoß gegen EU-Richtlinien durch Einleitung von pestizidverseuchtem Grundwasser in die Donau

Am 29.11.2012 wurde bekannt, dass die österreichische Bezirkshauptmannschaft Korneuburg seit mehreren Tagen pestizidverseuchtes Grundwasser in die Donau pumpte. Die vorhergehende Verseuchung des Grundwassers mit den Pestiziden Clopyralid und Thiamethoxam erfolgte durch die Firma Kwizda Agro Austria. Nach Angaben der Umweltorganisation Global 2000 wurde die Verseuchung über einen Zeitraum von zwei Jahren nicht von den zuständigen Behörden festgestellt. Nachdem die Verseuchung bekannt wurde, wurde die Bevölkerung unzureichend über mögliche Risiken informiert.

1. Ist die vorsätzliche Einleitung von mit Pestiziden verseuchtem Grundwasser in ein Flusssystem, wie durch die Bezirkshauptmannschaft Korneuburg geschehen, mit der EU-Wasserrahmenrichtlinie vereinbar?

2. Verstößt die vorsätzliche Einleitung von mit Pestiziden verseuchtem Grundwasser in ein Flusssystem gegen andere EU-Umweltschutz- oder -Entsorgungsrichtlinien?

3. Falls ja: Wird die Kommission die Bezirkshauptmannschaft Korneuburg und/oder die Republik Österreich sanktionieren und, wenn ja, in welcher Form?

4. Falls nein: Sieht die Kommission hier eine Regulierungslücke und wird sie entsprechende Ergänzungen zu geltenden Wasser-, Umwelt- oder Entsorgungsrichtlinien vorschlagen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(19. April 2013)

Nach der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie 2000/60/EG sind die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, die notwendigen Maßnahmen durchzuführen, um eine Verschlechterung des Zustands aller Oberflächenwasserkörper zu verhindern (Artikel 4 Absatz 1 Buchstabe a). Dies schließt alle erforderlichen Maßnahmen ein, um Freisetzungen von signifikanten Mengen an Schadstoffen aus technischen Anlagen zu verhindern und den Folgen unerwarteter Verschmutzungen vorzubeugen und/oder diese zu mindern (Artikel 11 Absatz 3 Buchstabe l). Eine vorsätzliche Einleitung, die zu einer Verschlechterung des Zustands von Wasserkörpern führt, ist daher nicht mit der EU-Wasserrahmenrichtlinie vereinbar.

Nach den der Kommission vorliegenden Informationen wurde die Grundwasserverseuchung durch Pestizide in Korneuburg durch einen Unfall verursacht und nicht durch vorsätzliche Einleitungen.

Die österreichischen Behörden trafen Maßnahmen, um die Folgen des Unfalls zu verringern. Grundwasseraufbereitungsanlagen wurden mit speziellen Aktivkohlefiltern ausgerüstet und betrieben; gleichzeitig wurden Sperrbrunnen errichtet, um die weitere Ausdehnung der Kontaminationsfahne zu verhindern. Darüber hinaus wurde ein analytisches Überwachungsprogramm zur Beobachtung der Kontaminationsfahne eingeführt. Auf dieser Grundlage konnte die Kommission keinen Verstoß Österreichs gegen das EU-Recht feststellen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001613/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Breach of EU directives through the discharge of groundwater contaminated with pesticides into the Danube

On 29 November 2012 it was revealed that groundwater contaminated with pesticides had for several days been pumped into the Danube in the Austrian administrative district of Korneuburg. The contamination involved the pesticides clopyralid and thiamethoxam and was caused by the Kwizda Agro Austria company. The Global 2000 environmental organisation reports that the authorities responsible failed over a period of two years to identify the contamination; then, when news of the incident became known, local people were given insufficient information about possible risks.

1. Is the deliberate discharge of groundwater contaminated with pesticides in a river system, as was done by the Austrian administrative district of Korneuburg, compatible with the EU Water Framework Directive?

2. Does the deliberate discharge of groundwater contaminated with pesticides in a river system represent a breach of other EU environmental or waste disposal directives?

3. If so: will the Commission sanction the Austrian administrative district of Korneuburg and/ or the Republic of Austria, and if so, how?

4. If not, does the Commission believe that this is a regulatory loophole and will it propose appropriate amendments to existing water, environmental or waste disposal directives?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2013)

According to the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC ([1]) Member States are required to implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all surface water bodies (Article 4.1 a). This includes any measure required to prevent significant losses of pollutants from technical installations and to prevent and/or to reduce the impact of accidental pollution incidents (Art 11.3 l). Deliberate discharge causing deterioration of the status of water bodies is therefore not compatible with the EU Water Framework Directive.

According to the information available to the Commission the groundwater contamination by pesticides in Korneuburg was caused by an accident and not by deliberate discharges.

The Austrian authorities established measures to mitigate the impacts of the accident. They installed and are operating groundwater treatment plants with special carbon filters while depression wells were installed to avoid a further expansion of the contamination plume. An analytical monitoring programme to observe the contamination plume was also established. On this basis, the Commission could not identify any breach of EU legislation by Austria.

([1]) OJ L 327/1, 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001614/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Prospects for the continuation of the EU 'BEST' Initiative

In 2011, the Commission published a document entitled 'Preparatory Action on a Voluntary scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of the EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories'. This has since been known by the acronym 'BEST' Initiative and, with a time-limited preparatory action budget, has been extremely popular to date, which demonstrates a strong requirement and funding gap in this area.

Parliament has always championed the need for technical support to safeguard the natural environment in overseas territories. The economies and, in particular, employment in the tourist sector of many of these territories, including the British Overseas Territories, depend in large part on the preservation of their natural resources.

Preparatory actions are meant to assist in the preparation of proposals with a view to the future adoption of definitive EU actions. Will the Commission give more details on how it intends to progress the work of this important preparatory action to a more definitive budget line once the existing budget runs out at the end of 2013?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2013)

The Commission is currently preparing the implementation of the third year of the BEST Preparatory Action. A call for tender will be launched in the coming months with a view to contributing to sustaining BEST activities beyond the lifetime of the preparatory action. In addition, the Commission is exploring possibilities to enhance biodiversity support to EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories through relevant funding instruments under the 2014-2020 Financial Framework and the mobilisation of other partner donors.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-001615/13
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(14 februarie 2013)

Subiect: Trasabilitatea și monitorizarea în lanțul aprovizionării cu alimente

Cazurile recente de carne de cal găsită în produse etichetate că ar conține carne de vită au ridicat semne de întrebare în legătură cu eficacitatea metodelor de trasabilitate a alimentelor și a sistemelor de etichetare. Încrederea consumatorilor în cadrul de reglementare a fost, ca urmare, serios zdruncinată.

Lanțurile de aprovizionare complexe (precum cele care implică producția, procesarea, ambalarea și distribuția alimentelor în UE) pot fi greu de monitorizat, iar corectitudinea etichetării pe tot parcursul acestor lanțuri se bazează în mare măsură pe încredere.

Este Comisia de acord cu faptul că recenta disfuncționalitate a sistemului dovedește necesitatea de a revizui normele și, posibil, de a introduce testări mai frecvente ale alimentelor, în special a cărnii, pe parcursul lanțului de aprovizionare?

În ce măsură ar putea fi revizuit mandatul Autorității europene pentru siguranță alimentară pentru ca aceasta să își asume un rol mai activ în testarea și monitorizarea alimentelor în statele membre?

De asemenea, ar fi Comisia de acord cu ideea că o creștere a măsurilor de detecție ar ajuta la descurajarea comportamentului infracțional și ar asigura un sistem de trasabilitate mai fiabil în care consumatorii să poată avea deplină încredere?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(13 martie 2013)

Responsabilitatea în ceea ce privește punerea în aplicare a legislației privind lanțul alimentar le revine statelor membre, cărora li se cere să înființeze un sistem de controale oficiale pentru a verifica respectarea de către operatori a cerințelor care derivă din legislația în acest domeniu. Comisia monitorizează îndeplinirea de către statele membre a îndatoririlor de control care le revin, inclusiv prin controale la fața locului. În cazul la care distinsul membru face referire, sistemele de controale oficiale înființate de statele membre le-a permis acestora să identifice încălcări ale normelor aplicabile.

Cu toate acestea, viitoarea propunere în ceea ce privește controalele oficiale va avea ca scop o mai bună consolidare a sistemului existent.

În ceea ce privește subiectul testării și monitorizării, aceste acțiuni reprezintă responsabilități care țin de domeniul gestionării riscurilor și, ca atare, rămân în afara competențelor Autorității Europene pentru Siguranța Alimentară. Totuși, în cazul în care este necesar, Autoritatea oferă expertiza sa științifică în sprijinul îndeplinii sarcinilor care îi revin Comisiei Europene.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001615/13
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Traceability and monitoring in the food supply chain

The recent cases of horsemeat found in products labelled as beef have raised questions about the effectiveness of food traceability methods and labelling systems. Consumer confidence in the regulatory framework has, as a consequence, been seriously undermined.

Complex supply chains (such as those involving the production, processing, packaging and distribution of food in the EU) can be difficult to monitor, and accurate labelling throughout such supply chains relies to a large extent on trust.

Would the Commission agree that the recent failure of the system proves the need for a review of the rules, and possibly the introduction of more frequent testing of food, particularly meat, along the supply chain?

To what extent could the European Food Safety Authority's mandate be revised in order for it to take a more active role in the testing and monitoring of foods in Member States?

Would the Commission also agree that an increase in detection measures would help to deter criminal behaviour and ensure a more reliable traceability system in which consumers can have full confidence?

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

The responsibility for enforcing food chain legislation lies with Member States, which are required to establish a system of official controls to verify compliance by operators with requirements deriving therefrom. The Commission monitors delivery by the Member States of their control duties, including through on-the-spot audits. In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, the official controls systems established by the Member States have allowed them to identify violations of applicable rules.

Notwithstanding the above, the forthcoming proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system.

With regard to the issue of testing and monitoring, these actions are risk management responsibilities and therefore remain outside the European Food Safety Authority's remit. Wherever necessary, however, the Authority supports with its scientific expertise the European Commission in the delivery of its tasks.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001616/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διάσωση των αρχαιοτήτων που ανακαλύφθηκαν στο Μετρό Θεσσαλονίκης

Η ανασκαφή που πραγματοποιήθηκε από την 9η Εφορία Βυζαντινών Αρχαιοτήτων στην περιοχή των εργασιών κατασκευής του σταθμού Βενιζέλου στο ΜΕΤΡΟ Θεσσαλονίκης έφερε στο φως με εντυπωσιακή πληρότητα την «καρδιά» της κοσμικής πόλης των βυζαντινών χρόνων: τμήμα μήκους 76 μ. του κεντρικού πλακόστρωτου δρόμου (decumanus) σε πολύ καλή κατάσταση διατήρησης, κτηριακά λείψανα της πόλης από τον 6ο έως και τον 9ο αιώνα μ.Χ., αλλά και μεγάλα δημόσια οικοδομήματα του 7ου αιώνα, φαινόμενο εξαιρετικά σπάνιο για τον βυζαντινό κόσμο.

Η πλακόστρωτη λεωφόρος και η διασταύρωσή της με την αρχαιότερη χάραξη της σημερινής οδού Βενιζέλου, που κατέληγε στο λιμάνι, καθώς και τα κατάλοιπα των όμορων στους αρχαίους αυτούς δρόμους οικοδομημάτων αποτελούν ένα σύνολο που, με βάση τις διεθνείς συμβάσεις προστασίας της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, είναι «αμετακίνητο» και γι' αυτό το λόγο είναι αναγκαίο να εξαντληθούν όλα τα περιθώρια για να αναδειχθεί κατά χώραν.

Παρ' όλα αυτά και την αντίθετη γνώμη του Συλλόγου Ελλήνων Αρχαιολόγων, το Κεντρικό Αρχαιολογικό Συμβούλιο γνωμοδότησε υπέρ της απόσπασης και της μεταφοράς των αρχαιοτήτων στο στρατόπεδο Παύλου Μελά της δυτικής Θεσσαλονίκης, συναινώντας στην εισήγηση των τεχνικών της ΑΤΤΙΚΟ ΜΕΤΡΟ. Ο δε Αναπληρωτής Υπουργός, στη συνέχεια, προχώρησε στην υπογραφή σχετικής υπουργικής απόφασης, με την οποία η δυνατότητα της πόλης της Θεσσαλονίκης να κερδίσει ένα μοναδικό αρχαιολογικό χώρο μέσα σε έναν υπόγειο σταθμό, θα χαθεί οριστικά.

Σημειώνεται ότι τα έργα για την διάνοιξη του Μετρό Θεσσαλονίκης είναι ενταγμένα στο ΕΣΠΑ.

Έχοντας υπόψη την σπουδαιότητα των αρχαιοτήτων, πολλοί μαζικοί φορείς της πόλης και ο Σύλλογος Ελλήνων Αρχαιολόγων διεκδικούν την ανάκληση της απόφασης για τη μεταφορά των αρχαιοτήτων στο στρατόπεδο Π. Μελά και την ανεύρεση τεχνικής λύσης για τη διατήρησή τους κατά χώραν ως επισκέψιμου αρχαιολογικού χώρου εντός του σταθμού Βενιζέλου ώστε μαζί με την καθημερινή μετακίνηση των επιβατών να εξασφαλίζεται και η περιήγησή τους στην ιστορία της πόλης. Απαιτούν να συνεχισθεί και να διευρυνθεί η αρχαιολογική έρευνα στο σταθμό Βενιζέλου του ΜΕΤΡΟ Θεσσαλονίκης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή πώς τοποθετείται στα δίκαια αιτήματα των φορέων της Θεσσαλονίκης;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί απόλυτα με την κύρια βουλευτή ότι η διατήρηση της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς είναι πολύ σημαντική. Η Επιτροπή προωθεί ενεργά την αρχή αυτή στο πλαίσιο της συνεργασίας για την πολιτική στον τομέα του πολιτισμού. Ωστόσο, το είδος της υπόθεσης που περιγράφει η κυρία βουλευτής δεν εμπίπτει στο πεδίο εφαρμογής των ενεργειών της Επιτροπής στον τομέα του πολιτισμού, το οποίο καθορίζεται στο άρθρο 167 της ΣΛΕΕ.

Το μεγάλο έργο «Μελέτη, κατασκευή και λειτουργία του μετρό της Θεσσαλονίκης» όσον αφορά την κύρια γραμμή του μετρό είναι έργο συγχρηματοδοτούμενο από την ΕΕ το οποίο άρχισε στο πλαίσιο του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου της ΕΕ για την περίοδο 2000-2006 και συνεχίζεται στο τρέχον ΠΔΠ 2007-2013. Το έργο έχει καθυστερήσει σημαντικά και, μέχρι σήμερα, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει καμία αίτηση για μεγάλο έργο.

Όσον αφορά τις βυζαντινές αρχαιότητες που αποκαλύφθηκαν, επειδή υλοποιούνται παρεμβάσεις των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων βάσει της αρχής της επικουρικότητας, οι ελληνικές αρχές είναι αρμόδιες να αποφασίσουν ποια είναι η πιο κατάλληλη λύση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001616/13
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Preservation of antiquities uncovered during work on the Thessaloniki Metro

The excavations carried out by the 9th Inspectorate of Byzantine Antiquities in the Venizelos station area of the Thessaloniki Metro have uncovered the impressively complete 'heart' of the Byzantine city: a 76 metre-long section of the main paved road (*decumanus*) in a very good state of preservation, ruins of city building from the 6th to the 9th centuries AD, and large public buildings from the 7th century, something extremely rare for the Byzantine world.

The paved highway and its intersection with the older route taken by present-day Venizelos Street, which ran down to the harbour, and the remains of the buildings lining these ancient streets form a whole, which, according to the provisions of international conventions protecting cultural heritage, may not be moved, which means that everything necessary must be done to exhibit them *in situ*.

Nevertheless, and in defiance of the advice of the Association of Greek Archaeologists, the Central Archaeological Council has issued an opinion in favour of detaching and transferring the antiquities to Pavlos Melas military camp to the west of Thessaloniki, thereby agreeing to the proposal put forward by *Attiko Metro*'s technical staff. The Deputy Minister has since signed a ministerial decision, which, if unopposed, will forever deprive the city of Thessaloniki of the chance of acquiring a unique archaeological site in an underground station.

It should be noted that the Thessaloniki Metro construction projects form part of the NSRF.

Given the importance of these antiquities, many of the city's grass-roots organisations and the Association of Greek Archaeologists are demanding the reversal of the decision to transfer the antiquities to Pavlos Melas military camp and urging that a technical solution be found to preserve them *in situ* as an archaeological site that can be visited inside Venizelos station so that commuters can learn about the history of their city as they travel underground. They are also calling for the continuation and expansion of the archaeological excavations at Venizelos station in Thessaloniki Metro.

In view of the above, how does the Commission stand regarding the legitimate demands of these Thessaloniki grass-roots organisations?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

The Commission fully agrees with the Honourable Member that the preservation of cultural heritage is of the utmost importance. The Commission actively promotes this principle within the framework for cooperation on culture policy. However, the type of case described by the Honourable Member does not fall within the Commission's scope of actions in the field of culture, which is laid down in Article 167 TFEU.

The major project 'Study, construction and function of Thessaloniki metro' regarding the main line of the metro is an EU co-financed project which started under the EU's 2000-2006 multiannual financial framework and continues under the current 2007-2013 framework. The project has been seriously delayed and, so far, the Commission has not received any major project application.

Regarding the Byzantine discoveries, as Structural Funds' interventions are implemented on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity, it is within the competence of the Greek authorities to decide the most appropriate solution.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001617/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(14 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Aumento delle riserve auree

Mentre assistiamo al continuo rinvio della riforma della finanza internazionale e alle manovre di vari governi per far fronte alla crescita del debito con svalutazioni competitive camuffate, alcuni Stati puntano sulla crescita delle loro riserve auree. La Cina, che è il primo produttore mondiale di oro, sta comprando oro sui mercati internazionali perché vuole aumentare di ben 500 tonnellate le sue riserve che attualmente ammontano soltanto a un migliaio circa. Anche la Germania, dalla notizia apparsa sul quotidiano Handelsblatt, pare abbia deciso di rimpatriare dagli USA la riserva di oro che vi era stata trasferita nel corso della «guerra fredda».

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se conferma queste informazioni;

2. come interpreta queste scelte di puntare sull'oro;

3. se ritiene che la causa di questa politica sia dovuta all'incertezza provocata dalle non scelte per risolvere la crisi finanziaria e dalle politiche monetarie che aumentano il debito con il rischio di forti spinte inflazionistiche;

4. quale funzione svolge l'aumento delle riserve auree rispetto al deprezzamento del dollaro e dello jen;

5. qual è la migliore tutela dell'euro in tutto questo scenario d'incertezza?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(11 aprile 2013)

1. Nella misura in cui la Commissione non si occupa di gestione delle riserve auree, i detentori di tali riserve non le riferiscono in merito alle loro attività sul mercato dell'oro.

2. L'oro monetario è iscritto nei bilanci delle banche centrali e le decisioni di tali istituti in merito fanno parte della gestione delle rispettive attività e riserve. Nello specifico, la Commissione tiene a rilevare che la seconda operazione cui l'onorevole deputato si riferisce riguarda l'ubicazione delle disponibilità di oro e non la compravendita di riserve.

3. La Commissione non fa ipotesi sui motivi che dettano agli operatori economici le mosse della compravendita di oro sul mercato. Da diversi indicatori relativi alle percezioni del rischio inflazionistico, quali i sondaggi sulle previsioni d'inflazione e i rendimenti dei titoli di Stato a lungo termine (valore sia nominale che indicizzato all'inflazione) risulta che le previsioni d'inflazione restano contenute.

4. I movimenti dei tassi di cambio sono influenzati da una serie di fattori: differenziali e aspettative di crescita, politica monetaria contingente, rendimenti delle attività finanziarie proporzionati al rischio. Data l'entità limitata, le operazioni sul mercato dell'oro generalmente non sono considerate un motore significativo dei movimenti dei tassi di cambio.

5. Durante la crisi l'euro ha mantenuto una stabilità sia interna che esterna. Gli sforzi di riforma realizzati scientemente a livello sia di Stati membri che europeo sono riusciti ad attenuare le tensioni sui mercati finanziari, ma in prospettiva è fondamentale mantenere alta la vigilanza. La Commissione collabora strettamente con altri portatori d'interesse, tra cui il Parlamento, per rafforzare ulteriormente il quadro politico dell'unione economica e monetaria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001617/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: The rise in gold reserves

While reforms to international finance are constantly being postponed and various governments try to tackle rising debt through disguised competitive devaluation, some countries are placing their hopes on increasing their gold reserves. China, the world's leading gold producer, is buying up gold on international markets because it wants to boost its reserves, currently standing at around 1 000 tonnes only, by a further 500 tonnes. Germany too, judging from information published in the daily newspaper Handelsblatt, seems to have decided to repatriate its gold reserves back from the USA, where they were sent during the cold war.

1. Can the Commission confirm this information?

2. What is its interpretation of these decisions to trust in gold?

3. Does the Commission consider that the roots of this policy lie in the uncertainly caused by the failure to take decisions to resolve the financial crisis and by monetary policies that push debt up and risk high inflation?

4. What role does the rise in gold reserves play in regard to the fall in the value of the dollar and the yen?

5. What is the best way of protecting the euro amongst all this uncertainty?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

1. The European Commission is not involved in the management of gold reserves. Reserve holders do not report to the Commission on their activities on the gold market.

2. Monetary gold is part of central banks' balance sheets, and their decisions in this regard are to be seen as part of their asset and reserve management. On a factual note, the Commission would point out that the second transaction referred to by the Honourable Member concerns the location of physical gold holdings and not the purchase or sale of reserves.

3. The Commission does not speculate on the motives of economic agents for buying or selling gold on the market. Various indicators related to inflation risk perceptions, such as inflation expectations surveys and long-term government bond yields (both nominal and inflation-indexed) show that inflation expectations remain contained.

4. Exchange rate movements are influenced by a range of factors, such as growth differentials and expectations, the relative monetary policy stance and relative risk-adjusted returns on financial assets. In view of their limited size, transactions on the gold market are generally not considered a significant driver for exchange rate movements.

5. The euro has maintained both internal and external stability during the crisis. Determined reform efforts at both Member State and European level have succeeded in easing financial market tensions, but strong vigilance remains key going forward. The Commission is working closely with other stakeholders, including the Parliament, to further strengthen the policy framework of the Economic and Monetary Union.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001618/13
alla Commissione
Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D) e Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(14 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Riduzione della dotazione del centro di ricerca «Giulio Natta» di Ferrara

Recentemente una multinazionale ha annunciato un taglio del 25 % della dotazione del centro di ricerca e sviluppo «Giulio Natta» che fa parte del suo sito produttivo di Ferrara.

Il centro «Giulio Natta» di Ferrara, che è transitato attraverso numerose proprietà, è nato come centro di innovazione del polipropilene e dei catalizzatori necessari alla sua produzione. Esso rappresenta un caso di eccellenza nel panorama industriale italiano e si colloca ai vertici più alti, a livello mondiale, per le innumerevoli scoperte e invenzioni che ha saputo ideare ed industrializzare.

Nonostante che la situazione economica complessiva della stessa multinazionale sia positiva grazie agli ampi utili ottenuti in Nord America, soprattutto per via dell'impiego dell'etilene nelle attività di estrazione di shale gas, la politica aziendale si sta concentrando sulla riduzione dei costi e la limitazione degli investimenti, per soddisfare le elevate aspettative di autofinanziamento dalla borsa.

Considerato che tale riduzione dei costi incide in maniera netta sulla capacità competitiva del centro di ricerca e sviluppo rischia di determinare pericolose ricadute su tutte le altre attività connesse alla struttura e tende a ridimensionare una delle più importanti comunità scientifiche preludendo quindi ad una progressiva dismissione dell'attività produttiva in Italia, può la Commissione dire:

quali misure di politica industriale possono essere messe in campo per tutelare un luogo di eccellenza fondamentale nella ricerca scientifica e, più in generale, una importante realtà nella produzione chimica industriale?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(22 aprile 2013)

La Commissione non ha poteri per interferire nelle decisioni di un'impresa specifica. Essa è tuttavia fortemente impegnata ad assicurare che l'Europa sia il luogo più attraente al mondo per gli investimenti nella ricerca e nell'innovazione nonché per la produzione manifatturiera. Ciò è al centro della strategia Europa 2020 e delle iniziative faro «Unione dell'innovazione» e «Una politica industriale per l'era della globalizzazione».

In particolare, l'aggiornamento della comunicazione in materia di politica industriale ([1]) intende promuovere un'industria europea più forte. Una delle priorità chiave è l'incoraggiamento degli investimenti nelle nuove tecnologie e nell'innovazione con un'attenzione specifica per sei linee d'azione prioritarie. La Commissione offrirà inoltre opportunità per incentivare e promuovere la ricerca industriale e le attività d'innovazione per il tramite dell'iniziativa Orizzonte 2020 che coprirà l'intera catena di valore in un unico programma. La Commissione suggerirebbe che le autorità competenti e gli stakeholder esaminino in che modo il centro di R&S «Giulio Natta» di Ferrara possa beneficiare di queste opportunità per rafforzare la propria posizione competitiva ed anche come possa sviluppare al meglio sinergie con gli attori pertinenti nel mondo della ricerca e dell'industria. Le autorità regionali dovrebbero inoltre cogliere le opportunità offerte dalla futura politica di coesione e porre in atto strategie locali di specializzazione intelligente. Ciò può avere un impatto positivo sulle imprese locali e sui centri di ricerca.

Quanto al possibile impatto sociale dell'annunciato taglio dei finanziamenti, la Commissione desidera ribadire che la normativa UE stabilisce che i datori di lavoro debbano informare e consultare i rappresentanti dei lavoratori prima di decidere di procedere a licenziamenti collettivi.

([1]) COM(2012)582 final del 10.10.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001618/13
to the Commission
Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D) and Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(14 February 2013)

Subject: Funding cut for 'Giulio Natta' research and development centre in Ferrara

A 25% cut in funding for the 'Giulio Natta' research and development centre in Ferrara has just been announced by a multinational company.

The initial purpose of the 'Giulio Natta' centre, which has changed hands many times, was the development of polypropylene and the catalysts necessary for its production. It has since proved to be an Italian industrial success story and is now one of the finest research centres in the world thanks to its numerous discoveries and inventions and its ability to develop them for industrial purposes.

Despite a very sound balance sheet owing to healthy profits in North America, particularly from the use of ethylene for shale gas extraction, company policy is now being geared to cutting coats and limiting investment in order to meet exacting market requirements with regard to self-financing.

Such cuts will substantially affect the competitiveness of the research and development centre and have possibly serious implications on all related activities, undermining and on one of the major scientific communities and leading to a progressive erosion of manufacturing output in Italy.

In view of this:

What industrial policies could, in the Commission's view, be adopted so as to protect this high-level scientific research centre, which is also of major importance for the industrial chemicals sector?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

The Commission has no powers to interfere in any specific company decisions. However, it is strongly committed to ensure that Europe is the most attractive location globally for investments in research and innovation as well as for manufacturing production. This is at the core of the Europe 2020 strategy and of the flagship initiatives 'Innovation Union' and 'An Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era'.

In particular, the Industrial Policy Communication Update ([1]) intends to promote a stronger European industry. One key priority is the facilitation of investments in new technologies and innovation, with a specific focus on six priority action lines. Furthermore, the Commission will provide opportunities to incentivise and enable industrial research and innovation activities through Horizon 2020, which will cover the entire value chain in one single programme. The Commission would suggest that relevant authorities and stakeholders consider how the 'Giulio Natta' R&D centre in Ferrara could benefit of these opportunities to develop its competitive position and also how best it can develop synergies with relevant actors in research and industry. In addition, regional authorities should seize the opportunities presented by future Cohesion policy and develop local strategies for smart specialisation. This may have a positive impact on local companies and research centres.

Concerning possible social impact of the announced funding cut, the Commission wishes to underline that EC law provides that employers are to inform and consult employees' representatives before they decide to carry out collective redundancies.

([1]) COM(2012) 582 final of 10.10.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001619/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Potential negative impact on UK fruit importation businesses of a proposed EU ban on imports of South African citrus fruit

A company which specialises in the importation of South African citrus fruit has complained that its business will face severe negative consequences if the Commission imposes a threatened EU-wide ban on the importation of citrus fruit from South Africa. The proposed ban will also have implications for the quality, price and availability of citrus fruit supply to UK consumers during the summer months. By way of background, South African citrus fruit is prone to Citrus Blackspot (*Guignardia citricarpa*), a fungus which only affects citrus fruit and causes small superficial black spots on the rind of the fruit but leaves the edible fruit safe to be consumed by humans. The fungus is not endemic in regions where citrus is grown in Europe.

South Africa is a large out-of-season supplier of citrus fruit to EU markets. If the ban is applied, it will be extremely difficult for UK suppliers to source alternative citrus fruit from EU Mediterranean producers during the next summer months. The proposed ban is scheduled to start in March 2013, a time of the year when South Africa traditionally provides approximately 70% of European summer citrus market supplies.

The competent UK authority, DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), has advised the UK Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC), which represents the interests of the fresh produce industry, that Citrus Blackspot poses no significant risk to the UK and that it is therefore urgently seeking a derogation from the Commission which would allow a regionalised approach whereby the UK can continue to import South African citrus fruit, which is reportedly safe for UK consumers.

Can the Commission urgently reassure the UK FPC that UK business will be allowed to continue to trade in imported South African citrus fruit and that UK consumers will be allowed to enjoy good-quality, reasonably priced citrus fruit throughout the year?

In addition, can the Commission confirm that an urgent and pragmatic solution will be found to this problem by modifying the 1992 EU regulations restricting the export of citrus fruit from countries where Citrus Blackspot occurs?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2013)

There is currently no ban in place for the import of citrus fruits originating in South Africa. However a ban may be put in place if repeated non-compliances are found in the current export season. South Africa is expected to improve its compliance with EU import requirements against citrus black spot (CBS) during this season.

Due to the principle of the free movement of goods within the EU, it is appropriate that all imports of citrus fruits respect basic phytosanitary requirements. Given that the EU is a single market, which implies, in principle, unrestricted access to all Members States, this applies irrespective of the point of entry.

A pest risk analysis of CBS is currently being conducted by the European Food Safety Authority. Based on the outcome of this evaluation, current EU phytosanitary requirements may be revised.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001620/13
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Impact of REACH restrictions on SMEs

In its recent review of the REACH Regulation, the Commission noted that 'there is a need to reduce the impact of REACH on SMEs'. It also said it would come forward by December 2013 with a draft implementing act containing possible amendments to the annexes to that regulation.

Annex XVII includes details of the restrictions placed on cadmium, and any amendments to it could have a significant impact on some SMEs in the UK. The total number of manufacturers of tungsten carbide-tipped tools, which are used in stonemasonry, in the world is less than 40. Three of these firms are based in the UK.

Cadmium is an essential component used in these tools, particularly to ensure that the tool's tip remains in place and to avoid injury to the user. However, the producers of the tools are concerned that the Commission will take steps to restrict the use of cadmium as it can be harmful if it comes into contact with the skin. Whilst restricting the amount of cadmium in jewellery, clothing or household water pipes is a sensible move, it is impossible for cadmium to come into contact with the skin when it is used in stoneworking tools: not only is the cadmium safely encased during production, it is also completely ground down by the end of the tool's life.

These tools are not available to the general public. They are specialist tools which are only used by trained professionals, and there is simply no substitute for them; cadmium is an essential component of stonemasonry tools.

1. Is the Commission aware that cadmium components are essential for use in stoneworking tools?

2. During its review of the REACH Regulation, did the Commission meet or make contact with relevant representatives of the stonemasonry industry?

3. What steps will the Commission take to ensure that these SMEs are protected and that a derogation is granted for essential components such as cadmium?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2013)

1&3. The Commission is aware that tools with tungsten-carbide tips are used in stonemasonry. It is also aware that during the manufacturing of such tools, components (brazing fillers) containing cadmium were used. The REACH regulation restricts the placing on the market of brazing fillers containing cadmium (Annex XVII, entry 23 (8)) because during the brazing process workers manufacturing tools could be exposed to fumes of carcinogenic cadmium compounds.

Paragraph 9 of this entry exempts the use of such brazing fillers from the restriction in cases justified by safety reasons. The derogation may apply if the specific use of cadmium for the manufacturing of tools is considered to be necessary for safety reasons. In addition, in preparation of this restriction, a study ([1]) was conducted showing that cadmium-free brazing fillers as alternative are available. Representatives from different industries, e.g. suppliers of brazing alloys or the metal working industry, provided information to this study.

2. Special attention was given in the REACH review ([2]) to costs, administrative burden, possible impacts on innovation and SMEs. This assessment has been made on the basis of the reports from Member States and ECHA as well as 12 thematic studies launched by the Commission. One of the thematic studies was based on a survey to which 1 500 companies from a wide range of sectors contributed.

([1]) Risk & Policy Analysts Limited (2010). Socio-Economic Impact of a Potential Update of the Restrictions on the Marketing and Use of Cadmium. Final Report prepared for the European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry (Framework Contract 30-CE-0221582/00-92 Lot 2). January 2010.

([2]) European Commission (2013): Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM(2013) 0049 final). 5.2.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001621/13
alla Commissione
Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Porto di Augusta

La procedura di cofinanziamento del grande progetto per il porto di Augusta, dopo aver ricevuto l'approvazione della DG COMP sulla compatibilità dei cofinanziamenti con la legislazione europea sugli aiuti di Stato lo scorso 20 dicembre 2012, è tuttora in fase di valutazione da parte delle direzioni generali della Commissione europea.

Può la Commissione chiarire quali aspetti impediscono la rapida approvazione e quali sono le cause che rallentano la conclusione di un procedimento peraltro risalente nel tempo?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2013)

Dopo l'adozione della decisione della Commissione che approvava gli aiuti di Stato per il porto di Augusta, le autorità italiane dovevano fornire importanti informazioni addizionali per consentire alla Commissione di perfezionare l'adozione del grande progetto per il «Potenziamento del porto commerciale di Augusta». La Commissione ha ricevuto ora tali informazioni e prevede di adottare la decisione nelle settimane a venire.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001621/13
to the Commission
Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Port of Augusta

On 20 December 2012, DG COMP approved the co-financing procedure for the major project relating to the port of Augusta from the point of view of the compatibility of co-financing with European law on state aid, and the proposal is now being assessed by the relevant directorates-general of the Commission.

Can the Commission indicate what aspects of the proposal are preventing its swift approval and what is delaying the conclusion of a procedure which has now been under way for a considerable period of time?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2013)

After the adoption of the Commission's decision approving state aid to the port of Augusta, the Italian authorities had to provide important additional information in order for the Commission to finalise the adoption of the 'Potenziamento del porto commerciale di Augusta' major project. The Commission has now received this information and expects to adopt the decision in the coming weeks.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001622/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(15. februar 2013)

Om: Kølecontainere og forordning (EF) nr. 1005/2009

Siden 2004 har det været ulovligt at importere og placere kølecontainere, som gør brug af HCFC141b i isoleringsskum, på det europæiske marked ([1]).

På det seneste har der dog i flere danske og europæiske medier været rejst kritik af Kommissionen for, at håndhævelsen af loven er mangelfuld, og for, at lovgivningen er uklar ([2]).

Konsekvensen af dette angives at være, at efterspørgslen på verdensmarkedet efter denne type containere ikke er faldet på grund af indførelsen af EU-forbuddet mod import og placering på markedet. Endvidere er der ikke tegn på, at kølecontainere med den klimaskadelige gas sendes til ophug, selv om der burde blive udfaset 50 000-60 000 containere årligt de kommende år.

De klimamæssige konsekvenser af at udlede HCFC141b i atmosfæren er velkendte og omfattende. Derfor bekymrer sagen mig som næstformand i Europa-Parlamentets Miljøudvalg.

Hvad vil Kommissionen gøre for at afdække, hvorvidt problemerne med kølecontainere, der benytter HCFC141b, er af det omfang, som kritikere har givet udtryk for? Hvad vil Kommissionen gøre for at imødegå kritikken af, at lovgivningen ikke håndhæves, selv om Kommissionen ifølge kritikere burde have hjemmel til at gribe mere aktivt ind? Hvad vil Kommissionen gøre for at imødegå kritikken af, at lovgivningen er uklar? Hvilke juridiske muligheder er der ifølge Kommissionen for at gøre lovgivningen mere klar, f.eks. i form af et krav om udfasning af samtlige kølecontainere, der bruger HCFC141b, snarere end blot et forbud mod at importere og placere dem på markedet?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Connie Hedegaard
(10. april 2013)

Forordning (EF) nr. 1005/2009 forbyder klart den første markedsføring af containere, som indeholder eller kun kan fungere ved hjælp af HCFC-forbindelser. Kommissionen og medlemsstaterne mener, at indførslen af containere i EU's toldområde er dækket af importforbuddet, hvis de er bestemt til markedsføring. Kommissionen sikrer, at dette forbud gennemføres ved at mærke containere i EU's tolddatabase TARIC. Håndhævelsen af denne bestemmelse henhører under medlemsstaternes kompetence, og de har endnu ikke anmeldt ulovlig markedsføring af HCFC-containere. Kommissionen vil dog undersøge sagen nærmere, henlede medlemsstaternes opmærksomhed på dette emne igen og agter at offentliggøre en vejledning i de kommende måneder.

Til gengæld kan den midlertidige indførsel af HCFC-containere ikke forhindres på grund af en række internationale konventioner ([3]). Ifølge disse bør den frie bevægelighed for containere ikke begrænses. At handle i modstrid med disse konventioner kan skabe forhindringer for den internationale handel, som skal udredes af Verdenshandelsorganisationen. Denne fortolkning blev vedtaget i 2010 af udvalget til gennemførelse af forordning (EF) nr. 1005/2009.

Udvalget påpegede også, at det ikke var retsaktens formål at kræve en afvikling af den nuværende beholdning af HCFC-containere, inklusive dem, som blev anskaffet på lovlig vis i EU før 2004. En udfasning af containere, som foreslået, anses ikke for at være rimelig, set i lyset af det store antal containere i cirkulation, deres betydning for den globale handel og at emissionerne igennem deres levetid er forholdsvis lave. Brugen af HCFC-forbindelser i fremstillingsindustrien er dog forbudt fra 2020 (2030 i udviklingslande) i henhold til Montrealprotokollen.

([1]) Jf. forordning (EF) nr. 1005/2009.
([2]) Jf. f.eks. Jyllands-Posten den 5.2. og 12.2. i Erhverv og Økonomi, begge s. 7.
([3]) Såsom konventionen om midlertidig indførsel (Verdenstoldorganisationen, Istanbul, 1990), konventionen om toldproceduren for containere, som inden for rammerne af en pool benyttes til international transport (Den Økonomiske Kommission for Europa, Genève, 1994) og toldkonventionen om containere (Den Internationale Søfartsorganisation, Genève, 1972).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001622/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Refrigerated containers and Regulation (EC) No 1005/2009

Since 2004 it has been illegal to import and place on the European market refrigerated containers that make use of HCFC-141b in their insulation foam ([1]).

Recently, however, the Commission has been widely criticised in the Danish and European media on the grounds that the law is inadequately enforced and that it is insufficiently clear ([2]).

It is claimed that, consequently, demand for this kind of container on the world market has not fallen in the wake of the EU ban on their import and placing on the market. Furthermore there is no sign of refrigerated containers with this gas, which is harmful to the climate, being scrapped, even though 50 000 to 60 000 of them were supposed to be phased out annually in the next few years.

The emission of HCFC141b into the atmosphere is well known to have wide-ranging effects on the climate. As vice-Chair of Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, I therefore find this worrying.

What will the Commission do to find out whether the problems with refrigerated containers using HCFC141b are as extensive as the critics say? What will the Commission do to counter criticism that the legislation is not being enforced, in spite of the fact that — according to the critics — the Commission should have authority to intervene more actively? What will the Commission do to counter the criticism that the legislation is unclear? What legal options exist to make the legislation clearer, e.g. a requirement to phase out all refrigerated containers using HCFC141b, rather than just a ban on importing them and placing them on the market?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 1005/2009 clearly prohibits the first placing on the market of containers containing or relying on HCFCs. The Commission and Member States consider that the entry of containers into the EU customs territory is covered by the import prohibition if they are to be placed on the market. The Commission ensures that this prohibition is effected by the containers' flagging in the EU's customs database TARIC. The enforcement of this provision falls within the competence of Member States and, to date, they have not reported any illegal placing on the market of HCFC containers. The Commission will however investigate this matter further, draw Member States' attention to this issue again and intends to issue a guidance note in the coming months.

On the contrary, the temporary admission of HCFC containers cannot be prevented in the light of several international Conventions ([3]), according to which the free movement of containers should not be limited. Contravening these Conventions may create barriers to international trade to be resolved by the World Trade Organisation. This interpretation was agreed in 2010 in the Committee set up to implement Regulation (EC) 1005/2009.

The Committee also underlined that it was not the legislation's intention to require the decommissioning of the current stock of HCFC containers, including those acquired legally in the EU before 2004. A phase-out of containers, as suggested, is not considered to be proportionate, given the large number of containers circulating, their importance for global trade and considering that emissions during their service time are relatively low. However, the use of HCFCs in manufacturing is banned from 2020, or 2030 in developing countries, under the Montreal Protocol.

([1]) See Regulation (EC) No 1005/2009.
([2]) See for example Jyllands-Posten, 5 February 2013, p. 7, and in the Erhverv og Økonomi (Business and Finance) section on 12 February 2013, p. 7.
([3]) Such as the Convention on Temporary Admission (World Customs Organisation, Istanbul, 1990), the Convention on Customs Treatment of Pools Containers used in international transport (Economic Commission for Europe, Geneva, 1994) and the Customs Convention on Containers (Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation, Geneva, 1972).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001623/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(15 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Energía eólica en España

La paralización de las ayudas a las energías renovables impulsada por el Gobierno español a principios del 2012 no sólo ha relegado las fuentes de energía renovables en aras de las tradicionales, sino que también amenaza la innovación y los proyectos de investigación en este campo.

El caso más reciente es el proyecto de construcción de una plataforma eólica marina experimental frente a la costa de l'Ametlla de Mar (Catalunya). El proyecto, inspirado en los molinos implantados en el Mar del Norte, ya ha cubierto todas las etapas administrativas. Sin embargo, debido a la congelación de las ayudas y la débil situación económica en la que se encuentran las empresas del sector, el proyecto puede abortarse. La Asociación Eólica de Catalunya alerta de que a lo largo de este año no está previsto que se levante ni un solo molino en Catalunya, algo nunca visto en los últimos nueve años.

A la luz de lo expuesto anteriormente,

¿Cómo valora la Comisión la decisión del Gobierno español de paralizar las primas a las energías renovables de acuerdo con la Hoja de ruta energética de la UE para 2050?

España es una potencia eólica de la que el resto de la UE se puede beneficiar. Sin embargo, la suspensión de las ayudas (medida de duración incierta para hacer frente al déficit presupuestario) puede poner en peligro su destacada posición. ¿Considera la Comisión que este hecho podría desacelerar el desarrollo del mercado europeo de la energía eólica?

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

En las Recomendaciones del Semestre Europeo de 2012 para España ([1]), así como en la Comunicación de la Comisión de 2012 sobre las energías renovables ([2]), la Comisión reconocía que España se enfrentaba a difíciles retos en el sector de la energía, en particular al problema del déficit tarifario del sector eléctrico, que implica un pasivo contingente para el presupuesto y un riesgo macroeconómico considerable, todo lo cual debe abordarse de una manera global. La Comisión manifestó su inquietud en cuanto a la alternancia rápida de medidas de contracción y expansión en las ayudas a las energías renovables, aunque reconocía que los regímenes de ayuda debían reformarse por razones de rentabilidad. La Comisión tiene previsto publicar en un futuro próximo orientaciones para los Estados miembros sobre el diseño y la reforma de esos regímenes de ayuda a favor de las energías renovables.

La Comisión está convencida de que la crisis económica, junto con los actuales obstáculos administrativos, ha retrasado las inversiones en infraestructuras. Los cambios bruscos que afectan a los regímenes de ayuda pueden frenar la expansión de los mercados de la energía eólica de la UE. Todos los Estados miembros, España incluida, tienen que redoblar esfuerzos para realizar los objetivos de 2020.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/communication_2012_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001623/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Spain's wind power industry

Owing to the Spanish Government's decision to freeze subsidies for renewable energy as from early 2012, not only are renewable energy producers finding it harder to compete with their conventional counterparts but also innovation and research into renewable energy are at risk of being stifled.

For instance, plans to build an experimental offshore windfarm off the coast of L'Ametlla de Mar in Catalonia have had to be put on hold. The project, which was inspired by North Sea windfarms, has already been through all the necessary administrative steps. However, it may have to be shelved because of the decision to freeze subsidies coupled with the fact that many renewable energy firms are currently struggling. The Catalan wind power association (Asociación Eólica de Catalunya) is warning that for the first time in nine years, there are no plans to build any wind turbines in Catalonia during the course of 2013.

In the light of the above, could the Commission answer the following questions:

In view of the EU Energy Roadmap 2050, what does the Commission think of the Spanish Government's decision to freeze subsidies for renewable energy?

Spain is a major producer of wind power and other EU Member States could benefit from its expertise. However, freezing energy subsidies for an unspecified period of time in order to reduce the budget deficit could undermine Spain's leading position. Does the Commission agree that this could slow down the expansion of the EU wind power market?

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

In both the 2012 EU semester recommendations to Spain ([1]) as well as the 2012 Commission Communication on renewable energy ([2]), the Commission recognised that Spain faces complex challenges in the energy sector, including the issue of the electricity tariff deficit. The deficit implies a considerable contingent liability for the budget and a non-negligible macroeconomic risk, both of which should be tackled in a comprehensive way. The Commission expressed its concerns about stop-and-go approaches to renewable energy support, while recognising that support schemes should be reformed for cost-effectiveness reasons. The Commission is planning to issue guidance to the Member States in the near future on the issue of design and reform of support schemes for renewable energy.

The Commission believes that the impact of the economic crisis, coupled with ongoing administrative barriers, delayed investments in infrastructure. Disruptive changes to support schemes are likely to slow down the expansion of the EU wind power markets. Additional efforts by all Member States, including Spain, are required in order to achieve the 2020 targets.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/communication_2012_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001624/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(15 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Política energética en España

El Gobierno de España ha reducido ya cuatro veces la retribución que reciben las energías renovables. En la más reciente se aprobó un decreto-ley mediante el cual se actualizan las tarifas, se limitan los horarios y se congelan nuevos proyectos.

Esto conlleva una mayor inseguridad jurídica para las inversiones en este sector, las cuales siguen siendo las principales perjudicadas mientras el sistema eléctrico sigue aumentando sus ingresos.

¿Considera la Comisión que el Gobierno de España debería modificar su política energética y alinearla con la que se promueve desde la propia Comisión, para reducir la dependencia energética exterior de la Unión Europea y luchar contra el cambio climático?

Actualmente en España únicamente un 13,5 % de la energía consumida proviene de fuentes renovables, siendo la potencia instalada mucho mayor.

¿Cree la Comisión que España podrá alcanzar el objetivo en materia de energía y cambio climático, recogido en la estrategia Europa 2020, sin modificar la actual política energética?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de abril de 2013)

En 2012, la Comisión recomendó, entre otras cosas, que España abordara su déficit tarifario del sector eléctrico de forma global, particularmente mejorando la rentabilidad de la cadena de suministro de electricidad ([1]). Además, en su Comunicación titulada «Energías renovables: principales protagonistas en el mercado europeo de la energía» ([2]), la Comisión expresó su preocupación acerca de los cambios bruscos y las medidas retroactivas que afectan a los proyectos relativos a la energía renovable. Dicha preocupación sigue vigente. Por otro lado, si bien España registró avances notables en su trayectoria hacia el objetivo nacional del 20 % hasta 2010 ([3]), no es seguro que vaya a alcanzarse el objetivo nacional de 2020, teniendo en cuenta la evolución reciente señalada anteriormente.

En lo que atañe al objetivo de ahorro energético del 20 % fijado para 2020, cada Estado miembro debe informar de su nuevo objetivo indicativo bien en el marco de su programa nacional de reforma de 2013, o antes del 30 de abril de 2013, tal como exige la Directiva 2012/27/UE (Directiva de la eficiencia energética). A continuación, la Comisión debe informar antes del 30 de junio de 2014 sobre los avances registrados a nivel de toda la UE hacia el objetivo del 20 %. Esta evaluación se basará en los 27 objetivos nacionales indicativos en materia de eficiencia energética, la información sobre las políticas nacionales, estudios y modelos.

De conformidad con la Decisión sobre el esfuerzo compartido, España debe reducir sus emisiones no contempladas en el RCDE UE un 10 % de aquí a 2020, en comparación con 2005. El volumen de las emisiones se ha reducido gradualmente en el último decenio. Según los datos más recientes que se han publicado, las emisiones de 2010 fueron ya inferiores en un 5 % al nivel de 2005. Según las previsiones y sobre la base de la tendencia actual, España alcanzará su objetivo si se aplican las medidas ya existentes, como la Ley de Economía Sostenible de 2011, tal como estaba previsto inicialmente.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/communication_2012_es.htm
([3]) El último dato oficial disponible (Eurostat) indica que la energía renovable representaba en 2010 el 13,8 % del consumo energético final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001624/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Spain's energy policy

The Spanish Government has already reduced feed-in tariffs for renewable energies on four separate occasions. Most recently, it passed a decree law revising feed-in tariffs, capping the number of subsidised hours that renewable energy producers can sell and freezing new projects.

This has increased the legal uncertainty surrounding investment in the renewable energy sector, which continues to bear the brunt of this change in policy, even as electricity industry revenues are increasing steadily.

Does the Commission believe that the Spanish Government should revise its energy policy to bring it into line with the Commission's own position, which is that the EU needs to reduce foreign energy dependence and tackle climate change? At present only 13.5% of Spain's energy comes from renewable sources, despite the fact that the country has the infrastructure needed to exploit these sources on a much larger scale.

Does the Commission believe that Spain will be able to meet the Europe 2020 energy and climate change targets if it sticks to its current energy policy?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2013)

In 2012, the Commission recommended, amongst others, that Spain addresses its electricity tariff deficit in a comprehensive way, in particular by improving the cost efficiency of the electricity supply chain ([1]). Furthermore, in the communication entitled 'Renewable Energy: a major player in the European energy market' ([2]), the Commission expressed concerns about stop-and-go approaches and retroactive measures affecting renewable energy projects. These concerns remain valid. Moreover, although Spain made good progress on its trajectory to reaching the national target of 20% until 2010 ([3]), the recent developments mentioned above mean that the achievement of the national 2020 target is not certain at this point.

As regards the energy savings target of 20% by 2020, each Member State has to report their new indicative target either with the 2013 National Reform Programme or by 30 April 2013 as required in the Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU). Subsequently, the Commission is required to report progress for the EU as a whole towards the 20% target by 30 June 2014. This assessment will be based on the 27 indicative energy efficiency targets, information on the national policies and modelling and studies.

Under the Effort Sharing Decision, Spain is obliged to decrease its emissions not covered by the EU ETS by 10% by 2020 compared to 2005. Emissions have been decreasing gradually in the last decade. The most recent publicly available data show that in 2010 emissions were already 5% below the 2005 level. Based on the current trend, it can be expected that Spain meets its target if existing measures such as the Sustainable Economy Act of 2011 are implemented as initially set out.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/communication_2012_en.htm
([3]) The share of renewable energy in final energy consumption was 13.8% in 2010, which is the last official figure available (Eurostat).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001625/13
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(15 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Fracking en el municipio de Riudaura (Girona)

Diversas plataformas ciudadanas acaban de denunciar que en el municipio de Riudaura (Girona) las instituciones públicas (tanto la Generalitat de Catalunya como el Estado español) están permitiendo la realización de prospecciones mineras con el objetivo de hallar hidrocarburos no convencionales. La técnica utilizada para ello es la denominada fractura hidráulica (fracking). Dicho método constituye un grave peligro para la salud humana por los riesgos que conlleva (destrucción del paisaje, emisiones de gases contaminantes a la atmósfera, contaminación de acuíferos o génesis de residuos sólidos, entre otros). La Generalitat de Catalunya ha autorizado, con fecha de 2 de octubre de 2012, a la sociedad mercantil Teredo Oil Limited Segunda Sucursal SL a buscar hidrocarburos durante un plazo de 6 años en la zona denominada Ripoll, en una superficie de 51 201,30 hectáreas, como se recoge en el Diario Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya (DOGC) de 4 de octubre de 2012.

El espacio tiene un alto valor natural, por lo que ha sido nombrado Espacio de Interés Natural por la Generalitat de Catalunya. Varios municipios han presentado alegaciones al proyecto y se ha constituido una plataforma cívica que denuncia específicamente el uso de la técnica del fracking y el inicio de las prospecciones de hidrocarburos en la zona. La Directiva 2011/92/UE relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente establece, en su considerando número 7, que dicha evaluación se debe realizar tomando como base «la información proporcionada por el promotor» y «por el público al que pueda interesar el proyecto». De igual manera, afirma en su artículo 6.4 que «el público interesado tendrá la posibilidad real de participar desde una fase temprana en los procedimientos de toma de decisiones (…), tendrá derecho a expresar observaciones y opiniones».

1. ¿Contempla la Comisión una compensación económica para los ganaderos y agricultores que pudieran verse afectados por mayores niveles de contaminación derivados de dicha actividad que les impidieran realizar total o parcialmente su actividad habitual?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que se ha cumplido lo dispuesto en la Directiva 2011/92/UE, dado que no se ha informado de manera previa ni a los ciudadanos ni a los propios Ayuntamientos, y que no son públicas las hojas de trabajo de la posible empresa extractora ni el sumario del proyecto?

3. ¿Se posicionará la Comisión contra la utilización de esta práctica nociva para el medio natural y las personas?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de marzo de 2013)

1. La respuesta a la primera pregunta de Su Señoría es no.

2. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-010456/2012.

3. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-011576/2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001625/13
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Fracking in Riudaura (Girona)

Several pressure groups have recently protested against the fact that public authorities, in the shape of the Catalan and Spanish governments, are allowing prospecting for unconventional gas to be carried out around the town of Riudaura, near Girona. The technique used to do this is hydraulic fracturing, or 'fracking'. Given the risks it poses to human health, this method is extremely dangerous. It destroys the countryside, gives off gases which pollute the atmosphere, pollutes watercourses, creates solid waste, and so on. According to the Catalan Government's official gazette of 4 October 2012, on 2 October 2012 the Catalan Government gave the go-ahead for a company called Teredo Oil Limited Segunda Sucursal SL to explore for gas over a period of six years in an area known as Ripoll, covering an area of 51 201.30 hectares.

The area concerned is of great natural value, with the Catalan Government having designated it as an Area of Natural Interest. Several local councils have objected to the project, and a pressure group has been set up specifically for the purpose of speaking out against fracking and the start of gas exploration in the area. Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment stipulates, in Recital 7, that assessment 'should be conducted on the basis of […] information […] supplied by the developer' and 'by the public likely to be concerned by the project in question'. The directive goes on to state, in Article 6(4), that '[t]he public concerned shall be given early and effective opportunities to participate in the […] decision-making procedures […] and shall […] be entitled to express comments and opinions'.

1. Is the Commission considering financial compensation for farmers who, as a result of fracking, might be affected by increased levels of pollution that will partially or completely prevent them from going about their everyday business?

2. Given that there was no prior consultation of either the local residents or the town councils themselves, and that no worksheets from the prospective mining firm or project summaries have been made public, does the Commission think that Directive 2011/92/EU has been complied with?

3. Will the Commission take a stance against the use of fracking, which is so damaging to the environment and to human beings?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2013)

1. The answer to the first question of the Honourable Member is No.

2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written Question E-010456/2012.

3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written Question E-011576/2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001626/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(15 de febrero de 2013)

Asunto: Acciones Bankia

Los medios de comunicación se han echo eco de la posibilidad de que el FROB valorice las acciones de Bankia a 0,01 euros por participación. Más allá del hecho de que esta valoración se aplique finalmente (lo que fijaría el valor de capitalización de Bankia en 20 millones), el valor de las acciones de Bankia se ha desplomado desde su salida en bolsa desde los 3,75 euros/acción hasta los 0,46 ([1]).

Cabe tener en cuenta que Bankia tiene 400 000 accionistas individuales que compraron sus participaciones en julio de 2011, cuando la entidad ocultaba información a la opinión pública y al gobierno sobre su verdadera situación financiera.

En el MoU, la Comisión propone una serie de medidas que tienen como objetivo recuperar la credibilidad del sistema bancario español. Este objetivo no puede cumplirse cuando se imponen pérdidas millonarias a ciudadanos de renta media afectados por las malas prácticas anteriores. En el caso de Bankia estas pérdidas están cuantificadas en 2 100 millones de euros.

Finalmente, cabe recordar que son los mismos ciudadanos españoles los mayores inversores y depositarios en el sistema bancario español, por lo que es imprescindible que el sistema financiero recupere su credibilidad ante ellos.

A la luz de lo anterior,

¿Piensa ampliar la Comisión las condiciones del MoU para incluir un mecanismo de compensación para los ciudadanos afectados por esta situación?

¿Qué medidas piensa la Comisión que serían necesarias para mejorar la credibilidad del sistema financiero ante los pequeños ahorradores españoles que no son expertos o profesionales de las finanzas?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de abril de 2013)

Las disposiciones en el ámbito de la protección de los consumidores en el caso de las ofertas de acciones o valores a los inversores en el marco de un proceso de cotización pública forman parte de la MiFID (Directiva sobre los mercados de instrumentos financieros) ([2]) y de la Directiva sobre el folleto ([3]), que los Estados miembros de la UE han incorporado al ordenamiento jurídico nacional. Conforme a lo dispuesto en esas Directivas, cuando se realicen ofertas públicas de acciones en un proceso de cotización, la entidad interesada debe proporcionar información suficiente sobre las condiciones de la oferta y las acciones que se ofrecen, con el fin de permitir a los inversores decidir si compran o no esas acciones. Teniendo en cuenta fue admitida a cotización a mediados de 2011, esto es, tras la incorporación de las Directivas a la legislación española, Bankia tenía que aplicar en su oferta pública inicial (OPI) las disposiciones de las mismas sobre la información exhaustiva a los inversores.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/mercados/2013/02/14/bankia-suspendida-de-cotizacion-el-frob-valora-sus-titulos-en-001-euros-8656

([2]) Directiva 2004/39/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 21 de abril de 2004, relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros, por la que se modifican las Directivas 85/611/CEE y 93/6/CEE del Consejo y la Directiva 2000/12/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo y se deroga la Directiva 93/22/CEE del Consejo.

([3]) Directiva 2010/73/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 24 de noviembre de 2010, por la que se modifican la Directiva 2003/71/CE sobre el folleto que debe publicarse en caso de oferta pública o admisión a cotización de valores y la Directiva 2004/109/CE sobre la armonización de los requisitos de transparencia relativos a la información sobre los emisores cuyos valores se admiten a negociación en un mercado regulado.

A fin de recuperar la confianza en el sector bancario de los inversores y, en particular, de los clientes minoristas, el Memorando de Entendimiento contempla, entre otras cosas, la condicionalidad con vistas a mejorar la protección de los consumidores. Según dicho Memorando, debe reforzarse la legislación sobre la protección de los consumidores y los valores, así como el control por las autoridades de su cumplimiento, para limitar la venta de instrumentos de deuda subordinada a clientes minoristas sin preparación por parte de las entidades bancarias, y mejorar considerablemente el proceso de venta a clientes minoristas de cualquiera de los instrumentos no cubiertos por el fondo de garantía de depósitos. Esto supone también una mayor transparencia sobre las características de dichos instrumentos y los riesgos que entrañan para garantizar su pleno conocimiento por los clientes minoristas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001626/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Bankia shares

There have been reports in the media that the Spain's bank restructuring fund, the FROB, might value Bankia shares at EUR 0.01 each. Whether or not this actually happens (if it does, Bankia's capital will be worth EUR 20 million), the fact remains that the value of Bankia's shares has plummeted from EUR 3.75 per share when it was first floated on the stock exchange to EUR 0.46 per share now ([1]).

It is worth noting that Bankia has 400 000 individual shareholders who bought their stakes in July 2011 — a time when the bank was withholding information from the general public and from the government about its true financial situation.

In its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the Commission proposes a series of measures designed to restore the credibility of Spain's banking system. This objective cannot be met when people on average incomes are being hit with losses running into millions of euros as a result of bad practices that took place in the past. In the case of Bankia these losses amount to EUR 2 100 million.

Finally, emphasis needs to be placed on the fact that the Spanish public are the main investors and depositors in the Spanish banking system, and that it is therefore vital for that system to regain their trust.

In the light of the above:

Is the Commission considering widening the terms of the MoU to include a compensation scheme for members of the public who have been affected by this situation?

What measures does the Commission think will be needed to shore up the credibility of the financial system in the eyes of small-scale savers in Spain who are not finance experts or finance professionals?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2013)

The provisions in the area of consumer protection in case of offers of shares/securities to investors in the framework of a public listing process are included in the MIFID (Markets in Financial Instruments Directive) ([2]) and Prospectus Directive ([3]), which EU Member States transposed into national legislation. According to the provisions of these directives, when offering shares to the public in a listing process, the concerned entity has to provide sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the shares to be offered, so as to enable investors to decide whether to purchase these shares. Considering that Bankia was listed in mid-2011, hence after the transposition of these directives into Spanish legislation, it had to apply in its Initial Public Offering (IPO) the provisions of these directives on the thorough information of investors.

In order to restore the confidence of investors, and in particular of retail customers in the banking sector, the memorandum of understanding (MoU) includes, *inter alia*, conditionality aiming at enhancing consumer protection. According to the MoU, consumer protection and securities legislation as well as compliance monitoring by the authorities should be strengthened, to limit the sale by banks of subordinate debt instruments to non-qualified retail clients and to substantially improve the process for the sale of any instruments not covered by the deposit guarantee fund to retail clients. This also implies increased transparency on the characteristics of these instruments and the consequent risks in order to guarantee full awareness of the retail clients.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/mercados/2013/02/14/bankia-suspendida-de-cotizacion-el-frob-valora-sus-titulos-en-001-euros-8656.

([2]) Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 21 April 2004 on markets in financial instruments amending Council Directives 85/611/EEC and 93/6/EEC and Directive 2000/12/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Directive 93/22/EEC.

([3]) Directive 2010/73/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 24 November 2010 amending Directives 2003/71/EC on the prospectus to be published when securities are offered to the public or admitted to trading and 2004/109/EC on the harmonisation of transparency requirements in relation to information about issuers whose securities are admitted to trading on a regulated market. .

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001627/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(15 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τουρκικές έρευνες σε Κυπριακή ΑΟΖ

Η Τουρκία, σε ναυπηγείο κοντά στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, ετοιμάζει το σεισμογραφικό Polarcus Samur, στοχεύοντας στη δημιουργία έντασης στην Κυπριακή ΑΟΖ. Θα προβεί σε εκτενείς έρευνες στα τεμάχια (4, 5, 6, 7, 8) ώστε να γνωρίζει η ίδια ή οι συνεταίροι της, που θα εγκαταστήσει πλατφόρμα για δημιουργία νέων τετελεσμένων.

1. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η ΕΕ για να αποσοβήσει τον κίνδυνο δημιουργίας νέων τετελεσμένων στην περιοχή που πιθανόν να θέσουν σε κίνδυνο την ειρήνη στην ευρύτερη γεωπολιτική περιοχή;

2. Με ποιο δικαίωμα και θράσος η Τουρκία σχεδιάζει να προβεί σε έρευνες στην Κυπριακή ΑΟΖ;

Απάντηση
(15 Μαΐου 2013)

Στα συμπεράσματα του Δεκεμβρίου του 2012, το Συμβούλιο επανέλαβε ότι σύμφωνα με το διαπραγματευτικό πλαίσιο και τα προηγούμενα συμπεράσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, η Τουρκία θα πρέπει να δεσμευθεί απερίφραστα για τις σχέσεις καλή γειτονίας και την ειρηνική διευθέτηση διαφορών σύμφωνα με τον Χάρτη των Ηνωμένων Εθνών, με δυνατότητα προσφυγής, εάν χρειαστεί, στο Διεθνές Δικαστήριο. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, το Συμβούλιο εξέφρασε και πάλι τις σοβαρές του ανησυχίες και ζήτησε από την Τουρκία να αποφύγει κάθε μορφή απειλής ή δράσης κατά κράτους μέλους, ή πηγή τριβών ή δράσεις που θα μπορούσαν να παραβλάψουν τις σχέσεις καλής γειτονίας και την ειρηνική διευθέτηση των διαφορών. Το Συμβούλιο τόνισε και πάλι όλα τα κυριαρχικά δικαιώματα των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ, μεταξύ των οποίων είναι η σύναψη διμερών συμφωνιών, η αναζήτηση και η εκμετάλλευση του φυσικού πλούτου σύμφωνα με το κεκτημένο της ΕΕ και το διεθνές δίκαιο, περιλαμβανομένης της Σύμβασης των ΗΕ για το Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας.

Η ΕΕ θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί αυτά τα θέματα από κοντά και να τα συζητεί με τις τουρκικές αρχές κατά περίπτωση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001627/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(15 February 2013)

Subject: Turkish exploration work in Cyprus's EEZ

In a shipyard near Istanbul, Turkey is fitting out the seismographic vessel Polarcus Samur in order to fuel tension in Cyprus's EEZ. It will carry out extensive exploration in plots 4, 5,6,7 and 8 to establish for itself or its partners where to build a platform to create new *faits accomplis*.

1. What will the EU do to avert the risk of creating new adverse *faits accomplis* in the region that could endanger peace in the wider geopolitical area?

2. What entitles Turkey brazenly to plan exploration work in Cyprus's EEZ?

Reply
(15 May 2013)

In its conclusions of December 2012, the Council reiterated that in line with the Negotiating Framework and previous European Council and Council conclusions, Turkey needs to commit itself unequivocally to good neighbourly relations and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice. In this context, the Council also expressed once again serious concern, and urged Turkey to avoid any kind of threat or action directed against a Member State, or source of friction or actions, which could damage good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Council moreover stressed again all the sovereign rights of EU Member States which include, *inter alia*, entering into bilateral agreements, and to explore and exploit their natural resources in accordance with the EU *acquis* and international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The EU will continue to follow these issues closely and to raise them with the Turkish authorities as appropriate.

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