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2014/C 46 E/01 Pisna vprašanja poslancev Evropskega parlamenta in odgovori institucij Evropske unije 1

(glej obvestilo bralcem)

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Obvestilo bralcem

Ta objava vsebuje pisna vprašanja poslancev Evropskega parlamenta in odgovore institucij Evropske unije.

Vprašanje in odgovor nanj sta najprej predstavljena v izvirnem jeziku, sledi pa jima morebitni prevod.

V nekaterih primerih se jezik odgovora lahko razlikuje od jezika vprašanja, saj je odvisen od delovnega jezika odbora, ki mora pripraviti odgovor.

Vprašanja in odgovori se objavijo v skladu s členoma 117 in 118 Poslovnika Evropskega parlamenta.

Vsa vprašanja z odgovori so dostopna prek spletišča Evropskega parlamenta (Europarl), pod naslovom Parlamentarna vprašanja:

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

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PPE	Skupina Evropske ljudske stranke (Krščanskih demokratov)
S&D	Skupina Naprednega zavezništva socialistov in demokratov v Evropskem parlamentu
ALDE	Skupina Zavezništva liberalcev in demokratov za Evropo
Verts/ALE	Skupina Zelenih/Evropske svobodne zveze
ECR	Skupina Evropskih konservativcev in reformistov
GUE/NGL	Konfederalna skupina Evropske združene levice - Zelene nordijske levice
EFD	Skupina Evropa svobode in demokracije
NI	Samostojni poslanci

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IV

(Informacije)

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EVROPSKI PARLAMENT

PISNA VPRAŠANJA Z ODGOVORI

Pisna vprašanja poslancev Evropskega parlamenta in odgovori institucij Evropske unije

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(English version)

Question for written answer E-002862/13
to the Commission
Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)
(12 March 2013)

Subject: Veterinary Medicinal Products Directive

The Veterinary Medicinal Products Directive 2001/82/EC (as amended) sets out controls on the manufacture, authorisation, marketing, distribution and post-authorisation surveillance of veterinary medicines applicable in all Member States.

In 2010 the Commission launched a public consultation on the legal framework for veterinary medicinal products. The stated aim of this public consultation was to provide sufficient information for the production of an impact assessment on a revision of the legal framework for veterinary medicinal products.

In advance of the publication of this impact assessment, and taking into account the diversity of animal medicine distribution systems across the EU, could the Commission clarify whether it intends to require all Member States to implement an EU-wide, standardised distribution system or to enable national provisions to be applied in order to avoid disrupting the supply chain, which would seriously affect the availability and accessibility of veterinary medicines and have a potentially significant impact on owners and on animal welfare?

Further, could the Commission confirm whether the current distribution system for animal medicines in place in the UK — which affects some 5 500 professionally qualified prescribing staff- will remain in place?

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

In preparation of the revision of the legislation of veterinary medicine the Commission consulted stakeholders on key issues, including the distribution channel. The consultation document, a summary report and responses of stakeholders are published on the Commission's website ([1]). The Commission will decide, based on the results of the public consultation and the impact assessment, whether there is a need to amend the legislation on the distribution channel. Consequently it is not possible at this stage to provide the assurances sought in the last question.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/veterinary-use/rev_frame_index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003124/13
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Animal medicine distribution

Could the Commission clarify what current differences there are in the way animal medicines are distributed in the different Member States and what problems, if any, result?

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

Directive 2001/82/EC ([1]) regulates the possession, distribution and dispensing of veterinary medicinal products. It obliges Member States to take all appropriate measures to ensure that those involved in the wholesale distribution of veterinary medicines are authorised and that retail supply is conducted only by persons who are permitted to do so by law in the Member State concerned. On this basis, Member States have set up different systems to distribute veterinary medicines. The Commission does not have information about problems linked to a specific system of distribution.

([1]) OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p. 1-66.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004763/13
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE) und Richard Seeber (PPE)
(29. April 2013)

Betrifft: Verbot der konventionellen Käfighaltung für Legehennen

Das EU-weite Verbot der konventionellen Käfighaltung für Legehennen ist seit 1.1.2012 in Kraft.

Welche Mitgliedstaaten sind dem Verbot der konventionellen Käfighaltung nach eigenen Angaben bislang nicht nachgekommen? Um wie viele Legehennenstallplätze handelt es sich dabei?

Welche Mitgliedstaaten konnten bislang aufgrund der gelieferten Daten oder auf der Grundlage von Kontrollberichten nicht glaubhaft darstellen, dass in ihrem Land keine Legehennen mehr in verbotenen Käfiganlagen gehalten werden?

Welche Maßnahmen wurden von der Kommission hinsichtlich Vorort-Kontrollen und Sanktionen ergriffen?

Wie wird sichergestellt, dass keine Frischeier aus der verbotenen Haltungsform in andere Mitgliedstaaten verbracht werden?

Wie wird sichergestellt, dass keine in der EU erzeugten Lebensmittel mit Eiern aus der verbotenen Haltungsform in EU-Mitgliedstaaten (z. B. Österreich) in Verkehr gebracht werden?

Welche Kennzeichnungsvorschriften sind geplant, um den Verbraucherinnen und Verbrauchern zukünftig mehr Transparenz und Sicherheit beim Einkauf von Lebensmitteln mit Eiern zu bieten?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(17. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission verweist die Abgeordneten auf ihre Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-4047/2013, E-002696-13, E-10273/2012, E-010256/2012, E-9338/2012 und E-008325/2012 ([1]).

Die Kommission hat Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen mehrere Mitgliedstaaten angestrengt, um die Einhaltung des Verbots der Haltung in nicht ausgestalteten Käfigen gemäß der Richtlinie 1999/74/EG des Rates ([2]) sicherzustellen. Italien und Griechenland verstoßen weiterhin gegen das Verbot der Verwendung nicht ausgestalteter Käfige und die Kommission hat in dieser Angelegenheit den Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union befasst ([3]).

Seit dem 1. Januar 2012 hat das Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt der Generaldirektion Gesundheit und Verbraucher der Kommission Auditbesuche in Bulgarien, Kroatien, Frankreich, Litauen, Rumänien und Slowenien durchgeführt, um die Umsetzung der Anforderungen der Richtlinie 1999/74/EG des Rates zu überprüfen.

Die Durchsetzung der EU-Rechtsvorschriften obliegt den Mitgliedstaaten und damit auch die Gewährleistung, dass keine Eier aus nichtkonformen Haltungsbetrieben auf den Binnenmarkt gelangen. Mit dem Code „3“ gekennzeichnete Eier sollten ausschließlich aus Haltungsbetrieben stammen, in denen die Hennen in ausgestalteten Käfigen gehalten werden.

Gemäß den Anfang 2013 bei der Kommission eingegangenen Daten werden rund 4 % der gesamten Legehennenbestände in der EU noch in nicht ausgestalteten Käfigen gehalten.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Richtlinie 1999/74/EG des Rates zur Festlegung von Mindestanforderungen zum Schutz von Legehennen, ABl. L 203 vom 3.8.1999, S. 53.
([3]) Siehe Pressemitteilung IP/13/366 vom 25. April 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004763/13
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE) and Richard Seeber (PPE)
(29 April 2013)

Subject: Ban on the conventional caging of laying hens

The EU-wide ban on conventional caging of laying hens has been in force since 1 January 2012.

Which Member States have, according to their own information, failed to implement the ban on conventional caging? How many battery cages are involved?

According to the data provided or based on control reports, which Member States have so far failed to provide credible proof that laying hens are no longer housed in banned battery cage systems in their country?

What action has the Commission taken in terms of on-the-spot controls and sanctions?

What steps are taken to ensure that no fresh eggs produced under the banned system are imported into other Member States?

What steps are taken to ensure that no foods produced in the EU with eggs produced under the banned system are placed on the market in EU Member States (such as Austria)?

What labelling regulations are planned to offer consumers greater transparency and safety in the future when buying foods produced with eggs?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its replies to Parliamentary Questions E-4047/2013, E-002696-13, E-10273/2012, E-010256/2012, E-9338/2012 and E-008325/2012 ([1]).

The Commission pursued infringement proceedings against a number of Member States to ensure compliance with the ban on unenriched cages laid down in Council Directive 1999/74/EC ([2]). Italy and Greece remain non-compliant with the ban on unenriched cages and have hence been referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union ([3]).

Since 1 January 2012, the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) audited Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia on compliance with Council Directive 1999/74/EC.

Member States' are responsible for enforcing Union law and thus for ensuring that no eggs from non-compliant holdings are placed on the internal market. Eggs marked with the code 3 should stem only from farms keeping hens in enriched cages.

According to data received by the Commission early 2013, roughly 4% of the total EU laying hen flock is still kept in unenriched cages.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Council Directive 1999/74/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens; OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 5.
([3]) See Press release IP/13/366 of 25 April 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006082/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: European Union genetically modified organism (GMO) authorisation system

The European Union takes on average 3.7 years to approve new GMOs for import. In Brazil, this process takes just an average of 2 years, and many other countries, like the United States, are aiming to achieve a 1.5-year average. Given that the number of GMO stacks awaiting approval from the EU GMO authorisation system has grown each year since 2004, will the Commission outline what it intends to do to ease this backlog and ensure a workable import approval system?

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

The EU GMO legislation foresees a number of steps in the authorisation procedure which the Commission follows and will continue to follow in the future. The Commission will maintain this policy and will continue, as in the recent past, to pay particular attention to authorisations which can have major impact on trade.

The Commission believes that the EU approval regime continues to operate normally despite the lack of support of the Member States. In 2012, the Commission authorised five GMOs and renewed the authorisation of a sixth one. One GMO was authorised on 25 June 2013. Three GMOs are in the final stage of the decision making process after the Appeal Committee reached no opinion on 11 July 2013.

The Commission also believes that the implementing Regulation (EC) No 503/2013 ([1]) on authorisation of GM food and feed, published on 8 June 2013, will streamline the risk assessment and risk management of the products by asking applicants to include different GMOs (stacks and sub-combinations) in one single application and that it is expected that this clear procedure will contribute to reduce the asynchronicity of authorisations between the EU and exporting third countries.

Regulation (EC) No 611/2011 ([2]) laying down the methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of feed, allows the EU to maintain its policy of 'zero tolerance', while providing more legal certainty to operators importing crops from third countries.

([1]) OJ L 157 8.6.13.
([2]) OJ L 164/1 24.6.11.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006083/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Plaga de «huonglongbing» (dragón amarillo) en Europa

Recientemente el sector citrícola europeo ha expresado su preocupación por el peligro de la llegada a las zonas citrícolas productoras de la plaga denominada «huonglongbing» (HLB) o dragón amarillo de los cítricos. Esta plaga se ha detectado ya en Estados Unidos, en América Latina, Asia y África, y ha causado verdaderos estragos en las zonas productoras afectadas.

Como es conocido, en determinadas épocas del año se producen importaciones a la UE de cítricos procedentes de zonas productoras situadas en otros continentes que ya están afectadas por el HLB. Ante esta situación se formulan las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Qué información tiene la Comisión relativa a la presencia de la bacteria HLB en territorio europeo?

2. ¿Qué medidas se están adoptando para prevenir la entrada de esta plaga en el espacio europeo?

3. ¿Ha recibido la UE algún requerimiento de actuación por parte de las autoridades de algún Estado miembro?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

La bacteria del verdeo del género *Citrus*, el agente causante de la plaga del dragón amarillo de los cítricos (*Huanglongbing*), es un organismo nocivo sujeto a restricciones, que está sometido a cuarentena en la EU, en cuyo territorio no se ha detectado su presencia. La bacteria se transmite fundamentalmente a través de dos insectos vectores, *Diaphorina citri* y *Trioza erytreae*, que también son organismos nocivos sujetos a restricciones en la EU.

Las disposiciones fitosanitarias de la Directiva 2000/29/CE del Consejo ([1]) incluyen medidas de protección frente a la introducción de este organismo en la Unión. Dado que en la EU la bacteria del verdeo del género *Citrus* y sus vectores están sometidos a cuarentena, su introducción en la EU está prohibida. Además, están prohibidas las importaciones desde todos los terceros países de plantas hospedadoras de la bacteria y sus vectores de los géneros *Citrus*, *Poncirus* y *Fortunella*, y sus híbridos. La fruta de estos mismos géneros procedente de terceros países podrá importarse en la EU siempre que haya sido sometida a una inspección fitosanitaria, vaya acompañada de un certificado fitosanitario y esté libre de hojas y pedúnculos; además, el envase debe estar provisto de una marca de origen adecuada.

España ha indicado recientemente que las actuales disposiciones fitosanitarias contra la bacteria del verdeo del género *Citrus* y sus vectores pueden necesitar revisión. Se basa en un nuevo análisis del riesgo de plagas para el territorio de la UE elaborado por España, que proporciona nuevos datos sobre la identidad del agente causante de la plaga del dragón amarillo de los cítricos, su espectro de hospedadores y el de sus vectores. También indica que las semillas podrían ser una vía de introducción de la bacteria. La Comisión ha evaluado estos nuevos datos junto con los Estados miembros y en la actualidad prepara un proyecto de medida por la que se modifican los actuales requisitos fitosanitarios para la bacteria del verdeo del género *Citrus* y sus vectores.

([1]) DO L 169 de 10.7.2000, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006083/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: 'Huanglongbing' (yellow dragon) disease in Europe

Recently the European citrus sector has expressed its concern regarding the risk of the arrival of the so-called 'huanglongbing' (HLB) or citrus yellow dragon disease in citrus growing regions. The disease has already been detected in the United States, Latin America, Asia and Africa, and it has wreaked real havoc in the production areas affected.

As we know, at certain times of the year, citrus fruits are imported to the EU from production areas in other continents that are already affected by HLB. In view of this situation, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. What information does the Commission have regarding the presence of HLB bacteria in European territory?

2. What measures are being adopted to prevent this disease from entering European territory?

3. Has the EU received any request to act from the authorities of any Member State?

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

The citrus greening bacterium, the causal agent of the citrus greening disease or Huanglongbing, is a regulated harmful organism with quarantine status in the EU, which is not known to occur in the EU territory. The bacterium is primarily spread by two insect vectors, 'Diaphorina citri and Trioza erytreae', which are also regulated harmful organisms in the EU.

Plant health provisions under Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([1]) provide for protection against the introduction of this organism into the Union. Given that the citrus greening bacterium and its vectors have quarantine status in the EU, their introduction into the EU is prohibited. Moreover, the import of host plants of the bacterium and its vectors from the genera 'Citrus', 'Poncirus and Fortunella', and their hybrids, is prohibited from all third countries. Fruit from the same genera originating from third countries may be imported into the EU provided it has undergone a phytosanitary inspection, is accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate and is free from peduncles and leaves and the packaging thereof bears an appropriate origin mark.

Spain has recently indicated that the existing plant health provisions against citrus greening bacterium and its vectors may need revision. This is based on a new pest risk analysis for the EU territory prepared by Spain, which provides new data about the identity of the causal agent of citrus greening disease, its host range and that of the vectors. It also indicates that seeds could be a pathway for the introduction of the bacterium. The Commission has evaluated these new data together with the Members States and it is currently preparing a draft measure amending the existing plant health requirements against citrus greening bacterium and its vectors.

([1]) OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p.1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006084/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Encuentro y acuerdos entre el Comisario Johannes Hahn y el Presidente de la Generalitat Valenciana (España), Alberto Fabra

Estos días el Presidente de la Generalitat valenciana, Alberto Fabra, ha hecho público el acuerdo con el Comisario de Política Regional, Johannes Hahn, para desbloquear 76,6 millones de euros de los Fondos FEDER que llegarán el próximo mes de junio. También ha anunciado el Presidente Fabra que ha alcanzado varios acuerdos que afectan de manera directa a la Comunidad Valenciana y entre estos acuerdos figuraría que las Comunidades Autónomas tendrán una mejor participación en la gestión de los fondos FEDER. Igualmente se dice que el Comisario Hahn se comprometió a mantener, en los reglamentos pendientes de aprobación, una cláusula de revisión del reparto de los fondos en 2016 contemplando los datos del PIB regional más recientes. Las informaciones suministradas por el Gobierno valenciano señalan, igualmente, que el Comisario Hahn aceptó la invitación del Presidente Fabra para visitar la Comunidad Valenciana y que felicitó al Presidente Fabra por los programas operativos de Fondos Estructurales desarrollados en la Comunidad.

1. ¿En qué fecha tuvo lugar la reunión entre el Presidente Fabra y el Comisario Hahn de la que informan los medios de la Comunidad Valenciana (España)?

2. ¿En qué consiste el acuerdo publicado de desbloquear 76,6 millones de euros de los fondos FEDER que llegarían en junio?

3. ¿A qué compromiso llegó el Comisario Hahn con el Presidente Fabra en lo relativo a la mayor participación de las Comunidades Autónomas en la gestión de los fondos FEDER?

4. ¿En qué se comprometió el Comisario Hahn con el Presidente Fabra en relación con el reparto de fondos comunitarios en 2016?

5. ¿Se ha fijado fecha, por parte del Comisario Hahn, para visitar la Comunidad Valenciana en respuesta a la petición del Presidente Fabra?

6. ¿En qué términos procedió a felicitar el Comisario Hahn al Presidente Fabra por los programas operativos de Fondos Estructurales desarrollados en la Comunidad Valenciana?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de agosto de 2013)

1. La reunión con el Presidente Fabra tuvo lugar el 13 de mayo de 2013 a petición suya.

2. El pago de 76,6 millones de euros estaba congelado temporalmente debido a la falta de créditos y se reanudó posteriormente cuando se dispuso de los créditos.

3. El Comisario indicó que el reparto de la responsabilidad entre los niveles central y regional forma parte de las negociaciones con el Gobierno español respecto del período de programación 2014-2020 con el fin de simplificar y hacer más eficiente la gobernanza de la política de cohesión.

4. El reparto de la financiación de la UE entre las regiones españolas forma parte de las negociaciones entre la Comisión y el Gobierno español. La Comisión velará por que este reparto sea equitativo y esté en consonancia con los principios de la política de cohesión. Por otra parte, en el nuevo marco financiero de la UE está prevista una revisión intermedia en 2016 con el fin de tener en cuenta la difícil situación de los países afectados por la crisis. Esta revisión se basará en las estadísticas más recientes y podría dar lugar a ajustes de la asignación financiera para el período 2017-20.

5. No se ha fijado ninguna fecha para la visita del Comisario Hahn a Valencia. Sin embargo, ha aceptado visitar la región más adelante.

6. El Comisario felicitó al Presidente Fabra por el logro de resultados positivos: el grado de aplicación de los programas es satisfactorio y, desde 2010, se han llevado a cabo considerables mejoras en los sistemas de gestión y control.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006084/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Meeting and agreements between Commissioner Johannes Hahn and the President of the Valencian Regional Government (Spain), Alberto Fabra

In recent days, the President of the Valencian Regional Government, Alberto Fabra, has made public the agreement with the Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn, to unfreeze EUR 76.6 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which will be released in June. President Fabra has also announced that he has concluded various agreements that directly affect the Autonomous Community of Valencia, including one stating that the Autonomous Communities will have greater participation in the management of ERDF funds. It is also said that Commissioner Hahn agreed to retain, for regulations pending approval, a clause revising the distribution of the funds in 2016 in accordance with the most recent regional GDP data. The information provided by the Valencian Government also states that Commissioner Hahn accepted an invitation from President Fabra to visit the Autonomous Community of Valencia and that he congratulated President Fabra on the Structural Funds operational programmes developed in region.

1. On what date did the meeting between President Fabra and Commissioner Hahn reported by the media in the Autonomous Community of Valencia (Spain), take place?

2. What is included in the published agreement to unfreeze EUR 76.6 million from the ERDF funds to be released in June?

3. What agreement did Commissioner Hahn reach with President Fabra with regard to the greater participation of the Autonomous Communities in the management of ERDF funds?

4. What did Commissioner Hahn agree with President Fabra with regard to the distribution of Community funding in 2016?

5. Has a date been set, by Commissioner Hahn, to visit the Autonomous Community of Valencia following President Fabra's request?

6. In what terms did Commissioner Hahn proceed to congratulate President Fabra for the Structural Funds operational programmes developed in the Autonomous Community of Valencia?

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

1. The meeting with the President Fabra took place on 13 May 2013 at his request.

2. The payment of EUR 76.6 million was temporarily frozen due to the lack of credits and was subsequently resumed when credits became available.

3. The Commissioner indicated that the distribution of responsibility between the central and regional levels is part of the negotiations with the Spanish Government for the programming period 2014-2020 in order to simplify and make the governance of cohesion policy more efficient.

4. The distribution of EU funding between Spanish regions is part of the negotiations between the Commission and the Spanish Government. The Commission will ensure that such distribution is fair and in line with the principles of cohesion policy. Moreover, to take account of the difficult situation of countries and regions suffering from the crisis, the new EU financial framework foresees a mid-term review in 2016. This will be based on the latest statistics and may lead to adjustments of the financial allocation for the period 2017-20.

5. No date has been fixed for a visit of Commissioner Hahn to Valencia. He has, however, accepted to visit the region at a later stage.

6. The Commissioner congratulated President Fabra for the positive results achieved: implementation is satisfactory and substantial improvements of the management and control system have been made since 2010.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006085/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Preocupante aumento del número de drogas sintéticas

Según un informe publicado ayer por el Observatorio Europeo sobre las Drogas y las Toxicomonías (OEDT), el número de drogas sintéticas, y también su consumo, ha aumentado de forma preocupante en Europa. En el último año, se han detectado 73 nuevas drogas sintéticas.

La emergencia de negocios de nuevas sustancias, como los denominados «euforizantes legales», ha provocado la muerte de más de 40 personas en Europa.

Los traficantes se aprovechan de la falta de regulación a escala internacional de las sustancias químicas para abastecer el mercado de drogas ilícitas. ¿Cómo prevé la Comisión adaptar la política de la UE en materia de drogas a los cambios de los mercados de drogas?

Otro estudio realizado por Europol revela que estas drogas sintéticas no han sido producidas en laboratorios secretos europeos, sino que acostumbran a ser importadas en grandes cantidades desde China o la India. ¿Cómo prevé la Comisión hacer frente a la entrada de estas drogas ilegales?

Internet está desempeñando cada vez más un papel más importante en la distribución de drogas. Este tipo de drogas se han propagado rápidamente a través de Internet en muchos de los Estados miembros que tienen dificultades a la hora de evitar su venta. ¿Qué medidas prevé tomar la Comisión para controlar la venta y el tráfico de drogas por Internet?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

Una de las prioridades de la Comisión es hacer frente a la frecuente aparición y rápida propagación de nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas en toda la UE.

El informe de evaluación de la Comisión ([1]), publicado en julio de 2011, concluyó que el instrumento de la UE que representa la Decisión 2005/387/JAI ([2]) del Consejo, relativa al intercambio de información, la evaluación del riesgo y el control de las nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas, es insuficiente para abordar este problema y necesita ser revisado. La Comunicación de la Comisión titulada «Para una respuesta más firme frente a las drogas» ([3]), adoptada en octubre de 2011, señala que la propagación de nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas es uno de los principales retos a que debe hacer frente la política en materia de drogas y exige una respuesta firme de la UE.

La Comisión está preparando actualmente nuevas propuestas legislativas sobre las nuevas sustancias psicotrópicas, que prevé presentar en breve con el fin de reforzar la respuesta de la UE, consistentes en la mejora de la supervisión y evaluación del riesgo de las sustancias y la utilización de medidas más rápidas, más eficaces y más proporcionadas que reduzcan la disponibilidad de sustancias que ponen en peligro la salud y la seguridad.

La Comisión apoya la actuación de los Estados miembros a la hora de atajar el tráfico ilícito de drogas —que se aprovecha cada vez más de las nuevas tecnologías de la comunicación—, ayuda que incluye también la financiación de la cooperación transfronteriza en el marco de los programas de financiación de la UE, como el titulado «Prevención y lucha contra la delincuencia» (ISEC) ([4]) que, desde 2007, ha financiado un gran número de proyectos transfronterizos contra el tráfico de drogas.

([1]) COM(2011) 430 final y SEC(2011) 912 final.
([2]) DO L 127 de 20.5.2005, pp. 32-37.
([3]) COM(2011) 689 final.
([4]) Decisión del Consejo, de 12 de febrero de 2007, por la que se establece para el período 2007-2013 el programa específico «Prevención y lucha contra la delincuencia», integrado en el programa general «Seguridad y defensa de las libertades» (2007/125/JAI). DO L 58 de 24.2.2007, p. 7.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006085/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Worrying increase in the number of synthetic drugs

According to a report published yesterday by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the number of synthetic drugs, as well as their use, has increased worryingly in Europe. In the last year, 73 new synthetic drugs have been detected.

The emergence of a trade in new substances, such as the so-called 'legal highs', has caused the death of more than 40 people in Europe.

Dealers take advantage of the lack of regulation of chemical substances on an international scale to supply the illegal drugs market. How does the Commission intend to adapt EU policy on drugs to the changes in the drugs markets?

Another study conducted by Europol reveals that these synthetic drugs have not been produced in secret European laboratories, but rather they are usually imported in large quantities from China or India. How does the Commission intend to tackle the influx of these illegal drugs?

The Internet is playing an increasingly significant role in the distribution of drugs. This type of drug has spread rapidly across the Internet in many Member States who have difficulties when it comes to preventing their sale. What measures does the Commission intend to take to control the sale and trafficking of drugs via the Internet?

Answer given by Ms Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

Addressing the frequent emergence and rapid spread across the EU of new psychoactive substances is a priority for the Commission.

The Commission's assessment report ([1]), published in July 2011, concluded that the EU instrument, Council Decision 2005/387/JHA ([2]) on the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances, is inadequate for addressing this challenge, and that it requires revision. The Commission Communication 'Towards a stronger European response to drugs' ([3]), adopted in October 2011, identified the spread of new psychoactive substances as one of the most challenging developments in drugs policy, requiring a firmer EU response.

The Commission is currently working on new legislative proposals on new psychoactive substances, aimed at strengthening the EU response, through enhanced monitoring and risk assessment of substances, and swifter, more effective and more proportionate answers to reduce the availability of substances posing health and security risks. It is planning to present the new proposals soon.

The Commission supports Member States' action in addressing illicit drug trafficking, which increasingly takes advantage of new communication technologies, including by funding cross-border cooperation under EU financial programmes. The Prevention of and Fight Against Crime Programme (ISEC) ([4]) has funded, since 2007, a large number of cross-border projects targeting drug trafficking.

([1]) COM(2011) 430 final and SEC(2011) 912 final.
([2]) OJ L 127, 20.5.2005, p. 32 pp. 32-37.
([3]) COM(2011) 689 final.
([4]) Council Decision of 12 February 2007 establishing for the period 2007 to 2013, as part of General Programme on Security and Safeguarding Liberties, the Specific Programme 'Prevention of and Fight against Crime' (2007/125/JHA). OJ L 58, 24.2.2007, p. 7.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006086/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Casos recientes de violencia de género

La semana pasada se produjeron cuatro asesinatos de mujeres a manos de parejas o ex parejas y tres intentos de asesinato en apenas 24 horas. En lo que va de año, 22 mujeres han perdido la vida (y dos casos más están bajo investigación).

Las campañas de sensibilización y concienciación contra la violencia de género son esenciales para atajar esta problemática. Sin embargo, los presupuestos para financiar estas campañas se han visto fuertemente reducidos. Además, la falta de coordinación por parte de los departamentos del Ejecutivo del Gobierno español involucrados en la lucha contra la violencia de género hacen más complicada la puesta en marcha de medidas eficaces contra esta lucha.

Recientemente, el Gobierno español ha recibido numerosas quejas por parte de las asociaciones de mujeres por su manera de atajar esta problemática. El Ministerio de Justicia pretendía presentar una ley de tasas que obligaba al pago en los casos de divorcio de mujeres víctimas de violencia de género y pretendía hacer desaparecer la violencia de género de la reforma del Código Penal. Además, la eliminación de asignatura de educación para la ciudadanía bajo la nueva ley de educación del Gobierno español, un instrumento clave para luchar desde la educación primaria contra la violencia de género, ha sido duramente criticada.

¿Cómo valora la Comisión la estrategia del Gobierno español para combatir la violencia de género, partiendo de la base de que la violencia contra las mujeres no sólo es un delito sino también un problema social?

¿Cómo evalúa la Comisión el proceso de aplicación de las disposiciones contempladas en la Directiva 2012/29/EU, adoptada el 25 de octubre de 2012, por la cual se establecen las normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección a las víctimas de delitos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a sus respuestas a la pregunta escrita E-5525/2013 ([1]) sobre un tema similar.

Además, la Comisión ha anunciado este año una financiación, al amparo del programa Progress, por un importe de 3,7 millones de euros para apoyar las actividades de los Estados miembros dirigidas a una mayor concienciación sobre la violencia contra las mujeres, así como un importe suplementario de 11,4 millones de euros para subvencionar proyectos transnacionales presentados por organizaciones no gubernamentales y autoridades locales que trabajan para evitar y combatir todas las formas de violencia contra las mujeres, al amparo del programa Daphne III.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006086/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Recent cases of gender-based violence

Last week, four women were murdered at the hands of partners or ex-partners, alongside three cases of attempted murder in just 24 hours. So far this year, 22 women have lost their lives (and two further cases are under investigation).

Awareness raising campaigns against gender-based violence are essential in order to bring an end to this issue. However, the budgets for financing these campaigns have been drastically reduced. Furthermore, the lack of coordination on the part of the Spanish Government departments involved in the fight against gender-based violence is making the implementation of effective measures more complicated.

Recently, the Spanish Government has received numerous complaints from women's groups regarding its approach to tackling this issue. The Ministry of Justice attempted to introduce a law on fees that obliged payment in the divorce cases of women who were victims of gender-based violence and attempted to remove gender-based violence from the amended Criminal Code. Furthermore, the withdrawal of citizenship as a subject under the Spanish Government's new education law, a key instrument in combating gender-based violence within primary education, has been harshly criticised.

What is the Commission's assessment of the Spanish Government's strategy for combating gender-based violence, from the standpoint that violence against women is not only a crime but also a social issue?

What is the Commission's assessment of the process of enforcement of the provisions referred to in Directive 2012/29/EU, adopted on 25 October 2012, establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Question E-5525/2013 ([1]) on a similar issue.

Moreover, this year, the Commission announced EUR 3.7 million in funding to support Member States activities to raise awareness on violence against women (under the PROGRESS Program) and a further amount of EUR 11.4 million to support transnational projects by non-governmental organisations and local authorities working to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women (under the DAPHNE III program).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006087/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(30 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Rigidità della PAC e mobilità del clima

I novecento millimetri di precipitazioni piovose registrati in questi primi mesi del 2013 hanno provocato all'agricoltura lombarda un danno calcolato tra seicento e settecento milioni di euro. Ma il peggio deve ancora arrivare, poiché i danni alla semina si tradurranno ovviamente in rincari per i prodotti disponibili in minore quantità. E tutto è conseguenza del maltempo — informa «Innovagri» — che persiste e che modifica l'andamento climatico stagionale tradizionale. La situazione è estremamente negativa soprattutto nel settore dei cereali. Primo granaio d'Italia, la Lombardia è stata colpita da un accanimento climatico proprio nella stagione della semina, dopo aver subito il marzo più freddo degli ultimi sessant'anni. I campi sono ridotti ad acquitrini e i mezzi meccanici non sono stati in grado di arare il terreno per la semina, impedendo, tra l'altro, interventi di carattere fitosanitario sulle coltivazioni. Il 60 % degli appezzamenti destinati al mais non ha conosciuto la semina. I 360 000 ettari di cui dispone la Lombardia produrranno il 30 % in meno di mais. Anche per i cereali cosiddetti «a paglia» — grano, orzo, avena e simili — l'impossibilità di svolgere lavori stagionali per la tutela della qualità del prodotto determinerà una perdita secca del 30 %. Il riso è stato messo a semina soltanto per il 40 %, con un danno maggiore di quello del mais. Mentre, infatti, per il mais è ancora possibile la semina «a ciclo breve», per il riso le semine non effettuate non possono essere recuperate con semine «tardive», per cui non è nemmeno possibile una stima esatta delle perdite. Per quanto riguarda i foraggi, l'impossibilità di procedere ai tagli per la fienagione e l'alimentazione del bestiame ha comportato, essendo una merce più rara, un rincaro del 40-50 % negli ultimi dieci giorni. Gli allevatori subiscono l'aggravio dei costi e la perdita di competitività. Tutto ciò si aggiunge alle conseguenze della crisi economica e finanziaria e alle politiche d'austerità che hanno richiesto una maggiorazione delle imposte.

1. È la Commissione al corrente della situazione in cui si trovano i coltivatori e gli allevatori lombardi?

2. È essa in grado di stimare i danni all'economia agricola della Lombardia e della valle padana?

3. Non ritiene che il criterio di erogare agli operatori agricoli un sostegno in funzione dell'estensione dei loro appezzamenti debba essere ripensato e riconsiderato anche in funzione degli accadimenti climatici che modificano i cicli produttivi e quindi la stabilità dei prezzi, con conseguenze che si ripercuotono pure sul consumatore finale?

4. È d'accordo sul fatto che le conseguenze della mobilità del clima sono facilmente controllabili e che dovrebbe essere ragionevolmente possibile considerarle fra i criteri da adottare per il sostegno all'agricoltura?

Risposta di Dacian Ciolos a nome della Commissione
(5 luglio 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente delle difficoltà registrate nell'Italia settentrionale e segue da vicino l'evoluzione della situazione meteorologica e il suo impatto sull'agricoltura, allevamento compreso. Le condizioni meteorologiche avverse hanno provocato un ritardo significativo nello sviluppo delle colture invernali e hanno ostacolato il lavoro dei campi, ad esempio la semina del mais, il che potrebbe accrescere il rischio di malattie e avere implicazioni per la disponibilità e i costi del foraggio a livello locale. Le condizioni meteorologiche che si registreranno nei prossimi mesi saranno essenziali per determinare l'impatto che per il momento non è ancora possibile valutare.

I pagamenti diretti previsti dalla nuova PAC riguarderanno obiettivi specifici come quelli ambientali, tra cui il cambiamento climatico, e i giovani agricoltori. I pagamenti diretti sono concessi agli agricoltori quale integrazione del reddito poiché esercitano un effetto stabilizzatore del reddito in caso di forti fluttuazioni dei prezzi. I pagamenti diretti non sono però uno strumento destinato in prima istanza agli interventi di crisi.

I gravi effetti delle catastrofi naturali e del maltempo sull'agricoltura possono però essere presi in conto nell'ambito dei programmi per lo sviluppo rurale (PSR) nel contesto della misura «Ricostituzione del potenziale agricolo danneggiato da disastri naturali e introduzione di adeguati strumenti di prevenzione». Alcune regioni italiane si sono avvalse di questa disposizione nel contesto dei PSR per il periodo 2007-13 a sostegno delle aziende agricole colpite, ad esempio, da gravi precipitazioni nevose. Per migliorare la vitalità del settore nel lungo periodo, la politica di sviluppo rurale attuale e quella futura prevedono misure volte all'adattamento dell'agricoltura alle mutate condizioni climatiche. Per il periodo 2014-20 sono proposti nuovi strumenti di gestione del rischio.

Per quanto concerne l'effetto del cambiamento climatico sull'agricoltura, per il momento non è possibile fare una differenziazione esatta tra la variabilità meteorologica nel medio termine e gli effetti del cambiamento climatico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006087/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Inflexibility of the CAP and climate change

It is estimated that the 900 millimetres of rain recorded in these first few months of 2013 have caused damaged amounting to between EUR 6 and 7 hundred million to Lombardy agriculture. But the worst is yet to come, because the damage to sowing activities will obviously result in higher prices for the products in shorter supply. According to INNOV-AGRI, all of this is due to the persistent bad weather that is changing the traditional climatic behaviour of the seasons. The situation is extremely serious, especially in the cereals sector. Italy's main granary, Lombardy, has been hit by ferocious weather right in the middle of the sowing season, after suffering the coldest March of the last 60 years. Fields have been reduced to bogs, and tractors have been unable to plough the land for sowing. Among other things, these conditions have made it impossible to carry out crop protection operations. Sixty per cent of the land intended for maize production has been left unsown, and Lombardy's 360 000 hectares will produce 30% less maize. 'Straw' cereals — wheat, barley, oats and the like — have also been affected by the inability to carry out seasonal work to protect the quality of the product, and this will result in a deadweight loss of 30%. Only 40% of rice crops have been sown, resulting in damage even greater than that suffered by maize. For maize, 'short season' sowing is still possible, but in the case of rice, lost sowings cannot be recovered with 'late' sowings, and this makes it impossible to estimate the losses with any accuracy. With regard to forage crops, the inability to cut for hay and animal fodder — a very scarce product — has resulted in a price rise of 40-50% in the last 10 days. Livestock farmers are suffering from increased costs and a loss of competitiveness. All of these problems are added to the effects of the economic and financial crisis and the austerity policies that have made tax increases necessary.

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation that Lombardy's farmers and livestock farmers find themselves in?

2. Can it estimate the damage caused to the agricultural economy of Lombardy and the Po Valley?

3. Does it not believe that the principle of providing support to farmers according to the size of their fields should be reviewed and reconsidered to take account of climatic events that alter the production cycles and therefore the stability of prices, with consequences that also affect the end consumer?

4. Does it agree that the effects of climate change can be easily verified, and that it should be reasonably possible to take these effects into account among the criteria used for providing support to the agriculture industry?

Answer given by Mr Ciolos on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the difficulties in Northern Italy and monitors closely the evolution of the weather situation and the impact on agriculture, including the livestock sector. The adverse weather conditions caused a significant delay in the development of winter crops and hampered field operations e.g. maize sowing and it could both increase the risk of disease and impact local fodder availability and costs. The weather conditions during the next month will be crucial to determine the impact which cannot yet be assessed.

The new CAP direct payments will address specific objectives such as environmental including climate change, and young farmers. Direct payments are granted as an income support for farmers, thus they have a stabilising income effect in case of strong price fluctuations. Direct payments, however, are not a tool primarily targeted at crisis intervention.

Serious effects of natural disasters and extreme weather events on farming can however be taken into account in Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) under measure 'Restoring agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters and introducing appropriate prevention measures'. Some Italian regions have used this provision within the RDPs 2007-13 to support farms affected by e.g. severe snowfall. In view of improving the long-term viability of the sector, the current as well as the future Rural Development policy provides measures aimed at adaptation of farming to the changing climatic conditions. For the period 2014-20 new risk management instruments are proposed.

About the effect of climate change on agriculture, an exact differentiation between medium-term weather variability and the effects of climate change is not possible for the time being.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006088/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(30 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Perdurare della diffusa attività di bracconaggio nell'area del delta del fiume Po in provincia di Rovigo, in costante violazione della direttiva «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE

Nella prima interrogazione presentata dallo scrivente sull'argomento in data 18.1.2012 (E-000151/2012) veniva sottoposta all'attenzione della Commissione la situazione di diffusa illegalità che caratterizza l'attività venatoria da appostamento posta in essere nel comprensorio del delta del fiume Po (in provincia di Rovigo). Trattasi di un'area dallo straordinario valore faunistico in quanto eletta a territorio di sosta, riproduzione e svernamento da parte di numerose specie di uccelli migratori (in particolar modo acquatici) provenienti dall'Europa settentrionale e tutelata, in ragione di ciò, all'interno della Rete Natura 2000 quale SIC e ZPS ai sensi delle direttive «Habitat» 92/43/CEE e «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE ([1]). La presente interrogazione è volta a fornire un aggiornamento sulla gravità del fenomeno in atto. In base ai dati recentemente forniti dal WWF di Rovigo — in costante aggiornamento ad opera dell'associazione ([2]) — nel 100 % delle 70 uscite di controllo effettuate da parte dei volontari nel corso degli anni sono stati scoperti numerosi e gravi episodi di illegale attività venatoria, per un totale di 132 segnalazioni ([3]). Le condotte riscontrate sono espressamente vietate dalla direttiva «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE (e costituiscono reato ai sensi della legge italiana 11.2.1992, n. 157). Si ricordano, in particolare, il deliberato abbattimento in passato di specie protette quali ad esempio la Gru (Grus grus), il Biancone (Circaetus gallicus) e il Fenicottero (Phoenicopterus ruber), specie queste inserite tutte nell'allegato I della direttiva, che elenca le specie oggetto di maggiore protezione; a ciò aggiungasi l'uso per l'attività venatoria di richiami elettroacustici e di armi automatiche o semiautomatiche con caricatore contenente più di due cartucce, presenti nell'elenco di cui all'allegato IV della direttiva, che individua i mezzi vietati ai sensi dell'art. 8. Sempre secondo quanto riferito dal WWF di Rovigo, l'attività di vigilanza venatoria posta in essere da parte degli enti preposti si è a oggi dimostrata inadeguata; la Provincia di Rovigo, inoltre, ha recentemente fornito dati discordanti rispetto a quelli rilevati dal WWF quanto alla gravità del fenomeno, minimizzandolo ([4]); l'associazione, infine, lamenta una certa difficoltà a ottenere da parte di tali enti le informazioni necessarie ad analizzare l'efficienza del servizio pubblico di controllo ([5]).

Nella sua risposta in data 24.2.2012, la Commissione si impegnava a svolgere indagini presso le autorità competenti circa l'efficacia dei provvedimenti adottati per porre rimedio a tale situazione di illegalità.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione rendere noto l'esito delle indagini compiute?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(8 luglio 2013)

La Commissione sta ancora valutando il caso specifico richiamato dall'onorevole deputato e terrà conto delle nuove informazioni contenute nella presente interrogazione scritta.

La Commissione sta inoltre valutando altri casi legati alla mancata applicazione della direttiva 2009/147/CE ([6]) (direttiva Uccelli) in relazione all'uccisione, alla cattura e al commercio illegali di uccelli selvatici in Italia. Una volta concluse le sue valutazioni, la Commissione deciderà le azioni successive più opportune al fine di garantire il rispetto della direttiva Uccelli.

([1]) SIC IT3270017 (Delta del Po: tratto terminale e delta veneto) e ZPS IT3270023 (delta del Po).
([2]) Cfr. Prospetto riassuntivo elaborato dal WWF di Rovigo in data 14.12.2012, presente al link: http://goo.gl/79K5V
([3]) Il sottoscritto deputato ha avuto modo di valutare la gravità della situazione in un recente sopralluogo in loco avvenuto in data 4.4.2013, alla presenza del presidente del WWF di Rovigo Massimo Benà e del delegato LIPU (Lega italiana protezione uccelli) di Rovigo Luciano Marangoni.
([4]) Dichiarazioni alla stampa dell'assessore con delega alla caccia della provincia di Rovigo: http://goo.gl/v5oYz
([5]) Dichiarazioni alla stampa del presidente del WWF di Rovigo Massimo Benà: http://goo.gl/nVhXh
([6]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006088/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Continued widespread poaching activities in the Po delta area in the province of Rovigo, in persistent breach of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)

My first question with regard to this issue of 18 January 2012 (E-000151/2012) drew the Commission's attention to the situation of widespread illegality involving hunting from hides in the Po delta area (province of Rovigo). This is an area of outstanding wildlife value, since it is used as a stopover, breeding and wintering site by many species of migratory birds (particularly waterfowl) coming from northern Europe. Because of this, it is protected within the Natura 2000 network as a site of Community importance (SCI) and a special protection area (SPA) according to the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) ([1]). The purpose of the present question is to provide an update on the seriousness of this problem. According to recent figures from the Rovigo branch of the WWF — which constantly updates such data ([2]) — every one of the 70 control trips carried out by volunteers over the years has revealed many serious instances of illegal hunting activity, with a total of 132 reports ([3]). The activities discovered are expressly prohibited by the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) (as well as being illegal under Italian Law No 157 of 11 February 1992). In particular, we have previously seen the wilful slaughter of protected species such as the Common Crane (*Grus grus*), the Short-toed Snake Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*) and the Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*), all of which are included in Annex I to the directive, which lists the species given the greatest protection. We are also seeing the use, for hunting activities, of electro-acoustic decoys and of automatic and semi-automatic weapons with magazines holding more than two rounds of ammunition, as listed in Annex IV to the directive, which identifies the means prohibited under Article 8. Again according to reports from the Rovigo WWF, the hunting supervision activities carried out by the responsible bodies have so far proved inadequate; moreover, the Provincial Government of Rovigo recently issued figures at odds with those of the WWF, playing down the seriousness of the problem ([4]). The association complains that it is difficult to obtain from these bodies the information necessary to analyse the effectiveness of the public control service ([5]).

In its answer of 24 February 2012, the Commission undertook to investigate the competent authorities in order to determine the effectiveness of the measures taken to stop these illegal activities.

In view of the above, can the Commission report on the results of the investigations carried out?

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

The Commission is still assessing the specific case mentioned by the Honourable Member and will take into account the new information provided in this Written Question.

The Commission is also assessing other cases related to the lack of enforcement of Directive 2009/147/EC ([6]) ('Birds Directive') as regards the illegal killing, trapping and trade of wild Birds in Italy. Once this assessment is complete, the Commission will decide on possible next steps as appropriate, in order to ensure compliance with the Birds Directive.

([1]) SCI IT3270017 (Po delta: main branch and Veneto delta) and SPA IT3270023 (Po delta).
([2]) See the summary prepared by the Rovigo WWF on 14.12.2012, at http://goo.gl/79K5V
([3]) I had the opportunity to assess the seriousness of the situation during a recent on-site inspection on 4.4.2013, accompanied by Massimo Benà, President of the Rovigo WWF, and Luciano Marangoni, Rovigo representative of the LIPU (Italian League for Bird Protection).
([4]) Statements to the press by the Rovigo councillor with responsibility for hunting: http://goo.gl/v5oYz
([5]) Statements to the press by Massimo Benà, President of the Rovigo WWF: http://goo.gl/nVhXh
([6]) OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006089/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(30 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Interpretazione della direttiva 2009/147/CE sugli uccelli per quanto riguarda la specie del colombo di città (Columba livia)

La *Columba livia* è inserita tra le specie di cui all'elenco dell'allegato II, parte A della direttiva «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE. Si tratta, quindi, di una delle «specie di uccelli viventi naturalmente allo stato selvatico» delle quali, ai sensi dell'articolo 1, si occupa la direttiva stessa e delle quali si prefigge la conservazione, la gestione e la regolamentazione.

Di *Columba livia*, tuttavia, esistono alcune varianti tutte riconducibili al medesimo nome scientifico, tra cui la cosiddetta variante domestica, che prospera nei centri urbani.

Trattasi di una variante caratterizzata da taglia corporea normalmente più robusta, con forme più tozze e pesanti. Altri aspetti morfologici peculiari sono il becco più potente, le cere nasali più sviluppate e il capo in genere più grande e allungato, con un profilo che scende meno bruscamente in avanti. Quanto alla tonalità e alla disposizione dei colori del mantello, nella variante domestica della *Columba livia* può essere presente ogni possibile combinazione di livrea. Nella *Columba livia* propriamente detta, invece, il mantello è grigio lavagna con due barre alari nere e coda con banda nera terminale ([1]).

In merito alla variante domestica della *Columba livia*, sono noti da tempo l'esistenza di una diatriba in seno alla letteratura scientifica e il dibattito giuridico in merito allo *status* da attribuirsi alla stessa.

Secondo una prima tesi, il fatto di vivere stabilmente in ambito urbano, giovarsi dell'intervento umano per alimentarsi (somministrazione diretta di cibo e abbandono di rifiuti urbani), ricoverarsi e riprodursi porterebbe a far ritenere che tali animali, nella loro variante domestica, perdano lo *status* di uccelli selvatici.

Una seconda tesi è quella che sostiene al contrario che trattasi in ogni caso dell'uccello selvatico *Columba livia*, senza dare alcun rilievo al fatto che, nella sua variante domestica presente nelle città, tale uccello sia solito avvalersi del contributo dato dall'uomo per soddisfare i suoi bisogni.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione chiarire quale delle due tesi ritiene essere quella corretta?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 agosto 2013)

Il piccione selvatico (*Columba livia*) è una specie autoctona soggetta alla tutela prevista dalla direttiva 2009/147/CE ([2]) (direttiva «Uccelli»). Già da lungo tempo esemplari addomesticati fuggiti dalle colombaie di allevamento si sono inselvatichiti incrociandosi con popolazioni selvatiche. Gli esemplari allevati in cattività non rientrano nel campo di applicazione della direttiva. Conseguentemente si dovrebbe ritenere che i piccioni selvatici rientrino nel campo di applicazione della direttiva «Uccelli», salvo ove sia dimostrato che si tratta di esemplari allevati in cattività.

([1]) Cfr. Descrizione presente nella disamina giuridica sullo status attuale del colombo (Columba livia) variante domestica dell'I.N.F.U (Istituto Nazionale per la gestione della Fauna Urbana), presente al link http://goo.gl/vTFId.

([2]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006089/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Interpretation of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) with regard to the urban pigeon (Columba livia)

Columba livia is included among the species listed in part A of Annex II to the Birds Directive (2009/247EC). It is thus one of the 'species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state' that the directive is intended to help protect, manage and control, in accordance with Article 1.

The scientific name *Columba livia* covers a number of different varieties of pigeon, including the feral pigeon, which thrives in urban areas.

Feral pigeons are normally stockier and heavier than other pigeons. They have more powerful beaks, larger nasal cavities and larger and more elongated heads, with a profile that slopes down more gently to the beak. The plumage of the feral variety of *Columba livia* varies widely in both colour and pattern, as opposed to that of the wild variety of the species, which is pale grey, with two black bars on each wing and a black bar at the end of the tail ([1]).

There has long been fierce disagreement in scientific circles and among legal experts as to the status of the feral variety of *Columba livia*.

Some argue that the fact that these birds live in urban environments and take advantage of the presence of human beings to find food (either being fed directly or feeding off urban waste) and shelter and reproduce means that they may not be deemed wild birds.

Others argue that *Columba livia* is, and remains at all times, a species of wild bird, regardless of the fact that the feral variety of the species that is to be found in urban areas relies heavily on the input of human beings in meeting its daily needs.

Which of the two views does the Commission consider to be correct?

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

The Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) is a native species that falls under the scope of protection of Directive 2009/147/EC ([2]) ('Birds Directive'). Domesticated specimens have escaped from breeding installations for a long time and constitute feral populations which have interbred with wild populations. Captive bred specimens do not fall under the scope of the directive. Therefore, unless it can be demonstrated that they are captive bred, feral pigeons should be considered as falling under the scope of the Birds Directive.

([1]) See the description given in the paper on the current legal status of the feral variety of Columba livia published by the INFU (Italian Urban Wildlife Institute), which is available, in Italian only, at http://goo.gl/vTFId.

([2]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006090/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(30 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Violazione della direttiva 2001/42/CE — mancata verifica ambientale strategica del piano cave provinciale di Sondrio

Con delibera del consiglio provinciale n. 15, del 18 marzo 2002, è stato adottato il piano cave della provincia di Sondrio, successivamente approvato dalla regione Lombardia ([1]).

La provincia di Sondrio ha intrapreso la revisione del piano cave già nel 2007 ([2]) e, con una successiva delibera della giunta provinciale ([3]), nel 2008 ha avviato la valutazione ambientale strategica (VAS) per la revisione del piano cave — settore inerti — che rientra nei settori definiti dalla direttiva europea 2001/42/CE.

Da allora, però, non è stata effettuata alcuna VAS e valutazione delle qualità agricole, ambientali e paesaggistiche delle aree interessate. Tuttavia, la regione Lombardia ha ugualmente approvato il piano cave provinciale di Sondrio per il settore sabbia e ghiaia, che prevede ben 15 ambiti territoriali estrattivi (ATE) per una superficie occupata di circa 100 ettari, praticamente tutti nel fondovalle.

Quasi la metà di questi ambiti è concentrata vicino al corso dell'Adda, tra Bianzone, Teglio e Castello Dell'Acqua, in zone di elevato pregio agricolo, ambientale e paesaggistico.

Per giustificare l'omissione della VAS la provincia di Sondrio ha affermato, con un comunicato stampa del 2 marzo 2012, che il piano cave vigente «non doveva essere assoggettato alla procedura di valutazione ambientale strategica in quanto la seconda parte del decreto legge n. 152 del 3 aprile 2006, concernente le procedure per la VAS, era entrata in vigore solo in data 31 luglio 2007».

Tale decisione è stata, a giusto titolo, contestata dal Comitato per la tutela e la valorizzazione del territorio agricolo di Bianzone, che si occupa specificamente di tutelare questo territorio, in quanto l'articolo 13 della direttiva 2001/42/CE prevede esplicitamente che siano sottoposti a VAS anche i piani approvati dopo il 21 luglio 2006, ancorché avviati prima del 21 luglio 2004.

La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione sopra descritta, che arreca grave danno alla tutela ambientale di un'intera provincia caratterizzata da zone di elevato pregio agricolo, ambientale e paesaggistico? Non ritiene utile, necessario e urgente verificare se sussiste una violazione del diritto comunitario derivante dalla mancata VAS per il piano cave provinciale di Sondrio?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 luglio 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole dell'omissione delle valutazioni ambientali strategiche (VAS) a norma della direttiva 2001/42/CE ([4]) per i piani cave provinciali della Lombardia (Varese e Bergamo), che riflette il recepimento tardivo della direttiva in Italia.

Nel quadro dell'indagine PILOT 2706/11/ENVI la Commissione ha chiesto informazioni sull'applicazione della direttiva VAS a tutti i piani cave provinciali della Lombardia, anche per la provincia di Sondrio.

([1]) Deliberazione del consiglio regionale del 20 marzo 2007 n. VIII/357, pubblicata sul Bollettino Ufficiale della Regione Lombardia in data 15 maggio 2007.
([2]) Deliberazione della Giunta Provinciale n. 277 del 3 ottobre 2007.
([3]) Delibera della Giunta Provinciale n. 186 del 16 giugno 2008.
([4]) GU L 197 del 21.7.2001, pag. 30.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006090/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Breach of Directive 2001/42/EC — failure to carry out a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) on the quarry plan for the Province of Sondrio

Provincial Council Decision No 15 of 18 March 2002 adopted the quarry plan for the Province of Sondrio, which was subsequently approved by the Regional Government of Lombardy ([1]).

The Provincial Government of Sondrio set about revising the quarry plan in 2007 ([2]) and, with a subsequent Provincial Council decision ([3]), in 2008 it began the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) for the revision of the quarry plan — aggregate sector — which is among the sectors established by Directive 2001/42/EC.

Since then, however, no SEA has been carried out nor has an assessment of the agricultural, environmental and landscape features of the areas concerned. However, the Regional Government of Lombardy has also approved Sondrio's provincial quarry plan for the sand and gravel sector, which provides for some 15 territorial mining areas (ATEs) covering an area of around 100 hectares, almost entirely on the valley floor.

Almost half of these areas are concentrated near the course of the River Adda, between Bianzone, Teglio and Castello dell'Acqua, in areas of great agricultural, environmental and landscape value.

In justification of the failure to carry out the SEA, the Provincial Government of Sondrio, in a press release dated 2 March 2012, stated that the current quarry plan did not have to undergo the strategic environmental assessment procedure as the second part of Decree-Law No 152 of 3 April 2006 on SEA procedures had only entered into force on 31 July 2007.

This decision was rightly disputed by the Committee for the protection and promotion of the farming area of Bianzone, which is responsible specifically for protecting that area, since Article 13 of Directive 2001/42/EC explicitly lays down that even plans approved after 21 July 2006 are subject to SEAs, even if started before 21 July 2004.

Is the Commission aware of the above situation, which is seriously harming the environmental protection of an entire province that is typified by areas of great agricultural, environmental and landscape value? Does it think it should check as a matter of necessity and urgency whether any EC law is being breached as a result of the failure to carry out an SEA on the quarry plan for the Province of Sondrio?

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

The Commission is aware of the absence of Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) in accordance with Directive 2001/42/EC ([4]) for Provincial Quarry Plans in Lombardy (Varese and Bergamo), reflecting the late transposition of the directive in Italy.

In the context of the existing PILOT 2706/11/ENVI, the Commission has requested information on the application of the SEA Directive to all Provincial Quarry Plans in Lombardy, including for the Province of Sondrio.

([1]) Regional Council Decision No VIII/357 of 20 March 2007, published in the Official Gazette of the Regional Government of Lombardy on 15 May 2007.
([2]) Provincial Council Decision No 277 of 3 October 2007.
([3]) Provincial Council Decision No 186 of 16 June 2008.
([4]) OJ L 197, 21.7.2001, p.30.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006092/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(30 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Aumento dei casi di Epatite A

In Italia è scattata l'allerta sui casi di Epatite A. Una circolare del Ministero della Salute datata 23 maggio 2013 denuncia un aumento del 70 % dei casi riscontrati nel nostro Paese nel solo periodo marzo-maggio 2013.

Le autorità individuano come probabile vettore del virus i frutti di bosco importati da Paesi quali Bulgaria, Polonia, Serbia e Canada.

1. È La Commissione al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. Le risulta che in altri Stati membri si sia riscontrato un aumento anomalo di casi di Epatite A?

3. Intende essa porre in essere un'indagine al fine di appurare le cause scatenanti di quanto sopra descritto e innalzare il livello di guardia in tutta l'UE?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(16 luglio 2013)

1. La Commissione è al corrente dei casi di epatite A che sono stati notificati attraverso il sistema dell'Unione europea di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi e attraverso il sistema dell'Unione europea di allarme rapido e di reazione per la prevenzione ed il controllo delle malattie trasmissibili.

2. Per quanto concerne l'aumento anomalo dei casi di epatite A in altri Stati membri, oltre all'Italia la Germania, i Paesi Bassi e la Polonia hanno notificato 15 casi confermati in laboratorio di epatite A.

3. Per quanto riguarda le indagini, tutti i 15 casi confermati in laboratorio si riferiscono a soggetti che si trovavano nel Norditalia durante il periodo di esposizione. Dato che i soggetti interessati non sono usciti dall'Unione durante il periodo di potenziale esposizione, si presume che si tratti di un focolaio con esposizione attualmente in corso in uno Stato membro dell'UE. Dalle indagini preliminari a livello epidemiologico e ambientale risulta che il veicolo d'infezione più probabile per il focolaio in questione sia costituito da una miscela di bacche congelate. Basandosi sulle informazioni fornite attraverso il sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi, la Commissione sorveglia ogni giorno i risultati delle analisi di laboratorio su possibili fonti alimentari, il rintracciamento dei possibili alimenti implicati e gli interventi delle autorità competenti. La Commissione continuerà a monitorare gli eventi in stretto contatto con gli Stati membri e con il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie ([1]).

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/news/Lists/News/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?List=32e43ee8-e230-4424-a783-85742124029a&ID=928&RootFolder=%2Fen%2Fpress%2Fnews%2FLists%2FNews.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006092/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Rise in the number of cases of hepatitis A

In Italy, the alarm has been raised over cases of hepatitis A. According to a Ministry of Health circular dated 23 May 2013, the number of cases detected in Italy went up by 70% between March and May 2013 alone.

The authorities have identified berries imported from Bulgaria, Poland, Serbia and Canada as the likely vector of the virus.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation?

2. Have any other Member States seen an unusual rise in the number of cases of hepatitis A?

3. Does the Commission plan to conduct an investigation to determine the causes of the above situation and raise the level of protection throughout the EU?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the outbreaks of Hepatitis A that have been notified through the European Union Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed and through the European Union Early Warning and Response System for communicable diseases.

2. Concerning the rise of unusual cases in other Member States, 15 laboratory-confirmed cases of Hepatitis A have been reported by Germany, the Netherlands and Poland, in addition to Italy.

3. Concerning the investigation, all of the 15 laboratory confirmed cases had travelled to northern Italy during the exposure period. As the cases did not have a travel history outside the Union within their period of potential exposure, this suggests an outbreak with exposure currently occurring in one EU Member State. Preliminary epidemiological and environmental investigations indicate mixed frozen berries as the most likely vehicle of infection for this outbreak. On the basis of information provided through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, the Commission overviews on a daily basis the outcome of laboratory analyses on possible food sources, the tracing of possible implicated food and the actions taken by competent authorities. The Commission will continue to monitor the event in close contact with the Member States and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control ([1]).

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/news/Lists/News/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?List=32e43ee8-e230-4424-a783-85742124029a&ID=928&RootFolder=%2Fen%2Fpress%2Fnews%2FLists%2FNews.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006095/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(30 mai 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre le cynips du châtaignier et maintien de la castanéiculture dans le sud-est de la France

Le cynips (dryocosmus kuriphilus) est considéré comme étant le principal ravageur du châtaignier au niveau mondial. La production de galles par ce ravageur peut entraîner une baisse de 60 à 80 % de la production fruitière ainsi que la mortalité des rameaux touchés, des branches, voire des arbres pour de très forts taux d'infestation.

Introduit au Japon en 1941, il a ensuite été identifié en 1963 en Corée du Sud puis en 1974 dans le sud-est des États Unis et en 2002 dans la région de Cuneo au nord-ouest de l'Italie dans le Piémont. En 2006, il est détecté dans la vallée de la Roya dans les Alpes maritimes, puis en 2010 dans le Var, où il constitue aujourd'hui une menace pour l'avenir de la castanéiculture.

— La Commission pourrait-elle faire état des résultats et des conclusions concernant le cynips dans les deux projets financés au titre du 7e programme-cadre de recherche et de développement «Increasing Sustainability of European Forests: Modelling for Security Against Invasive Pests and Pathogens under Climate Change (Isefor)» et «Enhancement of pest risk analysis techniques (Pratique)»?

— En l'absence de lutte chimique efficace contre le cynips, la Commission compte-t-elle soutenir la lutte biologique par l'introduction du parasitoïde nommé Torymus?

— Quelles mesures la Commission prévoit-elle pour assurer la sensibilisation des producteurs, le maintien et le développement des productions locales de châtaignes ainsi que la survie des exploitations castanéicoles?

— S'agissant des instruments législatifs communautaires, comment la question du cynips sera-t-elle traitée dans le cadre de la future politique agricole commune, du régime phytosanitaire révisé et du nouvel instrument de lutte contre les espèces envahissantes?

Réponse donnée par Mme Geoghegan-Quinn au nom de la Commission
(19 juillet 2013)

Les projets Isefor et Pratique ([1]) financés au titre du 7e PC ([2]) visent à améliorer les techniques d'analyse du risque phytosanitaire et à concevoir un logiciel de modélisation permettant de prévoir les zones prochainement à risque. Ces projets, associés à des outils de diagnostic solides et peu coûteux (développés dans le cadre d'autres projets du 7e PC comme, par exemple, QBOL ([3])), facilitent la détection et l'éradication rapides des ravageurs. En principe, les détails des résultats expérimentaux sont protégés par des DPI ([4]) et les éléments livrables sont rendus publics sur le site web des projets.

La directive 2009/128/CE ([5]) prévoit que les États membres prennent les mesures nécessaires pour promouvoir une lutte contre les ennemis des cultures à faible apport en pesticides, en privilégiant les méthodes non chimiques. Par ailleurs, les principes généraux de lutte intégrée contre les ravageurs sont définis à l'annexe III de ladite directive, qui, en vertu de l'article 55 du règlement nº 1107/2009 ([6]), sera appliquée par tous les utilisateurs professionnels d'ici à janvier 2014.

Comme indiqué dans sa communication intitulée «La biodiversité, notre assurance-vie et notre capital naturel — stratégie de l'UE à l'horizon 2020» ([7]), la Commission élabore actuellement une proposition législative pour la prévention et la gestion de l'introduction et de la propagation d'espèces exotiques envahissantes.

([1]) Septième programme-cadre pour des activités de recherche, de développement technologique et de démonstration (7e PC, 2007-2013).
([2]) Pratique: https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/pratique/ et ISEFOR: http://www.isefor.com/ Pour en savoir plus, voir le catalogue intermédiaire des projets du 7e PC: http://ec.europa.eu/research/bioeconomy/pdf/catalogue_of_projects_web_small.pdf
([3]) QBOL: http://www.qbol.org/en/qbol.htm
([4]) Droits de propriété intellectuelle.
([5]) Directive 2009/128/CE sur une utilisation des pesticides compatible avec le développement durable (JO L 309 du 24.11.2009, p. 71).
([6]) Règlement (CE) n° 1107/2009 concernant la mise sur le marché des produits phytopharmaceutiques (JO L 309 du 24.11.2009, p. 1).
([7]) COM(2011) 244 du 3.5.2011.

Dans leurs programmes opérationnels, les organisations de producteurs de fruits et légumes peuvent prévoir une assurance-récolte pour couvrir les pertes dues à des catastrophes naturelles, aux ravageurs et aux maladies; elles peuvent également créer des fonds de mutualisation pour stabiliser les revenus des producteurs. Ces instruments sont maintenus dans l'accord politique sur la nouvelle PAC. Les modifications proposées au régime phytosanitaire par l'intermédiaire du nouveau règlement en la matière permettront d'accroître le niveau de protection contre les nouveaux ravageurs, mais pas ceux qui sont déjà établis dans l'UE comme c'est le cas du «Dryocosmus kuriphilus». Depuis 2006, ce ravageur fait l'objet de mesures d'urgence destinées à éviter d'autres introductions en provenance de pays tiers et à éradiquer sa propagation ([8]). Ces mesures font actuellement l'objet d'un réexamen.

([8]) Décision 2006/464/CE de la Commission du 27 juin 2006 relative à des mesures provisoires d'urgence destinées à éviter l'introduction et la propagation dans la Communauté de l'organisme Dryocosmus kuriphilus Yasumatsu (JO L 183 du 5.7.2006, p. 29).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006095/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Combating the chestnut gall wasp and supporting chestnut growing in south-east France

The chestnut gall wasp (*Dryocosmus kuriphilus*) is considered the worst chestnut pest in the world. The production of galls by this pest can cause nut production to fall by 60 to 80% and kill off affected branches, boughs, and even whole trees when there is a very heavy infestation.

The chestnut gall wasp was introduced into Japan in 1941 and was then identified in South Korea in 1963, then in the south-eastern United States in 1974 and in Cuneo in the Piedmont region of north-west Italy in 2002. In 2006, it was found in the Roya valley in the department of Alpes-Maritime, then in the department of Var in 2010, where it is now threatening the future of chestnut growing.

— Could the Commission state what the results and conclusions are of the two projects funded under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development, 'Increasing Sustainability of European Forests: Modelling for Security Against Invasive Pests and Pathogens under Climate Change (ISEFOR)' and 'Enhancement of pest risk analysis techniques (PRATIQUE)', with regard to the chestnut gall wasp?

— Given that there is no effective way to combat the chestnut gall wasp by chemical means, does the Commission plan to support combating it biologically by introducing the Torymus parasitoid?

— What measures is the Commission planning to raise awareness among producers, support and develop local chestnut production as well as to ensure the survival of chestnut farms?

— In terms of EU legislative instruments, how will the chestnut gall wasp issue be dealt with in the future common agricultural policy, the revised plant health regime and the new instrument for combating invasive species?

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

FP7 ([1]) projects ISEFOR and PRATIQUE ([2]) seek out pest risk assesment and modelling software enabling prediction of areas at risk. Combined with robust, inexpensive diagnostic tools (generated by other FP7 projects, e.g. QBOL ([3])), it facilitates quick detection and eradication of invasive pests. Details of the experimental results are normally under IPR ([4]) and public release on the project deliverables is normally made available on the project website.

Directive 2009/128/EC ([5]) provides for Member States to put in place measures to promote low pesticides-input giving priority to non-chemical methods of pest management. Moreover, general principles on Integrated Pest Management are laid down in its Annex III, which in compliance with Article 55 of Regulation 1107/2009 ([6]), will be applied by January 2014 by all professional users.

As outlined in the communication on an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ([7]), the Commission is developing a legislative proposal for the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species.

([1]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([2]) PRATIQUE : https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/pratique/ and ISEFOR : http://www.isefor.com/ For more information, see FP7InterimCatalogue: http://ec.europa.eu/research/bioeconomy/pdf/catalogue_of_projects_web_small.pdf
([3]) QBOL: http://www.qbol.org/en/qbol.htm
([4]) Intellectual Property Rights.
([5]) Directive 2009/128/EC on sustainable use of pesticides, OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 71.
([6]) Regulation 1107/2009 on placing of plant protection products on the market, OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([7]) COM(2011) 244, 3.5.2011.

Producer organisations in the fruit and vegetables sector may include in their operational programme harvest insurance to cover losses caused by natural disasters, pests and diseases, and set up mutual funds to stabilise producers' income. These tools are maintained in in the political agreement reached on the new CAP. The changes proposed to the plant health regime through the new Plant Health Regulation will increase the level of protection against new pests, not those already established in the EU like 'Dryocosmus kuriphilus'. This pest is since 2006 the subject of emergency measures to prevent additional introductions from third countries and further spreading ([8]), which are now being reviewed.

([8]) Commission Decision 2006/464/EC on provisional measures to prevent the introduction into and spread within the Community of Dryocosmus kuriphilus Yasumatsu, OJ L183/29, 5.7.2006, p. 1-4.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006096/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(30 mai 2013)

Objet: Traçabilité de la viande: vers la mise en place d'un code qualité européen

Suite au scandale de la viande de cheval qui a terni l'image de l'industrie agroalimentaire, la France envisage de prendre des mesures pour améliorer la traçabilité de la viande.

Lors d'une réunion avec les professionnels du secteur, il a été proposé de créer dès septembre prochain un «code qualité», notamment en ce qui concerne le minerai, composé de résidus de viande bas de gamme mêlés de collagène et de graisse, en vrac et congelé, et utilisé par les industriels dans la préparation de plats cuisinés.

Ce code qualité obligerait les traders du secteur à respecter des règles précises en matière de traçabilité et de qualité.

Le ministre délégué français à l'agroalimentaire a déclaré qu'il souhaitait aboutir à cet accord au niveau européen.

La Commission a-t-elle envisagé de participer à la mise en place d'un tel agrément?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(11 juillet 2013)

En vertu de la législation alimentaire générale ([1]) de l'UE, la traçabilité est une exigence globale déjà imposée aujourd'hui à tous les produits alimentaires. Des dispositions d'application détaillées ont été adoptées par la Commission pour toutes les denrées alimentaires d'origine animale ([2]). Elles imposent de mettre à jour et de conserver quotidiennement une description précise des denrées alimentaires, un numéro de référence permettant d'identifier le lot ou le chargement, son volume ou sa quantité, le nom et l'adresse de l'entreprise alimentaire d'où les denrées ont été expédiées et les coordonnées du destinataire.

Les négociants en denrées alimentaires sont des opérateurs du secteur alimentaire et doivent respecter ces dispositions d'application.

La Commission ne cautionne pas les lignes directrices nationales en matière de bonnes pratiques d'hygiène mais en publie un répertoire ([3]) lorsqu'elles sont transmises par les États membres.

([1]) Article 18 du règlement (CE) n° 178/2002 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 28 janvier 2002 établissant les principes généraux et les prescriptions générales de la législation alimentaire, instituant l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments et fixant des procédures relatives à la sécurité des denrées alimentaires (JO L 31 du 1.2.2002, p. 1).

([2]) Règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 931/2011 de la Commission du 19 septembre 2011 relatif aux exigences de traçabilité définies par le règlement (CE) n° 178/2002 du Parlement européen et du Conseil en ce qui concerne les denrées alimentaires d'origine animale. .

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/register_national_guides_en.pdf (en anglais seulement).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006096/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Traceability of meat: towards the introduction of a European quality code

In the wake of the horsemeat scandal that tarnished the image of the agro-food industry, France is planning to take steps to improve the traceability of meat.

At a meeting with industry professionals, it was proposed to create from next September a 'quality code', particularly with regard to mechanically recovered meat, which consists of low-quality leftover meat mixed with collagen and fat, in bulk and frozen, and used by manufacturers to make ready meals.

This quality code would force meat traders to comply with detailed rules on traceability and quality.

The French Deputy Minister for Agro-food has stated that he wanted this agreement to apply across Europe.

Has the Commission considered participating in the implementation of such an agreement?

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

According to the General Food Law ([1]) of the EU, traceability is already today a general requirement for all food. Detailed implementing provisions have been adopted by the Commission for all food of animal origin ([2]). They impose the updating and keeping, on a daily basis, of an accurate description of the food, a reference identifying the lot, batch or consignment, its volume or quantity, the name and address of the food business from which it was dispatched and those to whom the food is dispatched.

Food traders are food business operators and need to comply with the detailed implementing provisions.

The Commission does not endorse national guidelines to good hygiene practice but publishes a register of all these guidelines ([3]) when forwarded by Member States.

([1]) Article 18 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety (OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1).

([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 931/2011 of 19 September 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.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/register_national_guides_en.pdf

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-006097/13
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2013 m. gegužės 30 d.)

Tema: „Hercule III“ programa

2011 m. gruodžio mėn. Komisija patvirtino pasiūlymą dėl Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos reglamento dėl programos „Hercule III“, skirtos Europos Sąjungos finansinių interesų apsaugos srities veiklai skatinti.

Šią programą visiškai valdo Europos kovos su sukčiavimu tarnyba. Ji vienintelė specialiai skirta ES finansiniams interesams apsaugoti organizuojant mokymus, teikiant techninę pagalbą ir ypač stiprinant kovą su cigarečių padirbinėjimu ir kontrabanda, o tai ypač aktualu su trečiosiomis šalimis besiribojančioms valstybėms narėms.

Europos Parlamentas pritarė šiam reglamentui, tačiau kol kas Taryba nesutinka su Europos Parlamento pozicija ir jau nutraukti suplanuoti trišaliai dialogai.

— Norėčiau sužinoti, kokios yra pagrindinės šio reglamento patvirtinimo vilkinimo priežastys ir koks yra Komisijos vaidmuo šiame instituciniame derybų procese?

— Kokių veiksmų imasi ar ketina imtis Komisija, kad laiku būtų patvirtintas šis labai svarbus reglamentas ir valstybės narės galėtų tinkamai planuoti savo veiksmus bei rengtis operacijoms siekiant užkirsti kelią sukčiavimo atvejams?

A. Šemetos atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. liepos 18 d.)

1. 2012 m. lapkričio mėn. Europos Parlamento biudžeto kontrolės komitetas (CONT) priėmė Komisijos pasiūlymo dėl reglamento dėl programos „Hercule III“ ataskaitą. Ši ataskaita buvo aptarta Tarybos kovos su sukčiavimu darbo grupėje. Siekiant susitarti dėl likusių klausimų, visų pirma dėl CONT pasiūlyto deleguotųjų aktų taikymo ir dėl dotacijų bendro finansavimo procentinių dalių, buvo surengta techninio pobūdžio trišalių posėdžių, kuriuose dalyvavo CONT pranešėja M. Macovei, Tarybai pirmininkaujanti valstybė narė ir Komisija (Europos kovos su sukčiavimu tarnyba). Susitarti kol kas nepavyko, nes Taryba, kuriai pritaria ir Komisija, mano, kad, turint omenyje nurodytos programos mastą, taikant deleguotuosius aktus labai padidėtų valstybėms narėms ir Komisijai įgyvendinant šią programą tenkanti administracinė našta.

2. Komisija ir toliau aktyviai stengsis padėti daryti pažangą, kurios reikia, kad ES teisės aktų leidėjas galėtų priimti daugiametę finansinę programą.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006097/13
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Hercule III programme

In December 2011, the Commission approved the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hercule III programme to promote activities in the field of the protection of the European Union's financial interests.

This programme is managed entirely by the European Anti-Fraud Office. It is the only programme specifically aimed at protecting the EU's financial interests by organising training, providing technical assistance and, in particular, by strengthening the fight against cigarette counterfeiting and smuggling, something that is particularly relevant for Member States that share borders with third countries.

The European Parliament has approved this regulation, but the Council does not yet agree with Parliament's position and the planned tripartite dialogues have already been cancelled.

— I would like to know what the main reasons are for delaying the approval of this regulation and the Commission's role in this institutional negotiation process.

— What actions is the Commission taking, or does it intend to take, so that this very important regulation is approved in a timely manner and the Member States can plan their actions appropriately and prepare operations to stop cases of fraud?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2013)

1. The European Parliament's Budgetary Control Committee (CONT) adopted a report on the Commission's proposal for the Hercule III Regulation in November 2012. The report has been discussed in the Council's Anti-Fraud Working Group. Technical trilogue meetings took place between the rapporteur of CONT, Ms Macovei, the Presidency of the Council and the Commission (OLAF) in order to reach an agreement on the outstanding issues, in particular, the introduction by CONT of Delegated Acts as well as the co-funding percentages for grants. An agreement could not yet be reached as the Council, supported by the Commission, considers that the introduction of Delegated Acts would considerably increase the administrative burden on the Member States and the Commission for the implementation of the programme, given its size.

2. The Commission will continue to play an active role in order to facilitate progress allowing the adoption of the Multi-annual Financial Framework Programme by the EU legislator.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006098/13
do Komisji
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(30 maja 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Korekta finansowa zastosowana w odniesieniu do Polski w związku z programami rozwoju obszarów wiejskich

Komisja zastosowała korektę finansową w odniesieniu do Polski ze względu na rzekome „niedociągnięcia w kontrolach wstępnych wniosków i zatwierdzaniu planów operacyjnych w przypadku środka dla gospodarstw niskotowarowych" ([1]).

Jaki konkretnie charakter miały te „niedociągnięcia w kontrolach wstępnych wniosków i zatwierdzaniu planów operacyjnych" dotyczące beneficjentów, które rzekomo wystąpiły w latach 2004-2006?

Czy Komisja mogłaby przedstawić pełne informacje dotyczące procedury rozliczenia rachunków, w wyniku której zastosowano tę korektę finansową?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Komisja pragnie odesłać Szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi, jakich udzieliła na następujące pytania: P-04970/2013, P-004971/2013 oraz E-004976/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Komunikat prasowy Komisji z dnia 2 maja 2013 r., nr ref. IP/13/389 (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-389_pl.htm)
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006098/13
to the Commission
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Financial correction applied to Poland with regard to rural development programmes

The Commission has applied a financial correction to Poland for alleged 'deficiencies in the check of the initial application and in the approval of the business plan for the semi-subsistence farms measure' ([1]) .

What exactly was the nature of the 'deficiencies in the check of the initial application and in the approval of the business plan' for beneficiaries, which are alleged to have been taking place in the period 2004-2006?

Will the Commission please provide full information regarding the clearance of accounts procedure that led to the financial correction in question?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable member to its answer to the questions P-04970/2013, P-004971/2013 and E-004976/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Commission press release of 2 May 2013, ref. IP/13/389 (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-389_en.htm).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-006099/13
Komisijai
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2013 m. gegužės 30 d.)

Tema: Kibernetinio saugumo užtikrinimas ES mastu

Kibernetinis saugumas – iššūkis informacinėmis technologijomis pagrįstai Europos Sąjungai bei pasauliui. Deja, ši sritis – viena iš daugelio, kuriose teisinis reguliavimas nespėja su realybe. Nauji teisės aktai dar tik svarstomi ES institucijose, tuo tarpu pavienės ES valstybės patiria kibernetines atakas, kurios, nors dažniausiai organizuojamos trečiosiose šalyse, įgyvendinamos perėmus ES valstybėse narėse esančių kompiuterių kontrolę. Didžiausio Lietuvos naujienų portalo ir antro pagal dydį Lietuvos miesto savivaldybės patiriamos atakos kelia susirūpinimą dėl saugumo, ypač Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai išvakarėse.

Ar Komisija nemano, jog, kol ES institucijose svarstoma Direktyva dėl priemonių aukštam bendram tinklų ir informacinių sistemų saugumo lygiui visoje Sąjungoje užtikrinti (COM(2013)0048), būtų tikslinga imtis bent laikinų priemonių ES lygmeniu (pavyzdžiui, per Europos tinklų ir informacijos agentūrą ENISA), siekiant užtikrinti nacionalinių CERT padalinių bendradarbiavimą ir jų veiksmų koordinavimą reaguojant į incidentus, susijusius su atakomis prieš ypač svarbią IT infrastruktūrą?

N. Kroes atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. liepos 19 d.)

Komisija pritaria gerbiamos Parlamento narės nuomonei, kad svarbu ir būtina skubiai imtis veiksmų, kuriais būtų užtikrintas aukštesnio lygio kibernetinis saugumas visoje Europos Sąjungoje.

Todėl Komisija ragina Tarybą ir Europos Parlamentą skubiai priimti Komisijos pateiktą direktyvos ([1]) dėl tinklų ir informacijos saugumo pasiūlymą.

Komisija taip pat vykdo veiklą, kuria siekiama aukštesnio lygio parengties ir bendradarbiavimo Europos Sąjungoje. Apie tokią veiklą paskelbta neseniai priimtoje Europos Sąjungos kibernetinio saugumo strategijoje ([2]) ir Ypatingos svarbos informacinės infrastruktūros apsaugos veiksmų plane ([3]). Į juos įtrauktos ES kibernetinio saugumo incidentų pratybos, kuriose, remiamos Europos tinklų ir informacijos apsaugos agentūros (ENISA), dalyvauja valstybės narės ([4]), politinės valstybių narių diskusijos valstybių narių Europos forume ([5]) bei ENISA veikla, susijusi su kompiuterinių incidentų tyrimo tarnybų (CERT) baziniais reikalavimais, ([6]) ir taip valstybėms narėms padedama siekti didesnės parengties nacionaliniu lygmeniu bei tvirtesnio bendradarbiavimo. Be to, ES įsteigė Europolui priklausantį Europos kovos su elektroniniu nusikalstamumu centrą (EC3), kurio paskirtis – remti valstybes nares ir koordinuoti veiklą. Europos Sąjunga taip pat įkūrė ES institucijų, agentūrų ir įstaigų kompiuterinių incidentų tyrimo tarnybą (CERT), kad būtų apsaugotos ES institucijos, kuri glaudžiai bendradarbiauja su nacionalinėmis CERT ir pramonės sektoriumi.

Neseniai Komisija pradėjo įgyvendinti Tinklų ir informacijos apsaugos viešojo ir privačiojo sektorių platformą ([7]), kurioje valstybių narių, pramonės sektoriaus ir akademinės bendruomenės atstovai nustatys geriausią kibernetinio saugumo srities patirtį ir paskatas diegti tokią praktiką.

Komisija taip pat finansuoja bandomuosius projektus, pavyzdžiui, Pažangų kibernetinės gynybos centrą ([8]), kad būtų užtikrintas susijusių subjektų kovos su kenkėjišku programiniu kodu apkrėstų kompiuterių tinklais (angl. „botnets“) koordinavimas.

([1]) COM(2013) 48.
([2]) JOIN(2013) 1.
([3]) COM(2009) 149 ir COM(2011) 163.
([4]) Atitinkamai 2010 m. (2010 m. „CyberEurope“ pratybos: http://www.enisa.europa.eu/activities/Resilience-and-CIIP/cyber-crisis-cooperation/cyber-europe/ce2010/ce2010report) ir 2012 m. (http://www.enisa.europa.eu/activities/Resilience-and-CIIP/cyber-crisis-cooperation/cyber-europe/cyber-europe-2012/cyber-europe-2012-key-findings-report).
([5]) Pradėtas pagal COM (2009) 149.
([6]) http://www.enisa.europa.eu/activities/cert/support/baseline-capabilities.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/nis-public-private-platform-%E2%80%93-call-expression-interest.
([8]) CIP-ICT PSP-2012-6, 325188; https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/europe-bands-together-fight-against-botnets.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006099/13
to the Commission
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Safeguarding cyber security throughout the EU

Cyber security is a challenge for a European Union and world based on information technologies. Unfortunately, this area is one of many in which legal regulation fails to keep pace with reality. New legislation is still only under consideration in the EU institutions. Meanwhile, individual Member States are experiencing cyber attacks which, although mostly organised in third countries, are implemented by assuming control of computers in Member States. The attacks experienced by Lithuania's largest news portal and the second largest city municipality in the country raise concerns about security, particularly on the eve of Lithuania assuming the EU Presidency.

Does the Commission not feel that while a directive concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union is being considered in the EU institutions, it would be appropriate to at least take temporary measures at EU level (via the European Network and Information Security Agency ENISA, for instance) in order to ensure cooperation between national CERTs and the coordination of their actions when responding to incidents involving attacks against particularly important IT infrastructure?

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

The Commission shares the views of the Honourable Member on the importance and the urgency to take action to enhance the level of cybersecurity across the European Union.

For this reason, the Commission calls upon the Council and the European Parliament to swiftly adopt the Commission proposal for a directive ([1]) on network and information security.

In parallel, the Commission pursues activities to raise the level of preparedness and cooperation in the EU. Such activities are announced in the recently adopted Cybersecurity Strategy for the European Union ([2]) and in the action plan on Critical Information Infrastructure Protection ([3]) (CIIP). They include EU cybersecurity exercises to which the Member States participate ([4]) with the support of ENISA; the policy discussions among the Member States within the European Forum for Member States ([5]); and ENISA's activities on baseline requirements for CERTs ([6]), that support Member States in enhancing national preparedness and strenghtening cooperation. Furthermore, the EU has created the European Cybercrime Centre (EC) within Europol to support Member States and provide coordination. The Union has also set up a CERT for the EU institutions, agencies and bodies to protect the EU institutions, which cooperates closely with national CERTs and the industry.

Most recently, the Commission launched the NIS public-private platform ([7]) where the Member States, the industry and academia will identify best practices in the field of cybersecurity and incentives for the take-up of such practices.

The Commission is also funding pilot projects, such as the Advanced Cyber Defence Centre ([8]), to ensure coordination among relevant players in the fight against botnets.

([1]) COM(2013) 48.
([2]) JOIN(2013) 1.
([3]) COM(2009) 149 and COM(2011) 163.
([4]) Respectively in 2010 (CyberEurope 2010: http://www.enisa.europa.eu/activities/Resilience-and-CIIP/cyber-crisis-cooperation/cyber-europe/ce2010/ce2010report) and in 2012 (http://www.enisa.europa.eu/activities/Resilience-and-CIIP/cyber-crisis-cooperation/cyber-europe/cyber-europe-2012/cyber-europe-2012-key-findings-report).
([5]) Launched via COM(2009) 149.
([6]) http://www.enisa.europa.eu/activities/cert/support/baseline-capabilities
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/nis-public-private-platform-%E2%80%93-call-expression-interest
([8]) CIP-ICT PSP-2012-6, 325188. https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/europe-bands-together-fight-against-botnets

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006100/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
James Nicholson (ECR)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Civilian experts in post-war Libya

110 civilian experts from Member States are being sent to aid the reconstruction of post-war Libya as part of a two-year secondment led by Antti Hartikainen.

Will the Vice-President/High Representative detail which Member States the experts come from and outline what their primary roles and responsibilities in Libya will be?

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

EUBAM Libya was launched on 22 May 2013 ([1]). The maximum strength of the mission is 111 experts. The first Call for Contributions was finalised beginning of June. Selected candidates will soon join in Tripoli the people initially composing the core team of the mission. The personnel of the mission will then be originating from 14 different Member States (BE, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, MT, PT, SE, UK). Further deployments will be carried out after a thorough assessment of the political and security situation on the ground, as well as the absorption capacity of the Libyan authorities.

EUBAM is a civilian mission with no executive powers. The headquarters is in Tripoli although its work will benefit all the country's borders. Within this framework, the strategic objective is to support the Libyan authorities to develop capacity for enhancing the security of their land, sea and air borders in the short term, and to develop a broader Integrated Border Management (IBM) strategy in the long term, in accordance with international standards and best practices. In practice, the work will be carried out through training and mentoring the relevant Libyan agencies as well as advising the Libyan authorities on the development of a national IBM strategy.

([1]) Due to the security rating in Libya (CRITICAL), detailed information on numbers and date of deployment are not included.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-006102/13
aan de Commissie
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(30 mei 2013)

Betreft: Salarissen EU-ambtenaren

Op de „Conference of Presidents" van 28 mei jongstleden verzocht ik de Commissie om eindelijk opheldering te geven ten aanzien van de salarissen van EU-ambtenaren. Zoals u weet, heb ik al meerdere malen hierom verzocht.

U gaf ter vergadering aan het onderwerp interessant te vinden en mij graag schriftelijk van antwoorden te voorzien, maar het op dit moment niet te willen behandelen. Daarom hierbij wederom een verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord.

Zoals u wellicht weet, is het salaris van de Nederlandse Minister-President vastgesteld op 144 000 euro bruto. Ik heb van de Nederlandse Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken reeds vernomen dat, uitgaande van dit brutobedrag, 3 000 EU-ambtenaren boven dit salaris zitten.

Aangezien voor EU-ambtenaren echter een aanzienlijk lagere belastingdruk geldt, en zij gebruik kunnen maken van allerhande vergoedingen en potjes, schept het een realistischer beeld om een netto-nettovergelijking te maken tussen salarissen van EU-ambtenaren en de Nederlandse Premier.

Ik zou u dan ook vriendelijk willen vragen om voor eens en altijd uitsluitsel te geven op de volgende vraag:

Kunt u mij vertellen hoeveel EU-ambtenaren netto meer krijgen uitgekeerd dan de Nederlandse Minister-President netto krijgt uitgekeerd, rekening houdend met alle factoren, waaronder belastingdruk, vergoedingen en toelagen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(3 juli 2013)

De voorschriften inzake salarissen, toelagen en belastingen van ambtenaren en andere personeelsleden van de EU zijn transparant en openbaar. In artikel 66 van het personeelsstatuut zijn de maandelijkse brutosalarissen per rang vastgesteld. Het aantal toegestane ambten per rang is voor alle EU-instellingen vastgelegd in lijsten.

De salaristabel voor EU-ambtenaren is in overeenstemming met die van andere internationale organisaties, nationale diplomatieke diensten en overheidsdiensten in sommige lidstaten. Waar nodig voor bepaalde personeelscategorieën en voor bepaalde voordelen die achterhaald kunnen lijken, wordt met het voorstel van de Commissie van 2011 (COM(2011)890) gehoor gegeven aan de toegenomen roep om efficiëntie en besparingen, zonder daarbij afbreuk te doen aan het vermogen van de EU-instellingen om resultaten te bieden.

Vergelijkingen maken zonder een geschikte methodologie en zonder volledige transparantie van alle partijen, inclusief gegevens met betrekking tot salarissen en voordelen van personeelsleden in permanente vertegenwoordigingen, draagt niet bij aan een pragmatische discussie. Er bestaan voornamelijk verschillen in de financiële en niet-financiële beloningselementen en in de toepassing van belastingregelingen, zoals mogelijke aftrekposten, bijvoorbeeld voor hypotheken. Vergelijkingen tussen de beloning van één van de 27 staatshoofden of regeringsleiders en die van EU-ambtenaren zijn niet gepast en zouden het verschil in statuut tussen een ambtenaar en de bekleder van een politiek ambt niet weerspiegelen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006102/13
to the Commission
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Salaries of EU officials

At the meeting of the Conference of Presidents on 28 May 2013, I asked the Commission finally to shed light on the salaries of EU officials. As the Commission knows, I have already requested this a number of times.

At the meeting, the Commission stated that it considered the subject to be of interest, and that it would be happy to give me answers in writing, but it was not willing to deal with the subject at that moment. I am therefore again requesting an answer in writing.

As the Commission may be aware, the salary of the Dutch Prime Minister is EUR 144 000 gross. I have already heard from the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs that, on the basis of this gross amount, 3 000 EU officials are earning more than the Dutch Prime Minister.

As EU officials pay considerably less tax and have the benefit of numerous allowances, a more realistic picture may be obtained by comparing the net salaries of EU officials with that of the Dutch Prime Minister.

I should therefore like to ask you once and for all to answer the following question:

Can the Commission tell me how many EU officials earn more net than the Dutch Prime Minister does, taking all factors into account, including taxation and allowances? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

The rules on salaries, allowances and taxes of EU officials and agents are transparent and publicly available. Article 66 of the SR provides monthly gross salaries for each grade. Establishment plans for all EU institutions provide numbers of authorised posts per grade.

The salary grid for EU officials is in line with those of other international organisations, national diplomatic services and some Member States' home public services. Where necessary for certain categories of staff and for certain benefits that may look outdated, the Commission proposal of 2011 (COM(2011)890) replies to an increased need for efficiency and savings, while not harming the EU institutions' ability to deliver results.

Making comparisons without an appropriate methodology and a full transparency from all parties, including data on remuneration and benefits of staff in permanent representations would not contribute to any pragmatic discussion. Differences exist particularly in the financial and non-financial elements of remuneration and the application of tax regimes such as the possibility for deductions, e.g. of mortgages. Comparisons between the remuneration of one out of 27 Heads of Governments or Heads of States and those of EU officials is not appropriate and would not reflect the difference in status between an official and the holder of a political office.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-006103/13
à la Commission
Isabelle Thomas (S&D)
(30 mai 2013)

Objet: Erasmus pour tous

La réforme des programmes de mobilité, Erasmus pour tous, coïncide avec les discussions en cours sur le cadre financier pluriannuel 2014-2020. Selon le projet de cadre financier pluriannuel, adopté par le Conseil, le budget prévu pour le programme «Erasmus pour tous» ne progresserait pas de 72 %, comme suggéré dans la proposition initiale de la Commission, mais de 47 % seulement.

En moyenne, quel est le coût de revient, par étudiant, pour l'Union européenne, d'une bourse de mobilité? Quelle somme l'étudiant touchera-t-il de la part de l'Union européenne?

En moyenne, quel est le coût de revient, par étudiant, pour l'Union européenne, d'une facilité de garantie de prêt? Quelle somme l'étudiant touchera-t-il de la part de l'Union européenne?

Sur la base des coûts moyens, combien de bourses pourraient être constituées si le projet «instrument de facilité de garantie de prêt» était abandonné et ses moyens affectés aux bourses de mobilité?

Réponse donnée par M^me^Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(3 juillet 2013)

Dans le cadre de la garantie de prêt proposée au titre du programme Erasmus pour tous, le coût unitaire d'une action de mobilité au niveau des crédits d'enseignement financée par une bourse est estimé à 2 380 euros et celui d'une mobilité aux fins de l'obtention d'un diplôme à 2 660 euros. Ces chiffres toutefois ne sont pas comparables. Le coût d'une action de mobilité au niveau des crédits couvre en moyenne une période de six mois seulement, contre 12 à 24 mois pour une mobilité aux fins de l'obtention d'un diplôme. Si ces différences dans la durée des études sont prises en compte, le coût mensuel pour une mobilité au niveau des crédits s'élèverait à environ 397 euros contre environ 148 euros dans le cas d'une mobilité au niveau des diplômes.

L'effet de levier — consistant à utiliser le budget de l'UE pour mobiliser un financement auprès des institutions financières — explique le coût mensuel nettement inférieur d'une mobilité au niveau des diplômes soutenue par la garantie de prêt aux étudiants. L'abandon du mécanisme de garantie de prêts aux étudiants entraînerait une perte nettement plus élevée de financement global pour la mobilité des étudiants que la simple suppression de l'élément budgétaire de l'UE. Un investissement de l'UE de 881 millions d'euros dans le mécanisme de garantie de prêts aux étudiants permettrait de mobiliser un montant supplémentaire de 4,5 milliards d'euros. La renonciation à la contribution de l'UE de 881 millions d'euros réduirait de 5,4 milliards d'euros le financement disponible pour soutenir la mobilité aux fins de l'obtention d'un diplôme

La contribution de l'UE de 881 millions d'euros devrait rendre possible 330 000 actions de mobilité à des fins d'obtention de diplômes grâce au mécanisme de garantie de prêts aux étudiants; à l'inverse, 123 000 actions de mobilité pour suivre une formation complète pourraient être engagées si ce montant était converti en bourses. Il est important de souligner que le mécanisme de garantie de prêts aidera les étudiants qui ont le plus besoin d'une aide financière, à savoir ceux qui participent à des actions de mobilité en vue de l'obtention d'un diplôme complet, en leur accordant un prêt pouvant aller jusqu'à 12 000 euros pour un programme d'un an et jusqu'à 18 000 euros pour un programme de deux ans. Par conséquent, le fait de remplacer un soutien à long terme par un appui à court terme en faveur de la mobilité au niveau des crédits, ne permet pas de régler le problème.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006103/13
to the Commission
Isabelle Thomas (S&D)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Erasmus for All

The merging of the EU's educational mobility programmes into Erasmus for All is taking place within the discussions on the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020. Under the draft multiannual financial framework adopted by the Council, the budget earmarked for the Erasmus for All programme would not be increased by 72%, as in the Commission's initial proposal, but only by 47%.

What is the cost price, per student, of a mobility grant to the European Union? What amount will a student receive from the European Union?

On average, what is the cost price, per student, of a loan guarantee facility to the European Union? What amount will a student receive from the European Union?

At average costs, how many grants could be awarded if the loan guarantee facility instrument were scrapped and the money invested in it put towards mobility grants?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2013)

The proposed loan guarantee for Erasmus for All estimates the unit cost of a grant-funded credit mobility at EUR 2.380 and the unit cost of a degree mobility at EUR 2.660. However, those figures are not comparable. The cost of a credit mobility covers on average a period of only six months; a degree mobility would cover between 12 to 24 months. If these differences in the durationof study are taken into account, the cost per month for a credit mobility would amount to around EUR 397, as compared to around EUR 148 for a degree mobility.

The leverage effect — using the EU budget to unlock funding from financial institutions — explains the substantially lower cost per month of a degree mobility supported by the student loan guarantee. Scrapping the student loan guarantee facility would result in a much higher loss of overall funding for student mobility than would the simple removal of the EU budget element. An EU investment of EUR 881 million in the student loan guarantee facility would leverage a further EUR 4.5 billion. Scrapping the EU contribution of EUR 881 million would reduce the funding available to support degree mobility by EUR 5.4 billion.

The EU contribution of EUR 881 million should enable 330 000 degree mobilities via the student loan guarantee facility; alternatively it could support 123 000 full-programme mobilities if this sum were transformed into grants. It is important to stress that the loan guarantee facility will support students who face the most acute financing need — those pursuing mobility which leads to a full degree, with access to funding of up to EUR 12 000 for a 1-year programme and up to EUR 18 000 for a 2-year programme. Therefore replacing longer-term support with short-term support for credit mobility does not address this problem.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-006104/13
til Kommissionen
Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL)
(30. maj 2013)

Om: ILO's underkendelse af den svenske Laval-lov

Set i lyset af ILO's underkendelse af den svenske Laval-lov, bedes Kommissionen oplyse, hvad den har tænkt sig at gøre for at forhindre, at EU-lovgivningen påtvinger medlemslandene at vedtage lovgivning i strid med ILO-konventionen?

Mere generelt bedes Kommissionen oplyse, hvordan den forholder sig til de generelle kritiske bemærkninger fra ILO, når det handler om tilbageslag i EU-området for arbejderes ret til at organisere sig, og hvad har man tænkt sig at gøre ([1])?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Lázslo Andor
(5. juli 2013)

Kommissionen er bekendt med, at ILO's konferenceudvalg om anvendelse af standarder anmodede den svenske regering om i samarbejde med de berørte arbejdsmarkedsparter at gennemgå spørgsmålet om pålæggelse af sanktioner mod fagforeningerne for at føre en legitim strejke i henhold til national ret med henblik på eventuel iværksættelse af kompensationsforanstaltninger. Virkningen af ændringerne af den svenske lovgivning som følge af Domstolens dom i Laval- (og Viking Line-sagen) undersøges imidlertid stadig inden for rammerne af ILO's overvågningssystem.

Kommissionen foretrækker på nuværende tidspunkt ikke at udtale sig nærmere om det spørgsmål, som det ærede medlem henviser til.

([1]) Begrundelsen for spørgsmålet er nedenstående del af rapport fra ILO: Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. Report III- Information and reports on the application of Conventions and Recommendations 2013- 102nd Session Part 1 (A), pp. 176-181. Der omhandler: Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention 1948(ratified 1949), no. 87 and no. 98. Press release of the Swedish LO and TCU PUBLISHED 2013-02-27; ILO: Swedish Laval Legislation Violates Freedom of Association.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006104/13
to the Commission
Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: ILO finding on incompatibility of Swedish Laval legislation

Given the ILO's finding that Swedish legislation adopted following the Court of Justice's ruling in the Laval case is incompatible with its conventions, what does the Commission propose to do to prevent EC law from forcing Member States to adopt legislation that conflicts with ILO conventions?

More generally, what is the Commission's view of the critical remarks made by the ILO concerning setbacks in EU countries to the right of workers to organise, and what action does it propose to take? ([1])

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

The Commission is aware that the ILO Conference Committee on the Application of Standards asked the Swedish Government to review, with the social partners concerned, the issue of imposing sanctions on unions for leading a legitimate strike under national law with a view to considering solutions on compensation. However, the impact of changes made to the Swedish legislation following the Court's judgment in the Laval (and Viking-Line) case is still subject to consideration under the ILO's monitoring system.

The Commission prefers to refrain at this stage from commenting in detail on the issue to which the Honourable Member refers.

([1]) This question refers to the following section of the ILO report: Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations; Report III- Information and reports on the application of Conventions and Recommendations 2013- 102nd Session Part 1 (A), pp. 176-181. The report concerns the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention 1948 (ratified 1949) (No 87) and [the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949] (No 98). See press release of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) and the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (TCU) published 27 February 2013: 'ILO: Swedish Laval Legislation Violates Freedom of Association'.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006106/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Estrategia Europea contra la diabetes

El 14 de marzo de 2012, el Parlamento Europeo aprobó la Resolución titulada «Respuesta a la epidemia de diabetes en la EU». En dicha Resolución, el Parlamento pidió a la Comisión Europea que desarrollara y aplicara una estrategia específica sobre la diabetes en la Unión Europea pues solo 16 de los 27 Estados miembros cuentan con un marco o programa nacional en vigor para afrontar la diabetes, y no existen criterios claros de lo que constituye un buen programa provocando grandes diferencias y desigualdades en la calidad del tratamiento de la diabetes dentro de la UE.

En la Resolución se solicita también a la Comisión que:

— elabore unos criterios y métodos comunes y normalizados para la recogida de datos sobre la diabetes, y que, en colaboración con los Estados miembros, coordine, recoja, registre, supervise y gestione datos epidemiológicos generales sobre la diabetes, y datos económicos basados en los costes directos e indirectos de la prevención y gestión de la diabetes

— ayude a los Estados miembros fomentando el intercambio de las mejores prácticas en materia de buenos programas nacionales sobre la diabetes; subraya la necesidad de que la Comisión supervise permanentemente los progresos de los Estados miembros en lo que respecta a la ejecución de los programas nacionales sobre la diabetes, y de que presente regularmente los resultados en un informe;

— mejore, junto a los Estados miembros, la coordinación de la investigación europea sobre la diabetes impulsando la colaboración entre las diferentes ramas de la investigación, y creando infraestructuras generales compartidas para facilitar los esfuerzos de investigación sobre la diabetes en Europa, incluidos los ámbitos de la identificación y la prevención de los factores de riesgo

¿En qué estado se encuentra la puesta en marcha de una estrategia contra la diabetes a nivel europeo?

¿Ha establecido la Comisión criterios y métodos comunes normalizados para recoger datos sobre la diabetes? ¿Qué medidas se han adoptado para fomentar el intercambio de buenas prácticas entre los programas nacionales sobre la diabetes? ¿Qué instrumentos ha puesto en marcha la Comisión para coordinar la investigación europea sobre la diabetes?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión, que concede gran importancia a la diabetes, ha propuesto medidas para abordarla en diversas iniciativas y en su enfoque con respecto a las enfermedades crónicas en general, con acciones relativas a los factores de riesgo, como la alimentación y el ejercicio físico.

Además, la Comisión apoya una acción conjunta sobre enfermedades crónicas financiada en el marco del Programa de Salud, que incluye un plan de trabajo dedicado específicamente a la diabetes. La Comisión ha apoyado también proyectos en el marco de dicho Programa para mejorar la capidad de seguimiento de dicha enfermedad ([1]) ([2]) ([3]).

Los datos de Eurostat sobre la diabetes proceden de dos recopilaciones específicas de datos, a saber, las causas de mortalidad y la encuesta europea de salud mediante entrevista ([4]). Las organizaciones no gubernamentales trabajan activamente en el ámbito de la recogida de datos sobre la diabetes y desarrollan criterios comunes de medición. Algunos de estos datos se presentan en el informe «Panorama de la Salud Europa 2012» ([5]) financiado por la UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_projects/2000/monitoring/monitoring_project_2000_full_en.htm#11
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2005109
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2007115
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/reports/european/health_glance_2012_en.htm

Con cargo al VII Programa Marco de Investigación y Desarrollo Tecnológico ([6]) se han asignado 420 millones de euros a la investigación en el campo de la diabetes a través de proyectos como Eurocondor ([7]), META-Predict ([8]), Preview ([9]), Earlynutrition ([10]) y BETA-JUDO ([11]). La Comisión ha apoyado asimismo una hoja de ruta para la investigación sobre la diabetes (Diamap) ([12]).

La propuesta de la Comisión para Horizonte 2020, Programa Marco de Investigación e Innovación (2014-2020) ([13]) establece los dos siguientes objetivos: «salud, cambio demográfico y bienestar» y «seguridad alimentaria, agricultura sostenible, investigación marina y marítima» entre los seis retos sociales que deben abordarse, y que probablemente ofrecerán oportunidades de investigación en el campo de la diabetes. Por otra parte, la Comisión se ha incorporado a la Alianza Mundial contra las Enfermedades Crónicas ([14]), en la que la diabetes de tipo 2 será la próxima prioridad de acción conjunta.

([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html
([7]) http://eurocondor.eu/
([8]) http://metapredict.eu/
([9]) http://preview.ning.com/
([10]) http://www.project-earlynutrition.eu/
([11]) http://betajudo.org/
([12]) http://diamap.eu
([13]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents
([14]) http://www.gacd.org/research/priorities/priorities

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006106/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: European strategy against diabetes

On 14 March 2012, Parliament approved the Resolution entitled 'Addressing the EU diabetes epidemic'. In this Resolution, Parliament called on the Commission to develop and implement a targeted EU Diabetes Strategy, as only 16 of the 27 Member States have a national framework or programme in place to tackle diabetes, and no clear criteria exist as to what constitutes a good programme, causing considerable differences and inequalities in the quality of diabetes treatment within the EU.

In the Resolution, Parliament also calls on the Commission to:

— draw up common, standardised criteria and methods for data collection on diabetes and, in collaboration with the Member States, to coordinate, collect, register, monitor and manage comprehensive epidemiological data on diabetes, and economic data on the direct and indirect costs of diabetes prevention and management;

— support Member States by promoting the exchange of best practice with regard to good national diabetes programmes; stresses the need for the Commission continuously to monitor progress as regards the Member States' implementation of national diabetes programmes, and to present the results on a regular basis in the form of a Commission report;

— improve, together with the Member States, the coordination of European diabetes research by fostering collaboration between research disciplines and creating general, shared infrastructures to facilitate European diabetes research efforts, including in the fields of risk-factor identification and prevention.

What stage has been reached in the implementation of a strategy to tackle diabetes at European level?

Has the Commission established common, standardised criteria and methods for data collection on diabetes? What measures have been adopted to promote the exchange of best practice between national diabetes programmes? What instruments has the Commission implemented to coordinate European diabetes research?

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

The Commission is keen to help address diabetes, and has therefore enshrined action on diabetes in various initiatives and in its broader approach to chronic diseases in general. This includes action on common risk factors, such as nutrition and physical activity.

In addition, the Commission supports a joint action on chronic diseases, to be co-financed by the health programme, with a work package dedicated exclusively to diabetes. The Commisison has also supported projects under the Health Programme to improve capacity to monitor diabetes ([1]); ([2]); ([3]).

Data on diabetes is collected by Eurostat from two specific data collections on causes of death and the European Health Interview Survey ([4]). Non-governmental organisations are very active in the area of Diabetes data collection, developing common measurement criteria. Some of these data are presented in the EU-funded report 'Health at a Glance Europe 2012 ([5])'.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_projects/2000/monitoring/monitoring_project_2000_full_en.htm#11.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2005109.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2007115.
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/reports/european/health_glance_2012_en.htm

The 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development ([6]) has devoted EUR 420 million to diabetes research. Examples include the EUROCONDOR ([7]), META-PREDICT ([8]), PREVIEW ([9]), EARLYNUTRITION ([10]) and BETA-JUDO ([11]) projects. The Commission has also supported the establishment of a roadmap for diabetes research (DIAMAP) ([12]).

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([13]) 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, likely to provide opportunities for research on diabetes. Furthermore, the Commission joined the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases ([14]) and Type 2 diabetes will be the next priority for joint action.

([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html
([7]) http://eurocondor.eu/.
([8]) http://metapredict.eu/.
([9]) http://preview.ning.com/.
([10]) http://www.project-earlynutrition.eu/.
([11]) http://betajudo.org/.
([12]) http://diamap.eu.
([13]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.
([14]) http://www.gacd.org/research/priorities/priorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006107/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Fondos europeos recibidos por Galicia y próximas perspectivas financieras

Desde la integración de España en la ahora denominada Unión Europea, Galicia ha venido beneficiándose de la solidaridad comunitaria como receptora de los Fondos Estructurales y correspondientes a la política de cohesión.

¿Puede la Comisión informar de las cantidades asignadas a Galicia provenientes de los Fondos Estructurales (Fondo Social Europeo, Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional) y del Fondo de Cohesión desde la entrada de España en la Unión Europea, desglosándolo, en su caso, en los diversos períodos de financiación plurianual? ¿Podría remitir la misma información para el Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural y el Fondo Europeo de Pesca o cualquier otro programa de la UE?

¿Puede, asimismo, la Comisión detallar la estimación de las cantidades correspondientes a los Fondos Estructurales (Fondo Social Europeo, Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional), del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural y del Fondo Europeo Marítimo y de la Pesca previstas para Galicia para el próximo período de programación 2014-2020 según las cifras provisionales que podrían resultar del acuerdo adoptado por el Consejo Europeo el pasado mes de febrero sobre el MFP 2014-2020?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de julio de 2013)

1. Desde la adhesión de España a la Unión Europea en 1986, los Fondos de la UE (Fondos Estructurales y Fondos de Cohesión) han invertido más de 20 000 millones de euros en Galicia. La información disponible en el anexo está desglosada por períodos.

2. En febrero de 2013, el Consejo adoptó los importes de los Fondos Estructurales asignados por categoría de regiones. La Comisión comunicará a los Estados miembros la distribución de estos importes por países. Los Estados miembros serán los responsables de determinar la distribución de estos Fondos por regiones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006107/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: European Funds received by Galicia and forthcoming financial perspectives

Since Spain's entry into what is now called the European Union, Galicia has benefited from Community solidarity as a recipient of Structural Funds and funds relating to cohesion policy.

Can the Commission state the amounts assigned to Galicia from the Structural Funds (European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund) and the Cohesion Fund since Spain's entry into the European Union, broken down, where necessary, by the various periods of multiannual financing? Could it provide the same information for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Fisheries Fund or any other EU programme?

Likewise, can the Commission outline the estimated amounts relating to the Structural Funds (European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund planned for Galicia for the next programming period 2014-2020 in accordance with the provisional figures that could result from the agreement adopted by the Council last February on the MFF 2014-2020?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

1. Since the accession of Spain to the European Union in 1986, EU funds (Structural Funds and Cohesion fund) have invested more than EUR 20 billion in Galicia. The information available in the annex is broken down by the different periods.

2. In February 2013, the Council adopted the Structural Funds amounts allocated by category of regions. The distribution of these amounts by Member States will be communicated by the Commission to the Member States. It will be the responsibility of the Member States to determine the distribution of these funds by region.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006108/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: Recargo injustificado

Cuando un usuario compra un billete por Internet de la compañía aérea Vueling, el precio indicado en un principio por la misma sólo refleja el precio del billete por si mismo. Posteriormente, en el momento de efectuar el pago y sin previo aviso, el usuario debe pagar un recargo de hasta 13 euros si no utiliza la tarjeta de crédito Visa Vueling, de la propia compañía.

Por otra parte, la Directiva de derechos del consumidor 2011/83/EU dice en su artículo 6, apartado 1, letra e) que «el precio total de los bienes o servicios, incluidos los impuestos, o, si el precio no puede calcularse razonablemente de antemano por la naturaleza de los bienes o de los servicios, la forma en que se determina el precio, así como, cuando proceda, todos los gastos adicionales de transporte, entrega o postales y cualquier otro gasto o, si dichos gastos no pueden ser calculados razonablemente de antemano, el hecho de que puede ser necesario abonar dichos gastos adicionales.». Posteriormente, en el apartado 6 del citado artículo se dice: «Si el comerciante no cumple los requisitos de información sobre gastos adicionales u otros costes contemplados en el apartado 1, letra e), o sobre los costes de devolución de los bienes contemplados en el apartado 1, letra i), el consumidor no deberá abonar dichos gastos o costes.»

Por otro lado el artículo 23 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1008/2008 dice que «Se indicará en todo momento el precio final que deba pagarse, que incluirá la tarifa o flete aplicable así como todos los impuestos aplicables y los cánones, recargos y derechos que sean obligatorios y previsibles en el momento de su publicación.»

¿Cree la Comisión que existe una situación de abuso de mercado por el trato discriminatorio hacia los usuarios que no tienen la Visa Vueling?

¿Piensa actuar la Comisión contra la existencia de estos recargos sobre el uso de la tarjeta de crédito/debito por la compañía Vueling, o cualquier otra compañía aérea, que vulneran la legislación europea vigente?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de julio de 2013)

El Reglamento (CE) n° 1008/2008 ([1]) establece la libertad de precios en la EU para las «compañías aéreas comunitarias». La tarifa indicada debe incluir todos los elementos del precio obligatorios y previsibles en el momento de su publicación. Si las tarifas varían según el modo de pago, en el precio indicado se debe incluir la tarifa más baja. Sin embargo, la tarifa de referencia así indicada debe estar ampliamente disponible, es decir, no reservarse solo para un número limitado de pasajeros. Los suplementos opcionales de precio deben indicarse de manera clara, transparente y sin ambigüedades al comienzo de cualquier proceso de reserva.

La Directiva 2011/83/UE ([2]) establece en su artículo 8, apartado 2 ([3]), que, si un contrato a distancia que ha de celebrarse por medios electrónicos obliga al consumidor a pagar, el comerciante debe poner en conocimiento del consumidor de manera clara y destacada la información establecida en el artículo 6, apartado 1, letra e). Esto ha de tener lugar *justo antes* de que el consumidor efectúe el pedido. El artículo 19 obliga a los Estados miembros a prohibir a los comerciantes cargar a los consumidores, por el uso de determinados medios de pago, tasas que superen el coste asumido por el comerciante por el uso de tales medios.

([1]) DO L 293 de 31.10.2008.
([2]) Directiva 2011/83/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2011, sobre los derechos de los consumidores, por la que se modifican la Directiva 93/13/CEE del Consejo y la Directiva 1999/44/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo y se derogan la Directiva 85/577/CEE del Consejo y la Directiva 97/7/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, DO L 304 de 22.11.2011.
([3]) Las disposiciones nacionales destinadas a transponer la Directiva deben aplicarse desde el 13 de junio de 2014. El artículo 8, apartado 2, y el artículo 19 de la Directiva, citados en este contexto, están entre las disposiciones aplicables a los servicios de transporte de pasajeros; véase el artículo 3, apartado 3, letra k), de la Directiva.

La cuestión planteada por Su Señoría es muy representativa de las conclusiones sobre la transparencia de los precios en el contexto del ejercicio de «chequeo» llevado a cabo por los servicios de la Comisión ([4]). Aunque las competencias relativas a los operadores económicos las tienen las autoridades y los órganos jurisdiccionales de los Estados miembros, y no la Comisión, esta envió al respecto unas notas personalizadas a los Ministros de Transportes de la UE el 14 de abril de 2013, en las que subrayaba la necesidad de mejorar la cooperación entre los responsables de garantizar el respeto de las normas de transparencia de precios. Los servicios de la Comisión están evaluando actualmente junto con los Estados miembros la manera de mejorar la situación en la práctica.

([4]) En la dirección siguiente se encuentra más información sobre los recargos de las tarjetas de crédito y débito: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/fitness_check_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006108/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Unjustified surcharge

When a user buys a ticket on the Internet from the airline Vueling, the original price indicated only reflects the price of the ticket itself. Subsequently, at the point of making the payment and with no prior warning, the user must pay a surcharge of up to EUR 13 if he or she does not use the company's Vueling Visa credit card.

However, Directive 2011/83/EU on consumer rights states in Article 6(1)(e) that 'the total price of the goods or services inclusive of taxes, or where the nature of the goods or services is such that the price cannot reasonably be calculated in advance, the manner in which the price is to be calculated, as well as, where applicable, all additional freight, delivery or postal charges and any other costs or, where those charges cannot reasonably be calculated in advance, the fact that such additional charges may be payable.' It is subsequently stated in paragraph 6 of the abovementioned article that 'If the trader has not complied with the information requirements on additional charges or other costs as referred to in point (e) of paragraph 1, or on the costs of returning the goods as referred to in point (i) of paragraph 1, the consumer shall not bear those charges or costs'.

Furthermore, Article 23 of Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 states that 'The final price to be paid shall at all times be indicated and shall include the applicable air fare or air rate as well as all applicable taxes, and charges, surcharges and fees which are unavoidable and foreseeable at the time of publication'.

Does the Commission consider this situation to constitute market abuse due to the discriminatory treatment of users who do not have the Vueling Visa card?

Does the Commission intend to take action against these surcharges on the use of a credit/debit card by the Vueling company, or any other airline, which violate current European legislation?

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

Regulation 1008/2008 ([1]) provides for pricing freedom in the EU for 'Community air carriers'. The fare indicated must include all price elements unavoidable and foreseeable at the time of publication. If fees differ by payment modes, the lowest fee shall be included in the price indicated. However, the reference fee thus indicated must be widely available, i.e. not only to a limited number of passengers. Optional price supplements must be indicated in a clear, transparent and unambiguous manner at the start of any booking process.

Directive 2011/83/EU ([2]) provides in its Article 8(2) ([3]) that, if a distance contract to be concluded by electronic means places the consumer under an obligation to pay, certain elements, including the price information specified in Article 6(1)(e), need to be communicated to the consumer in a clear and prominent manner. This has to take place *directly before* the consumer places his order. Article 19 commits Member States to prohibit the imposition of fees on consumers in respect of the use of a given means of payment that exceed the cost borne by the trader for the use of such means.

The question raised by the Honourable Member is very representative of the findings on price transparency in the context of the 'Fitness check' exercise carried by the Commission services ([4]).

([1]) OJ L 293, 31.10.2008.
([2]) Directive 2011/83/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on consumer rights, amending Council Directive 93/13/EEC and Directive 1999/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Directive 85/577/EEC and Directive 97/7/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.
([3]) National provisions intended to transpose the directive have to be applied since 13 June 2014. Articles 8(2) and 19 of the directive referred to below are among the provisions applicable to passenger transport services, cf Cf. Article 3(3)(k) of the directive.
([4]) More data and information on the question of credit/debit card surcharges at http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/fitness_check_en.htm

While powers vis-à-vis economic operators are vested with the authorities and courts of the Member States and not with the Commission, the Commission has addressed individual letters to Transport Ministers on this subject on 14 April 2013. It has stressed the need for better cooperation of enforcers to ensure respect of price transparency rules. Commission services are currently assessing together with Member States how to further improve the situation in practice.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006109/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(30. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Auswanderungsbereitschaft der Griechen und Auswirkungen auf EU-Mitgliedstaaten

In Griechenland, mit einer Arbeitslosenquote von 27 %, ist — nach jüngsten Umfragen — mittlerweile jeder Fünfte bereit auszuwandern und man geht davon aus, dass sich wohl die Entwicklung der Geschichte in den 1960 Jahren wiederholen wird.

Angesichts der zu erwartenden eher stagnierenden, wenn nicht sogar sich verschlechternden wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung in der Eurozone stellt sich die Frage, wie sich ein solcher neuerlicher Auswanderungsstrom auf die Mitgliedstaaten des mittleren und nördlichen Europa auswirken wird, wo man ebenfalls insbesondere mit einem Anstieg der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit zu kämpfen hat?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(16. Juli 2013)

Auch wenn das Recht, in einem anderen EU-Land Arbeit zu suchen, seit 40 Jahren im Vertrag verankert ist, bleibt die grenzüberschreitende Mobilität im Beschäftigungsbereich innerhalb der EU nach wie vor gering und nur 3,1 % der EU-Erwerbsbevölkerung sind heute grenzüberschreitend mobil.

Laut der jüngsten internationalen Gallup-Meinungsumfrage (2011/2012) gaben 24 % der griechischen Bevölkerung (ab 15 Jahren) an, dass sie in ein anderes Land umziehen würden, wenn sie die Möglichkeit dazu hätten. Der Anteil derjenigen, die einen Umzug in den nächsten zwölf Monaten planten, war deutlich niedriger (ungefähr 4,1 %). Die derzeit verfügbaren statistischen Daten zeigen darüber hinaus, dass diese Mobilitätsabsichten bisher nicht zu erheblichen Mobilitätsströmen aus Griechenland geführt haben. Zwar hat die Anzahl der (erwerbstätigen) Griechinnen und Griechen, die im Zeitraum 2011/2012 in ein anderes EU-Land umgezogen sind, relativ stark zugenommen (+170 % im Vergleich zum Vorkrisenzeitraum 2007/2008), dennoch stellen sie bis jetzt nur einen geringen Anteil (3,7 %) der EU-internen Migranten ([1]).

Die Erfahrungen mit früheren Mobilitätswellen zeigen außerdem, dass der wichtigste Beweggrund nach wie vor die Beschäftigungsmöglichkeiten im Zielland sind. Die Analyse der Veränderungen bei den beliebtesten Zielländern für EU-interne Migranten bestätigt diese Aussage: Der Zustrom nach Deutschland und Österreich hat stark zugenommen, während parallel dazu der Zustrom nach Spanien und Irland ([2]) drastisch zurückgegangen ist.

Fazit: Die Mobilität von Griechenland in andere mittel- und nordeuropäische EU-Mitgliedstaaten ist bislang insgesamt ein seltenes Phänomen. Darüber hinaus wird diese Mobilität positive Auswirkungen auf die Zielländer haben, da die meisten mobilen Arbeitskräfte einen Bedarf auf dem Arbeitsmarkt der Zielländer decken dürften.

([1]) Eurostat, EU-Arbeitskräfteerhebung. EU-interne Migranten sind definiert als Personen, die in den letzten beiden Jahren in ein anderes EU-Land umgezogen und erwerbstätig sind.

([2]) Quartalsbericht der EU über die Beschäftigungssituation und die soziale Lage, Juni 2013 (erscheint in Kürze).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006109/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Readiness of Greeks to emigrate and the impact on EU Member States

In Greece, which has an unemployment rate of 27%, one in five people — according to the most recent polls — are now ready to emigrate, and the belief is that the events of the 1960s are likely to repeat themselves.

Given that economic developments in the euro area are expected to stagnate, if not even to deteriorate further, what impact will this new stream of emigration have on the Member States in central and northern Europe, which are also having to deal with a rise in youth unemployment in particular?

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

While the right to seek employment and work in another EU country has been enshrined in the Treaty for over 40 years, cross-border intra-EU labour mobility remains low and mobile EU citizens today represent only 3.1% of the EU labour force.

According to the most recent (2011-12) Gallup World Survey, 24% of Greek citizens (aged 15 and over) declared they would like to move to another country if they had the opportunity. However, the proportion of those planning to move in the next 12 months was much lower (around 4.1%). Moreover, currently available statistics indicate that until now those mobility intentions have not translated in substantial mobility flows from Greece. While the number of Greek (economically active) citizens having moved to another EU country in 2011-12 has strongly increased in relative terms (+170% compared to the pre-crisis period 2007-08), they represent until now only a limited proportion (3.7%) in all intra-EU movers ([1]).

In addition, experience from previous waves of mobility shows that the main driver of the flows remains the employment opportunities in the destination country. This is confirmed by the analysis of the changes in the top destination countries of intra-EU movers, with a strong rise of the share taken by Germany and Austria, and in parallel, the sharp decline of Spain and Ireland ([2]).

In conclusion, mobility from Greece to other EU Member States in central and northern Europe remains until now overall a limited phenomenon. Moreover it is likely to have a positive impact on the destination countries as most of the mobile workers are likely to fill labour market needs in the destination countries.

([1]) Eurostat, EU-Labour Force Survey. Intra-EU movers are defined as those having moved to another EU country in the last two years and being economically active.
([2]) EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review, June 2013 (forthcoming).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006110/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(30. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Prognosen bezüglich des BIP — ein weiterer Anstieg der Arbeitslosenzahlen ist zu erwarten

Nach den jüngsten Informationen der OECD sieht die Entwicklung für den Euroraum alles andere als gut aus — erwartet wird für den Euroraum ein Rückgang des BIP um 0,6 %.

1. Sind der Kommission diese Erwartungen bekannt? (Bitte um detaillierte Ausführungen)

2. Eine der Folgen des Rückganges des BIP bis 2014 wird ein weiterer Anstieg der Arbeitslosenzahlen sein (für den Euroraum um circa 0,2 %; unter anderem für Österreich um 0,4 %). Wie sehen die wohl nötigen präventiven Maßnahmen für die Eurozone aus (tatenlos wird man kaum bleiben können!)?

3. Von welchen Zahlen ist denn nun aufgrund dieser Prognosen sowohl hinsichtlich eines weiteren Anstiegs der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit als auch der Arbeitslosigkeit der Generation 55+ auszugehen?

Antwort von László Andor im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juli 2013)

1. Der Kommission sind diese Prognosen bekannt. Die wichtigsten der einschlägigen internationalen Institute haben alle vor Kurzem sehr ähnliche makroökonomische Prognosen für den Euroraum abgegeben, denen zufolge für 2013 mit einer Arbeitslosenquote von rund 12¼ % zu rechnen ist. Im Jahr 2014 soll die Quote etwa auf diesem Niveau bleiben, da sich die Beschleunigung des Wachstums aufgrund der üblicherweise verzögerten Reaktion des Arbeitsmarktes noch nicht auf die Arbeitslosigkeit auswirken kann.

2. Für die Wirtschafts- und Beschäftigungspolitik sind weiterhin die EU-Mitgliedstaaten zuständig. Die Kommission rät jedoch zur Durchführung von Strukturreformen auf den Arbeits-, Produkt- und Dienstleistungsmärkten als unerlässliches Mittel, um im Einklang mit der Strategie Europa 2020 ([1]) das Wachstum ankurbeln, die Arbeitslosigkeit senken sowie Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Tragfähigkeit der öffentlichen Finanzen wiederherstellen zu können. Ferner hat die Kommission genaue länderspezifische Empfehlungen für 2013 abgegeben.

3. Die Prognosen beziehen sich lediglich auf die Gesamtarbeitslosenquote und geben keinen Aufschluss über die Arbeitslosigkeit in bestimmten Altersgruppen. Zur Bekämpfung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit hat die Kommission eine Reihe konkreter, praktikabler Maßnahmen vorgeschlagen, die eine sofortige Wirkung zeitigen dürften: Die 6 Mrd. EUR, die der Rat im Rahmen der Beschäftigungsinitiative für junge Menschen bewilligt hat, sollten zeitlich vorgezogen und bereits 2014 und 2015 zugewiesen werden, um die Einführung der Jugendgarantie zu unterstützen. In der Verordnung über den Europäischen Sozialfonds für den nächsten Programmplanungszeitraum sollten ihrerseits Investitionen zur Integration junger Menschen in den Arbeitsmarkt als Priorität ausgewiesen werden. Als weitere Initiativen seien die Europäische Ausbildungsallianz, die Koalition für digitale Arbeitsplätze, die Reform von EURES und die Initiative „Dein erster EURES-Arbeitsplatz“ genannt. Schließlich wird die vereinbarte Aufstockung des Kapitals der Europäischen Investitionsbank bewilligt, damit KMU leichter an Finanzierungsmittel gelangen und junge Menschen einstellen.

([1]) KOM(2012)750 endg. vom 28.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006110/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Forecasts with regard to GDP — a further rise in unemployment rate to be expected

According to the most recent information from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), developments for the euro area are looking far from positive — GDP in the euro area is expected to contract by 0.6%.

1. Is the Commission aware of these expectations? (Please provide detailed comments.)

2. One of the consequences of the contraction of the GDP by 2014 will be a further rise in unemployment (for the euro area by around 0.2%; for Austria, amongst others, by 0.4%). What form will the preventive measures for the euro area that are clearly necessary take (we can hardly do nothing at all!)?

3. What figures can we expect, based on these forecasts, in terms of a further rise in youth unemployment and also of unemployment among the over 55s?

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

1. The Commission is aware of these expectations. The main international institutions have all recently released fairly similar macroeconomic forecasts for the euro area which point to an unemployment rate of around 12¼% in 2013. It would remain at about the same level in 2014, as the acceleration in growth cannot yet make a dent in unemployment, due to the usual lagged response of the labour market.

2. The EU Member States retain their competences on economic and employment policy. The Commission nevertheless advises that structural reforms in the labour, product and service markets are essential to kick-start growth, reduce unemployment, and restore competitiveness and the sustainability of public finances, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy ([1]). The Commission has also proposed detailed Country Specific Recommendations for 2013.

3. The forecasts predict only total unemployment and do not provide for unemployment by age group. On youth unemployment, the Commission has proposed a number of practical and achievable measures that have the potential to make an immediate impact: the EUR 6 billion approved by the Council under the Youth Employment Initiative should be frontloaded and committed already in 2014 and 2015 to support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, while the European Social Fund Regulation for the next programming period should also include a dedicated investment priority targeting youth labour market integration. Further initiatives include the EU Alliance for Apprenticeships, the coalition for digital employment, and the reform of EURES and the 'your first EURES job' initiative. Finally, the agreed capital increase of the European Investment Bank will be allocated to help SMEs get access to funding and hire young people.

([1]) COM(2012) 750 final of 28 November 2012.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006111/13
komissiolle
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) ja Petri Sarvamaa (PPE)
(30. toukokuuta 2013)

Aihe: Seuraavan sukupolven hätänumero 112 -järjestelmä EU:ssa

Parlamentti pyysi 5. heinäkuuta 2011 antamassaan päätöslauselmassa yleispalveluista ja hätänumerosta 112 ([1]) ”rahoituksen myöntämistä innovatiivisten palvelujen (VoIP-tekniikkaan ja internet-protokollaan perustuva hätänumeron 112 käyttö) testaamista ja täytäntöönpanoa varten, sillä nämä palvelut voidaan käynnistää verkoista riippumattomien sovellusten kautta odotettaessa seuraavan sukupolven hätänumero 112 -järjestelmän luomista EU:hun” ja kehotti komissiota ”tarkastelemaan seuraavan sukupolven 112-sovellusten täytäntöönpanoa, kuten tekstiviestit, videot ja verkkoyhteisöt sekä sitä, millä tavoin tällaiset nyt kansalaisten saatavilla olevat sovellukset voidaan toteuttaa hätäpalveluviestinnässä, jotta parannetaan hätänumeron 112 käytettävyyttä ja edistetään kansalaislähtöistä hätätilanteisiin reagointia”.

Voiko komissio kertoa, sisällytetäänkö seuraavan sukupolven hätänumero 112 -palvelu seuraavaan Horisontti 2020 -työohjelmaan (Yhteiskunnalliset haasteet – osallisuutta edistävät, innovatiiviset ja turvalliset yhteiskunnat), jotta tehostetaan turvallisten, kestävien ja innovatiivisten hätäpalveluja koskevien sovellusten käyttöönottoa EU:ssa?

Neelie Kroesin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(17. heinäkuuta 2013)

Komissio on parlamentin tavoin sitä mieltä, että tulevaisuuden varalle olisi valmisteltava innovatiiviset hätänumero 112 -palvelut IP-yhteyksien pohjalta. Näin Euroopan kansalaiset pääsisivät hätäpalveluihin käyttämällä samanaikaisesti ääni-, data-, kuva- ja tekstiviestintää. Komission yksiköt etsivät tämän vuoksi rahoitusmahdollisuuksia hankkeille, jotka mahdollistaisivat seuraavan sukupolven hätänumero 112 -palvelun testauksen.

Tätä aihetta voitaisiin mahdollisesti käsitellä Horisontti 2020 -ohjelman seitsemännen yhteiskunnallisen haasteen ”Turvalliset yhteiskunnat – Euroopan ja sen kansalaisten vapauden ja turvallisuuden suojaaminen” puitteissa. Komissio kylläkin tunnustaa tällaisen hankkeen mahdolliset hyödyt, mutta seuraavan sukupolven hätänumero 112 -palvelun sisällyttämiselle työohjelmaan on ensin saatava jäsenvaltioiden hyväksyntä Horisontti 2020 -ohjelmassa perustetun ohjelmakomitean kautta. Vasta tämän jälkeen komissio voi vahvistaa asian. Virallinen päätös seuraavan sukupolven hätänumero 112 -palvelun sisällyttämisestä Horisontti 2020 -ohjelmaan tehdään näin ollen vasta myöhemmin kuluvan vuoden aikana.

([1]) Hyväksytyt tekstit, P7_TA(2011)0306.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006111/13
to the Commission
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE) and Petri Sarvamaa (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Next Generation 112 system in the EU

In its resolution of 5 July 2011 on universal service and the 112 emergency number ([1]), Parliament asked for funds 'to be allocated to support the testing and implementation of innovative services (based on VoIP and IP-access to 112) that could be initiated through network-independent applications in anticipation of the establishment of a Next Generation 112 system in the EU' and called on the Commission 'to examine also the implementation of Next Generation 112 applications such as texting, video and social networks and how such applications, which are currently available to citizens, can be implemented in emergency communications to improve access to 112 as well as to enhance citizen-initiated emergency response'.

Could the Commission indicate whether funding to test the Next Generation 112 service will be included in the next Horizon 2020 work programme ('Societal challenges — Inclusive, innovative and secure societies') to accelerate the deployment of secure, robust and innovative applications for emergency services in the EU?

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

The Commission shares the concerns of the Parliament on the need to prepare innovative 112 services for the future, based on IP access. This would allow European citizens to access emergency services through simultaneous use of voice, data, video and text communications. Therefore the Commission services are looking for funding opportunities for projects which would allow for a testing regime for NG112.

Horizon 2020 societal challenge 7 on 'Secure Societies — Protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens' could eventually be the framework to implement this topic. However, although the Commission recognises the potential benefits of such a project, the inclusion of the Next Generation 112 in the work programme will have to be first approved by the Member States through the Programme Committee established under Horizon 2020 before being adopted by the Commission. A formal decision on whether to include a NG112 topic in Horizon 2020 will hence be taken only later this year.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0306.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006112/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Timor-Leste — Poder Local

O primeiro-ministro de Timor-Leste, Xanana Gusmão, declarou pretender levar a efeito um processo de descentralização administrativa e de estabelecimento de formas de poder local adequadas à realidade timorense, com as quais as comunidades se identifiquem.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Considera que a transmissão da experiência da União Europeia neste tipo de processos pode ser benéfica para as autoridades timorenses?

2. Está disponível para colaborar com as autoridades timorenses neste tocante? Em que termos e em que áreas?

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

Os Estados-Membros da UE possuem uma vasta experiência em matéria de descentralização que, eventualmente, poderia servir de inspiração às autoridades de Timor-Leste.

Recentemente, foram iniciadas consultas com as autoridades de Timor-Leste sobre a programação da ajuda ao desenvolvimento da UE ao país no âmbito do 11.° Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento para o período de 2014-2020. Neste contexto, um do setores emergentes a confirmar é o apoio ao reforço da capacidade das instituições do Estado. Caso o processo de descentralização avance, enquanto prioridade do Governo para o período de referência, então o apoio da UE poderá ser utilizado para esse fim.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006112/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — East Timor: local government

The East Timorese Prime Minister, Xanana Gusmão, has said that he intends to carry out an administrative decentralisation process and establish forms of local government suited to East Timorese reality that communities can identify with.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that the EU's experience in such processes could be beneficial to the East Timorese authorities?

2. Is she willing to work with the East Timorese authorities in this regard? On what terms and in which areas?

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

The EU Member States offer a wide variety of experience in decentralisation, some which could provide for inspiration for the Timor-Leste authorities.

Consultations have been recently initiated with the Timor-Leste authorities about the programming of EU development assistance to the country for the period 2014-2020 under the 11th European Development Fund. In this context, one of the emerging sectors, to be confirmed, is support for capacity building the state institutions. Should the decentralisation project in Timor-Leste go ahead, as the government's priority in the reference period, then EU support might be used for that purpose.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006113/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Timor-Leste — eleições locais em 2015

O Governo de Timor-Leste pretende realizar eleições autárquicas em 2015, tendo previsto para este ano a criação de 13 comissões instaladoras (uma por distrito) para avaliar se os distritos possuem os requisitos mínimos necessários para a criação de municípios e para o estabelecimento de processos eleitorais.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

Está disposta a auxiliar as autoridades timorenses no futuro processo eleitoral e a enviar àquele país uma missão de observação das eleições autárquicas de 2015?

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

A UE apoia os progressos democráticos em Timor-Leste desde a restauração da independência. Esse apoio incluiu a observação da campanha eleitoral e das eleições parlamentares de julho de 2012.

Atualmente, através da programação regional PALOP-TL, a UE contribui para reforçar as capacidades de gestão eleitoral dos órgãos de gestão eleitoral nacionais: o Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral (STAE) e a Comissão Nacional das Eleições (CNE).

No entanto, a UE não participa na observação das eleições autárquicas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006113/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — East Timor: local elections in 2015

The East Timorese Government intends to hold local elections in 2015 and, in preparation, has made provision to create 13 establishment committees (one per district) to assess whether the districts meet the minimum requirements necessary to create municipalities and to establish electoral processes.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative willing to assist the East Timorese authorities in the future electoral process and to send a mission to the country to observe the 2015 local elections?

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

The EU has been supportive of the Timor-Leste democratic progress since the very early days of restored independence. This support also included the observation of the electoral campaign and parliamentary elections in July 2012.

At present, through the regional PALOP-TL programming, the EU contributes to strengthening the electoral management capacities of National Electoral Management Bodies: the *Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral* (STAE) and the *Comissão Nacional das Eleições* (CNE).

However, the EU does not engage in observation of local elections.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006114/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — União Africana — acusação do TPI de práticas racistas

O Presidente em exercício da União Africana, o primeiro-ministro etíope, Hailemariam Desalegn, acusou o Tribunal Penal Internacional de fazer «uma espécie de perseguição racial» pelo facto de acusar sobretudo dirigentes africanos.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Que comentário lhe merece a declaração do Presidente em exercício da União Africana?

2. Considera que as acusações do TPI são efetivamente movidas por qualquer «espécie de perseguição racial»?

3. Em caso negativo, qual julga serem os motivos que subjazem a semelhante declaração?

4. Que avaliação faz da jurisprudência do TPI e do modo como vem conduzindo a sua atuação?

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

A União Europeia e a África estão ambas empenhadas em apoiar o TPI. Todos os Estados-Membros da UE ratificaram o Estatuto de Roma e 34 dos 54 países membros da União Africana são igualmente Partes no Estatuto de Roma. Os Estados africanos constituem o maior bloco regional na Assembleia dos Estados Partes.

O TPI tem por objetivo ajudar a combater a praga da impunidade. É, em grande parte, graças ao apoio africano e europeu que o Tribunal funciona atualmente. O facto de todas as pessoas acusadas até agora pelo Tribunal Penal Internacional (TPI) serem africanas deve-se essencialmente ao facto de a competência do Tribunal de Justiça se limitar aos Estados que já aceitaram esta jurisdição ou a casos em que o Conselho de Segurança tenha remetido a situação para o TPI. A maioria dos processos atualmente em curso no TPI sobre processos africanos deve-se ao facto de terem sido os próprios Estados africanos a submeter-se à jurisdição do TPI.

A UE e África continuam empenhadas em prosseguir os trabalhos a fim de garantir a plena universalidade do Estatuto do TPI. A UE está empenhada em trabalhar com os governos e os povos africanos no sentido de apoiar o Estado de direito, sendo o TPI a instituição fundamental na luta contra a impunidade dos mais graves crimes de relevância internacional.

O Tribunal Penal Internacional é uma instituição judicial independente e as suas decisões baseiam-se em critérios jurídicos e são proferidas por juízes imparciais, em conformidade com as disposições do seu Tratado fundador, o Estatuto de Roma, e de outros textos jurídicos que regem o funcionamento do Tribunal Penal Internacional. A UE está plenamente empenhada em continuar a proteger a independência do Tribunal e em apoiar o seu funcionamento efetivo e eficaz.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006114/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — African Union: ICC accused of racist practices

The Chairperson of the African Union, Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, has accused the International Criminal Court (ICC) of 'some kind of race hunting' since it mainly indicts African leaders.

1. What does the Vice-President/High Representative have to say about the Chairperson of the African Union's statement?

2. Does she believe that ICC indictments are effectively motivated by 'some kind of race hunting'?

3. If not, what does she believe are the underlying reasons for this statement?

4. What is her assessment of the ICC's jurisprudence and of the way in which it conducts its operations?

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

The EU and Africa are both committed to supporting the ICC. All EU Member States have ratified the Rome Statute while 34 of 54 AU Member States are also parties to the Rome Statute. The African states constitute the largest regional bloc in the Assembly of States Parties.

The purpose of the ICC has been to help combat the curse of impunity. It is largely thanks to African and European support that the Court today is in motion. The fact that all persons indicted so far by the International Criminal Court (ICC) are Africans is essentially due to the fact that the jurisdiction of the Court is limited to States that have already accepted this jurisdiction or where the Security Council has referred the situation. Most of the cases currently before the ICC concerning African situations are there because the respective States submitted themselves to the jurisdiction of the Court.

The EU and Africa remain committed to continuing work to achieve full universality of the ICC statute. The EU is dedicated to working with African Governments and people to support the rule of law and the ICC as the key institution in the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern.

The International Criminal Court is an independent judicial institution and its decisions are based on legal criteria and rendered by impartial judges in accordance with the provisions of its founding treaty, the Rome Statute and other legal texts governing the work of the Court. The EU is fully committed to continue protecting the independence of the Court and supporting its effective and efficient functioning.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006115/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guiné-Bissau — reunião de chefias militares da Cedeao

Chefes militares da África Ocidental reuniram-se recentemente em Bissau. O programa oficial da cimeira previa a análise do processo de transição na Guiné-Bissau, a reforma do setor de defesa e segurança e os desafios para o futuro do Conselho de Chefes de Estados-Maiores Generais da Cedeao (Comunidade Económica dos Estados da África Ocidental).

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento desta reunião, dos seus trabalhos e conclusões?

2. Como avalia a presença do contingente da Cedeao na Guiné-Bissau?

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

Segundo as informações disponíveis, a reunião realizou-se no quadro da monitorização da missão na Guiné-Bissau (Ecomib) organizada regularmente pela Cedeao e referida pelo Senhor Deputado. A Cedeao reiterou o seu apelo às forças armadas da Guiné-Bissau para que se abstenham de intervir nos assuntos políticos e facilitem a renovação da sua hierarquia.

A presença da Ecomib na Guiné-Bissau representa um contributo valioso para ajudar a garantir a estabilidade do processo de transição, que conduzirá à realização de eleições até ao final deste ano, em conformidade com a posição comum da UA, da Cedeao, da CPLP, da UE e da ONU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006115/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: meeting of Ecowas military chiefs

West African military chiefs recently met in Bissau. The summit's official programme included analysis of the transition process in Guinea-Bissau, defence and security sector reform and the future challenges facing the Ecowas (Economic Community of West African States) Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this meeting, its work and its findings?

2. What is her assessment of the Ecowas contingent's presence in Guinea-Bissau?

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

According to the available information, the meeting took place in the framework of Ecowas's regular monitoring of its mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) referred to by the Honorable Member; Ecowas reiterated its call on the Guinea-Bissau armed forces to abstain from intervening in political affairs and to facilitate the renewal of their own hierarchy.

ECOMIB's presence in Guinea-Bissau is a valuable contribution in helping to secure the stability of the transition process which will lead to elections that should take place before the end of this year, in accordance with the joint position of the AU, Ecowas, CPLP, EU and the UN.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006116/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: China — reciclagem de óleo alimentar

Segundo o jornal The China Daily, a cidade de Xangai pretende converter o óleo usado para cozinhar numa solução ambiental, reciclando-o para fabricar biocombustível para veículos. O governo de Xangai, em colaboração com uma universidade local e com seis empresas, prevê agora produzir biodiesel a partir desse óleo utilizado para os autocarros, táxis e camiões da cidade.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento deste projeto?

2. Considera que a União Europeia teria vantagem em acompanhar a sua evolução e, eventualmente, em participar no mesmo?

3. Tem conhecimento de projetos similares em curso na União Europeia?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(11 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão não tinha conhecimento deste projeto específico, mas está perfeitamente ciente de que o óleo alimentar usado pode ser utilizado como matéria-prima para a produção de biodiesel. De facto, a tecnologia aplicada à conversão do óleo alimentar usado em biocombustível é bem conhecida e é prática comum na UE recolher óleo usado junto de restaurantes e de outros produtores. Por conseguinte, não se considera necessário que a UE siga de perto este projeto.

No passado, a UE criou vários projetos de investigação para o desenvolvimento de tecnologias de produção de biodiesel a partir de óleo alimentar usado. Hoje em dia, a legislação da UE prevê incentivos especiais à utilização de resíduos e detritos para a produção de biocombustíveis. O óleo alimentar usado é atualmente, de longe, o resíduo mais comummente utilizado para a produção de biocombustíveis. Por exemplo, de acordo com as informações provenientes da indústria, a maior parte do biodiesel consumido no Reino Unido em 2012 foi produzido a partir de óleos alimentares usados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006116/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: China — recycling cooking oil

According to the *China Daily* newspaper, the city of Shanghai plans to turn cooking oil into an environmental solution by recycling it to produce biofuel for vehicles. The Shanghai government, in collaboration with a local university and six businesses, now plans to produce biofuel from this oil to power the city's buses, taxis and lorries.

1. Is the Commission aware of this project?

2. Does it believe that the EU would benefit from monitoring its progress and, potentially, from participating in it?

3. Is it aware of similar projects taking place in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

The Commission did not know about this specific project but is well aware that used cooking oil can be used as feedstock for the production of biodiesel. In fact the technology applied to convert used cooking oil into biofuel is well known and it is common practise in the EU to collect used cooking oil from restaurants and other producers. Therefore, it is not considered necessary that the EU follows this project closely.

In the past the EU has funded a number of research projects developing technologies to produce biodiesel from used cooking oil. Today EU legislation provides special incentives to use wastes and residues for the production of biofuels. Used cooking oil is currently by far the most commonly used waste for biofuels production. For example, according to information from the industry, the majority of biodiesel consumed in the UK in 2012 was produced from used cooking oil.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006117/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Síria — Hezbollah

O Secretário-Geral da ONU manifestou formalmente a sua profunda preocupação com o aumento da participação do Hezbollah nos combates na Síria, assim como com o risco de contágio do conflito ao Líbano.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento desta declaração de Ban Ki Moon?

2. Acompanha o Secretário-Geral nesta sua preocupação?

3. Tomou alguma posição pública acerca do envolvimento do Hezbollah no conflito sírio?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente tem acompanhado atentamente todos os desenvolvimentos relacionados com o conflito na Síria. Desenvolveu uma diplomacia ativa no que respeita à Síria, tanto a nível público como privado, com uma vasta gama de atores internacionais, incluindo o Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas.

Já desde o início de 2011 que a UE tinha manifestado repetidamente o seu total apoio à política de dissociação do conflito sírio, tal como acordado pelos líderes libaneses de todos os quadrantes políticos. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente recebeu, com grande preocupação, informações sobre o crescente envolvimento do Hezbollah libanês nos combates na Síria, sendo a luta por Al-Qusair um exemplo recente. É fundamental que todos os intervenientes no Líbano respeitem, na prática, a política de dissociação.

O Conselho «Negócios Estrangeiros» de maio de 2013, presidido pela Alta Representante, adotou conclusões em que se afirma que «A UE está seriamente preocupada com o envolvimento de atores não estatais extremistas e estrangeiros nos combates na Síria, que está a inflamar ainda mais o conflito e a ameaçar a estabilidade regional.»

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006117/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Syria: Hezbollah

The UN Secretary-General has formally expressed his deep concern over Hezbollah's increased participation in the fighting in Syria, as well as over the risk of the conflict spreading to Lebanon.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this statement by Ban Ki-moon?

2. Does she share the Secretary-General's concern?

3. Has she taken a public stance on Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian conflict?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President has been following all developments related to the Syrian conflict with close attention. She has engaged in active diplomacy as regards Syria, both publicly and privately, with a range of international players including the UN Secretary-General.

The EU has repeatedly stated its full support for the policy of dissociation from the Syrian conflict, as agreed by Lebanese leaders across the political spectrum as early as 2011. The High Representative/Vice-President has received with great concern the reports of increasing involvement of the Lebanese Hizbullah in the fighting in Syria, with the fight for al-Qusair being a recent example. It is essential that all actors in Lebanon abide by the dissociation policy in practice.

The Foreign Affairs Council of May 2013, chaired by the High Representative, adopted conclusions stating that 'the EU is seriously concerned with the involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria, which is further fuelling the conflict and posing a threat to regional stability.'

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006118/13
adresată Comisiei
Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE)
(30 mai 2013)

Subiect: numărul 112: GEASU

Cu toate că au fost făcute mai multe solicitări de participare, deputații în Parlamentul European încă nu sunt invitați să participe la reuniunile Grupului de experți privind accesul la serviciile de urgență (GEASU), înființat pentru a discuta chestiuni referitoare la numărul de urgență european 112.

Totuși, deputații în Parlamentul European sunt invitați să participe la reuniunile Platformei europene de implementare a sistemului eCall (EeIP).

Este Comisia în măsură să explice diferența în ce privește politica sa privind participarea deputaților în Parlamentul European la aceste reuniuni?

Este Comisia în măsură să confirme că viitoarele reuniuni ale GEASU vor fi organizate în alte perioade decât cele ale ședințelor plenare ale Parlamentului European, astfel încât deputații să poată participa?

Este Comisia în măsură să informeze Parlamentul European cu privire la datele următoarelor reuniuni din 2013 și 2014?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(15 iulie 2013)

Grupul de experți privind accesul la serviciile de urgență (EGEA) este un grup de lucru al Comitetului pentru comunicații (COCOM). Comitetul pentru comunicații este un comitet în sensul Regulamentului (UE) nr. 182/2011 ([1]). A fost înființat prin directiva-cadru privind un cadru de reglementare comun pentru rețelele și serviciile de comunicații electronice ([2]) cu scopul de a oferi asistență Comisiei în domeniile de politică în care are competența de a pune în aplicare legislația. Membrii COCOM sunt reprezentanți ai guvernelor statelor membre. Rolul COCOM este de a emite opinii formale cu privire la măsurile pe care Comisia intenționează să le adopte pentru a pune în aplicare legislația UE. EGEA, în calitatea sa de grup de lucru al COCOM, se supune procedurii comitetelor. Rolul Parlamentului European în această procedură este prevăzut de Regulamentul (UE) nr.182/2011.

Pe de altă parte, Platforma europeană de implementare a sistemului eCall (EeIP), la care distinsul deputat face, de asemenea, referire, este un grup de experți al Comisiei.

Sarcinile grupului EGEA, care există deja de câțiva ani, sunt în curs de a fi revizuite, pentru a se verifica dacă sunt în concordanță cu cadrul privind procedura comitetelor instituit prin Regulamentul (UE) nr. 182/2011.

([1]) Regulamentul (UE) nr. 182/2011 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 16 februarie 2011 de stabilire a normelor și principiilor generale privind mecanismele de control de către statele membre al exercitării competențelor de executare de către Comisie (JO L55, 28.2.2011, p. 13).

([2]) Directiva 2002/21/EC a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 7 marte 2002 privind un cadru de reglementare comun pentru rețelele și serviciile de comunicații electronice (JO L108, 24.4.2002, p. 33).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006118/13
to the Commission
Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: 112 number: EGEA

Although several attendance requests have been made, Members of the European Parliament are still not invited to attend meetings of the Expert Group on Emergency Access (EGEA), organised to discuss matters concerning the European emergency number 112.

However, Members of the European Parliament are invited to attend European eCall Implementation Platform (EEIP) meetings.

Can the Commission explain the difference in its policy regarding the attendance of Members of the European Parliament at such meetings?

Can the Commission confirm that future EGEA meetings will be organised outside the European Parliament's plenary sessions so that MEPs can attend?

Can the Commission inform the European Parliament of the exact dates of upcoming meetings in 2013 and 2014?

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

The Expert Group on Emergency Access (EGEA) is a working group of the communications Committee (CoCom). The communication Committee is a committee in the sense of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 ([1]). It is set up by the framework Directive on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications and services ([2]) to assist the Commission in policy areas where it is empowered to implement legislation. The CoCom members are representatives of the governments of the Member States. The role of CoCom is to give formal opinions on measures the Commission intends to adopt in order to implement EU legislation. EGEA, as a working group of CoCom, is thus subject to the rules and procedures applicable to comitology committees. The role of the European Parliament in these procedures is provided for in Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

The European eCall implementation Platform (EEIP), on the other hand, to which the Honourable Member also refers, is a Commission Expert Group.

The tasks of EGEA, which has existed for several years already, are currently being reviewed in order to clarify if they fit into the comitology framework established by Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers (OJ L55, 28.2.2011, p. 13).

([2]) Directive 2002/21/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 March 2002 Directive on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications and services (OJ L108, 24.4.2002, p. 33).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006119/13
an die Kommission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(30. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Anwendung des Subsidiaritätsprinzip nach dem Vertrag von Lissabon

Im Vertrag von Lissabon wurde das Subsidiaritätsprinzip gestärkt. Entscheidungen sollen so bürgernah wie möglich getroffen werden. Das Subsidiaritätsprinzip wurde in Artikel 5 Absatz 3 des Vertrages über die Europäische Union (EUV) und im Protokoll (Nr. 2) über die Anwendung der Grundsätze der Subsidiarität und der Verhältnismäßigkeit gestärkt. Die Instrumente der nationalen Parlamente zur Kontrolle der Gesetzgebungsakte auf Subsidiarität sind Subsidiaritätsrüge und Subsidiaritätsklage.

1. Wie viele Klagen wurden mit Verweis auf das Subsidiaritätsprinzip am EuGH eingereicht (Subsidiaritätsklage)? Und woran sind sie gegebenenfalls gescheitert?

2. Wie viele Subsidiaritätsrügen gab es von nationalen Parlamenten, dass die bemängelten Gesetzgebungsakte mit dem Subsidiaritätsprinzip nach dem Vertrag über die Europäische Union nicht konform seien? Und woran scheiterten gegebenenfalls die Subsidiaritätsrügen?

3. Für Regionalparlamente ist die Möglichkeit erweitert worden am Frühwarnsystem (FWS) teilzunehmen, allerdings haben diese im Gegensatz zu nationalen Parlamenten weniger Zeit zu handeln. Wie könnte der regionale Aspekt besser in zukünftigen Vertragsänderungen berücksichtigt werden?

4. Über welche internen Strukturen verfügt die Kommission für begründete Stellungnahmen von nationalen Parlamenten? Welche (personellen) Mittel stehen der Kommission diesbezüglich zur Verfügung? Gab es diesbezüglich eine Veränderung seit der mündlichen parlamentarischen Anfrage über die Anwendung des Subsidiaritätsprinzips an die Kommission vom 4. Oktober 2011?

5. Wie wird in Bezug auf Artikel 2 des Protokolls Nr. 2 die Beratung bezüglich der lokalen und regionalen Ebenen durchgeführt?

6. Ist die Kommission der Meinung, dass durch die Stärkung der nationalen Parlamente in der EU eine Verbesserung des Mitspracherechts erreicht wurde oder sollten gegebenenfalls noch weitere Maßnahmen ergriffen werden?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juli 2013)

1. Beim Gerichtshof und beim Gericht wurde in mindestens 42 Fällen die Gültigkeit von EU-Rechtsvorschriften mit Verweis auf das Subsidiaritätsprinzip angefochten; bei weiteren Klagen, die die Auslegung anderer Bestimmungen betrafen, ging es auch um das Subsidiaritätsprinzip. In keinem einzigen Fall jedoch führte dies dazu, dass der angefochtene EU-Rechtsakt für ungültig erklärt wurde. In einigen Fällen stellte der Gerichtshof fest, dass kein Verstoß gegen das Subsidiaritätsprinzip vorlag; in anderen Fällen war die Subsidiaritätsklage oder -rüge unzulässig oder offensichtlich unbegründet.

2. Die Kommission erhielt 34 mit Gründen versehene Stellungnahmen im Jahr 2010, 64 im Jahr 2011, 70 im Jahr 2012 und bislang 40 im Jahr 2013. Das Verfahren der „gelben Karte“ wurde nur beim Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Rates über die Ausübung des Rechts auf Durchführung kollektiver Maßnahmen im Kontext der Niederlassungs- und der Dienstleistungsfreiheit ([1]) eingeleitet. Die mit Gründen versehenen Stellungnahmen zu anderen Vorschlägen der Kommission erreichten nicht die nötigen Schwellenwerte.

3.+6. Durch den Vertrag von Lissabon wurde der regionale Charakter der EU-Governance gestärkt. Die Rolle der nationalen Parlamente auf EU-Ebene wurde in den letzten Jahren deutlich verbessert. Vor den nächsten Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament im Jahr 2014 wird die Kommission ihre Pläne für die Gestaltung der künftigen Europäischen Union vorlegen.

4. Da sich keine Änderungen ergeben haben, verweist die Kommission auf ihre frühere Antwort.

([1]) KOM(2012)130.

5. Es gibt eine Reihe von Instrumenten, um alle Akteure — einschließlich auf regionaler und lokaler Ebene — in die Ausarbeitung von Vorschlägen einzubeziehen, z. B. öffentlich zugängliche Fahrpläne ([2]) („Roadmaps“) und öffentliche Konsultationen ([3]). Wenn sich eine Initiative möglicherweise erheblich auf regionaler Ebene auswirkt, können die Kommissionsdienststellen über die Netzwerke des Ausschusses der Regionen auch regionale und lokale Behörden ansprechen.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/govemance/impact/planned_ia/roadmaps_2013_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006119/13
to the Commission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Application of the principle of subsidiarity in accordance with the Treaty of Lisbon

The principle of subsidiarity was strengthened in the Treaty of Lisbon. Decisions are to be taken as closely as possible to citizens. The principle of subsidiarity was strengthened in Article 5(3) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and in the Protocol (No 2) on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. The instruments available to national parliaments for monitoring legislative acts in terms of subsidiarity are subsidiarity complaints and the right to take action against infringements of the principle of subsidiarity.

1. How many cases have been filed with the Court of Justice of the European Union with reference to the principle of subsidiarity (action against infringements of the principle of subsidiarity)? If these cases were unsuccessful, what was the reason for this?

2. How many subsidiarity complaints have been made by national parliaments in respect of the fact that the legislative acts to which the complaint relates do not comply with the principle of subsidiarity in accordance with the Treaty on European Union? If these complaints were unsuccessful, what was the reason for this?

3. Regional parliaments have been given greater opportunity to participate in the early warning mechanism, although in contrast to national parliaments, regional parliaments have less time to act. How could the regional aspect be better taken into account in future amendments to the Treaty?

4. What internal structures does the Commission have in place for reasoned opinions from national parliaments? What resources (in terms of staff) are available to the Commission for this purpose? Has there been a change in this regard since the parliamentary question for oral answer to the Commission of 4 October 2011 concerning use of the principle of subsidiarity?

5. With regard to Article 2 of Protocol No 2, how is the consultation in respect of the local and regional dimensions carried out?

6. Does the Commission believe that strengthening the national parliaments in the EU has improved their powers of codecision, or should further measures be taken, where relevant?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

1. The principle of subsidiarity has been invoked to challenge the validity of EU acts before the Court of Justice and the General Court in at least 42 cases and, in other cases, for the interpretation of other provisions, but never led to the challenged EU act being declared invalid. In some cases the Court held that there was no breach of the principle, in other cases the action or plea based on subsidiarity was inadmissible or manifestly unfounded.

2. The Commission received 34 reasoned opinions in 2010, 64 in 2011, 70 in 2012 and, to date, 40 in 2013. The 'yellow card' was triggered only on the proposal for a Council Regulation on the exercise of the right to take collective action within the context of the freedom of establishment and the freedom to provide services ([1]). The reasoned opinions concerning other Commission proposals did not reach the necessary thresholds.

3 and 6. The Lisbon Treaty has reinforced the regional dimension of EU governance and the role of national Parliaments at EU level has been clearly strengthened in recent years. Before the next European Parliament elections in 2014, the Commission will present its outline for the shape of the future European Union.

4. As there has been no change, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its previous reply.

([1]) COM(2012) 130.

5. A number of tools are in place aiming at associating all stakeholders, including regional and local players, in the preparation of proposals, e.g. publically available roadmaps ([2]) and public consultations ([3]). Commission's services can also reach out to regional and local authorities through the Committee of the Regions' networks when an initiative may have significant regional impacts.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/roadmaps_2013_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006120/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(30 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Η κατάσταση των παιδιών στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα δημοσιοποιημένα στοιχεία Έκθεσης, που εκπονήθηκε από τη Unicef σε συνεργασία με το Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών, για την κατάσταση των παιδιών στην Ελλάδα, προκύπτει ότι ο δείκτης «φτώχεια ή κοινωνικός αποκλεισμός» για τη συγκεκριμένη πληθυσμιακή ομάδα ξεπέρασε το 30% (30,4%) για το 2011, αυξημένος κατά 9,1% σε σχέση με το 2010. Ταυτόχρονα, το 16,4% του συνόλου των ανηλίκων εμφανίζεται να διαβιεί σε νοικοκυριά με «σοβαρή υλική υστέρηση», παρουσιάζοντας αύξηση κατά 38,2% συγκριτικά με το 2011. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, και με βάση το διακηρυγμένο στόχο της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση της παιδικής φτώχειας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Πώς αξιολογεί την παραπάνω κατάσταση, καθώς και τις επιπτώσεις της στην αύξηση της σχολικής διαρροής και την όξυνση των εκπαιδευτικών ανισοτήτων συνολικότερα;

— Διαθέτει ανάλογα στατιστικά στοιχεία για τη διακύμανση του δείκτη «φτώχεια και κοινωνικός αποκλεισμός» στα κράτη-μέλη ή του ποσοστού των παιδιών που διαβιούν σε νοικοκυριά με «σοβαρή υλική υστέρηση» κατά τη διετία 2010-2011;

— Με δεδομένο ότι οι πολιτικές λιτότητας συνεχίζονται στην Ελλάδα (και μετά το 2011), ποιά είναι η εκτίμησή της αναφορικά με την εξέλιξη της παιδικής φτώχειας στη χώρα μας;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Ιουλίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί τις τάσεις των κοινωνικών εξελίξεων στην ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένων εκείνων που σχετίζονται με την παιδική φτώχεια, βάσει δεδομένων των EU SILC.

2. Δεδομένα για όλα τα κράτη μέλη της βρίσκονται στον διαδικτυακό τόπο της Eurostat ([1]). Τα δεδομένα είναι παρόμοια με εκείνα που ανέφερε ο κύριος βουλευτής: Το 2011, το 30,4% των παιδιών στην Ελλάδα και το 27,1% στην ΕΕ κινδύνευαν από φτώχεια ή κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό (28,7% και 27% το 2010). Το 2011, το 16,4% των παιδιών στην Ελλάδα και το 10% στην ΕΕ διαβιούσαν σε νοικοκυριά που αντιμετώπιζαν σημαντικές υλικές στερήσεις (12,2% και 9,7% το 2010).

3. Στατιστικές προσομοιώσεις που χρησιμοποιούσαν δεδομένα σχετικά με το εισόδημα και την απασχόληση απέδειξαν πρόσφατα ότι το ποσοστό των παιδιών που κινδυνεύουν από φτώχεια στην Ελλάδα ενδέχεται να αυξηθεί από το 23,7% το 2010 στο 27%-30% το 2012 (Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, βάσει EUROMOD για την εκτίμηση του κινδύνου της φτώχειας στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση ([2])).

Στο πλαίσιο του 2ου ελληνικού προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής καταβάλλονται σημαντικές προσπάθειες για τη βελτίωση του δικτύου κοινωνικής προστασίας. Την 1.1.2013 θεσπίσθηκε ενιαίο επίδομα διατροφής παιδιών ύψους 40 ευρώ τον μήνα για κάθε πρώτο συντηρούμενο τέκνο της οικογένειας ([3]). Το 2014, θα ξεκινήσει νέο πιλοτικό πρόγραμμα για την ενίσχυση του ελάχιστου εγγυημένου εισοδήματος, το οποίο θα αποτελέσει το ύστατο δίκτυ κοινωνικής ασφάλειας και ευημερίας για τις οικογένειες και τα παιδιά που αντιμετωπίζουν συνθήκες μεγάλης φτώχειας στην Ελλάδα.

Η παιδική φτώχεια αναγνωρίστηκε ως σημαντικό θέμα στην ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης (ΕΕΑ) 2013 ([4]). Οι τελευταίες ειδικές ανά χώρα συστάσεις που απηύθυνε η Επιτροπή σε 15 κράτη μέλη αφορούσαν την παιδική φτώχεια και τα μέτρα υποστήριξης του εισοδήματος.

Επιπλέον, η σύσταση της Επιτροπής «Επένδυση στα Παιδιά», ως μέρος της δέσμης κοινωνικών επενδύσεων ([5]), τονίζει ότι η υψηλής ποιότητας προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα αποτελεί καθοριστικό παράγοντα στη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας, καθώς και η ενίσχυση της συμμετοχής των γονέων στην αγορά εργασίας, ώστε να εξασφαλισθούν καλύτερα μακροπρόθεσμα αποτελέσματα για τα παιδιά.

([1]) Τμήμα «δείκτες για την Ευρώπη 2020».
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-13-010/EN/KS-RA-13-010-EN.PDF
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf, σ. 41.
([4]) COM(2012)750 τελικό της 28ης Νοεμβρίου 2012.
([5]) C(2013)778 τελικό της 20ής Φεβρουαρίου 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006120/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: The situation of children in Greece

According to a recently published Unicef report, drawn up in collaboration with the University of Athens, on the situation of children in Greece, the indicator 'poverty or social exclusion' for this population group exceeded 30% (30.4%) in 2011, an increase of 9.1% compared to 2010. At the same time, 16.4% of all minors appear to be living in households with 'severe material *deprivation*', an increase of 38.2% compared to 2011. In this context, and in the light of the EU's declared objective to combat child poverty, will the Commission say:

— How does it assess the above situation and its impact on the increasing school dropout rate and the exacerbation of educational inequalities in general?

— Does it have similar statistics for the index 'poverty and social exclusion' in Member States or the percentage of children living in households with 'severe material *deprivation*' during the period 2010-2011?

— Given that the austerity policies are continuing in Greece (after 2011), what is its assessment regarding the evolution of child poverty in our country?

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

1. The Commission is monitoring trends in social developments in the EU, including those related to child poverty on the basis of EU SILC data.

2. Data for all Member States are on the Eurostat website ([1]). They are similar to those quoted by the Honourable Member: in 2011, 30.4% of children were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Greece and 27.1% in the EU (28.7% and 27% in 2010). In 2011, 16.4% of children in Greece lived in a severely materially deprived household, and 10% in the EU (12.2% and 9.7% in 2010).

3. Statistical simulations using data on income and employment have recently shown that the share of children living at risk of poverty in Greece might increase from 23.7% in 2010 up to 27%-30% in 2012 (European Commission, using EUROMOD to estimate poverty risk in the European Union ([2])).

Within the context of the 2nd Greek economic adjustment programme important efforts are being made to improve the social safety net. A single allowance child support was instituted on 1.1.2013 of EUR 40 per month for each first dependent child of the family ([3]). In 2014 a new pilot for a guaranteed income support scheme will start. It should become the ultimate welfare safety net for families and children facing extreme poverty in Greece.

Child poverty was identified as an important issue in the AGS 2013 ([4]). Child poverty and income support measures have been targeted in 15 Member States through the latest country specific Recommendations.

Furthermore, the recommendation Investing in Children as part of the Social Investment Package ([5]) stresses that high quality early childhood education and care is an important source of job creation, as well as supporting parents' participation in the labour market, and providing better long-term outcomes for children.

([1]) Section — Europe 2020 indicators.
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-13-010/EN/KS-RA-13-010-EN.PDF
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf, p41
([4]) COM(2012) 750 final, 28.11.2012.
([5]) C(2013)778 final 20.2.2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006121/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(30 Μαΐου 2013)

Θέμα: Δείκτης θνησιμότητας στις ηλικίες 15-19 από μεταφορές-μετακινήσεις

Σύμφωνα με έρευνα του Πανεπιστήμιου Αθηνών για λογαριασμό της Unicef («Η κατάσταση των παιδιών στην Ελλάδα 2013»), ο δείκτης θνησιμότητας για τις ηλικίες 15-19 ετών από μεταφορές-μετακινήσεις ανήλθε στην Ελλάδα το 2010 σε 17,8%, γεγονός που καταδεικνύει την αυξημένη έκθεση σε αυξημένο κίνδυνο της συγκεκριμένης ηλικιακής ομάδας σε αντίστοιχα ατυχήματα. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, και με δεδομένη τη πρωταρχική επιδίωξη της ΕΕ για την ενίσχυση του πλέγματος ασφάλειας και προστασίας των ανηλίκων, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για το δείκτη θνησιμότητας στα κράτη μέλη από ατυχήματα που σχετίζονται με μεταφορές ή μετακινήσεις; τόσο στο γενικό πληθυσμό, όσο και στη συγκεκριμένη ηλικιακή ομάδα;

— Προτίθεται να προωθήσει την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών προκειμένου να περιοριστεί η συχνότητα αντίστοιχων ατυχημάτων και; κατ' επέκταση; η θνησιμότητα από αυτά;

— Επεξεργάζεται ή σκοπεύει να επεξεργαστεί ένα συνολικότερο σχέδιο δράσης για την ευαισθητοποίηση και την ενίσχυση της ενημέρωσης της κοινής γνώμης (γονείς και μαθητές) σε θέματα οδικής ασφάλειας ανηλίκων (οδηγών και πεζών);

— Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα ευρωπαϊκά κονδύλια για τη χρηματοδότηση ανάλογων δράσεων από τους εμπλεκόμενους φορείς σε εθνικό επίπεδο;

— Με δεδομένη τη συχνότητα των θανατηφόρων ατυχημάτων από μεταφορές-μετακινήσεις των νέων ηλικίας 15-19 ετών, πώς κρίνει την πρόταση η επερχόμενη Ευρωπαϊκή Ημέρα Οδικής Ασφάλειας (6 Μαΐου 2014) να επικεντρωθεί στο εν λόγω ζήτημα;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή συγκεντρώνει στατιστικά στοιχεία για ατυχήματα, καθώς και για αριθμό των νεκρών ανά χώρα και τις ηλικιακές ομάδες. Περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες διατίθενται στον δικτυακό τόπο της Επιτροπής ([1]).

Ένα από τα μέσα που χρησιμοποιούνται για τη βελτίωση της οδικής ασφάλειας για τους νέους στην ΕΕ είναι η στήριξη της ανταλλαγής βέλτιστων πρακτικών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών, για παράδειγμα μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Χάρτη Οδικής Ασφάλειας.

Η βελτίωση της ασφάλειας των νεότερων χρηστών του οδικού δικτύου βρίσκεται στο επίκεντρο των πολιτικών κατευθύνσεων για την οδική ασφάλεια 2011-2020 της Επιτροπής. Στις πρόσφατες δράσεις συγκαταλέγεται η νέα ευρωπαϊκή άδεια οδήγησης με σταδιακή πρόσβαση των νέων σε μοτοσικλέτες μεγαλύτερου κυβισμού, η πρόταση της Επιτροπής να συμπεριλάβει τα μοτοποδήλατα και λοιπά μηχανοκίνητα δίκυκλα σε υποχρεωτικό περιοδικό τεχνικό έλεγχο και οι προσπάθειες να αυξηθεί η οδική ασφάλεια των ευάλωτων χρηστών του οδικού δικτύου π.χ. με επίκεντρο την ασφάλεια των αστικών οδών, τη σύγχρονη τεχνολογία οδικής ασφάλειας και τους σοβαρούς τραυματισμούς από τροχαία ατυχήματα.

Η ΕΕ συγχρηματοδοτεί με επιχορηγήσεις δραστηριότητες για την ευαισθητοποίηση των νέων στην οδική ασφάλεια μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Φόρουμ Νεότητας για την Οδική Ασφάλεια. Τον προσεχή Σεπτέμβριο, το εν λόγω φόρουμ θα συγκληθεί για 5η φορά.

Η οδική ασφάλεια για τους νέους αποτέλεσε κεντρικό θέμα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ημέρας Οδικής Ασφάλειας 2012, η οποία διοργανώθηκε στη Λευκωσία σε συνεργασία με την Κυπριακή Προεδρία. Η διάσκεψη κάλυψε θέματα όπως εκπαίδευση, πρόληψη ατυχημάτων, προσπάθειες επιβολής της νομοθεσίας και συγκεκριμένους κινδύνους όπως η απόσπαση της προσοχής (π.χ. αποστολή μηνυμάτων, έξυπνα τηλέφωνα (smart phones), οδήγηση σε κατάσταση μέθης, καθώς και υπό την επήρεια οινοπνεύματος ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/statistics/index_en.htm
([2]) Συνοπτική παρουσίαση των συμπερασμάτων βρίσκεται στον ιστότοπο http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/news/nl9_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006121/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Mortality rate of 15 to 19 year-olds in accidents related to transportation and mobility

According to research conducted by the University of Athens on behalf of Unicef ('The situation of children in Greece in 2013'), the mortality rate from accidents related to transportation and mobility in 2010 for 15-19 year-olds was as high as 17.8% in Greece in 2010, which demonstrates the increased exposure of this specific age group to accidents of this nature. In this context, and given that enhancing the safety and protection of minors is one of the EU's major objectives, will the Commission say:

— Does it have any statistics on the mortality rate in Member States in accidents related to transportation and mobility, both for the general population, and for this age group?

— Will it promote exchanges of best practices between Member States in order to reduce the frequency of such accidents and, by extension, the death rate from such accidents?

— Is it drawing up, or does it intend to draw up in future, a more comprehensive action plan to raise awareness and increase public knowledge (parents and students) of road safety issues for minors (drivers and pedestrians)?

— Are any EU funds available to finance such actions by stakeholders at national level?

— Given the frequency of fatal accidents related to transportation and mobility in 2010 for 15-19 year-olds, how does it view the proposal that the upcoming European Road Safety Day (6 May, 2014) should focus on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

The Commission compiles statistics on road traffic crashes including the number of fatalities per country and age groups. More details can be found via the Commission website ([1]).

One of the tools used for improving road safety for young people on the EU level is the support of exchange of good practices between Member States, for example via the European Road Safety Charter.

Enhancing the safety of younger road users is very much at the core of the Commission's Road safety policy orientations for 2011-20. Recent actions include the new European driving licence with gradual access for young people to the heaviest motorcycles; the Commission proposal to include mopeds and other powered two-wheelers in mandatory periodic roadworthiness testing; and the efforts to increase road safety for vulnerable road users, e.g. with a focus on urban road safety, modern technology for road safety and serious road traffic injuries.

Through grants, the EU co-funds activities raising awareness among young people on road safety through the European Youth Forum for Road Safety. This September this forum will run in its 5th edition.

Youth road safety was the topic of the European Road Safety Day 2012, which was organised in Lefcosia in cooperation with the Cypriot Presidency. The conference covered issues such as training, accident prevention, enforcement efforts and specific risks such as distractions (e.g. texting, smart-phones), drink-driving and drug-driving ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/statistics/index_en.htm
([2]) A summary of conclusions can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/news/nl9_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006122/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 mei 2013)

Betreft: Waar eindigt de bevoegdheid van de EU?

Het Verdrag van Lissabon geeft toelichting bij de precieze verdeling van bevoegdheden tussen de Europese Unie en de lidstaten. Het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU) maakt een onderscheid tussen drie soorten bevoegdheden — exclusieve, gedeelde en ondersteunende bevoegdheden — en bevat een niet-uitputtende lijst van de desbetreffende beleidsgebieden voor elk geval. Bovendien verleent artikel 7 VWEU de Europese instellingen de bevoegdheid om na te gaan of er sprake is van een duidelijk risico van ernstige schending van de waarden van de EU door de lidstaten. Deze waarden zijn echter vaak beschermd door nationale wetgeving en dit valt dus binnen de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten.

1. Wat is het standpunt van de Commissie inzake de verhouding tussen de bevoegdheden van de Europese Unie en die van de lidstaten? Aan wie wordt de bevoegdheid verleend in gevallen waarin het Verdrag de verdeling niet uitdrukkelijk omschrijft?

2. Wat is de procedure indien de rechtsorde van een lidstaat handelingen omvat die binnen de bevoegdheid van de lidstaat vallen, maar die tegen de waarden van de EU indruisen?

3. In welke omstandigheden is de EU gemachtigd in te grijpen in de nationale wetgeving?

4. Is de positie van een rechtshandeling in de hiërarchie van het rechtssysteem van een lidstaat een bepalende factor om te verzekeren dat de waarden van de EU geëerbiedigd worden? Verschilt de procedure naargelang de handeling die niet in overeenstemming is met de waarden van de EU, een grondwet, een kardinale wet dan wel een gewone wet is?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(31 juli 2013)

Krachtens het beginsel van bevoegdheidstoedeling handelt de Unie uitsluitend binnen de grenzen van de bevoegdheden die de lidstaten haar in de Verdragen hebben toegedeeld om de daarin bepaalde doelstellingen te verwezenlijken. Bevoegdheden die in de Verdragen niet aan de Unie zijn toegedeeld, behoren toe aan de lidstaten (zie artikel 5, lid 2, VEU).

Artikel 7 VEU stelt de Unie, in laatste instantie, een correctie- en preventiemechanisme ter beschikking om globale en structurele situaties aan te pakken die een ernstige en voortdurende schending van de algemene beginselen van artikel 2 VEU vormen, of waarin er een duidelijk gevaar voor een dergelijke schending bestaat. De Commissie heeft haar aanpak betreffende artikel 7 VEU toegelicht in haar mededeling van 15 oktober 2003 aan de Raad en het Europees Parlement over artikel 7 van het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie — *Eerbiediging en bevordering van de waarden waarop de Unie is gegrondvest* ([1]).

Binnen het kader van de haar toegedeelde bevoegdheden heeft de Commissie de taak de toepassing te waarborgen van de Verdragen en de maatregelen die de instellingen krachtens de Verdragen hebben vastgesteld. Onder de controle van het Hof van Justitie ziet de Commissie toe op de toepassing van het recht van de Unie (zie artikel 17, lid 1, VEU). Iedere lidstaat is verplicht met al zijn handelingen de in artikel 2 VEU bedoelde waarden van de Unie te eerbiedigen, ongeacht de plaats die die handelingen innemen in de hiërarchie van het rechtsstelsel van de betrokken lidstaat.

([1]) COM(2003) 606 definitief.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006122/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Where does the EU's competence end?

The Treaty of Lisbon clarifies the precise division of competences between the European Union and the Member States. Thus, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) distinguishes between three types of competence — exclusive, shared and supporting — and contains a non-exhaustive list of the fields concerned in each case. In addition, Article 7 TFEU empowers the European institutions to determine whether there is a clear risk of a serious breach by a Member State of the EU's values. These values, however, are often protected by national law and thus fall within the competence of Member States.

1. What is the Commission's view on the relationship between the competences of the European Union and those of Member States? To whom is the competence transferred in cases where the Treaty does not explicitly specify the distinction?

2. What is the procedure if a Member State's legal order contains acts that fall within the remit of the Member State's competence but run counter to the EU's values?

3. Under what circumstances is the EU authorised to interfere with national legislation?

4. Is the position of a legal act in the hierarchy of a Member State's legal system a determining factor when ensuring compliance with the EU's values? Does the procedure differ according to whether the act that is not in line with the EU's values is a constitution, a cardinal law or a law?

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

According to the principle of conferral, the Union shall act only within the limits of the competences conferred upon it by the Member States in the Treaties to attain the objectives set out therein. Competences not conferred upon the Union in the Treaties remain with the Member States (cf. Article 5(2) TEU).

Article 7 TEU provides, as a last resort, the Union with a remedial and preventive mechanism aimed to cover global and structured situations which either constitute a serious and persistent breach of common principles laid down in Article 2 TEU or create a clear risk of a serious breach of the latter. The Commission presented its approach to Article 7 TEU in its communication of 15 October 2003 to the European Parliament and the Council called 'Respect for and promotion of the values on which the Union is based' ([1]).

Within the conferred competences, the Commission is given the task of ensuring the application of the Treaties and measures adopted by the institutions pursuant to them. It oversees the application of Union law, under the control of the Court of Justice (cf Article 17(1) TEU). Each Member State is bound to respect the Union's values referred to in Article 2 TEU throughout its acts, irrespective of the place of these acts in the hierarchy of that Member State's legal system.

([1]) COM(2003) 606 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006123/13
an die Kommission
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Albert Deß (PPE), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), George Lyon (ALDE), James Nicholson (ECR) und Alfreds Rubiks (GUE/NGL)
(30. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Geringfügige Verwendungen und Sonderkulturen

Der Mangel an effizienten Mitteln für die Prävention und Bekämpfung von Schädlingen und Krankheiten wird zu einem zentralen Problem für den Anbau von geringfügigen Verwendungen und Sonderkulturen in der Europäischen Union. Dies wirkt sich nicht nur auf die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der gesamten ernährungswirtschaftlichen Produktionskette aus, sondern auch auf die Vielfalt qualitativ hochwertiger Agrar- und Nahrungsmittelerzeugnisse und auf die Artenvielfalt.

Der wirtschaftliche Wert von Anbauprodukten wie Früchten, Gemüse und Blumen und von Anbaupflanzen, die spezifische Pflanzenschutzmittel benötigen, beläuft sich auf ca. 70 Mrd. EUR pro Jahr, das heißt auf 22 % der gesamten landwirtschaftlichen Produktion.

Die Kommission hätte dem Parlament und dem Rat gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 bereits bis zum 12. Dezember 2011 einen Bericht über Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung dieses Problems vorlegen sollen. Darüber hinaus sollen entsprechend der Richtlinie für die nachhaltige Verwendung von Pestiziden (2009/128/EG) bis 2014 angemessene Instrumente für die korrekte Umsetzung des Programms für integrierten Pflanzenschutz zur Verfügung gestellt werden.

1. Wann beabsichtigt die Kommission, angesichts der mangelnden Effizienz der Rechtsvorschriften der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 für den Schutz geringfügiger Verwendungen und von Sonderkulturen den vorstehend genannten Bericht vorzulegen, um auf künftige Herausforderungen wie die wachsende Bedrohung der Ernährungssicherheit, der Pflanzenvielfalt und der Pflanzengesundheit zu reagieren?

2. Wie beabsichtigt die Kommission, dieses Problem in Anbetracht der Notwendigkeit eines koordinierten Vorgehens der EU sowie eines angemessenen Finanzierungsplans in Bezug auf geringfügige Verwendungen und Sonderkulturen in ihrem Bericht anzugehen?

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

Gemäß Artikel 51 Absatz 9 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 über das Inverkehrbringen von Pflanzenschutzmitteln ([1]) legt die Kommission dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat einen Bericht über die mögliche Einrichtung eines europäischen Fonds für geringfügige Verwendungen vor.

Die Kommission wird den Bericht voraussichtlich im zweiten Halbjahr 2013 annehmen. Der Inhalt dieses Berichts wird in der Kommission derzeit noch intern erörtert.

([1]) ABl. L 309 vom 24.11.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006123/13
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Albert Deß (PPE), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), George Lyon (ALDE), James Nicholson (ECR) e Alfreds Rubiks (GUE/NGL)
(30 maggio 2013)

Oggetto: Usi minori e colture speciali

La mancanza di strumenti efficaci per prevenire e/o trattare i parassiti e le malattie sta diventando un fattore fondamentale per gli usi minori e le colture speciali nell'Unione europea. Ciò compromette non solo la competitività dell'intera filiera agroalimentare, ma anche la diversità dei prodotti agroalimentari di qualità, nonché la biodiversità.

Il valore economico delle colture di ortofrutticoli e di fiori e di quelle che dipendono da prodotti fitosanitari specifici ammonta a 70 miliardi di euro all'anno, ovvero il 22 % del valore della produzione agricola totale.

In conformità del regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009, la Commissione avrebbe dovuto presentare, entro il 12 dicembre 2011, una relazione al Parlamento e al Consiglio su come affrontare la questione. Inoltre, mancano ancora strumenti adeguati per la corretta attuazione del programma di difesa integrata a partire dal 2014, come previsto dalla direttiva sull'utilizzo sostenibile (2009/128/CE).

1. Alla luce dell'inefficacia delle disposizioni giuridiche di cui al regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009 nella difesa degli usi minori e delle colture speciali, quando intende la Commissione presentare la suddetta relazione al fine di rispondere alle sfide future, come ad esempio i rischi emergenti per la sicurezza alimentare, la diversità delle colture e il settore fitosanitario?

2. Dato che è necessario un approccio coordinato dell'UE in materia di usi minori e di colture speciali, oltre a un adeguato regime di investimenti, come intende la Commissione affrontare tale questione nella sua prossima relazione?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(12 luglio 2013)

Ai sensi dell'articolo 51, paragrafo 9, del regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009 ([1]) sui prodotti fitosanitari, la Commissione è tenuta a presentare una relazione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio riguardo all'eventuale istituzione di un fondo per gli usi minori.

La Commissione prevede di adottare tale relazione nella seconda metà del 2013. Il contenuto della relazione in questione è ancora in discussione alla Commissione.

([1]) GU L 309 del 24.11.2009.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-006123/13
Komisijai
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Albert Deß (PPE), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), George Lyon (ALDE), James Nicholson (ECR) un Alfreds Rubiks (GUE/NGL)
(2013. gada 30. maijs)

Temats: Mazie lietojumi un specifiskas kultūras

Efektīvu līdzekļu trūkums kaitēkļu un slimību profilaksei un/vai apkarošanai kļūst par izšķirošu faktoru mazajiem lietojumiem un specifisku kultūru audzēšanai Eiropas Savienībā. Tas ietekmē ne tikai visas lauksaimniecības produktu ražošanas un pārtikas produktu aprites ķēdes konkurētspēju, bet arī augstas kvalitātes lauksamniecības un pārtikas produktu daudzveidību un bioloģisko daudzveidību.

Tādu kultūru kā augļi, dārzeņi un ziedi, kā arī kultūru, kuras ir atkarīgas no īpaši tām izveidotiem augu aizsardzības līdzekļiem, ekonomiskā vērtība ir EUR 70 miljardi gadā, kas ir 22 % no visas lauksamniecības produkcijas ekonomiskās vērtības.

Komisijai saskaņā ar Regulu (EK) Nr. 1107/2009 līdz 2011. gada decembrim bija jāiesniedz Parlamentam un Padomei ziņojums par to, kā risināt šo jautājumu. Turklāt vēl aizvien ir nepieciešami pienācīgi līdzekļi, ar kuriem pēc 2014. gada īstenot integrētās augu aizsardzības programmu, ko paredz direktīva par pesticīdu ilgtspējīgu lietošanu (Direktīva 2009/128/EK).

1. Tā kā noteikumi, kas tika ieviesti ar Regulu (EK) Nr. 1107/2009, lai palīdzētu mazajiem lietojumiem un specifiskām kultūrām, nav efektīvi, kad Komisija ir iecerējusi nākt klajā ar iepriekš minēto ziņojumu, tādējādi reaģējot uz tādām nākotnē sagaidāmām problēmām kā draudi nodrošinājumam ar pārtiku, lauksaimniecības kultūru daudzveidībai un augu veselībai?

2. Tā kā ir nepieciešama saskaņota ES pieeja mazajiem lietojumiem un specifiskajām kultūrām un arī pienācīga ieguldījumu shēma, kā Komisijai ir iecerējusi risināt šo jautājumu minētajā ziņojumā?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Tonio Borgs
(2013. gada 12. jūlijs)

Saskaņā ar 51. panta 9. punktu Regulā (EK) Nr. 1107/2009 par augu aizsardzības līdzekļu laišanu tirgū ([1]) Komisijai ir pienākums iesniegt Eiropas Parlamentam un Padomei ziņojumu par mazo lietojumu fonda iespējamo izveidi.

Komisija sagaida, ka ziņojums tiks pieņemts 2013. gada otrajā pusgadā. Par minētā ziņojuma saturu joprojām tiek diskutēts Komisijā.

([1]) OV L 309, 24.11.2009., 1. lpp.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006123/13
à Comissão
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Albert Deß (PPE), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), George Lyon (ALDE), James Nicholson (ECR) e Alfreds Rubiks (GUE/NGL)
(30 de maio de 2013)

Assunto: Culturas menores ou subutilizadas e culturas especializadas

A falta de instrumentos eficazes para prevenir e/ou curar pragas e doenças está a transformar-se num fator crucial para o emprego de culturas menores ou subutilizadas e de culturas especializadas na União Europeia. Isto compromete não só a competitividade de toda a cadeia agroalimentar, mas também a diversidade dos produtos agroalimentares de alta qualidade, para além da própria biodiversidade.

O valor económico de culturas como a fruta, os legumes e as flores e de colheitas dependentes de produtos fitofarmacêuticos feitos à medida ascende a cerca de 70 mil milhões de euros anuais, o que representa 22 % do valor total da produção agrícola.

A Comissão deveria ter apresentado, até 12 de dezembro de 2011, um relatório ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho sobre a melhor forma de fazer face ao problema, como estipula o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1107/2009. Além disso, continuam a faltar os instrumentos apropriados para a correta aplicação do programa de gestão integrada das pragas a partir de 2014, tal como determina a diretiva que estabelece um quadro de ação para uma utilização sustentável dos pesticidas (2009/128/CE).

1. Atendendo à falta de eficácia das disposições legais introduzidas ao abrigo do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1107/2009 para auxiliar as culturas menores ou subutilizadas e as culturas especializadas, quando tenciona a Comissão apresentar o referido relatório, a fim de dar resposta aos desafios do futuro, como os riscos emergentes para a segurança alimentar, a diversidade das culturas e a saúde das plantas?

2. Na medida em que se afigura imprescindível encontrar uma abordagem coordenada da UE às culturas menores ou subutilizadas e às culturas especializadas, a par de um adequado regime de investimento, de que forma tenciona a Comissão abordar esta problemática no seu próximo relatório?

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

Em conformidade com o artigo 51.°, n.° 9, do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1107/2009 ([1]) relativo aos produtos fitofarmacêuticos, a Comissão deve apresentar ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho um relatório sobre a possibilidade de criação de um fundo europeu de promoção das aplicações menores.

A Comissão espera adotar o relatório no segundo semestre de 2013. O teor desse relatório está ainda sujeito a debate interno na Comissão.

([1]) JO L 309 de 24.11.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006123/13
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Albert Deß (PPE), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), George Lyon (ALDE), James Nicholson (ECR) and Alfreds Rubiks (GUE/NGL)
(30 May 2013)

Subject: Minor uses and specialty crops

The lack of effective tools for preventing and/or curing pests and diseases is becoming a crucial factor for the cultivation of minor uses and specialty crops in the European Union. It compromises not only the competitiveness of the entire agro-food chain, but also the diversity of high-quality agro-food products, along with biodiversity.

The economic value of crops such as fruit, vegetables and flowers, and of crops dependent on tailor-made plant protection products, amounts to about EUR 70 billion per year, representing 22% of the value of total agricultural output.

By 12 December 2011 the Commission was supposed to have presented a report to Parliament and the Council on how to tackle the matter, as provided for in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. Furthermore, proper tools are still needed for the correct implementation of the Integrated Pest Management programme from 2014, as provided for in the Sustainable Use Directive (2009/128/EC).

1. Given the lack of effectiveness of the legal provisions introduced under Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 in helping minor uses and specialty crops, when does the Commission intend to come forward with the aforementioned report in order to respond to future challenges such as emerging risks to food security, crop diversity and plant health?

2. Given that a coordinated EU approach to minor uses and specialty crops is needed, together with a proper investment scheme, how does the Commission intend to address this issue in its upcoming report?

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

According to Article 51(9) of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]) on plant protection products, the Commission is required to submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the possible establishment of a minor uses fund.

The Commission expects to adopt the report in the second half of 2013. The content of this report is still subject to internal discussions within the Commission.

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006163/13
an die Kommission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(31. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: ADR-Verordnungen

Die europäische Richtlinie 2003/59/EG zielte unter anderem darauf ab, die Sicherheit im Straßenverkehr durch fortlaufende Schulungen zu verbessern. Der Transport bestimmter Stoffe unterliegt dabei einer gesonderten Gesetzgebung. Diese bestehenden Rechtsvorschriften für den Verkehr (ADR-Verordnungen) sind regelmäßig Gegenstand von Änderungen, die Forderungen zu Schulungen sowie regelmäßige Aktualisierungen beinhalten.

Besteht die Möglichkeit, diese ADR-Schulungen als Teil der obligatorischen Schulungen (35 Stunden/5 Jahre) gemäß Richtlinie 2003/59/EG zu betrachten?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juli 2013)

Die Kommission vertritt die Ansicht, dass die in der Richtlinie 2003/59/EG ([1]) vorgesehene Ausbildung sehr konkrete Ziele hat, die durch ein speziell für diesen Zweck konzipiertes Schulungsprogramm erfüllt werden können. Die Ziele der Richtlinie sind:

1. Verbesserung des rationellen Fahrverhaltens auf der Grundlage der Sicherheitsregeln;

2. Kenntnis der sozialrechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen und Vorschriften für den Kraftverkehr und

3. Gesundheit, Verkehrs- und Umweltsicherheit, Dienstleistung, Logistik.

Die Richtlinie schließt nicht aus, dass Themen im Zusammenhang mit der Beförderung von gefährlichen Gütern in die Ausbildung aufgenommen werden, solange die genannten Ziele erreicht werden.

([1]) ABl. L 226 vom 10.9.2003, S. 4-17, in der geänderten Fassung.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006163/13
à la Commission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(31 mai 2013)

Objet: ADR

La directive européenne 2003/59/CE visait, entre autres, par la formation continue à améliorer la sécurité du transport routier. Le transport de certaines matières est soumis à une législation spéciale. Cette réglementation du transport ADR fait régulièrement l'objet de modifications qui demandent des formations et «mises à jour» régulières.

Ces formations ADR peuvent-elles être comptabilisées comme faisant partie des formations obligatoires (35 heures/5 ans) prévues par la directive 2003/59/CE?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(11 juillet 2013)

La Commission estime que la formation prévue par la directive 2003/59/CE ([1]) poursuit des objectifs très particuliers qui peuvent être atteints grâce à un programme de formation conçu spécialement à cet effet. Ces objectifs sont les suivants:

1. perfectionnement à la conduite rationnelle axé sur les règles de sécurité,

2. connaissance de l'environnement social du transport routier et de la réglementation en matière de transport routier, et

3. santé, sécurité routière et sécurité environnementale, service, logistique.

La directive n'empêche pas d'aborder des sujets concernant le transport de marchandises dangereuses, pour autant que ces objectifs soient atteints.

([1]) JO L 226 du 10.9.2003, p. 4, dans sa version modifiée.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006163/13
to the Commission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(31 May 2013)

Subject: ADR

One of the aims of European Directive 2003/59/EC was to improve road transport safety through ongoing training. The transport of certain materials is subject to special legislation. These regulations governing ADR transport are subject to frequent amendments that require regular training sessions and updates.

Can these ADR training sessions be recognised as forming part of the compulsory training (35 hours/5 years) provided for by Directive 2003/59/EC?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

It is the Commission's view that the training foreseen in Directive 2003/59/EC ([1]) has very specific objectives which can be met through a training programme conceived specifically for that purpose. The objectives set in the directive are:

1. advanced training in rational driving based on safety regulations;

2. to know the social environment of road transport and the rules governing it and

3. health, road and environmental safety, service, logistics.

The directive does not prevent the introduction of topics concerning the transport of dangerous goods, provided these objectives are met.

([1]) OJ L 226, 10.9.2003, pp. 4-17, as amended.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006192/13
an die Kommission
Richard Seeber (PPE)
(3. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Regeln für Beförderungen im kombinierten Güterverkehr zwischen Mitgliedstaaten

Die Richtlinie 92/106/EWG regelt die Beförderungen im kombinierten Güterverkehr zwischen Mitgliedstaaten. Die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 legt gemeinsame Regeln für den Zugang zum Markt des grenzüberschreitenden Güterkraftverkehrs fest. Am 14.5.2010 traten Artikel 8 und 9 ebendieser Verordnung in Kraft, welche Regelungen für Kabotagefahrten innerhalb eines Mitgliedstaats festlegen.

Im Grenzgebiet Österreich-Italien finden laufend Vor- und Nachlauftransporte auf der Straße statt. In der Vergangenheit haben sich Vorfälle gehäuft, bei denen italienische Behörden mit Bezugnahme auf Verletzung des Kabotageverbots österreichische Fahrzeuge beschlagnahmt haben.

— Stimmt die Kommission der Auffassung zu, dass beim intermodalen Vor- und Nachlauf gemäß 92/106/EWG keine zeitgebundene Beschränkung gegeben ist und dieser somit nicht unter das Kabotageverbot fällt, womit die Beschlagnahmung von Fahrzeugen durch die italienischen Behörden ungerechtfertigt ist?

— Plant die Kommission, gegen die in Italien bestehenden Problematiken bezüglich der Beschlagnahmung ausländischer Kraftfahrzeuge Schritte zu unternehmen, um den kombinierten Güterverkehr zwischen Mitgliedstaaten weiterhin reibungslos gewährleisten zu können?

— Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission, um derartige Problematiken zukünftig zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juli 2013)

Die Bedingungen, unter denen ein Transport als Teil eines Transports im Rahmen des kombinierten Güterverkehrs angesehen werden kann, sind in der Richtlinie 92/106/EWG ([1]) festgelegt. Diese Richtlinie schreibt keine zeitgebundenen Beschränkungen für Transporte im Rahmen des kombinierten Güterverkehrs vor.

In Erwägungsgrund 16 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 ([2]) wird bestätigt, dass Güterkraftverkehrstransporte, die den Bedingungen der Richtlinie 92/106/EWG entsprechen, nicht unter den Anwendungsbereich dieser Verordnung fallen ([3]).

Die Kommission kennt die Einzelheiten dieser Angelegenheit nicht, die sie zur Prüfung der angesprochenen Problematik benötigt. Sie bittet deshalb den Herrn Abgeordneten um nähere Angaben.

([1]) Richtlinie 92/106/EWG des Rates vom 7. Dezember 1992 über die Festlegung gemeinsamer Regeln für bestimmte Beförderungen im kombinierten Güterverkehr zwischen Mitgliedstaaten, ABl. L 368 vom 17.12.1992.

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 21. Oktober 2009 über gemeinsame Regeln für den Zugang zum Markt des grenzüberschreitenden Güterkraftverkehrs, ABl. L 300 vom 14.11.2009.

([3]) „(16) Diese Verordnung berührt nicht die Bestimmungen über den An- und Abtransport von Gütern über die Straße als Teil eines Transports im Rahmen des kombinierten Verkehrs, die in der Richtlinie 92/106/EWG des Rates vom 7. Dezember 1992 über die Festlegung gemeinsamer Regeln für bestimmte Beförderungen im kombinierten Güterverkehr zwischen Mitgliedstaaten festgelegt sind. Inländische Fahrten innerhalb eines Aufnahmemitgliedstaats, die nicht als Teil eines Transports im Rahmen des kombinierten Güterverkehrs nach der Richtlinie 92/106/EWG durchgeführt werden, fallen unter die Definition von Kabotage und sollten deshalb den Anforderungen dieser Verordnung unterliegen“.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006192/13
to the Commission
Richard Seeber (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Rules for the combined transport of goods between Member States

Directive 92/106/EEC regulates the combined transport of goods between Member States. Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 lays down common rules for access to the international road haulage market. Articles 8 and 9 of this very Regulation, which lay down rules on cabotage transport within a Member State, came into force on 14 May 2010.

In the border region between Austria and Italy, ongoing pre-and post transport takes place on the road. Incidents in which the Italian authorities seized Austrian vehicles in response to breaches of cabotage have recently become more frequent.

— Does the Commission share the view that there is no time restriction on intermodal pre-and post transport under Directive 92/106/EEC and that it, therefore, does not fall under the cabotage ban, which means that the seizure of vehicles by the Italian authorities is unjustified?

— Is the Commission planning to take action against the problems in Italy with regard to the seizure of foreign vehicles in order to be able to ensure smooth continuation of combined transport of goods between Member States?

— What measures is the Commission planning in order to prevent such problems in the future?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

The conditions under which a transport operation can be considered as part of combined transport, are laid down in Directive 92/106/EEC ([1]). This directive does not impose time restrictions on execution of combined transport operations.

Recital 16 of Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 ([2]) confirms that road haulage operations which comply with the conditions of Directive 92/106/EEC are not covered by the scope of this regulation ([3]).

The Commission does not have sufficient details on the matter to be able to investigate the problem raised. It would ask the Honourable Member to provide more details.

([1]) Council Directive 92/106/EEC of 7 December 1992 on the establishment of common rules for certain types of combined transport of goods between Member States, OJ L 368, 17.12.1992.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market, OJ L 300, 14.11.2009.

([3]) '(16) This regulation is without prejudice to the provisions concerning the incoming or outgoing carriage of goods by road as one leg of a combined transport journey as laid down in Council Directive 92/106/EEC of 7 December 1992 on the establishment of common rules for certain types of combined transport of goods between Member States. National journeys by road within a host Member State which are not part of a combined transport operation as laid down in Directive 92/106/EEC fall within the definition of cabotage operations and should accordingly be subject to the requirements of this regulation.'

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006194/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(3. juni 2013)

Om: Fipronil udgør en alvorlig akut fare for honningbierne

I en rapport, som Den Europæiske Fødevaresikkerhedsautoritet (EFSA) offentliggjorde den 27. maj 2013, konkluderes det, at insektbekæmpelsesmidlet fipronil udgør en alvorlig akut fare for honningbier, når det anvendes til bejdsning af majsfrø.

Bier er af afgørende betydning for miljøet, idet de sikrer biodiversiteten ved at varetage den nødvendige bestøvning af en lang række afgrøder og vilde planter. Kommissionen har for nylig begrænset anvendelsen af tre pesticider (clothianidin, imidacloprid og thiametoxam), som beviseligt var skadelige for den europæiske bestand af honningbier.

Rapporten fra EFSA var bestilt af Kommissionen, og konklusionerne understreger behovet for en øjeblikkelig indgriben. Hvilke lovforslag har Kommissionen under overvejelse for at afværge den alvorlige akutte fare, som fipronil udgør for honningbierne?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(23. juli 2013)

Kommissionen er i øjeblikket ved at vurdere foranstaltninger, der skal begrænse anvendelsen af plantebeskyttelsesmidler, der indeholder fipronil, til behandling af frø, der er bestemt til såning i drivhuse, og til behandling af frø af porrer, løg og skalotteløg, der er bestemt til såning i marken, og hvor afgrøderne høstes inden blomstring. Bier flyver ikke ind i drivhuse, hvis der ikke dyrkes afgrøder, der tiltrækker bier, og afgrøder, der høstes før blomstring, tiltrækker ikke bier.

Endvidere vil frø af afgrøder, der er behandlet med plantebeskyttelsesmidler indeholdende fipronil, ikke blive anvendt eller markedsført med undtagelse af ovennævnte frø.

Et udkast til foranstaltning vil i løbet af de kommende uger blive forelagt Den Stående Komité for Fødevarekæden og Dyresundhed.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006194/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Fipronil poses 'high acute risk' to honeybees

In a report released on 27 May 2013, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) concludes that the insecticide fipronil poses a 'high acute risk' to honeybees when used as a seed treatment for maize.

Bees are critically important to the environment, sustaining biodiversity by providing essential pollination for a wide range of crops and wild plants. The Commission has recently restricted the use of three pesticides (clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiametoxam) which were identified as being harmful to Europe's honeybee population.

The EFSA report was requested by the Commission, and its conclusions underline the need for immediate action. What legislative measures is the Commission considering in order to deal with the high acute risk that fipronil poses to honeybees?

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

The Commission is currently assessing measures to limit the use of plant protection products containing Fipronil to treatment of seeds intended to be sown in greenhouses and to treatment of seeds of leek, onions and shallots intended to be sown in the field and harvested before flowering. Bees are not entering greenhouses if no attractive crops are grown there, and crops which are harvested before flowering are not considered attractive to bees.

Furthermore, seeds of crops which have been treated with plant protection products containing Fipronil would not be used or placed on the market with the exception of the seeds mentioned above.

A draft measure will be put forward to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health in the next weeks.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-006195/13
aan de Commissie
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(3 juni 2013)

Betreft: Toezichts- en/of reguleringsbeperkingen op het vrije kapitaalverkeer in de Europese Unie

Het vrije verkeer van kapitaal is een essentiële pijler van de interne markt van de Europese Unie. Sinds het uitbreken van de financiële crisis zijn er door de nationale toezichtsinstanties een aantal maatregelen in het leven geroepen met de bedoeling het eigen bankwezen te beschermen door de banken te beletten geld naar andere landen over te maken.

Op 3 februari 2013 meldden de *Wall Street Journal* en diverse andere nieuwsbronnen dat de Commissie alle nationale banktoezichthouders schriftelijk had benaderd om hen te herinneren aan de EU-regels betreffende het vrije verkeer van kapitaal en het gebruik van prudentiële maatregelen voor banken ([1]). Tevens heeft de Commissie alle nationale banktoezichthouders verzocht haar tegen eind februari informatie te verschaffen omtrent hun huidige toezichtspraktijken.

1. Is de Commissie ook niet van mening dat beperkingen op het kapitaalverkeer leiden tot een versplintering van de interne markt en daarom een ernstige bedreiging vormen voor economisch herstel en groei?

2. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat er een officieel onderzoek gaande is naar de huidige toezichtspraktijken, die het vrije kapitaalverkeer over de landsgrenzen heen in de weg kunnen staan?

3. Zo ja, is de Commissie dan bereid de resultaten van dit onderzoek — uitgesplitst per lidstaat — publiekelijk bekend te maken? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Kan de Commissie voorts aangeven welke toezichts- en/of reguleringsobstakels er het meest uitspringen en in welke lidstaten dat het geval is, waarbij o.a. moet worden gedacht aan kapitaalcontroles, beperkingen op intragroepstransacties en -leningen, beperking van brancheactiviteiten en het verbieden van winstexpatriëring? En zo niet, waarom niet?

5. Kan de Commissie tenslotte aangeven welke corrigerende instrumenten er beschikbaar zijn om deze obstakels weg te werken en welke verdere stappen zij passend acht? Kan zij ook aangeven of er inmiddels corrigerende maatregelen zijn genomen ten aanzien van de nationale toezichtsinstanties?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(2 juli 2013)

1. Beperkende prudentiële maatregelen kunnen gerechtvaardigd zijn wanneer ze noodzakelijk zijn om de stabiliteit van de financiële markten te handhaven. Dergelijke maatregelen moeten echter evenredig aan hun doel en niet-discriminerend zijn. Bankentoezichthouders en de Europese Bankautoriteit (EBA) zouden nauw moeten samenwerken om elk risico op versplintering van de interne markt door ongecoördineerd of onevenredig handelen te vermijden.

2. De diensten van de Commissie hebben de nationale toezichthouders verzocht om informatie over de prudentiële maatregelen die zijn genomen vanwege zorgen over de financiële stabiliteit, zodat zij een overzicht krijgen van maatregelen die mogelijk het vrije kapitaalverkeer in de Unie beperken. In het kader van deze exercitie moet het vertrouwelijke karakter van de gegevens in acht genomen worden.

3. De Commissie garandeert voldoende transparantie van het mogelijke vervolg van dit onderzoek en zal tegelijkertijd het vertrouwelijke karakter van de ontvangen gegevens respecteren. De meest geschikte maatregelen worden met de EBA besproken, om het gebruik van de in de EU-wetgeving vastgestelde samenwerkingsmechanismen door de toezichthouders te verbeteren.

4. In dit stadium beschikt de Commissie niet over voldoende informatie om opvallende obstakels in de lidstaten aan te wijzen. De diensten van de Commissie verzamelen op dit moment aanvullende informatie en zij garanderen voldoende transparantie van de bevindingen, voor zover het vertrouwelijke karakter van de ontvangen gegevens dat toelaat. In dit verband benadrukt de Commissie de centrale rol van de EBA bij onenigheid tussen toezichthouders.

([1]) „EU Aims to Free Flow of Funds Across Borders", Wall Street Journal, 3 februari 2013.

5. Wanneer de Commissie kennis krijgt van maatregelen die de vrijheden van vestiging en kapitaalverkeer van het Verdrag onrechtmatig beperken, zal zij passende maatregelen nemen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006195/13
to the Commission
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Supervisory and/or regulatory restrictions on the free movement of capital in the European Union

The free movement of capital is a crucial pillar of the European Union's single market. Since the onset of the financial crisis, some actions by national prudential authorities have been put in place with the intention of protecting local banking systems by preventing banks from moving funds to other countries.

On 3 February 2013, the *Wall Street Journal* and several other news sources reported that the Commission had written to all national banking supervisors to remind them about EU rules on the free movement of capital and on the use of prudential measures for banks ([1]). Furthermore, the Commission asked all national banking supervisors to provide — by the end of February — information about their current supervisory practices.

1. Does the Commission agree that restrictions on capital movements fragment the single market and are therefore a serious threat to economic recovery and growth?

2. Can the Commission confirm that an official inquiry is looking into current supervisory practices which may prevent free flows of funds across national borders?

3. If so, will the Commission make the results of this inquiry publicly available, with data broken down by Member State? If not, why not?

4. Can the Commission indicate which supervisory and/or regulatory obstacles are dominant and in which Member States, including capital controls, restrictions on intra-group transfers and lending, limiting activities of branches and prohibiting expatriation of profits? If not, why not?

5. Can the Commission indicate what corrective tools are available to address these obstacles and what further steps it considers appropriate? Can it also indicate whether corrective action has been taken concerning national supervisory authorities?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

1. Restrictive prudential measures may be justified where necessary to maintain the stability of financial markets. However, any such measure must be non-discriminatory and proportionate to its objective. Banking supervisors and the European Banking Authority (EBA) should cooperate closely to avoid any risk of fragmentation of the internal market by uncoordinated or disproportionate actions.

2. The Commission Services have asked information from national supervisors about the prudential measures taken in response to financial stability concerns, in order to have an overview of any measure potentially limiting the free flow of capital in the Union. Within the framework of this exercise, the confidentiality of the information has to be respected.

3. The Commission will ensure appropriate transparency of the possible follow-up of this fact-finding exercise while fully respecting the confidentiality of the information received. The most suitable actions will be discussed with the EBA, with the objective of improving the use by supervisors of the cooperation mechanisms established by the EU legislation.

4. At this stage, the Commission does not have sufficient information to identify any dominant obstacles in the Member States. The Commission Services are currently collecting additional information and will ensure appropriate transparency of the findings, to the extent allowed by the confidentiality of the information received. In this context, the Commission underlines the central role of EBA in cases of disagreements between supervisors.

5. In case the Commission becomes aware of measures unduly restricting the Treaty freedoms of establishment and movement of capital, it will take the appropriate action to address the issue.

([1]) 'EU Aims to Free Flow of Funds Across Borders', Wall Street Journal, 3 February 2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-006196/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 juni 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Discrepantie tussen EU-beloften en -daden bij de opheffing van het EU-embargo op Syrische olie

Op 22 april 2013 heeft de Europese Raad besloten het olie-embargo tegen Syrië op te heffen met het oog op de financiële ondersteuning van de gematigde oppositie tegen het Assad-regime. De gematigde oppositie controleerde naar verluidt op dat moment een aantal belangrijke olievoorzieningen in het noorden van het land. Hoewel er inmiddels toezeggingen in die zin zijn gedaan, laat de concrete invulling daarvan nog op zich wachten, met alle contraproductieve gevolgen van dien. Een en ander heeft geresulteerd in gevechten om de controle over de olie-infrastructuur in het noorden van Syrië in handen te krijgen, waarbij de gematigde groeperingen hun greep op de meeste oliebronnen en pijpleidingen in de regio zijn kwijtgeraakt aan radicale groeperingen zoals Jabhat al-Nusra, die hiervan inmiddels in zoverre financieel profijt trekken dat hun gevechtscapaciteit en hun aanhang onder de Syrische bevolking er wel bij varen (zie het desbetreffende rapport in *The Guardian* van 19 mei 2013) ([1]).

1. Kan de VV/HV laten weten hoe zij de huidige situatie in Syrië met betrekking tot de controle over de olie-infrastructuur inschat?

2. Is de VV/HV ook niet van mening dat het besluit om het embargo op te heffen en de vertraging die vervolgens is opgetreden bij de tenuitvoerlegging daarvan hebben geresulteerd in een door financiële motieven gedreven wedloop om greep te krijgen op de olie-infrastructuur in het noorden van Syrië?

3. Kan de VV/HV toelichten waarom de opheffing van het olie-embargo niet onmiddellijk vergezeld is gegaan van regels voor de tenuitvoerlegging daarvan? En zo niet, waarom?

4. Is de VV/HV bereid nadere uitleg te verschaffen omtrent de stand van zaken met betrekking tot de daadwerkelijke opheffing van het embargo? En zo niet, waarom?

5. Is de VV/HV ook niet van mening dat de onverwijlde uitvaardiging van regels voor de daadwerkelijke opheffing van het olie-embargo op dit moment tot gevolg zou hebben dat de EU radicale groeperingen financieel ondersteunt? En zo niet, waarom?

6. Welke verdere stappen denkt de VV/HV te ondernemen met betrekking tot de opheffing van het olie-embargo?

7. Is de VV/HV ook niet van oordeel dat deze discrepantie tussen de beloften en de daden van de EU haar geloofwaardigheid ondermijnt in de ogen van de gematigde rebellengroeperingen die zij beweert te steunen, en dat een en ander tegelijkertijd de invloed en reputatie ten goede komt van de groeperingen die zij niet ondersteunt? En zo niet, waarom?

Antwoord van de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(27 augustus 2013)

De situatie in het noorden van Syrië verandert voortdurend en de EU volgt nauwlettend de situatie met betrekking tot de controle over de olie-infrastructuur.

In het besluit van de Raad dat de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaten de mogelijkheid biedt om de invoer van olie uit Syrië toe te staan, is bepaald dat de toestemming daarvoor uitsluitend onder bepaalde voorwaarden mag worden gegeven ([2]). De toestemming moet erop gericht zijn de Syrische bevolking te helpen, met name uit humanitaire overwegingen, om weer een normaal leven mogelijk te maken, basisvoorzieningen in stand te houden, de wederopbouw te stimuleren en normale economische activiteiten te herstellen of andere civiele doelen te dienen. Alvorens de relevante bevoegde autoriteit de toestemming kan geven voor maatregelen met de bovenstaande doelen, moet de lidstaat de Syrische Nationale Coalitie van revolutionaire en oppositiekrachten raadplegen. De bevoegde autoriteit moet ervan overtuigd zijn dat de voorgestelde maatregelen civiele doelen dienen, geen inbreuk vormen op enige sancties of verbodsbepalingen, en niet direct of indirect ten goede komen aan bepaalde personen of entiteiten.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/may/19/eu-syria-oil-jihadist-al-qaida.
([2]) Council Decision 2013/186/CFSP of 22 April 2013 amending Decision 2012/739/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria, Besluit 2013/186/GBVB van de Raad van 22 april 2013 houdende wijziging van Besluit 2012/739/GBVB betreffende beperkende maatregelen tegen Syrië.

Verordening (EU) nr. 697/2013 van de Raad van 22 juli tot wijziging van Verordening (EU) nr. 36/2012 van 18 januari 2012 betreffende beperkende maatregelen in het licht van de situatie in Syrië vormt het rechtskader voor uitvoering op de gebieden waarvoor de Unie bevoegd is en zet de voorwaarden uiteen waaronder de afwijkingen worden toegepast.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006196/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Discrepancy between EU promises and deeds concerning the lifting of the EU embargo on Syrian oil

On 22 April 2013 the European Council decided to lift the oil embargo against Syria, with a view to the financial strengthening of the moderate opposition to the Assad regime. The moderate opposition was then said to be in control of major oil resources in the north of the country. While this promise has been made, no implementing rules have yet been issued, and this has had counterproductive effects. The result has been a fight for control of the oil infrastructure in northern Syria, in which moderate groups have lost control of most of the oil wells and pipelines in the region to radical groups like Jabhat al-Nusra, who are now benefiting financially, in circumstances enhancing their capability and their standing amongst the Syrian population (see report in *The Guardian*, 19 May 2013) ([1]).

1. What is the VP/HR's assessment of the current situation in Syria concerning control over oil infrastructure?

2. Does the VP/HR agree that the decision to lift the embargo and the subsequent delay in implementation have led to a financially driven race for control of the oil infrastructure of northern Syria?

3. Is the VP/HR willing to explain why the lifting of the oil embargo was not immediately followed up with rules for implementing it? If not, why not?

4. Is the VP/HR willing to explain the state of play regarding implementation of the lifting of the embargo? If not, why not?

5. Does the VP/HR believe that issuing implementing rules for lifting the oil embargo now would result in the EU financially supporting radical groups? If not, why not?

6. How does the VP/HR plan to move ahead with the lifting of the oil embargo?

7. Does the VP/HR agree that this discrepancy between the EU's promises and its deeds undermines the Union in the eyes of the moderate rebel groups it claims to support, and at the same time enhances the power and reputation of those groups it does not support? If not, why not?

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

The situation in Northern Syria evolves constantly and the EU is continusly assesing the situation of the control over oil infrastructure.

The decision taken by the Council to allow the competent authorities of Member States to authorise the import of oil from Syria provides that such authorisations may be given only subject to specific conditions. ([2]) Any such authorisation must aim at helping the Syrian civilian population, meeting humanitarian concerns, restoring normal life, upholding basic services, reconstruction and restoring normal economic activity or other civilian purposes. Before the relevant competent authority can authorise any such activities, the Member State must consult the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces and the competent authority must be satisfied that the proposed activities are for civilian purposes and will not breach other sanctions prohibitions, including any direct or indirect benefit to any designated person or entity.

Council Regulation (EU) No 697/2013 of 22 July amending Regulation EU) No 36/2012 of 18 January 2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria providing the legal framework for implementation in areas of community competence sets out the conditions under which the derogations will be exercised.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/may/19/eu-syria-oil-jihadist-al-qaida.
([2]) Council Decision 2013/186/CFSP of 22 April 2013 amending Decision 2012/739/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006198/13
an die Kommission
Anja Weisgerber (PPE)
(3. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Akute Herzinsuffizienz

Akute Herzinsuffizienz ist lebensbedrohlich und schwächt den menschlichen Körper nachhaltig. 20 bis 30 % der Patienten, die einen akuten Anfall erleiden, sterben innerhalb eines Jahres. Obwohl dieses Krankheitsbild keine Seltenheit ist, wissen nur rund 3 % der Bevölkerung die Symptome einer Herzinsuffizienz zu deuten. Zudem gab es in den letzten 20 Jahren keinen wissenschaftlichen Durchbruch bei der Erforschung neuer Behandlungsmethoden.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Was hat die Kommission unternommen, um die Bürgerinnen und Bürger über die Krankheitssymptome aufzuklären, so dass eine schnelle medizinische Behandlung sichergestellt werden kann?

2. Hat die Kommission finanzielle Mittel zur Entwicklung neuer Behandlungsmethoden bereitgestellt?

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

Die Kommission unterstützt die allgemeinen Ziele der Erklärung des Europäischen Parlaments vom 14. Juni 2012 zur Einführung einer europäischen Woche zur Sensibilisierung für das Thema Herzstillstand.

Im Hinblick auf die Sensibilisierung der Öffentlichkeit für die Risiken eines Herzversagens konzentriert die Kommission ihre Maßnahmen auf die wichtigsten Risikofaktoren, nämlich Tabakkonsum — durch Rechtsvorschriften und Sensibilisierungskampagnen; Übergewicht und mangelnde körperliche Betätigung — durch Zusammenarbeit mit den Mitgliedstaaten und Interessenträgern zur Umsetzung der Strategie für Ernährung, Übergewicht und Adipositas ([1]); Alkoholkonsum — durch Unterstützung der Mitgliedstaaten bei der Verringerung alkoholbedingter Schäden ([2]).

Außerdem finanziert die Kommission im Rahmen des EU-Gesundheitsprogramms Projekte und Konferenzen zu Herzerkrankungen ([3]).

Über das Siebte Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung (FP7, 2007-2013) hat die Kommission schließlich 173 Mio. EUR für 57 Forschungsprogramme im Zusammenhang mit Herzversagen zur Verfügung gestellt. Zwei Projekte beschäftigen sich ganz gezielt mit dem Vorgehen bei akutem Herzversagen: BIOSTAT-CFH ([4]) ermittelt individuelle Konzepte zur Behandlung von Herzversagen, die eine Verschlimmerung der Krankheit und Krankenhauseinweisungen vermeiden helfen. Ein neues Projekt mit der Bezeichnung SHOCKOMICS wird sich auf molekulare Auslöser akuten Herzversagens in Verbindung mit Schock konzentrieren sowie auf die Ermittlung neuer Ziele für die Erfolge neuer Therapien.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/strategy_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/public_health/health_determinants_lifestyle/c11564b_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([4]) BIOSTAT-CHF: A systems BIOlogy Study to TAilored Treatment in Chronic Heart Failure http://www.biostat-chf.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006198/13
to the Commission
Anja Weisgerber (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Acute heart failure

Acute heart failure is a life-threatening condition and permanently weakens the human body. Of those who suffer an acute attack, 20-30% die within a year. Although this disease is not uncommon, only about 3% of the population know how to interpret the symptoms of heart failure. Moreover, in the last 20 years there has been no scientific breakthrough in the search for new treatment methods.

Can the Commission answer the following questions in this respect?

1. What action has the Commission taken to inform citizens about the symptoms of this disease, so that rapid medical treatment can be ensured?

2. Has the Commission provided financial support for the development of new treatment methods?

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

The Commission supports the general aims of the declaration of the European Parliament of 14 June 2012 on 'Establishing a European cardiac arrest awareness week'.

With regard to raising public awareness about risks of heart failure, the Commission is concentrating its action on the key risk factors as follows: tobacco, through legislative action and awareness raising campaigns; obesity and lack of physical activity, through work with Member States and stakeholders to implement the strategy on nutrition, overweight, and obesity-related health issues ([1]); and alcohol, through partnerships to implement the EU Strategy to support Member States in addressing alcohol-related harm ([2]).

In addition, the Commission has been financing projects and conferences on heart diseases ([3]) through the EU Health Programme.

Finally, the Commission allocated EUR 173 million to 57 research projects related to heart failure through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007- 2013). Two projects specifically address acute heart failure management: BIOSTAT-CFH ([4]) is identifying personalised approaches to heart failure treatment that would prevent the exacerbation of disease and patient hospitalizations. A new project, SHOCKOMICS, will focus on molecular triggers of acute heart failure in association to shock, and identification of novel targets for the delivery of new therapies.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/strategy_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/public_health/health_determinants_lifestyle/c11564b_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([4]) BIOSTAT-CHF: A systems BIOlogy Study to TAilored Treatment in Chronic Heart Failure http://www.biostat-chf.eu/.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006199/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ιδιαίτερα ανησυχητική και εκτεταμένη η διάδοση της ναρκωτικής ουσίας σίσα (sisha) στην Ελλάδα

Το σίσα (sisha) είναι ένα αμφεταμινούχο (κρυσταλλική μεθαμφεταμίνη) συνθετικό παραισθησιογόνο ναρκωτικό που παράγεται από τη μίξη διεγερτικών και τοξικών ουσιών, όπως οινόπνευμα, χλωρίνη, ακόμα και υγρά μπαταριών αυτοκινήτων. Παρά το γεγονός ότι κυκλοφορεί εδώ και περίπου μια 25ετία στις ΗΠΑ, τα τελευταία χρόνια παρατηρείται ραγδαία εξάπλωσή του κυρίως στην Ελλάδα, αλλά και σε άλλες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες. Βασικές αιτίες για την τεράστια αύξηση της διακίνησής του είναι αφενός η χαμηλή τιμή πώλησης («κοκαΐνη των φτωχών»), και αφετέρου η ευκολία παρασκευής του (αυτοσχέδια εργαστήρια-συστατικά που κυκλοφορούν ελεύθερα στο εμπόριο). Ειδικοί επιστήμονες του χώρου της τοξικοεξάρτησης διασυνδέουν άμεσα τη διάδοσή του με την οικονομική κρίση ενώ υποστηρίζουν ότι οι επιπτώσεις-παρενέργειές του είναι εξαιρετικά επώδυνες και επικίνδυνες τόσο για την υγεία του ίδιου του χρήστη προκαλώντας μέσα σε σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα μη αναστρέψιμες βλάβες (6 μήνες χρήσης σίσα δημιουργούν ζημιές στον οργανισμό ανάλογες με 20 χρόνια χρήσης ηρωίνης), όσο και για το κοινωνικό σύνολο, καθώς συμβάλλει στην ανάπτυξη άκρως επιθετικών και εν πολλοίς ανεξέλεγκτων συμπεριφορών. Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει λάβει γνώση σχετικών ερευνών που καταδεικνύουν τη σημαντική αύξηση της διακίνησης της εν λόγω ναρκωτικής ουσίας και τη συσχέτισή της με τις επιπτώσεις της οικονομικής κρίσης;

2. Επεξεργάζεται ή πρόκειται να επεξεργαστεί ένα συγκεκριμένο σχέδιο δράσης για την ανάσχεση της διάδοσής του σίσα στο πλαίσιο της ευρύτερης αντιναρκωτικής πολιτικής της ΕΕ;

3. Με δεδομένο ότι στις χώρες που αντιμετωπίζουν σοβαρά δημοσιονομικά προβλήματα, όπως η Ελλάδα, σημειώνονται εκτεταμένες περικοπές κρατικών χρηματοδοτήσεων στις δομές αντιναρκωτικής πολιτικής (πρόληψη, απεξάρτηση, επανένταξη), πόσο εφικτή θεωρεί την αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου της χρήσης ναρκωτικών ουσιών που εντείνεται και περιπλέκεται λόγω της οικονομικής δυσπραγίας και της επιδείνωσης της κοινωνικής κατάστασης;

4. Προτίθεται να προωθήσει και να χρηματοδοτήσει δράσεις ενημέρωσης και ευαισθητοποίησης της κοινής γνώμης γύρω από τις επιπτώσεις της χρήσης σίσα;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει την αύξηση της χρήσης παραλλαγής της μεθαμφεταμίνης, γνωστής ως σίσα («shisha»), στην Ελλάδα.

Το ναρκωτικό αυτό, που είναι κοινώς γνωστό ως «κοκαΐνη των φτωχών», φαίνεται ότι είναι μείγμα συνθετικών ναρκωτικών με διάφορες χημικές ουσίες (λάδι μπαταρίας, λάδι κινητήρα, μερικές φορές σαμπουάν). Προσλαμβάνεται με εισπνοή ή ενέσεις και συχνά χρησιμοποιείται σε συνδυασμό με αλκοόλ. Δεν υπάρχουν στοιχεία σχετικά με την τοξικότητά του, αλλά από πληροφορίες των ίδιων των χρηστών προκύπτει ότι μπορεί να έχει σοβαρές συνέπειες στην υγεία και την κοινωνία, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της απώλειας συνείδησης και της βίαιης συμπεριφοράς. Οι κατασχέσεις της αστυνομίας επιβεβαιώνουν ότι είναι άμεσα διαθέσιμο και εύκολο να παραχθεί σε κατ' οίκον εργαστήρια.

Ο περιορισμός της ζήτησης ναρκωτικών αποτελεί κατά κύριο λόγο αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών, τα οποία εκπονούν και εφαρμόζουν πολιτικές σχετικά με την πρόληψη, τη θεραπεία και τον περιορισμό των επιπτώσεων της τοξικομανίας, με στόχο τη μείωση της χρήσης ψυχοτρόπων ουσιών και των επιπτώσεών τους στα άτομα και στην κοινωνία.

Η Επιτροπή συμπληρώνει και στηρίζει τη δράση των κρατών μελών με την προώθηση της ανάπτυξης καινοτόμων προσεγγίσεων και την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών, καθώς και με τη χρηματοδότηση της έρευνας, μέσω χρηματοδοτικών προγραμμάτων της ΕΕ. Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος «Πρόληψη των ναρκωτικών και σχετική ενημέρωση» ([1]), τα τελευταία χρόνια χρηματοδοτήθηκαν πολλά έργα σχετικά με τους κινδύνους των νέων ψυχοτρόπων ουσιών, την ευαισθητοποίηση του κοινού και καινοτόμους μεθόδους πρόληψης που απευθύνονται σε νεαρά άτομα, οικογένειες και επαγγελματίες οι οποίοι εργάζονται στους τομείς πρόληψης της τοξικομανίας και της υγείας.

([1]) Απόφαση αριθ. 1150/2007/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 25ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2007, για τη θέσπιση, για την περίοδο 2007-2013, του ειδικού προγράμματος Πρόληψη των ναρκωτικών και σχετική ενημέρωση στο πλαίσιο του γενικού προγράμματος Θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα και δικαιοσύνη. ΕΕ L 257 της 3.10.2007, σ. 23-29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006199/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Worrying and widespread availability of the narcotic substance 'shisha' in Greece

Shisha is a crystalline methamphetamine-based synthetic hallucinogenic narcotic produced by mixing stimulants and toxic substances, such as alcohol, chlorine and even car battery fluid. Despite the fact that it has been available in the USA for around 25 years, it has spread rapidly over recent years in a number of European countries, especially Greece. The basic reasons for this massive increase in its availability are, firstly, the fact that it is cheap (poor man's cocaine) and, secondly, the fact that it is easy to prepare (homemade laboratories and ingredients available on the open market). Scientists who specialise in toxin dependency see a direct link between the spread of this drug and the economic crisis and warn that its side effects are extremely painful and dangerous both to the health of the user, who suffers irreparable harm within a very short space of time (6 months' use of shisha causes similar damage to the body as 20 years of heroin use), and to society as a whole, as it is one of the causes of highly aggressive and often uncontrolled behaviour. In view of this, will the Commission state:

1. Is it aware of any surveys mapping the significant increase in the availability of this narcotic substance and any link between that and the impact of the economic crisis?

2. Is it preparing, or does it intend to prepare, a specific action plan to reduce the use of shisha as part of the EU's general anti-drug policy?

3. Given that, in countries (such as Greece) which face serious fiscal problems, there have been extensive cutbacks in government spending on drug rehabilitation structures (prevention, detoxification, reintegration), how feasible does it rate the action being taken to combat the use of narcotics, which is spreading and becoming more complicated due to the economic recession and worsening social situation?

4. Does it intend to promote and finance actions to inform and raise public awareness about the effects of shisha use?

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

The Commission is aware of the rise in the use of a variant of methamphetamine, commonly called 'shisha', in Greece.

This drug, known in the streets as 'cocaine of the poor' appears to be a mixture of a synthetic drug with various chemicals (battery oil, engine oil, sometimes shampoo). It can be inhaled or injected and it is frequently used in combination with alcohol. There is no information on its toxicity, but users self-reports suggest it can cause severe health and social harms, including loss of consciousness and violent behaviour. Police seizures confirm that it is readily available and easy to produce in home laboratories.

Drug-demand reduction is primarily a competence of the Member States, which develop and implement policies on drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction, to reduce the use of psychoactive substances and the harms that they cause to individuals and society.

The Commission complements and supports Member States' action by promoting the development of innovative approaches and the sharing of best practices, and by funding research, through EU financial programmes. Under the Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([1]), several projects were funded in the past years on the risks of new psychoactive substances, awareness raising and innovative prevention methods aimed at young people, families and professionals working in the fields of drug prevention and health.

([1]) Decision No 1150/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 September 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the Specific Programme Drug prevention and information as part of the General Programme Fundamental Rights and Justice. OJ L 257, 3.10.2007, p. 23-29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006200/13
to the Commission
Geoffrey Van Orden (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Transfer of sentenced persons

What steps would a Member State and the Commission need to take for the EU to amend the Council Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments imposing custodial sentences so that:

1. A person from one EU Member State committing a serious offence in another can automatically be deported for imprisonment to his or her country of origin;

2. That person can be banned from re-entry to the country where his or her offence was committed.

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

Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA establishes a system for transferring convicted prisoners back to the Member State of nationality or habitual residence (or to another Member State with which they have close ties) to serve their prison sentence.

No consent of the sentenced person to the transfer to his home country is required when the sentenced person: (i) is a national of the executing State who lives in the executing State; (ii) will be deported to the executing State once he is released and (iii) has fled to the executing State ([1]).

According to Article 33 of Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, expulsion orders may not be issued by the host Member State as a penalty or legal consequence of a custodial penalty, unless they conform with the relevant guarantees provided by this directive.

In particular, a re-entry ban may only be issued, following an individual assessment, on grounds of public policy or public security. It must comply with the principle of proportionality and be based exclusively on the personal conduct of the individual, which must represent a genuine, present and sufficiently serious threat affecting one of the fundamental interests of society. Where such orders are enforced more than two years after they were issued, Member States shall check that the individuals concerned are currently and genuinely a threat to public policy or public security, and shall assess whether there has since been any material change in the circumstances.

([1]) See Article 6 of the framework Decision.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006201/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(3 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — il caso Pussy Riot

Respinta la libertà condizionata per una delle musiciste del gruppo musicale punk Pussy Riot: secondo i giudici russi Maria Alyokhina, 24 anni, assente per scelta durante l'udienza, avrebbe violato le regole del carcere e non si sarebbe mostrata pentita dei fatti che le sono attribuiti. La donna, detenuta negli Urali, ha cominciato uno sciopero della fame per protestare contro il presidente del tribunale, che le ha negato il diritto di partecipare all'udienza in cui si doveva discutere della sua richiesta di liberazione. Sta scontando, con un'altra esponente del gruppo, Nadejda Tolokonnikova, 22 anni, una pena di due anni di detenzione in un campo di lavoro per vandalismo e istigazione all'odio religioso, per avere inscenato una protesta non autorizzata contro la fusione tra il potere dello Stato e quello della Chiesa cantando una preghiera punk anti Putin nella cattedrale ortodossa di Cristo Salvatore a Mosca lo scorso febbraio.

I giudici russi avevano già respinto la richiesta di Alyokhina di posticipare l'espiazione della pena per potersi prendere cura del figlio piccolo. All'origine del rifiuto del tribunale, oltre a una serie di aggravanti, il fatto che la presenza di un bambino minorenne — cinque anni — non ha impedito alla madre di commettere il reato.

Respinta anche la richiesta di libertà anticipata di Tolokonnikova, destinata a restare nella colonia penale a 500 chilometri da Mosca perché, secondo il giudice, non meriterebbe la liberazione non avendo ammesso le proprie colpe.

Solo Yekateria Samoutsevich, 30 anni, evita il carcere e beneficia della condizionale ottenuta grazie alla strategia difensiva messa in piedi dopo un cambio di avvocati: era nella cattedrale quel giorno, ma non ha partecipato allo show punk anti Putin inscenato dalle altre.

Le altre due componenti del gruppo, temendo la persecuzione dopo la protesta di febbraio, hanno abbandonato la Russia sfuggendo così all'arresto.

Le sentenze sono state ampiamente criticate da Stati Uniti e Unione europea e da esponenti di spicco del mondo dello spettacolo in tutto il mondo. L'opinione pubblica in Russia è stata generalmente meno solidale verso le donne.

A tal proposito, si chiede al Vice-Presidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto segue:

1. l'UE può fare pressione affinché la Corte europea dei diritti umani intervenga in favore di queste donne, definite «prigioniere di coscienza»?

2. l'UE può fare pressione sul governo russo affinché ai membri del gruppo Pussy Riot sia garantito un equo processo?

3. in quale modo l'UE entra in contatto con gruppi quali Amnesty International, che lottano in difesa dei diritti umani e dell'equa giustizia amministrativa?

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

L'AR/VP ha seguito da vicino il caso dei membri del gruppo musicale Pussy Riot e condivide le preoccupazioni dell'onorevole deputata, come espresso chiaramente nella dichiarazione che ha rilasciato subito dopo il processo.

Abbiamo richiamato l'attenzione delle autorità russe sulle questioni relative al presente caso e alla libertà di espressione in generale. Nello specifico, abbiamo affrontato questi temi nel corso delle consultazioni biennali sui diritti umani tra l'UE e la Russia, nel luglio e dicembre 2012 e 2013, ed anche mediante lo scambio di informazioni scritte. In tali occasioni, l'Unione europea ha sottolineato il diritto di Maria Alyokhina, Nadejda Tolokonnikova e Yekateria Samutsevich ad un processo equo e a un equo trattamento in materia di libertà condizionale, assistenza legale e contatti con le famiglie. Anche la delegazione dell'UE a Mosca ha seguito il caso da vicino, incontrando regolarmente gli avvocati dei membri del gruppo in attesa di giudizio, nonché assistendo al processo. L'UE continuerà a seguire gli sviluppi del caso, inclusi i procedimenti della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo.

L'UE mantiene uno stretto rapporto con una serie di organizzazioni della società civile che si occupano di diritti umani, in particolare attraverso la Rete per i diritti umani e la democrazia, e ha quindi contatti regolari con l'organizzazione a cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006201/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The Pussy Riot case

Parole has been refused for one of the musicians in the punk band Pussy Riot: according to the Russian court, Maria Alyokhina, 24, who chose not to be at the hearing, violated prison rules, and has not repented for the actions for which she was convicted. Currently being imprisoned in the Urals, she began a hunger strike to protest against the president of the court, who had denied her the right to attend her own parole hearing. Along with another member of the group, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, 22, she is serving a two-year sentence in a labour camp for hooliganism and incitement to religious hatred for staging an unauthorised protest against the collusion between the power of the State and that of the Church by singing an anti-Putin punk prayer in the Orthodox Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow last February.

The Russian courts had already rejected Alyokhina's plea to defer the sentence to enable her to take care of her young son. In addition to a number of aggravating circumstances, the court justified its refusal on the basis of the fact that having a young child of five had not deterred the mother from committing the offence.

The court also rejected parole for Tolokonnikova, who will stay at the penal colony 500 kilometres from Moscow because, according to the court, she does not deserve parole as she has not admitted her guilt.

Only Yekaterina Samutsevich, 30, is not spending time behind bars, having been given a suspended sentence — after switching lawyers, she came up with a new defence strategy, i.e. that she was in the cathedral that day, but did not perform in the anti-Putin punk show put on by the others.

The remaining two members of the group, fearing persecution after the February protest, left Russia and thus escaped arrest.

The sentences were widely criticised by the United States and the European Union, and by prominent members of the entertainment industry worldwide. Public opinion in Russia has generally been less supportive towards the women.

In this regard, can the Vice-President/High Representative indicate:

1. Whether the EU can put pressure on the European Court of Human Rights to intervene in favour of these women, who have been defined as prisoners of conscience?

2. Whether the EU can put pressure on the Russian Government to ensure that the members of the Pussy Riot group are guaranteed a fair trial?

3. What sort of contact the EU has with groups such as Amnesty International, which fight for human rights and for a fair administrative justice system?

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

The HR/VP has been following closely the case of the Pussy Riot band members and shares the concerns of the Honourable Member, as expressed clearly in the statement she issued immediately following their trial.

The issues pertaining to this case in particular and to freedom of expression in general have been raised with the Russian authorities. They were in particular addressed during several rounds of the bi-annual human rights consultations between the EU and Russia, in July and December 2012 and May 2013, including through exchange of written information. In those discussions, the European Union stressed the right of Ms Alyokhina, Ms Tolokonnikova and Ms Samutsevich to receive a fair trial and to be treated as any other prisoner when it comes to their right to parole, their access to lawyers and their contacts with their families. The EU Delegation in Moscow has also been following this case very closely, regularly meeting with the lawyers of the group members that were on trial, and also observing the trial in court. The EU will continue to follow the developments in this case, including proceedings in the ECHR.

The EU maintains a close relationship with a number civil society organisations dealing with human rights issues, notably through the Human Rights and Democracy Network, and therefore has regular contacts with the organisation referred to by the Honourable Member.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006202/13
alla Commissione
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(3 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Carta europea dei diritti delle donne nello sport

— Considerata la comunicazione della Commissione del 18 gennaio 2011 dal titolo «Sviluppare la dimensione europea dello sport»;

— tenuto conto della risoluzione approvata dal Parlamento europeo il 2 febbraio 2012 sulla dimensione europea dello sport, nella quale si invitano la Commissione e gli Stati membri a sostenere gli organismi europei per la promozione e l'attuazione delle raccomandazioni della Carta europea dei diritti delle donne nello sport e che individua nell'attività motoria e sportiva un'importante risorsa per la promozione della salute, nonché della risoluzione approvata dal Parlamento europeo il 12 marzo 2013 per il superamento degli stereotipi di genere;

— preso atto che la pratica dello sport da parte delle donne non è sufficientemente valorizzata e che le donne sono sottorappresentate in seno agli organi decisionali delle organizzazioni sportive;

1. può la Commissione coordinare insieme agli Stati membri una campagna per la promozione e l'adozione della Carta europea dei diritti delle donne nello sport?

2. quali iniziative intende la Commissione adottare al fine di incoraggiare maggiormente la partecipazione delle donne alla pratica sportiva, garantendo la parità di accesso alle attività sportive, in particolare per le ragazze e le donne, inclusi i gruppi svantaggiati e per sostenere e incoraggiare la parità di genere negli organismi decisionali delle federazioni sportive nazionali e internazionali e la rappresentazione da parte dei mass media dello sport femminile come fenomeno originale, superando gli stereotipi di genere?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(17 luglio 2013)

Quale seguito delle iniziative politiche menzionate dall'onorevole deputata la Commissione organizza una conferenza UE sulla parità tra i generi e lo sport. La conferenza si terrà il 3-4 dicembre 2013 a Vilnius, Lituania.

Obiettivo della conferenza è discutere una proposta relativa a una strategia specifica sulla parità di genere e lo sport per il 2015-2020 da prepararsi a cura di un gruppo di esperti delle organizzazioni sportive governative e non governative. La conferenza si concentrerà su soggetti quali la parità di genere nelle posizioni di responsabilità nel settore dello sport, sulle modalità per promuovere la partecipazione delle ragazze e delle donne allo sport, sulla prevenzione della violenza sessualizzata e delle molestie sessuali nello sport nonché sull'eliminazione degli stereotipi di genere a valenza negativa.

La maggior parte degli elementi menzionati nella Carta europea dei Diritti delle donne nello sport, che è il resultato di un progetto finanziato dall'UE nel quadro delle azioni preparatorie nel settore dello sport, è in corso di discussione in seno al gruppo di esperti che sta preparando questa conferenza ad alto livello. La Commissione ritiene che iniziative come questa siano il modo più efficace per dare seguito al testo della Carta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006202/13
to the Commission
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: European Charter of Women's Rights in Sports

— Having regard to the Commission communication of 18 January 2011 entitled 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport';

— having regard to the resolution adopted by Parliament on 2 February 2012 on the European dimension in sport, in which it called on the Commission and Member States to support European organisations in the promotion and implementation of the recommendations of the European Charter of Women's Rights in Sports, and in which sport and exercise are identified as important resources for health promotion, as well as the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 12 March 2013 on eliminating gender stereotypes;

— whereas participation by women in sport is not sufficiently valued, and women are under-represented within the decision-making bodies of sports organisations;

1. Can the Commission coordinate with Member States a campaign for the promotion and adoption of the European Charter of Women's Rights in Sports?

2. What steps will the Commission take to encourage increased participation among women in sports, guaranteeing equal access to sporting activities, particularly for girls and women, including disadvantaged groups, and to support and encourage gender equality in the decision-making bodies of international and national sports federations and the representation by the mass media of sport for women as being an original phenomenon, thus eliminating gender stereotypes?

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

As a follow-up to the policy initiatives mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Commission is organising an EU conference on Gender Equality and sport. It will take place on 3-4 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

The aim of the conference is to discuss a proposal for a specific strategy on gender equality and sport for 2015-2020 to be prepared by a group of experts from governmental and non-governmental sport organisations. The conference will focus on topics such as gender equality in management positions in the field of sport, ways to promote the participation of girls and women in sport, the prevention of sexualised violence and harassment in sport, and the elimination of negative gender stereotypes.

Most of the elements mentioned in the European Charter of Women's Rights in Sport, which is the output of a project funded by the EU in the framework of the Preparatory actions in the field of sport, are under discussion within in the group of experts which is preparing this high level conference. The Commission considers that policy initiatives such as these are the most effective way to follow up on the content of the Charter.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006203/13
alla Commissione
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(3 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Call DEAR 2013

— La Commissione ha pubblicato l'invito a presentare proposte in materia di educazione e sensibilizzazione allo sviluppo DEAR 2013 che prevede, tra i requisiti di ammissibilità dei progetti, un bilancio minimo di 3 milioni di euro per progetto e l'obbligo di coinvolgere almeno 15 paesi;

— i requisiti imposti potrebbero limitare, se non rendere impossibile, la partecipazione di gran parte delle organizzazioni non governative e delle organizzazioni della società civile europee di dimensioni piccole o medie, portando a concentrare le sovvenzioni sui grandi soggetti;

— nel documento di lavoro della Commissione sull'educazione e la sensibilizzazione allo sviluppo (DEAR) in Europa del 20 dicembre 2012 si legge che «le organizzazioni della società civile (OSC) contribuiscono alla costruzione di Stati più responsabili e legittimi, a rafforzare la coesione sociale e a consolidare e rendere più aperte le democrazie».

1. Può la Commissione comunicare come intende conciliare questo approccio di valorizzazione e riconoscimento del ruolo di queste organizzazioni nel loro complesso con i vincoli inseriti nell'invito a presentare proposte, che porterebbero a concentrare i progetti in capo alle grandi organizzazioni non governative o della società civile a discapito di quelle piccole e medie?

2. Quali iniziative intende adottare la Commissione al fine di verificare la possibilità di una corretta e ampia partecipazione all'invito a presentare proposte, che non sia discriminante per gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea caratterizzati dalla presenza di piccole e medie organizzazioni non governative o della società civile?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(26 luglio 2013)

La Commissione non ha ancora pubblicato l'invito a presentare proposte DEAR 2013 (educazione e sensibilizzazione allo sviluppo). Tuttavia, nel tentativo di procedere a consultazioni con tutte le parti interessate, la Commissione ha tenuto due riunioni di consultazione a maggio e giugno 2013.

Le previste modifiche dell'invito a presentare proposte del 2013 sono giustificate dalla necessità di migliorare l'impatto delle nostre azioni sul terreno e di garantire la complementarità tra le nostre azioni e le politiche e attività degli Stati membri nel settore, coprendo al tempo stesso tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE.

La Commissione osserva che durante la seconda riunione (che ha visto una buona partecipazione degli Stati membri e delle parti interessate), organizzata il 19 giugno 2013 durante il Forum politico sullo sviluppo, è stata trovata una soluzione di compromesso che aumenta il cofinanziamento per tutti i candidati e crea un lotto specifico per i candidati dell'UE-12 + 1 (Stati membri che hanno aderito dal 2004 in poi, inclusa la Croazia).

Le organizzazioni non governative e le organizzazioni della società civile europee di piccole e medie dimensioni potranno raggrupparsi per partecipare all'invito a presentare proposte.

Come in passato, l'invito a presentare proposte sarà aperto a tutte le organizzazioni di tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE, indipendentemente dalle loro dimensioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006203/13
to the Commission
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: DEAR 2013 call for proposals

— The Commission has published DEAR 2013, a call for proposals in the field of development education and awareness raising, whose eligibility requirements for projects include a minimum budget of EUR 3 million per project and the obligation to involve at least 15 countries;

— such requirements may limit the chances, or even make it impossible, for the majority of small and medium-sized European non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations to participate, which would thus lead to subsidies being concentrated in the hands of larger organisations;

— the Commission's Working Document on Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) in Europe of 20 December 2012 states that civil society organisations (CSOs) contribute to building more accountable and legitimate states, leading to enhanced social cohesion and more open and deeper democracies.

1. Can the Commission indicate how it intends to reconcile this enhancement and recognition of the role which these organisations play as a whole with the constraints included in the call for proposals, which would lead to concentrating projects in the hands of large non-governmental or civil society organisations at the expense of small and medium-sized ones?

2. What steps will the Commission take to make sure that there can be true broad-based participation in the call for proposals, such that those EU Member States characterised by the presence of small and medium-sized non-governmental or civil society organisations will not be discriminated against?

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

Regarding the 2013 DEAR (Development Education and Awareness Raising) Call for Proposals, the Commission has not yet published the call. The Commission has, however, in an effort to engage in consultation with all concerned stakeholders, held two consultation meetings in May and June 2013.

The reasons for the planned changes to the 2013 Call for Proposals are the need to improve the impact of our operations on the ground and ensure complementarity between our operations and Member States' policies and activities in the field, while covering all EU member states.

The Commission notes that during the second stakeholder meeting (with good attendance from Member States and stakeholders) organised during the Policy Forum for Development, on 19 June 2013, a compromise solution was found increasing the co-financing for all applicants as well as creating a specific lot for applicants from EU12+1 (Member States that have joined since 2004 including Croatia).

Small and medium-sized European non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations will be able to participate in this call for proposals by forming coalitions.

As in the past, the Call for Proposals will be open to all organisations of any size from all EU Member States.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-006204/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. június 3.)

Tárgy: A szlovák nyelvtörvény módosításának elmaradása

Az elmúlt években kétségtelenül komoly vitákat váltottak ki a 2009 szeptemberében módosított, jelenleg hatályos szlovák nyelvtörvény eredményeképpen a felvidéki magyarságot érintő negatív diszkrimináció okozta hatások. Sajnálatos módon ezek az intézkedések – amelyek számos magyar származású embert érintettek Szlovákiában – súlyosan sérthetik az EU emberi jogi egyezményeit, mivel a magyar nyelv használatának korlátozását írják elő, szankcionálnak, illetve egyes személyeket megfosztanak szlovák állampolgárságuktól. A tegnapi nap folyamán a pozsonyi parlamentben leszavazták a magyarellenes nyelvtörvény módosítását, sőt Brüsszelben sem reagáltak még érdemben ebben az ügyben.

A Bizottság milyen lépéseket tesz a diszkriminatív szlovák nyelvtörvénnyel kapcsolatban?

A Bizottság hogyan tudja garantálni, hogy a jövőben ne történjenek a szlovákiaihoz hasonló, az uniós tagállamok közötti viszonyban egymásra nézve súlyos, a nemzetiségek jogait korlátozó intézkedések?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. augusztus 13.)

Az Európai Unióról szóló szerződés 2. cikke szerint a kisebbségekhez tartozó személyek jogainak tiszteletben tartása az Európai Unió egyik alapelve. Továbbá az Európai Unió Alapjogi Chartájának 21. és 22. cikke tiltja a nemzeti kisebbséghez való tartozás alapján történő megkülönböztetést, és az Unió számára előírja a kulturális, vallási és nyelvi sokféleség tiszteletben tartását.

A Bizottság az Európai Unió jogának alkalmazási körében biztosítja, hogy a tagállamok ezen jog végrehajtása során tiszteletben tartsák a Chartában lefektetett alapjogokat. Ezen túlmenően az uniós jogszabályok és finanszírozási programok foglalkoznak a megkülönböztetéssel, illetve a faji, nemzeti vagy etnikai származáson alapuló erőszakra való felbujtással vagy gyűlöletkeltéssel, amelyek érinthetik a kisebbséghez tartozó személyeket ([1]).

Az E-01067/2012 írásbeli kérdésre adott válaszban kifejtetteknek megfelelően a Bizottság általános hatáskörei a kisebbségekre nem terjednek ki. Konkrétan a nemzeti kisebbségek meghatározása és elismerése, a kisebbségek önrendelkezési joga és autonómiája vagy a regionális, illetve kisebbségi nyelvhasználat nem tartozik a Bizottság hatáskörébe, hanem ezek tagállami felelősségek.

([1]) A Tanács 2008/912/IB kerethatározata (2008. november 28.) a rasszizmus és az idegengyűlölet egyes formái és megnyilvánulásai elleni, büntetőjogi eszközökkel történő küzdelemről (HL L 328., 2008.12.6.); a Tanács 2000/43/EK irányelve (2000. június 29.) a személyek közötti, faji- vagy etnikai származásra való tekintet nélküli egyenlő bánásmód elvének alkalmazásáról (HL L 180., 2000.7.19.). További információkért keresse fel a Jogérvényesülési Főigazgatóság weboldalát: http://ec.europa.eu/justice

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006204/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Postponement of amendment to the Slovak language law

In recent years the Slovak language law currently in force, which was amended in September 2009, has given rise to much heated debate and has resulted in ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia suffering discrimination. Unfortunately these provisions, which have had an impact on many people of Hungarian origin in Slovakia, are in serious violation of EU human rights conventions, as they prescribe restrictions on the use of Hungarian, impose sanctions and deprive certain individuals of their Slovak citizenship. Yesterday the parliament in Bratislava voted against amending the anti-Hungarian language law, and there has been no reaction from Brussels on the merits of this issue.

What action is the Commission taking in the matter of the discriminatory Slovak language law?

How does the Commission intend to prevent the future adoption of similar provisions restricting the rights of nationalities, which have a serious impact on relations between Member States?

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

According to Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union, the respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities constitutes one of the founding values of the European Union. Furthermore, Articles 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibit discrimination based on membership of a national minority and provide for the respect by the Union of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

Within the scope of European Union law, the Commission ensures that Member States, when implementing this law, respect fundamental rights laid down in the Charter. Furthermore, EU legislation and financing programmes address discrimination and incitement to violence or hatred based on race or national or ethnic origin which may affect persons belonging to minorities ([1]).

As explained in its reply to Written Question E-01067/2012, the Commission has no general powers as regards minorities. In particular, the Commission has no competence over the definition and recognition of national minorities, their self-determination and autonomy or the use of regional or minority languages, which fall under the responsibility of the Member States.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008; Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin (OJ L 180, 19.7.2000). For further information, please see DG Justice website at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-006205/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. június 3.)

Tárgy: Az erdélyi magyarságot érintő uniós források

Románia teljes jogú uniós csatlakozása 2007 januárjában történt meg, aminek következtében jelentős uniós forrásokhoz jutott, de a fejlesztések zömét mind a mai napig nem az erdélyi magyarlakta területek kapták. A 2013 januárjában aláírt támogatási szerződés nyomán a Regionális Fejlesztési Operatív Program fog megvalósításra kerülni Romániában is. A romániai új közigazgatási „reform" következtében félő, hogy a decentralizációk kapcsán ismét a magyarok lakta Erdély és az egységes Székelyföld kerülhet ki diszkriminatív módon a támogatott régiók köréből. Kívánatos lenne a magyarok lakta Székelyföldet külön entitásként kezelni.

A Bizottság milyen ajánlásokat fogalmaz meg az uniós forrásoknak a romániai kisebbségeket érintő igazságos elosztásával kapcsolatban?

A Bizottság milyen lépéseket kíván tenni, hogy az erdélyi magyarlakta Székelyföld egységes közigazgatási területként részesülhessen az uniós forrásokból?

Johannes Hahn válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. július 23.)

Az Európai Regionális Fejlesztési Alapra, az Európai Szociális Alapra, a Kohéziós Alapra, az Európai Mezőgazdasági Vidékfejlesztési Alapra és az Európai Tengerügyi és Halászati Alapra a 2014–2020 időszakban vonatkozó közös rendelkezésekre irányuló bizottsági jogalkotási javaslat többek között előírja, hogy a tagállamok és a Bizottság tegyék meg a megfelelő lépéseket a programok előkészítése és végrehajtása során a nemen, faji vagy etnikai származáson, valláson vagy meggyőződésen, fogyatékosságon, koron vagy szexuális irányultságon alapuló bármilyen megkülönböztetés megakadályozása érdekében.

A finanszírozás elosztásáról szóló megállapodás a Bizottság és az egyes tagállamok között jön létre az intelligens, fenntartható és inkluzív növekedésre vonatkozó uniós stratégiához való hozzájárulás érdekében, a jogalkotási javaslatba foglalt tematikus célkitűzések tekintetében meghatározott egyenlőtlenségek és fejlesztési szükségletek elemzése alapján. E folyamat során figyelembe veszik a szegénység által legjobban sújtott földrajzi területek egyedi szükségleteit.

A megosztott irányítás elve alapján az Unió által társfinanszírozott programok végrehajtására a tagállam intézményi keretével összhangban kerül sor. A közigazgatási reformokkal és decentralizációval kapcsolatos döntések a tagállam hatáskörébe tartoznak.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006205/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: EU funding and the ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania

Romania became a full member of the EU in January 2007, as a result of which it has received large amounts of EU funding. However, the lion's share of the benefits has not reached the ethnic Hungarian areas of Transylvania. As a result of the grant agreement signed in January 2013, the Operational Programme for Regional Development is due to be implemented in Romania. There is a danger that, as a consequence of the new administrative 'reform' in Romania, ethnically-Hungarian Transylvania and the Székely Land (Székelyföld) will again be discriminated against and, with reference being made to decentralisation, be omitted from the list of regions which receive funding. It would be better if the Székely Land, which is ethnically Hungarian, were treated as a separate entity.

What proposals will the Commission put forward regarding the fair allocation of EU funding to minorities in Romania?

What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the Székely Land in Transylvania, which is inhabited by Hungarians, benefits from EU funding as a single administrative region?

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

The Commission's legislative proposal for common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for the 2014-2020 period includes a requirement that the Member States and the Commission shall take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation and implementation of programmes.

The allocation of funding will be agreed between the Commission and each Member State based on an analysis of disparities and development needs with reference to the thematic objectives included in the legislative proposal in order to contribute to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In this process, specific needs of geographical areas most affected by poverty will be taken into account.

Under the shared management principle, EU co-financed programmes are implemented in accordance with the institutional framework of the Member State. Decisions on administrative reform and decentralisation are a competency of the Member State.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006206/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Novas drogas na Europa

Considerando que:

— Existe um mercado emergente de estimulantes cada vez mais complexo potenciado pela Internet e pelas novas tecnologias;

— Em 2009 foram identificadas 24 novas substâncias, esse número tem vindo a aumentar — 41 em 2010 e 49 em 2011;

— No último ano, de acordo com o Relatório Europeu sobre Drogas de 2013, o sistema de alerta rápido da União Europeia detetou 73 novas substâncias;

— Em declarações recentes, a comissária europeia para os Assuntos Internos, Cecilia Malmström, fala de «uma oferta imparável de novas drogas».

Pergunto à Comissão:

De que forma prevê a Comissão combater a referida «oferta imparável» de novas drogas, evitando os riscos associados às populações jovens e estudantis no espaço da UE?

Está a União Europeia capaz de promover pedagogicamente a divulgação dos riscos inerentes a estas novas drogas?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(31 de julho de 2013)

Constitui prioridade da Comissão combater o surgimento frequente e a rápida propagação de novas substâncias psicoativas no mercado interno da UE.

O relatório de avaliação da Comissão ([1]), publicado em julho de 2011, concluiu que o instrumento da UE — a Decisão 2005/387/JAI do Conselho relativa ao intercâmbio de informações, avaliação de riscos e controlo de novas substâncias psicoativas ([2]) — é inadequado para fazer frente a este desafio e ser revisto A Comunicação da Comissão «Para uma resposta europeia mais eficaz na luta contra a droga» ([3]), adotada em outubro de 2011, identificou a disseminação de novas substâncias psicoativas como um dos maiores desafios na luta contra a droga, que requer uma reação mais firme por parte da UE.

A Comissão está atualmente a preparar novas propostas legislativas sobre as novas substâncias psicoativas, com vista ao reforço da reação da UE, através de um reforço da vigilância e da avaliação dos riscos das substâncias e de uma resposta mais rápida, eficaz e adequada para reduzir a disponibilidade de substâncias que põem em risco a saúde e a segurança. As novas propostas deverão ser apresentadas em meados de 2013.

A redução da procura de drogas é principalmente da competência dos Estados-Membros, que desenvolvem e aplicam políticas de prevenção da toxicodependência, de tratamento e de redução dos efeitos nocivos na UE, a fim de reduzir a utilização de substâncias psicoativas.

([1]) COM(2011) 430 final e SEC(2011) 912 final.
([2]) JO L 127, 20.5.2005, pp. 32-37.
([3]) COM(2011) 689 final.

A Comissão complementa e apoia a ação dos Estados-Membros através da promoção do desenvolvimento de abordagens inovadoras e da partilha de boas práticas e do financiamento da investigação, através de programas financeiros da UE. O Programa de Informação e Prevenção em matéria de Droga ([4]) financiou diversos projetos sobre os riscos associados às novas substâncias psicoativas, a sensibilização e os métodos de prevenção inovadores destinados aos jovens.

([4]) Decisão n.° 1150/2007/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 25 de setembro de 2007, que cria, para o período de 2007 a 2013, o programa específico Informação e prevenção em matéria de droga no âmbito do programa geral Direitos fundamentais e Justiça. JO L 257 de 3.10.2007, pp. 23-29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006206/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: New drugs in Europe

— There is an emerging market for increasingly complex stimulants, which is driven by the Internet and new technologies.

— In 2009, 24 new substances were identified and this number has continued to rise, reaching 41 in 2010 and 49 in 2011.

— According to the European Drug Report 2013, the EU early warning system detected 73 new substances during 2012.

— In a recent statement, EU Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmström talked about a 'relentless supply of new drugs'.

How does the Commission plan to combat this 'relentless supply' of new drugs and prevent the risks associated with young people and students in the EU?

Is the EU able to promote awareness of the inherent risks of these new drugs through education?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

Addressing the frequent emergence and rapid spread in the EU internal market of new psychoactive substances is a priority for the Commission.

The Commission's assessment report ([1]), published in July 2011, concluded that the EU instrument, Council Decision 2005/387/JHA ([2]) on the information exchange, risk-assessment and control of new psychoactive substances, is inadequate for addressing this challenge, and that it requires revision. The Commission Communication 'Towards a stronger European response to drugs' ([3]), adopted in October 2011, identified the spread of new psychoactive substances as one of the most challenging developments in drugs policy, requiring a firmer EU response.

The Commission is currently working on new legislative proposals on new psychoactive substances, aimed at strengthening the EU response, through enhanced monitoring and risk assessment of substances, and swifter, more effective and more proportionate answers to reduce the availability of substances posing health and security risks. It is planning to present the new proposals by mid-2013.

Drug-demand reduction is primarily a competence of the Member States, which develop and implement policies on drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction, to reduce the use of psychoactive substances.

The Commission complements and supports Member States' action by promoting the development of innovative approaches and the sharing of best practices, and by funding research, through EU financial programmes. The Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([4]) has funded several projects on the risks of new psychoactive substances, on awareness raising and innovative prevention methods aimed at young people.

([1]) COM(2011) 430 final and SEC(2011) 912 final.
([2]) OJ L 127, 20.5.2005, pp. 32-37.
([3]) COM(2011) 689 final.
([4]) Decision No 1150/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 September 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the Specific Programme Drug prevention and information as part of the General Programme Fundamental Rights and Justice. OJ L 257, 3.10.2007, p. 23-29.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006207/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Jovens europeus — principais causas de morte

Considerando que:

— De acordo com o Relatório Europeu sobre Drogas 2013, o consumo de droga é uma das principais causas de morte entre os jovens na Europa;

— A taxa de mortalidade — provocada diretamente pelo consumo de droga, através de overdoses, ou indiretamente, por doenças várias, sobretudo infetocontagiosas, e acidentes, violência e suicídio — ronda os 1 a 2 % por ano,

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento do referido relatório?

De que forma tem a UE lidado com este grave problema?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(6 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia tem pleno conhecimento do Relatório Europeu sobre Drogas elaborado anualmente pelo Observatório Europeu da Droga e da Toxicodependência.

A redução da procura de drogas releva primariamente da competência dos Estados-Membros, que concebem e põem em prática as políticas de prevenção, tratamento e diminuição dos efeitos nocivos da toxicodependência, de modo a reduzir o consumo de drogas e os danos causados ao indivíduo e à sociedade, nomeadamente as mortes dele decorrentes.

A Comissão complementa e apoia a ação dos Estados-Membros promovendo a conceção de abordagens inovadoras e o intercâmbio das melhores práticas, e financiando a investigação através de programas financeiros da UE. Por esta via, no quadro do programa específico «Informação e Prevenção em matéria de Droga» ([1]) e do Programa de Ação no domínio da Saúde ([2]), a Comissão tem financiado projetos que visam especificamente a redução do número de mortes associadas ao consumo de drogas, nomeadamente o projeto «ORION», que criou uma ferramenta de saúde em linha para diminuir o risco de superdose e o *Imp.Ac.T* para facilitar o acesso dos grupos marginalizados a testes de VIH/Tuberculose. A Comissão está a igualmente a preparar uma nova proposta legislativa no intuito de reforçar a resposta da UE a novas substâncias psicoativas, frequentemente destinadas a imitar os efeitos de estupefacientes controlados.

A Estratégia da UE de Luta contra a Droga (2013-2020) ([3]) aponta como prioridade a elaboração de medidas eficazes de diminuição dos riscos e danos. O Plano de Ação da UE de Luta contra a Droga (2013-2016) ([4]) apela aos Estados-Membros para que assegurem um maior acesso a opções de redução dos riscos e danos, a fim de reduzir substancialmente o número de mortes direta ou indiretamente relacionadas com a droga e as doenças infecciosas transmitidas por via sanguínea associadas ao consumo de droga.

([1]) Decisão n.° 1150/2007/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 25 de setembro de 2007, que cria, para o período de 2007 a 2013, o programa específico Informação e Prevenção em matéria de Droga no âmbito do programa geral Direitos Fundamentais e Justiça, JO L 257 de 3.10.2007, pp. 23-29.

([2]) Decisão n.° 1350/2007/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 23 de outubro de 2007, que cria um segundo Programa de Ação Comunitária no domínio da Saúde (2008-2013), JO L 301 de 20.11.2007, p. 3.

([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:402:0001:0010:pt:PDF

([4]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/pt/13/st09/st09963.pt13.pdf
adotado pelo Conselho «JAI» de 6 e 7 de junho de 2013 (ainda não publicado no JO).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006207/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Main causes of death among young Europeans

— The European Drug Report 2013 identifies drug use as one of the main causes of death among young people in Europe.

— Between 1% and 2% of young people die every year either as a direct result of drug overdoses or indirectly from various diseases, particularly infectious ones, or from accidents, violence and suicide.

Is the Commission aware of this report?

How has the EU attempted to curb this serious problem?

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

The Commission is fully aware of the European Drugs Report produced annually by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction.

Drug-demand reduction is primarily a competence of the Member States, which develop and implement policies on drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction, to reduce the use of drugs and the harms that they cause to individuals and to society, including drug-related deaths.

The Commission complements and supports Member States' action by promoting the development of innovative approaches and the sharing of best practices, and by funding research, through EU financial programmes. Through the EU financial programmes the Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([1]) and the Public Health Programme ([2]), the Commission has funded projects aimed specifically at reducing the number of drug-related deaths, notably ORION, which developed an e-health tool to reduce the risk of overdose, and Imp.Ac.T on improving access to HIV/TB testing for marginalised groups. The European Commission is also preparing a new legislative proposal for strengthening the EU response to new psychoactive substances often intended to mimic the effects of controlled drugs.

The EU Drugs Strategy (2013-2020) ([3]) sets out as a priority the development of effective risk and harm reduction measures. The EU Action Plan on Drugs (2013-2016) ([4]) calls upon Member States to ensure greater access to risk and harm reduction options to substantially reduce the number of drug-related deaths and the spread of infectious blood borne diseases associated with drug use.

([1]) Decision No 1150/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 September 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the Specific Programme Drug prevention and information as part of the General Programme Fundamental Rights and Justice, OJ L 257, 3.10.2007, p. 23-29.

([2]) Decision No 1350/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 establishing a second programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-2013), OJ L 301, 20.11.2007.

([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:402:0001:0010:en:PDF.

([4]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st09/st09963.en13.pdf — adopted by the JHA Council on 6-7 June 2013, not published in the OJ yet.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006208/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Lagoa dos Salgados III

— O Deputado signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000195/2013;

— Na resposta dada por Janez Potocnik em nome da Comissão, é dito que «A Comissão ainda está a debater o assunto com as autoridades portuguesas e as partes interessadas.»

Pergunto à Comissão:

Após o debate com as autoridades portuguesas e as partes interessadas, de que informações dispõe?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(29 de julho de 2013)

Na sequência de contactos com as autoridades portuguesas e as partes interessadas pertinentes, a Comissão recolheu os dados mais recentes sobre a Lagoa dos Salgados. Esta zona tinha sido identificada como uma zona importante para a conservação das aves pela BirdLife International em 2003, mas as informações na altura não eram suficientes para que a Comissão solicitasse a sua designação. A Comissão está atualmente a analisar os dados relativos aos últimos controlos da zona dos Salgados que indicam que a zona húmida tem valores ornitológicos. Nesta base, a Comissão tenciona solicitar esclarecimentos adicionais às autoridades portuguesas sobre a coerência da decisão de não incluir este sítio na sua rede de zonas de proteção especial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006208/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Salgados Lake III

— I submitted Question No E-000195/2013 for written answer to the Commission.

— The answer given by Janez Potočnik, on behalf of the Commission, states that 'The Commission is still discussing this issue, both with the Portuguese authorities and with the stakeholders concerned'.

What information does the Commission have following discussions with the Portuguese authorities and with the stakeholders concerned?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 2013)

The Commission has, following contacts with the Portuguese authorities and relevant stakeholders, gathered the latest relevant information on the Salgados area. This area had been identified as an Important Bird Area by Birdlife International in 2003 but the information at the time was not sufficient for the Commission to request its designation. The Commission is currently analysing data related to recent monitoring of the Salgados area which does indicate that the wetland has ornithological values. On this basis, the Commission intends to seek further clarification from the Portuguese authorities on the coherence of the decision not to designate this site within its Network of Special Protection Areas.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006209/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Crise do euro — risco para o crescimento dos países africanos

Considerando que:

— Foi recentemente apresentado um relatório elaborado pelo Banco Africano de Desenvolvimento (BAD), a Organização para a Cooperação e Desenvolvimento Económico (OCDE), a Comissão Económica para a África (CEA) e o Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento (PNUD), que aponta a crise da zona euro como um dos principais riscos para o crescimento económico;

— De acordo com este documento, «as perspetivas económicas do continente africano dependem de fatores globais e domésticos que são altamente incertos», que afetam fortemente o nível de exportações dos países africanos.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento do referido relatório?

Concorda com a teoria apresentada?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(19 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do relatório African Economic Outlook 2013 (Perspetivas económicas para África em 2013), que é cofinanciado pelo Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento e amplamente divulgado junto das delegações da UE.

Nos últimos anos, a África Subsariana registou um sólido crescimento, apesar de se ter verificado um abrandamento do crescimento das economias desenvolvidas. É de destacar que no futuro próximo as perspetivas são globalmente positivas para África.

É certo que entre os riscos que podem fazer com que estas perspetivas não se concretizem, especialmente no que respeita aos países de rendimento médio, se encontra um crescimento fraco prolongado mas economias desenvolvidas, nomeadamente na zona euro. Mas, existem outros riscos que podem fazer com que as previsões tenham de ser revistas, como é o caso de um abrandamento das grandes economias de mercado emergentes, de oscilações acentuadas dos preços das matérias-primas, de uma evolução climática negativa e do eclodir de conflitos internos.

Posto isto, a análise e as perspetivas económicas propostas constituem uma base sólida para os responsáveis políticos, sendo o presente relatório anual uma das principais fontes de informação e análise sobre a situação da economia africana.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006209/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Euro crisis — growth in African countries at risk

— A report was recently produced by the African Development Bank (ADB), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which identifies the crisis in the euro area as one of the main risks to economic growth.

— According to the report, 'Africa's economic prospects depend on global and domestic factors which are highly uncertain' and which strongly affect the level of exports from African countries.

Is the Commission aware of this report?

Does it agree with the theory it puts forward?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

The Commission is aware of the report-the African Economic Outlook 2013- which is co-financed by the European Development Fund and widely disseminated to all concerned EU Delegations.

Sub-Saharan Africa has maintained a solid growth over the last few years despite the slowdown of growth in developed economies. Prospects remain broadly positive in the near future.

Risks affecting this outlook — especially for middle-income countries — include, nevertheless, prolonged weak growth in developed economies, including in the euro area. Other downside risks include a slowdown in major emerging market economies, shocks on commodity prices as well as adverse climatic developments and internal conflicts.

The analysis made and the economic outlook proposed provide a solid basis for policy-makers. This annual report is one of the important sources for information and analysis on the situation of the African economy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006210/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Vitamina C pode matar bactéria da tuberculose

Considerando o seguinte:

— Dados de 2011 indicam a existência de cerca de 12 milhões de casos de tuberculose no mundo, 630 000 dos quais multirresistentes;

— Um grupo de cientistas, do Albert Einstein College of Medicine, descobriu que a vitamina C pode matar a bactéria da tuberculose em laboratório;

— Nos testes que foram desenvolvidos em laboratório, a bactéria nunca desenvolveu resistência à vitamina C, que foi testada também em estirpes da tuberculose resistentes a medicamentos, com o mesmo resultado;

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta recente descoberta?

Como a avalia?

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

1. A Comissão está ciente das descobertas dos efeitos da vitamina C na bactéria da tuberculose.

2. Devem ser feitos ensaios clínicos aleatórios a fim de avaliar se a vitamina C tem um efeito benéfico sobre o resultado do tratamento da tuberculose em seres humanos, incluindo com que dosagem. Atualmente, não foram registados na Plataforma internacional de registo de ensaios clínicos da Organização Mundial de Saúde ([1])quaisquer ensaios clínicos que testem o efeito da vitamina C no resultado de tratamento da tuberculose.

([1]) http://apps.who.int/trialsearch/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006210/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Potential of vitamin C to kill tuberculosis bacteria

— According to figures for 2011, there were around 12 million cases of tuberculosis worldwide, of which 630 000 were multi-resistant.

— Scientists working at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine have discovered that vitamin C can kill tuberculosis bacteria in laboratory conditions.

— In laboratory tests, the bacteria never developed resistance to vitamin C, which was also tested on drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis with the same result.

Is the Commission aware of this recent discovery?

What view does it take of it?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the findings of the effects of vitamin C on Mycobacterium tuberculosis.

2. In order to assess whether vitamin C has a beneficial effect on the outcome of tuberculosis treatment in humans, including at which doses, randomized clinical trials should be done. Currently, no clinical trials testing the effect of vitamin C on the outcome of treatment of tuberculosis have been registered in the World Health Organisation's International Clinical Trials Registry Platform ([1]).

([1]) http://apps.who.int/trialsearch/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006211/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Bagas goji

Considerando o seguinte:

— As bagas goji são um fruto apresentado como detentor de múltiplas propriedades benéficas para o ser humano, com capacidade de antienvelhecimento e uma forte atividade antioxidante;

— A comercialização destas bagas em Portugal tem vindo a registar um crescimento acentuado, mas o Observatório de Interações Planta-Medicamento recomenda cuidado no seu consumo, estabelecendo os 45 gramas como a dose máxima diária recomendada;

— Segundo o referido Observatório, faltam estudos que comprovem, por exemplo, a redução dos níveis de colesterol, o fortalecimento do sistema imunitário, a proteção do corpo contra o envelhecimento, o aumento da longevidade, a promoção do bem-estar e o combate das doenças cardiovasculares;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Possui algum estudo que demonstre e comprove as propriedades benéficas das bagas goji para o ser humano? Quais?

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

Em 2010, no âmbito dos procedimentos previstos pelo Regulamento (CE) n°. 1924/2006 relativo às alegações nutricionais e de saúde, a AESA concluiu a sua avaliação de uma alegação de saúde relativa às «Lycium barbarum» (nome comum: bagas goji) e respetivas propriedades antioxidantes ([1]) e concluiu que não foi estabelecida qualquer relação de causa e efeito entre o consumo de bagas goji e a proteção das células e moléculas do corpo, como o ADN, as proteínas e os lípidos, contra danos oxidativos. A ligação entre as bagas goji e outros efeitos na saúde não foi avaliada pela AESA, já que não houve pedidos nesse sentido.

O respeito da legislação da UE em matéria de alegações nutricionais e de saúde deve ser garantido pelas autoridades de controlo competentes dos Estados-Membros.

([1]) EFSA Journal 2010; 8(2):1489.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006211/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Goji berries

— The goji berry is a fruit that is said to have many beneficial properties for humans, including anti-ageing and antioxidant properties.

— Although sales of these berries have risen sharply in Portugal, the Observatory of Herb-Drug Interactions recommends that they be consumed with care, setting a maximum recommended daily dose of 45 grams.

— According to the Observatory, no studies exist that prove, for example, that they reduce cholesterol levels, strengthen the immune system, protect the body against ageing, increase longevity, promote well-being or prevent cardiovascular diseases.

Is the Commission aware of any study that demonstrates and proves that goji berries have beneficial properties for human beings? Which studies are these?

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

In 2010, in the context of the procedures foreseen by Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims, EFSA completed its assessment of a health claim on 'lycium barbarum' (common name: goji berry) and antioxidant properties ([1]), and concluded that no cause and effect relationship was established between the consumption of goji berries and the protection of body cells and molecules such as DNA, proteins and lipids from oxidative damage. The link between goji berries and other health effects has not been evaluated by EFSA as there have been no relevant requests.

The respect of EU legislation on nutrition and health claims is to be ensured by the relevant control authorites in the Member Sates.

([1]) EFSA Journal 2010; 8(2):1489.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006212/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Alegada manipulação nos preços do petróleo

Considerando que:

— A Comissão Europeia abriu um inquérito e revistou os escritórios de várias companhias petrolíferas e da agência norte-americana Platts, líder mundial de informações sobre preços do petróleo;

— De acordo com suspeitas, os vários grupos petrolíferos anglo-holandês, britânico e holandês pactuaram para manipular os preços do petróleo;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação?

Como a avalia?

Quais são os países da UE mais afetados com a referida manipulação de preços?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(17 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão pode confirmar que realizou, em maio de 2013, inspeções nas instalações de diversas empresas ativas e prestadoras de serviços nos setores petrolífero, produtos petrolíferos refinados e de biocombustíveis. A Comissão receia que as empresas possam ter acordado comunicar preços distorcidos a uma agência de comunicação de preços de forma a manipular os preços publicados para uma série de produtos petrolíferos e derivados de biocombustíveis, e que possam ter impedido outras da participação no processo de avaliação de preços, com o objetivo de distorcer os preços publicados.

As inspeções tiveram lugar em dois Estados-Membros da UE e num país do Espaço Económico Europeu (EEE), em que o Órgão de Fiscalização da EFTA realizou inspeções em nome da Comissão.

Na fase atual, é ainda demasiado cedo para a Comissão tomar uma posição e retirar conclusões sobre os resultados do inquérito e para verificar se certos Estados-Membros da UE são mais afetados pela alegada infração do que outros. A Comissão procurará concluir o inquérito o mais rapidamente possível.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006212/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Alleged fixing of oil prices

— The Commission has opened an inquiry and searched the offices of several oil companies and of Platts, the US-based leading oil-pricing agency.

— It is suspected that several Anglo-Dutch, British and Dutch fuel groups agreed to fix oil prices.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

What view does it take of it?

Which EU Member States are most affected by this price fixing?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

The Commission can confirm that in May 2013 it carried out inspections at the premises of several companies active in and providing services to the crude oil, refined oil products and biofuels sectors. The Commission has concerns that the companies may have colluded in reporting distorted prices to a Price Reporting Agency to manipulate the published prices for a number of oil and biofuel products, and that the companies may have prevented others from participating in the price assessment process, with a view to distorting published prices.

The inspections took place in two EU Member States and in one European Economic Area (EEA) Member State where the EFTA Surveillance Authority carried out inspections on behalf of the Commission.

At this stage, it is too early for the Commission to take a view and draw conclusions about the findings of the investigation and to ascertain whether certain EU Member States are more affected by the alleged infringement than others. The Commission will seek to finalise the investigation as quickly as possible.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006213/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Paraísos fiscais

Considerando que:

— Segundo as contas da organização não-governamental Oxfam, há 14 biliões de euros escondidos, que representariam uma receita fiscal de 120 mil milhões de euros, que daria para «acabar duas vezes com a pobreza extrema no mundo»;

— Ainda de acordo com a referida organização, a UE é responsável por dois terços desta riqueza depositada em paraísos fiscais como o Luxemburgo, Andorra e Malta.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz dos números apresentados?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(23 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão não tem nenhuma informação suscetível de confirmar estes dados, pelo que não está em condições de os comentar.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006213/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Tax havens

— According to the non-governmental organisation Oxfam, EUR 14 trillion are hidden in tax havens, an amount that would generate tax revenue of around EUR 120 billion, which would 'end extreme poverty across the world twice over'.

— The organisation also claims that the EU is responsible for two thirds of the wealth deposited in tax havens such as Luxembourg, Andorra and Malta.

What is the Commission's view of these figures?

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

The Commission has no information that could confirm these figures and is therefore not in a position to comment on them.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006214/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Vírus da Sida — novo teste para detetar anticorpos

Considerando que:

— Um grupo de virólogos norte-americanos criou um novo teste para identificar os anticorpos contra o vírus da imunodeficiência humana (VIH), responsável pela SIDA;

— De acordo com os autores do estudo, publicado na revista *Science*, os anticorpos que neutralizam o VIH são capazes de impedir uma infeção pela maioria das estirpes do vírus;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Considera que esta descoberta pode acelerar a criação de uma vacina contra o VIH?

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

A Comissão tem conhecimento do artigo publicado na revista científica «Science» sobre um novo instrumento, ou seja, um perfil de neutralização, desenvolvido por uma equipa de cientistas do NIH com o objetivo de identificar os anticorpos com um perfil de neutralização mais alargado. Esses anticorpos são importantes porque são suscetíveis de evitar a infeção pela maioria das estirpes de VIH.

A Comissão considera que esta descoberta, tal como outros desenvolvimentos científicos publicados em revistas científicas de grande impacto objeto de revisão pelos pares, tem potencial para contribuir para os progressos da investigação de uma vacina eficaz contra o HIV.

A Comissão tem vindo a apoiar substancialmente a investigação no domínio do HIV através dos programas-quadro de investigação. O atual Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Investigação, Desenvolvimento Tecnológico e Demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013) foi dotado de mais de 165 milhões de EUR, dos quais 37 % são consagrados à investigação no domínio das vacinas e dos microbicidas. A Comissão continuará a acompanhar de perto o desenvolvimento de novos instrumentos à medida que vão surgindo. No entanto, deve observar-se que são necessárias várias fases da investigação para passar do instrumento desenvolvido para a criação de uma vacina contra o HIV, sendo impossível prever, nesta fase, quando teremos êxito na criação de uma vacina.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006214/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Aids virus — new test to detect antibodies

— Virologists in the United States have created a new test to identify antibodies that attack the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes Aids.

— According to the authors of the study, which was published in the journal *Science*, the antibodies that neutralise HIV can prevent infection by most strains of the virus.

Does the Commission believe that this discovery could bring forward the creation of an HIV vaccine?

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

The Commission is aware of the paper published in the scientific journal 'Science' on the new tool, namely the neutralization fingerprinting developed by a team of NIH scientists to identify broadly neutralizing antibodies. These antibodies are important because they are capable of preventing infection by the majority of HIV strains.

The Commission considers that this finding, like other scientific developments published in high impact peer-reviewed scientific journals, has the potential to help progress HIV vaccine research towards the development of an effective vaccine.

The Commission is significantly supporting HIV research through the Research Framework Programme. In the current Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), over EUR 165 million have been committed, of which 37% devoted to vaccines and microbicides research. The Commission will continue to follow closely the development of new tools as they emerge. However, it deserves to be mentioned that several research steps are required to move from the tool developed to the creation of a HIV vaccine, and success is impossible to predict at this stage.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006215/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Tráfico de crianças na Europa

— Estima-se que na União Europeia existam entre 1,6 milhão e 3,8 milhões de imigrantes ilegais, mas não há dados confiáveis sobre a percentagem de crianças.

— Muitas das crianças imigrantes ilegais entram na UE com as suas famílias, mas uma grande percentagem de crianças, principalmente oriundas da Turquia, Hungria e Roménia, são vítimas de tráfico.

— A crise financeira intensificou a situação, especialmente em países de fronteira da UE, como é o caso da Grécia.

— De acordo com a representante especial e coordenadora do combate ao tráfico de seres humanos na Organização para a Segurança e a Cooperação na Europa (OSCE), «um sistema comum e efetivo de proteção à infância não existe no âmbito da UE».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que dados dispõe relativamente a esta matéria?

Prevê a criação de algum sistema de proteção à infância no seio da UE?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(5 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão regista com preocupação as tendências em matéria de tráfico de crianças na UE. Segundo o primeiro relatório da UE com dados estatísticos sobre o tráfico de seres humanos, no período 2008-2010 cerca de 15 % (12 % de raparigas e 3 % de rapazes) das vítimas de tráfico identificadas ou presumidas na UE eram crianças ([1]).

O quadro da UE relativo à luta contra o tráfico de seres humanos considera que as crianças constituem o grupo mais vulnerável. A Diretiva 2011/36/UE ([2]) adota uma abordagem sensível à criança e estabelece como consideração primordial o interesse superior da criança. Prevê uma série de disposições reforçadas relativas à assistência, ao apoio e à proteção das crianças vítimas de tráfico, em especial das crianças não acompanhadas.

A Estratégia da União Europeia para a erradicação do tráfico de seres humanos ([3]) apela ao reforço das investigações policiais e dos processos judiciais contra os traficantes, bem como ao estabelecimento de medidas especiais de prevenção, assistência, apoio e proteção das crianças vítimas de tráfico, incluindo a formação dos funcionários pertinentes. Em especial, a Estratégia da UE prevê a elaboração de orientações sobre os sistemas de proteção das crianças e apela aos Estados-Membros para que reforcem os sistemas de proteção de crianças face às situações de tráfico. Sempre que o interesse superior da criança preconize o seu regresso ao país de origem, quer se trate de um Estado-Membro ou de um país terceiro, os Estados-Membros devem zelar por um regresso seguro e duradouro e por impedir que a criança volte a ser vítima de tráfico. Outra ação prevista na Estratégia da UE é a elaboração de um modelo de boas práticas sobre o papel dos tutores e/ou dos representantes das crianças vítimas de tráfico, em colaboração com a Agência dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia. Por último, a Comissão financia numerosos projetos destinados às crianças em risco nos países de origem, de destino ou de trânsito.

([1]) O Relatório Eurostat-DG HOME inclui dados para o período 2008-2010 relativos aos 27 Estados-Membros, bem como à Croácia e aos seguintes países candidatos à adesão e países EFTA/EEE: Islândia, Montenegro, Noruega, Sérvia, Suíça e Turquia. Disponível no seguinte endereço: http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity.action?path=EU+Policy%2FReport_DGHome_Eurostat

([2]) Diretiva 2011/36/UE relativa à prevenção e luta contra o tráfico de seres humanos e à proteção das vítimas, e que substitui a Decisão-Quadro 2002/629/JAI do Conselho.

([3]) Estratégia da União Europeia para a erradicação do tráfico de seres humanos 2012-2016 COM(2012) 286 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006215/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Child trafficking in Europe

— According to estimates, there are between 1.6 and 3.8 million illegal immigrants in the EU, although there are no reliable figures for the percentage of children.

— Although many illegal child immigrants enter the EU with their families, a large percentage of children, mainly originating from Turkey, Hungary and Romania, are victims of trafficking.

— The financial crisis has made matters worse, particularly in EU border countries such as Greece.

— According to the Special Representative and Coordinator for combating trafficking in human beings at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), there is no common and effective system for protecting children in the EU.

What information does the Commission have on this issue?

Are there any plans to create a system for protecting children in the EU?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2013)

The Commission notes with concern trends related to child trafficking in the EU. According to the 1st EU Statistical Data Report in 2008-2010 close to 15% (12% girls and 3% boys) of identified or presumed victims of trafficking in the EU are children ([1]).

The EU framework for addressing trafficking in human beings considers children as the most vulnerable group. The directive 2011/36/EU ([2]) adopts a child sensitive approach and sets as primary consideration the best interests of the child. It sets forth a series of robust provisions for the assistance, support and protection of child victims, especially unaccompanied child victims.

The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings ([3]) calls for increased investigations and prosecutions against traffickers, special measures for prevention, assistance, support and protection of child victims, including training of relevant officials. More specifically the EU Strategy provides for the development of guidelines for child protection systems and calls on Member States to strengthen child protection systems for trafficking situations and ensure where return is deemed to be the child's best interest, the safe and sustainable return of children to the country of origin, in and outside the EU, and prevent them from being re-trafficked. One more action of the EU Strategy is the development of a best practice model on the role of guardians and/or representatives of child victims of trafficking, in cooperation with European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. Finally the Commission is funding numerous projects targeting children at risk in countries of origin, destination or transit.

([1]) The Eurostat-DG Home Report includes data for the years 2008-2010from all 27 EU MSs, plus Croatia and the following EU Candidate and EFTA/EEA countries: Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey. It is available at:. http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity.action?path=EU+Policy%2FReport_DGHome_Eurostat.

([2]) Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA.

([3]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 COM(2012)286 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006216/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Situação das mães no mundo

Considerando que:

— O relatório anual da ONG «Save the Children», intitulado «Situação das mães no mundo» e publicado recentemente, comparou a situação de 176 países nas áreas da saúde, mortalidade infantil, educação, fontes de rendimento e estatuto político das mães;

— O relatório destacou as altas taxas de mortalidade e o mau estado de saúde das mulheres na África subsariana como causa para a classificação apresentada;

— Segundo o documento, na RDC, uma mulher em cada 30 corre o risco de morrer devido a complicações relacionadas com a gravidez, incluindo o parto. Na Finlândia, apenas uma em cada 12 200 mulheres correm esse risco.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Como pode a UE contribuir para combater e atenuar as disparidades existentes na saúde das mães dos países desenvolvidos e dos países em desenvolvimento?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A principal forma de melhorar a saúde materna nos países em desenvolvimento é trabalhar a nível nacional e contribuir para os esforços dos governos dos países parceiros para implantar sistemas de saúde eficazes e operacionais capazes de prestar serviços de saúde de boa qualidade, a preços acessíveis, incluindo cuidados maternos e serviços no domínio da saúde sexual e reprodutiva. A UE apoia os sistemas de saúde global e promove a cobertura universal para um pacote básico de cuidados, a melhoria dos recursos humanos no setor da saúde e a melhoria do acesso aos medicamentos e outros produtos. A Comissão considera que esta é a forma melhor e mais sustentável de melhorar o acesso aos serviços básicos de saúde essenciais, cujas vertentes fundamentais são os cuidados de saúde materno-infantis e os serviços de planeamento familiar.

Uma forte apropriação pelos países parceiros e o respeito dos direitos humanos no domínio da saúde sexual e reprodutiva são essenciais para fazer avançar a saúde materna e sexual. Por conseguinte, a UE, aborda de forma sistemática questões no domínio da saúde sexual e reprodutiva nos nossos diálogos políticos e estratégicos.

Atualmente, a UE apoia programas no domínio da saúde sexual e reprodutiva, através de uma série de instrumentos, incluindo programas temáticos e a iniciativa ODM ao abrigo da qual as nossas delegações realizam vários projetos de saúde materna e infantil. Globalmente, entre 2008 e 2011, os programas temáticos e nacionais permitiram disponibilizar 328 milhões de EUR para os serviços no domínio da saúde sexual e reprodutiva. Além disso, a UE contribuiu com mais de 1,1 mil milhões de EUR para o Fundo Mundial de Luta contra o VIH/SIDA, a Tuberculose e a Malária, desde a sua criação há dez anos. A maioria das subvenções do Fundo Mundial incluem, pelo menos, um elemento e indicadores específicos relacionados com o domínio da saúde sexual e reprodutiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006216/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: State of the world's mothers

— The non-governmental organisation Save the Children recently published its annual report 'State of the World's Mothers', which compared 176 countries by examining the health, education, sources of income and political status of mothers as well as infant mortality.

— The report indicated that the rankings obtained by the countries of sub-Saharan Africa were due to the high mortality rates and poor health of women in those countries.

— The report states that one in 30 women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is at risk of dying from maternal causes, including childbirth. In Finland, only one woman in 12 200 is at risk.

How can the EU help to curb and reduce the disparities between the health of mothers in developed countries and those in developing countries?

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

The main way to improve maternal health in developing countries is to work at the national level and contribute to partner governments' efforts to build effective and functioning health systems able to provide affordable good quality health services of good quality, including maternal care and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. The EU supports comprehensive health systems and promotes universal coverage for a basic package of care, improved human resources for health and better access to medicines and supplies. The Commission believes this is the best and most sustainable way of improving access to essential basic health services of which maternal, child health and family planning services are core components.

Strong ownership by the partner countries and respect for human rights related to SRH are essential in advancing maternal and sexual health. The EU therefore consistently raises SRH issues in our political and policy dialogues.

The EU is currently supporting programmes on SRH through a number of instruments including thematic programmes and the MDG initiative from which several maternal and child health projects are being implemented by our Delegations. Overall, between 2008 and 2011, over EUR 328 million was disbursed for SRH from the thematic and country programmes. In addition, the EU has contributed more than EUR 1.1 billion to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria since it was formed 10 years ago. The majority of Global Fund HIV grants include at least one element and specific indicators related to SRH.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006217/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Novo plástico biodegradável

Considerando que:

— Várias unidades agrícolas, principalmente hortícolas, utilizam a chamada plasticultura, ou seja, plásticos convencionais, de polietileno, para proteger as sementeiras de culturas como o melão, a meloa, os pimentos ou os morangos, para aumentar a produtividade e antecipar a data da colheita, conseguindo exportar mais cedo;

— No âmbito do projeto comunitário Agrobiofilm, a investigação que juntou empresas e universidades de Portugal e de outros países criou um plástico biodegradável, para sementeiras, com uma produtividade semelhante ao convencional, mas que poderá contribuir para a redução do consumo de água e de pesticidas;

— Uma das cientistas que participou no projeto explicou que estes plásticos amigos do ambiente são «um produto que se adapta às culturas, com um desempenho em termos de produtividade idêntico ao do plástico convencional e uma qualidade, por vezes, superior», e que «há fortes indícios de que permitirá diminuir o consumo de água, de pesticidas e de fungicidas».

Pergunto à Comissão:

De que forma irá a Comissão incentivar a utilização deste novo plástico biodegradável?

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

A Comissão acolhe com satisfação soluções inovadoras que contribuam para reduzir o impacto ambiental na agricultura e minimizar os resíduos industriais. A inovação destinada a introduzir novos produtos no mercado, tais como o plástico biodegradável, e a melhorar a utilização sustentável dos recursos naturais constitui o tema principal da Estratégia Bioeconómica para a Europa ([1]).

Por outro lado, no contexto da nova política de desenvolvimento rural, a Comissão propôs medidas específicas para atividades-piloto e de demonstração que possam ser financiadas no âmbito do Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural (Feader) e executadas pelos Estados-Membros com base nos seus programas de desenvolvimento rural. Neste contexto, os testes sobre a de reduzir o consumo de água com a utilização de plástico biodegradável podem ser apoiados. Este projeto seria especialmente adequado à abordagem da Parceria Europeia da Inovação para a Agricultura (EIP-A) ([2]), no âmbito da qual vários intervenientes (por exemplo, agricultores, cientistas, retalhistas) se reúnem e formam um «grupo operacional» que realiza um determinado projeto.

Contudo, a Comissão não considera atualmente a possibilidade de criar incentivos à utilização de plástico biodegradável na agricultura. A Comissão lançou uma vasta consulta ([3]) mediante um Livro Verde sobre uma estratégia europeia para os resíduos de plástico no ambiente ([4]). O Livro Verde aborda a questão da utilização do plástico biodegradável. Quaisquer futuras medidas que a Comissão venha a tomar em relação às políticas em matéria de resíduos de plástico dependerão da avaliação da consulta do Livro Verde.

([1]) Inovação para um Crescimento Sustentável: Bioeconomia para a Europa, COM(2012) 60 final, 13.2.2012.
([2]) Parceira Europeia de Inovação «produtividade e sustentabilidade agrícolas»: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eip/
([3]) Consulta pública sobre o Livro Verde sobre os resíduos de plástico: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/plastic_waste_en.htm
([4]) Livro verde sobre uma estratégia europeia para os resíduos de plástico no ambiente, COM(2013) 123 final, 7.3.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006217/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: New biodegradable plastic

— Various agricultural holdings, particularly those devoted to vegetable production, make use of 'plasticulture', which is the use of conventional polyethylene plastics to protect sown crops such as melons, cantaloupes, peppers and strawberries to increase productivity and bring forward the harvest date, thereby allowing produce to be exported earlier.

— As part of the EU's Agrobiofilm project, research undertaken by companies and universities in Portugal and other countries has led to the creation of a biodegradable type of plastic for sowing crops, which guarantees similar productivity levels to conventional plastic and which may help to reduce water and pesticide consumption.

— One of the scientists who worked on the project explained that these environmentally friendly plastics were a product that was suited to crops and guaranteed a productivity level identical to that of conventional plastic and a quality that was sometimes higher. According to the scientist, there were strong indications that it would allow water, pesticide and fungicide consumption to be reduced.

How will the Commission encourage the use of this new biodegradable plastic?

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

The Commission welcomes innovative solutions that contribute to the reduction of the environmental impact of agriculture, and to the minimisation of industrial waste. Innovation aimed at bringing new products to the market, such as bioplastics, and at improving the sustainable use of natural resources lies at the heart of the Bioeconomy Strategy for Europe ([1]).

In addition, under the new rural development policy, the Commission has proposed specific measures for pilot and demonstration activities that could be funded under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and implemented via Member States on the basis of their Rural Development Programmes. In this context, testing whether using biodegradable plastic saves water, pesticides and fungicides could be supported. Such a project would be particularly well-suited to the approach of the European Innovation Partnership on Agriculture (EIP-A) ([2]), in which various actors (for instance, farmers, scientists, retail specialists) come together and form an 'operational group' that carries out a given project.

However, the Commission does not consider at present creating any incentives for the use of biodegradable plastic in agriculture. The Commission has launched a broad consultation ([3]) through a Green Paper on plastic waste in the environment ([4]). This paper also pays attention to the use of biodegradable plastic. Any future steps the Commission may take in relation to plastic waste policies will depend on the evaluation of the Green Paper consultation.

([1]) Innovating for Growth: A Bioeconomy Strategy for Europe, COM(2012) 60, 13.2.2012.
([2]) European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability': http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eip/
([3]) Public consultation on the Green Paper on Plastic Waste: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/plastic_waste_en.htm
([4]) Green Paper on a European Strategy on Plastic Waste in the Environment, COM(2013) 123, 7.3.2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006219/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Doenças mentais e neurológicas

Considerando que:

— Segundo dados apresentados pela OMS, as doenças mentais e neurológicas afetam cerca de 700 milhões de pessoas no mundo e já representam um terço do total de casos de doenças não transmissíveis;

— Também de acordo com a OMS, grande parte das 700 milhões de pessoas afetadas pelas doenças mentais e neurológicas não está a ser acompanhada a nível médico;

— Segundo as estimativas, cerca de 350 milhões de pessoas sofrerão de depressão e 90 milhões terão uma desordem por abuso ou dependência de substâncias e, no foro neurológico, calcula-se que 50 milhões de pessoas terão epilepsia e mais de 35 milhões virão a sofrer de Alzheimer ou outras demências;

— Na União Europeia, estima-se que a falta de produtividade decorrente das doenças mentais provoque uma quebra do Produto Interno Bruto (PIB) de entre 3 % a 4 %.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz dos números referenciados pela OMS?

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

Em 2010, a Comissão Europeia publicou os resultados de um inquérito Eurobarómetro ([1]) sobre saúde mental. Os resultados revelaram que cerca de um em cada sete cidadãos da UE (15 %) procurarou ajuda para um problema psicológico ou emocional e 7 % admitiram ter tomado antidepressivos nos 12 meses anteriores ao inquérito. Os trabalhadores que procuraram ajuda e que tomaram antidepressivos tendem a estar ausentes do trabalho mais dois a três dias de que a média dos trabalhadores.

A próxima vaga de Inquéritos Europeus de Saúde por Entrevista, a realizar em todos os Estados-Membros no período de 2013-2015, incluirá perguntas sobre a saúde mental e sobre as doenças não transmissíveis. O inquérito será realizado de cinco em cinco anos, a fim de permitir a análise das tendências nos Estados-Membros.

Em resposta à elevada carga de doenças mentais e neurológicas ou neurodegenerativas, a Comissão lançou atividades tais como a iniciativa europeia em matéria de doença de Alzheimer e outras formas de demência ([2]) e de uma ação comum entre a Comissão e 25 Estados-Membros, lançada em fevereiro deste ano, para abordar a saúde mental, com o apoio do programa de saúde da UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/docs/ebs_345_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2009) 380 final de 22.7.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006219/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Mental and neurological illnesses

— According to figures from the World Health Organisation (WHO), mental and neurological illnesses affect around 700 million people worldwide and account for a third of all non-communicable diseases.

— The WHO also states that many of the 700 million people affected by mental and neurological illnesses are not receiving medical treatment.

— According to estimates, around 350 million people will suffer from depression and 90 million will have a disorder caused by substance abuse or dependency; where neurological illnesses are concerned, an estimated 50 million people will have epilepsy and a further 35 million will suffer from Alzheimer's disease or other dementias.

— In the EU, it is estimated that the productivity lost through mental illness corresponds to a drop in GDP of between 3% and 4%.

What is the Commission's view of the WHO's figures?

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

In 2010 the European Commission published the results of a Eurobarometer survey ([1]) on Mental Health. The results showed that about one in seven EU citizens (15%) have sought help for a psychological or emotional problem and 7% have admitted to taking antidepressants in the 12 months preceding the survey. Employees who have sought help and who have taken antidepressants tend to take two to three more days absent from work than the average employee.

The next wave of European Health Interview Surveys, to be conducted in all Member States in 2013-2015, will include questions on Mental Health and on Non-Communicable Diseases. The survey will be conducted every 5 years which will allow the analysis of trends in the Member States.

In response to the high burden of mental and neurological or neurodegenerative disorders, the Commission has launched activities such as the European initiative on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias ([2]) and a Joint Action between the Commission and 25 Member States, launched in February this year, to address Mental Health with the support of the EU Health Programme.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/docs/ebs_345_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2009) 380 final of 22.7.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006220/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Coreia do Norte — mísseis de curto alcance

Considerando que:

— O regime norte-coreano voltou a lançar, pelo terceiro dia consecutivo, novos mísseis de curto alcance no mar do Japão, ignorando assim as sanções impostas pelo Conselho de Segurança da ONU aquando do lançamento de mísseis balísticos e de testes nucleares realizados por Pyongyang;

— O secretário-geral da ONU, Ban Ki-moon, pronunciou-se sobre o sucedido e alertou para o que considera ser uma «perigosa escalada».

Pergunto à Comissão:

De que forma tem acompanhado a referida situação?

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

A UE acompanha a situação através das suas fontes regulares, incluindo as delegações da UE na região. Por enquanto, o lançamento de projéteis não conduziu a qualquer nova escalada. A UE continua a acompanhar atentamente a situação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006220/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: North Korea — short-range missiles

— For the third consecutive day, the North Korean regime has launched new short-range missiles into the Sea of Japan, ignoring United Nations Security Council sanctions intended to prevent Pyongyang from launching ballistic missiles and carrying out nuclear tests.

— The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, has commented on what happened, calling it a 'dangerous escalation'.

How has the Commission been monitoring this situation?

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

The EU monitors the situation via its regular sources, including EU Delegations in the region. For the time being the launching of the projectiles has not led to any further escalation. The EU continues to watch the situation carefully.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006221/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Cientistas criam células estaminais

Considerando que:

— Uma equipa de investigadores da Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Oregon, nos Estados Unidos, conseguiu criar células estaminais a partir de pele humana;

— Esta experiência tem a vantagem de não utilizar embriões fertilizados, o que levantaria questões éticas, e é um passo importante para tratamento de doenças como a de Parkinson ou a esclerose múltipla;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta importante descoberta?

2. Que avaliação faz dela?

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

A Comissão está ao corrente das técnicas de produção de células estaminais a partir de pele humana. Aliás, o Prémio Nobel de Fisiologia ou Medicina de 2012 foi atribuído precisamente a John B. Gurdon e Shinya Yamanaka conjuntamente pela descoberta de que as células maduras podem ser reprogramadas para se tornarem pluripotentes.

Sublinhando a importância desta técnica, o comunicado de imprensa sobre a atribuição deste Prémio Nobel diz o seguinte: «Por exemplo, podem ser obtidas células de pele de doentes com diversas doenças, que depois são reprogramadas e examinadas em laboratório, a fim de determinar de que forma essas células diferem de células de pessoas saudáveis. Estas células constituem valiosos instrumentos para compreender os mecanismos da doença, proporcionando assim novas oportunidades para desenvolver terapêuticas médicas» ([1]). A Comissão subscreve esta declaração.

([1]) www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/2012/press.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006221/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Stem cells created by scientists

— A research team at Oregon Health and Science University, in the United States, has successfully created stem cells from human skin.

— This method has the advantage of avoiding the ethically questionable use of fertilised embryos and is an important breakthrough with implications for the treatment of diseases such as Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis.

1. Is the Commission aware of this important discovery?

2. What is its assessment of it?

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

The Commission is aware of techniques for creating stem cells from human skin. Indeed, the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2012 was awarded jointly to John B. Gurdon and Shinya Yamanaka for the discovery that mature cells can be reprogrammed to become pluripotent.

Illustrating the importance of the technique, the Nobel Prize press release states: 'For instance, skin cells can be obtained from patients with various diseases, reprogrammed, and examined in the laboratory to determine how they differ from cells of healthy individuals. Such cells constitute invaluable tools for understanding disease mechanisms and so provide new opportunities to develop medical therapies' ([1]). The Commission would concur with this statement.

([1]) www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/2012/press.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006222/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Células cancerígenas — novas descobertas

Considerando que:

— Um grupo de investigadores internacionais descobriu que um complexo enzimático designado «piruvato desidrogenase» (PDH) serve de travão à proliferação de células cancerígenas;

— De acordo com o estudo publicado na revista *Nature*, o PDH intervém no processo de envelhecimento celular, atuando como «mecanismo de defesa» induzido por um gene em que a célula «deixa de dividir-se e se mantém num estado pré-maligno»;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta importante descoberta?

2. Que avaliação faz dela?

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

A Comissão tem conhecimento da publicação referida pelo Senhor Deputado, realizada pelo grupo internacional de investigação chefiado por Daniel Peeper ([1]), do Instituto de Oncologia dos Países Baixos (NKI), descrevendo o papel fundamental do piruvato desidrogenase (PDH) em matéria da regulação da senescência celular induzidos pelo oncogene BRAF ([2]).

Os resultados apresentados foram obtidos através da utilização de culturas de células e de ratinhos como modelo. Estes resultados servem para alargar os conhecimentos sobre uma das vias envolvidas na supressão de tumores. São necessários mais estudos para avaliar a importância desta via para os seres humanos e o seu potencial como terapia na luta conta o melanoma e outras formas de cancro.

([1]) O Professor Daniel Peeper é corresponsável pelo projeto «CombatCancer» do Conselho Europeu de Investigação (CEI), que recebeu em maio do presente ano um prémio de 14,5 milhões de EUR. Este novo projeto permitirá desvendar as complexas características genómicas e bioquímicas do melanoma e de outros tipos de cancro, a fim de identificar as melhores combinações de medicamentos para uma terapia caso a caso. http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?Caller=EN_NEWS&Action=D&RCN=35767.

([2]) Kaplon J, Zheng L, Meissl K, Chaneton B, Selivanov VA, Mackay G, van der Burg SH, Verdegaal EM, Cascante M, Shlomi T, Gottlieb E, Peeper DS. A key role for mitochondrial gatekeeper pyruvate dehydrogenase in oncogene-induced senescence. Nature. 2013 Jun 6;498(7452):109-12. doi: 10.1038/nature12154.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006222/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: New discoveries about cancer cells

— An international group of researchers has discovered that an enzyme complex known as 'pyruvate dehydrogenase' (PDH) acts as a brake on the proliferation of cancer cells.

— According to the study published in the journal *Nature*, PDH interferes in the cellular ageing process, acting as a 'defence mechanism' induced by a gene, so that the cell stops dividing and remains in a pre-malignant state.

1. Is the Commission aware of this important discovery?

2. What is its assessment of it?

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

The Commission is aware of the publication mentioned by the Honourable Member, conducted by the international group of researchers led by Daniel Peeper ([1]) from the Netherlands Cancer Institute (NKI), describing the major role of pyruvate dehydrogenase (PDH) in the regulation of cellular senescence induced by the oncogene BRAF ([2]).

The results presented were obtained using cell cultures and mice as a model. They broaden the knowledge on one of the pathways involved in tumour suppression. Further research is required to assess the importance of this pathway in humans and its potential as a therapeutic target in melanoma and other cancers.

([1]) Professor Daniel Peeper, is a co-leader of the European Research Council (ERC) Synergy project 'CombatCancer' awarded EUR 14.5 million in May this year. This new project will unravel the complex genomic and biochemical characteristics of melanoma and other cancers in order to identify optimal drug combinations for use in personalised cancer therapy. http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=35767

([2]) Kaplon J, Zheng L, Meissl K, Chaneton B, Selivanov VA, Mackay G, van der Burg SH, Verdegaal EM, Cascante M, Shlomi T, Gottlieb E, Peeper DS. A key role for mitochondrial gatekeeper pyruvate dehydrogenase in oncogene-induced senescence. Nature. 2013 Jun 6;498(7452):109-12. doi: 10.1038/nature12154

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006223/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Causas de morte ao volante

Uma investigação conduzida pelo Cohen Children Medical Center, nos EUA, revelou que já há mais mortes causadas pela falta de atenção à estrada enquanto se escreve uma mensagem do que a conduzir com excesso de álcool.

O referido centro hospitalar realça ainda que, por ano, só nos Estados Unidos cerca de 3 000 pessoas perdem a vida enquanto enviam mensagens escritas e cerca de 2 700 morrem em acidentes causados pelo excesso de álcool.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

A Comissão possui algum estudo semelhante com números que ilustrem a realidade europeia?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(16 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão não dispõe de estudos com esses números.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006223/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Causes of driving fatalities

A study carried out by the Cohen Children's Medical Centre in the United States found that more deaths are caused by attention loss while texting at the wheel than by drink driving.

The hospital centre also pointed out that in the US alone, some 3 000 people die every year as a result of texting while driving, whereas only 2 700 die in accidents caused by excessive alcohol consumption.

Does the Commission have any similar study with figures illustrating the situation in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

The Commission has no studies with such figures.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006224/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Carne processada perigosa para consumo humano

Em 2009, um estudo publicado pelo Fundo Mundial para a Pesquisa do Cancro (WCRF) sobre as ligações entre a dieta alimentar e alguns tipos de cancro alertou para o facto de as carnes processadas serem habitualmente preparadas com nitrito de sódio, um ingrediente considerado carcinogénico. Uma investigação recente que envolveu mais de um milhão de pessoas em 10 países europeus mostrou uma relação entre as dietas ricas em carnes processadas e as doenças cardiovasculares, o cancro e as mortes precoces. O estudo revelou que um alto consumo daquele tipo de carne fez aumentar em 72 por cento o risco de morrer de doença coronária e em 11 % o risco de morrer de cancro. A responsável pela investigação calculou que «se poderiam evitar cerca de três por cento de mortes prematuras anualmente se as pessoas consumissem menos de 20 gramas por dia de carne processada».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento do referido estudo?

Que avaliação faz do mesmo?

Que medidas pondera implementar de forma a proibir a utilização do nitrito de sódio no processamento de carnes dentro do espaço comunitário?

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

A Comissão tem conhecimento da investigação realizada pelo Fundo Mundial para a Pesquisa do Cancro e pela Investigação Prospetiva sobre Cancro e Alimentação referida pelo Senhor Deputado.

Os nitritos são conservantes necessários nos produtos à base de carne a fim de controlar o possível crescimento de bactérias nocivas, em especial de «*clostridium botulinum*». A atual autorização de nitritos enquanto aditivos alimentares, estabelecida no anexo II do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1333/2008 relativo aos aditivos alimentares ([1]) ([2]), tem em consideração os possíveis efeitos tóxicos dos nitritos com base no parecer do Comité Científico da Alimentação Humana, bem como a necessidade de proteger o consumidor contra o botulismo.

O Regulamento (UE) n.° 257/2010 da Comissão que estabelece um programa de reavaliação de aditivos alimentares aprovados ([3]) estabelece que a AESA deve proceder à reavaliação dos nitritos até ao final de 2015. A Comissão está simultaneamente a proceder à recolha de informações sobre a utilização prática dos nitritos pela indústria. Caso seja necessário, a Comissão tomará as medidas adequadas para uma maior proteção dos consumidores.

Está em curso o projeto do 7.° PQ ([4]) sobre substâncias fitoquímicas para reduzir os nitritos nos produtos à base de carne («*Phytochemicals to reduce nitrite in meat products*» — Phytome) (2,4 milhões de EUR de contribuição da UE) que tem como objetivo o desenvolvimento de novas tecnologias de processamento de carnes que resultem em produtos inovadores com níveis de nitritos nulos ou fortemente reduzidos.

Além disso, a investigação em colaboração no domínio do cancro, que é uma das principais causas de doença na União Europeia, tem sido e continua a ser uma grande prioridade no âmbito dos Programas-Quadro da UE.

([1]) JO L 354 de 31.12.2008, p. 16.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fs/sc/scf/reports/scf_reports_38.pdf
([3]) JO L 80 de 26.3.2010, p. 19.
([4]) Sétimo Programa-Quadro de atividades em matéria de investigação, desenvolvimento tecnológico e demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006224/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Processed meat dangerous to human health

In 2009 the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) published a study examining the link between diet and certain types of cancer, in which it warned that processed meat is usually prepared with sodium nitrite, which is considered to be carcinogenic. Recent research, involving over 1 000 people in 10 European countries, found a link between diets rich in processed meats and cardiovascular diseases, cancer and premature death. The study showed that heavy consumption of these types of meat increases the risk of death from heart disease by 72% and that of death from cancer by 11%. The study leader estimated that '3% of premature deaths each year could be prevented if people ate less than 20 grams of processed meat per day'.

Is the Commission aware of this research?

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

The Commission is aware of the research by the World Cancer Research Fund and by the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition, to which the Honourable Member refers.

Nitrites are needed as preservatives in meat products to control the possible growth of harmful bacteria, in particular 'Clostridium botulinum'. The current authorisation of nitrites as food additives, in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 on food additives, ([1]) takes into account the possible toxic effects of nitrites based on the opinion of the Scientific Committee for Food, ([2]) and the need to protect the consumer against botulism.

Commission Regulation (EU) No 257/2010 setting up a programme for the re-evaluation of approved food additives ([3]) requires EFSA to re-evaluate nitrites by the end of 2015. At the same time, the Commission is collecting information on the practical use of nitrites by industry. The Commission will, if needed, take appropriate measures to further protect the consumer.

The FP7 ([4]) project 'Phytochemicals to reduce nitrite in meat products' (PHYTOME) (EUR 2,4 million EU contribution) is ongoing and aims at developing new meat processing technologies, resulting in innovative products that have no or strongly reduced nitrite levels.

In addition, collaborative research on cancer, which is one of the major causes of ill health in the European Union, has been and remains a high priority in the EU framework programmes.

([1]) OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 16.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fs/sc/scf/reports/scf_reports_38.pdf
([3]) OJ L 80, 26.3.2010, p. 19.
([4]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006225/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Assimetria de rendimentos

Considerando que:

— Um relatório da Organização para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento Económico (OCDE) evidenciou que a crise económica global «reduziu os rendimentos do trabalho e do capital na maior parte dos países», agravando de forma substancial a desigualdade de rendimentos nas principais economias;

— A base de dados da OCDE sobre a distribuição de rendimentos revelou ainda que a desigualdade de rendimentos cresceu mais entre 2008 e 2010 do que durante os 12 anos anteriores para o conjunto dos 34 Estados-Membros da organização;

— O secretário-geral daquela entidade, Angel Gurria, considerou que «esta conclusão realça a necessidade de proteger os mais vulneráveis na sociedade, em particular quando os governos prosseguem a tarefa necessária de colocar a despesa pública sob controlo»;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. De que forma avalia o referido relatório?

2. Faz sentido que, nos países intervencionados, sejam exigidas medidas que ainda agravam mais a situação dos mais vulneráveis, como por exemplo os cortes aos pensionistas?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(16 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão acompanha continuamente a evolução da pobreza, da desigualdade e da segurança social na UE. ([1]) As suas conclusões são semelhantes às da OCDE ([2]) — as redes de segurança social desempenharam um papel importante na atenuação do impacto social da crise, sobretudo até 2010, mas não foram capazes de impedir o aumento da pobreza absoluta e da privação material, especialmente após 2010 e nos países com uma elevada taxa de desemprego.

A Comissão sublinhou, nos inquéritos anuais sobre o crescimento de 2012 e 2013, que, num contexto de crescente pobreza associado à crise económica e financeira, os pacotes de consolidação orçamental devem procurar minimizar os efeitos adversos nos grupos de baixos rendimentos. Embora os cortes nas transferências sociais não possam ser evitados, os seus efeitos a nível do tecido social podem ser diminuídos através de um melhor planeamento e de uma melhor definição da população visada.

Deve salientar-se que a crise teve consequências diferentes nos diversos segmentos da população, tendo afetado duramente as crianças e os jovens, assim como os desempregados (de longa duração), e estes efeitos díspares têm que refletir-se na resposta política. Por exemplo, nos países atingidos por um desemprego maciço, como a Espanha e a Irlanda, o indicador de risco ([3]) de pobreza deteriorou-se significativamente mais para os jovens adultos do que, por exemplo, para os mais velhos.

([1]) Sobre as avaliações regulares, sugerimos a consulta do relatório anual do emprego e da evolução social na Europa e do relatório trimestral do emprego e da situação social na UE, acessíveis em: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113

([2]) OCDE (2013), A crise reduz os rendimentos e aumenta as desigualdades e a pobreza. Novos resultados da base de dados da OCDE sobre a distribuição dos rendimentos.

([3]) Código dos dados do Eurostat [ilc_li02].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006225/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Income inequality

— A report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) highlights that the global economic crisis 'has squeezed incomes from work and capital in most countries', significantly widening income inequality in the major economies.

— The OECD income distribution database has also revealed that among the organisation's 34 member countries income inequality grew more between 2008 and 2010 than in the preceding 12 years.

— The OECD Secretary-General Ángel Gurría said, 'These worrying findings underline the need to protect the most vulnerable in society, especially as governments pursue the necessary task of bringing public spending under control.'

1. What is the Commission's view of the OECD report?

2. Is it sensible that the countries that have received bailouts are required to apply measures that make things even more difficult for the most vulnerable, such as the cuts affecting pensioners?

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

The Commission is continuously monitoring changes in poverty, inequality and social security in the EU. ([1]) The observations are similar to the ones reached by OECD ([2]) — social safety nets played an important role in taming the social impact of the crisis, especially until 2010, but were not able to stop absolute poverty, material deprivation from increasing, especially following 2010 and in countries with mass unemployment.

The Commission has stressed in the 2012 and 2013 Annual Growth Surveys that in a context of rising poverty linked to the economic and financial crisis, fiscal consolidation packages should be geared towards minimising adverse effects on low-income groups. If cuts in social transfers cannot be avoided, their distributional impact can be reduced via improved design and targeting.

It must be noted that the crisis has impacted segments of populations differently in particular children and young people as well as the (long-term) unemployed have been hard hit, and these distributional effects need to be reflected in the policy response. For example, in countries hit by mass unemployment such as Spain and Ireland, the at-risk of poverty indicator ([3]) deteriorated significantly more for young adults than for example for the elderly.

([1]) For regular assessments, please see the annual Employment and Social Developments in Europe report and the quarterly EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review, accessible from: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113

([2]) OECD (2013), Crisis squeezes income and puts pressure on inequality and poverty. New Results from the OECD Income Distribution Database.

([3]) Eurostat data code [ilc_li02].

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006226/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Ajuda financeira ao Mali

Considerando o seguinte:

— A União Europeia anunciou que irá contribuir com 520 milhões de euros para o processo de reconstrução do Mali em 2013 e em 2014;

— Posteriormente, e totalizando as ofertas validadas durante a conferência internacional de doadores a favor do Mali, foram prometidos 3,2 mil milhões de euros;

— As eleições, que deverão ser realizadas em junho, são a condição obrigatória para a entrega do montante aprovado;

Pergunto à Comissão:

De que forma irá a UE disponibilizar as referidas verbas?

Existe, ou está previsto, algum plano de controlo e fiscalização na aplicação da ajuda financeira ao Mali?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(18 de julho de 2013)

A conferência internacional organizada em Bruxelas, em 15 de maio, na qual participaram 108 delegações e foram assumidos compromissos significativos, constituiu um sinal inequívoco do apoio internacional ao Mali.

De facto, a comunidade internacional comprometeu-se a disponibilizar 3285 milhões de euros para apoiar o Plano de Relançamento Sustentável do Mali no período 2013-2014, 523 milhões dos quais atribuídos pela Comissão. Este último montante inclui 54 milhões de euros para a ajuda humanitária, um contrato de apoio orçamental no valor de 225 milhões de euros, 17 milhões de euros para assistência eleitoral, bem como um montante significativo para assistência a curto prazo à reabilitação, à recuperação e ao desenvolvimento. Foi igualmente enviada para o país uma missão de observação eleitoral.

O reatamento gradual da cooperação para o desenvolvimento por parte da UE no Mali foi possível graças à adoção, em janeiro de 2013, de um roteiro para a transição que estabelece doze prioridades, entre as quais a reconciliação nacional e a realização de eleições. A execução do contrato de apoio orçamental está subordinada à execução desse roteiro. Neste contexto, o Acordo de Uagadugu constitui um passo importante, permitindo o pagamento de uma primeira parcela de 90 milhões de euros em 19 de junho, antes das eleições previstas para 28 de julho.

É importante coordenar a concretização de todos os compromissos financeiros assumidos. As autoridades do Mali e a comunidade internacional decidiram assegurar um seguimento de alto nível da conferência de Bruxelas através de reuniões dos respetivos representantes, realizadas alternadamente em Bamaco e fora do Mali, com a participação das partes interessadas não governamentais. Os copresidentes da conferência estão determinados a lançar rapidamente este processo de acompanhamento. A União Europeia, por sua vez, decidiu estabelecer e aplicar regras estritas em matéria de auditoria, avaliação e monitorização, a fim de garantir a melhor utilização possível dos fundos e controlar a forma como são geridos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006226/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Financial aid for Mali

— The EU has announced that it will contribute EUR 520 million to reconstruction efforts in Mali in 2013 and 2014.

— Subsequent to this, the offers confirmed during the international donor conference for Mali totalled EUR 3.2 billion.

— The release of the approved sums is conditional on elections being held. These are due to take place in June.

In what way will the EU be making these sums available?

Is there currently, or will there be, any control and supervision plan for how the financial aid for Mali is to be used?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2013)

The international high level conference organised in Brussels on 15 May sent a strong signal of international support to Mali with the participation of 108 delegations and remarkable pledges.

EUR 3,285 billion were pledged by the international community in support of the Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali 2013-2014, including EUR 523 million by the Commission alone. The latter includes EUR 54 million in humanitarian aid, a EUR 225 million budget support contract, EUR 17 million in electoral assistance and a significant provision for short term assistance linking rehabilitation, recovery and development. An election observation mission has been deployed as well.

The gradual resumption of EU development cooperation in Mali was made possible by the adoption of a Transition Road Map in January 2013, which established 12 priorities, among which reconciliation and elections. The implementation of the budget support contract is subject to the implementation of the Road Map. The Agreement of Ouagadougou is an important step in this regard which permitted to disburse on 19 June, in advance of the elections scheduled for the 28 July, a first tranche of EUR 90 million.

Coordinating the disbursement of all pledges will be important. The Malian authorities and the international community have agreed on high-level follow-up to the Brussels conference via meetings alternately in Bamako and outside Mali, and involving their representatives and non-governmental stakeholders. The co-chairs of the conference are determined to launch swiftly this follow-up. As far as the EU is concerned, to guarantee the best use possible of funds, it has set out and apply strong rules (audit, evaluations, monitoring) that allow to control the way funds are managed.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006227/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: OMS: o mundo não está preparado para um eventual surto de gripe

A Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS) alertou recentemente para o facto de que o mundo continua a não estar preparado para lidar com um surto de gripe em larga escala, havendo receios de que o vírus H7N9 na China se possa espalhar.

O diretor-geral adjunto da OMS, Keiji Fukuda, afirmou que, apesar dos esforços empreendidos desde a gripe aviária H1N1 há três anos, é necessário um maior planeamento de contingência.

Os sistemas de reação rápida são cruciais, uma vez que os esforços das autoridades sanitárias estão limitados por falta de conhecimentos acerca das doenças em causa, adiantou o responsável da OMS.

Por seu lado, a diretora-geral da OMS, Margaret Chan, disse que «qualquer novo vírus da gripe que infete humanos pode potencialmente tornar-se uma ameaça de saúde à escala global».

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão de que forma está a UE preparada para uma situação desta natureza?

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

A Comissão está consciente da ameaça para a saúde pública na UE decorrente do vírus da gripe H7N9. A Comissão tem trabalhado em estreita colaboração com o Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças (ECDC) e com os Estados-Membros desde o início do atual surto a fim de coordenar a avaliação e gestão dos riscos e assegurar uma comunicação coerente em toda UE.

A resposta ao nível da UE é igualmente coordenada e facilitada através do sistema de alerta rápido e de resposta, bem como do Comité de Segurança da Saúde, com base na legislação da UE em vigor ([1]) e num mandato atribuído pelo Conselho ([2]) ([3]). O ECDC continua a prestar assistência à Comissão no âmbito da monitorização do estado de preparação a nível nacional na UE, através de relatórios técnicos, ferramentas de avaliação conjunta e seminários regionais.

Além disso, a Comissão tomou medidas no sentido de melhorar a preparação relativamente a todas as ameaças para a saúde transfronteiriças, incluindo ameaças que possam provocar uma pandemia, ao adotar, em 2011, uma proposta de Decisão do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa a ameaças sanitárias transfronteiriças graves ([4]). Após acordo entre os colegisladores, o Parlamento Europeu aprovou o projeto de decisão em julho e o Conselho aprová-lo-á previsivelmente em setembro. O novo ato permitirá uma melhor prevenção e atenuação, pela UE, dos surtos graves e das emergências sanitárias, incluindo a gripe pandémica, através do planeamento coordenado da preparação e da resposta ao nível da UE. A decisão proporciona uma base jurídica sólida para a gestão de crises e a aquisição conjunta de contramedidas médicas, incluindo vacinas contra a gripe pandémica.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/communicable_diseases/early_warning/comm_legislation_en.htm
([2]) Conclusões do Conselho de 22 de fevereiro de 2007 sobre o Comité de Segurança da Saúde: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/92911.pdf
([3]) Conclusões do Conselho de 13 de setembro de 2010: Ensinamentos da pandemia de gripe A/H1N1 — Segurança sanitária na União Europeia, http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12665.en10.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/policy/hsi/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006227/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: WHO: the world is unprepared for a possible flu outbreak

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently warned that the world was still not ready to handle a mass flu outbreak, amid fears that the H7N9 bird flu affecting China could spread.

The WHO Assistant Director-General, Keiji Fukuda, stated that, despite efforts made since the H1N1 bird flu outbreak three years ago, far more contingency planning was required.

Rapid-response systems were crucial, given that health authorities' efforts were already hampered by a lack of knowledge about such diseases, he said.

According to WHO Director-General, Margaret Chan, 'any new influenza virus that infects humans has the potential to become a global health threat'.

Can the Commission explain to what extent the EU is prepared for an outbreak of this type?

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

The Commission is aware of the challenge the H7N9 flu virus poses to public health in the EU. From the onset of the current outbreak, the Commission has closely collaborated with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the Member States to coordinate risk assessement and risk management including coherent communication across the EU.

Response at EU level is further coordinated and facilitated through the Early Warning and Response System and the Health Security Committee based on current EU legislation ([1]) and a mandate entrusted by the Council ([2]),([3]). The Commission continues to be assisted by the ECDC in monitoring the state of national preparedness in the EU on the basis of technical reports, joint assessment tools and regional workshops.

In addition, the Commission has taken forward enhanced preparedness for all serious cross border health threats, including threats that might cause a pandemic, by adopting a proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and the Council on serious cross-border threats to health in 2011 ([4]). Following agreement among the co-legislators, the European Parliament endorsed the draft Decision in July and the Council is foreseen to endorse it in September. The new legislation will enable the EU to better prevent and mitigate serious outbreaks and health emergencies including pandemic flu through coordinated preparedness and response planning at EU level. The decision provides a strong legal basis for crisis management and for the joint procurement of medical countermeasures including pandemic influenza vaccines.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/communicable_diseases/early_warning/comm_legislation_en.htm
([2]) Council Conclusions of 22 February 2007 on health security committee: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/92911.pdf
([3]) Council conclusions of 13 September 2010 on lessons learned from A/H1N1 pandemic — health security in the European Union http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12665.en10.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/policy/hsi/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006228/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Zona Euro com excedente na balança comercial de 23 mil milhões em março

A balança comercial internacional da Zona Euro registou, em março, um excedente de 22,9 mil milhões de euros, mais do que duplicando os números de fevereiro (10,1 mil milhões), segundo estimativas recentes do Eurostat.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Estará a Comissão em condições de apresentar a contribuição discriminada por cada um dos Estados--Membros da UE relativamente ao referido excedente na balança comercial da Zona Euro?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(15 de julho de 2013)

De acordo com os números divulgados pelo Eurostat em 16 de maio de 2013, a estimativa da balança comercial da zona euro em março de 2013 é de 22,9 mil milhões de euros. Entretanto, na sequência de revisões de dados, o indicador diminuiu para 22,4 mil milhões de euros. Este saldo efetivo é desagregado por Estados-Membros da zona euro no anexo.

Há que interpretar a balança comercial da zona euro a nível nacional com prudência, por razões metodológicas. A metodologia harmonizada garante a coerência dos dados agregados a nível da UE e, em menor medida, a nível da zona euro, podendo levar a alguma distorção dos dados ao nível dos Estados-Membros. Por exemplo, as importações dos Países Baixos e, por conseguinte, o défice comercial, são sobrestimados devido ao «efeito Roterdão» (denominado quase-trânsito), segundo o qual as mercadorias destinadas ao resto da UE chegam, são importadas e, consequentemente, registadas nas estatísticas do comércio externo harmonizadas a nível da UE, em portos holandeses. Esta situação tem, por seu turno, efeitos positivos para a balança comercial dos Estados-Membros a que se destinam estas mercadorias, uma vez que estas remessas seriam registadas enquanto comércio intracomunitário (intra-zona euro) com os Países Baixos em vez de comércio extra-UE (extra-zona euro).

Por conseguinte, o anexo inclui também dados a nível nacional relativos à balança comercial com diferentes grupos de parceiros (o mundo, intra-UE e extra-UE).

O Eurostat está atualmente a realizar dois projetos que visam desenvolver as estatísticas relativas ao comércio internacional de mercadorias no âmbito das estatísticas integradas das empresas europeias, bem como reduzir os encargos administrativos que incidem sobre as empresas. Trata-se do «Regulamento-Quadro relativo à integração das estatísticas das empresas» e de «Simstat», relativo as estatísticas do mercado único, que produzirão resultados no período 2015-2017.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006228/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Euro area trade balance surplus of EUR 23 billion in March

According to recent Eurostat estimates, the euro area recorded an international trade balance surplus in March of EUR 22.9 billion, more than double the amount in February (EUR 10.1 billion).

Is the Commission able to provide a breakdown by each EU Member State of the euro area trade balance surplus?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

According to the figures released by Eurostat on the 16 May 2013, the estimated euro area trade balance in March 2013 was EUR 22.9 billion. Meanwhile, due to data revisions, the indicator decreased to EUR 22.4 billion. This actual balance is broken down by single euro area Member State in the annex.

The Eurozone trade balance at country level should be interpreted with caution for methodological reasons. The harmonised methodology ensures consistency of aggregated data at EU level and, to a lesser extent, at euro area level. It can lead to some data distorsion at the level of Member States. For example, Dutch imports and therefore the trade deficit are over-estimated because of the 'Rotterdam effect' (so-called quasi-transit) where goods destined for the rest of the EU arrive, are imported and are therefore recorded in harmonised EU external trade statistics, in Dutch ports. This then has a positive effect on the external trade balances of those Member States to which the goods are destined as these shipments would be recorded as intra-EU (intra-euro area) trade with the Netherlands rather than extra-EU (extra-euro area) trade.

Therefore, country level data for the trade balance with different groups of partners (the world, intra-EU and extra-EU) are included in the annex as well.

Eurostat is presently implementing two projects that aim at further developing international trade in goods statistics as part of the integrated statistics on European businesses and at reducing the administrative burden on enterprises. These projects: the 'Framework regulation integrating business statistics' and 'Simstat' which stands for Single Market Statistics, will produce results in the period 2015-2017.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006229/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Refugiados da Síria

Considerando que:

— O primeiro-ministro da Turquia, Recep Erdogan, admitiu, pela primeira vez, que não consegue suportar os gastos com os 400 mil refugiados sírios que estão no seu país, manifestando a vontade de que os EUA e a Europa participem no esforço financeiro e recebam refugiados da Síria;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz da situação descrita?

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

Até à data, a Comissão e os Estados-Membros mobilizaram 944,5 milhões de euros para assistência humanitária a pessoas em situação de necessidade, tanto na Síria como para as pessoas que fugiram da Síria e encontraram abrigo na Turquia e noutros países vizinhos. Esses fundos são canalizados através de diversas agências da ONU e de ONG parceiras.

Desta forma, a UE tem dado uma grande atenção ao crescente encargo que o fluxo de refugiados representa para as comunidades de acolhimento dos países vizinhos. A Turquia está a assumir uma responsabilidade acrescida, proporcionando abrigos e assistência humanitária de alta qualidade. Atualmente, 412 789 refugiados sírios registaram-se ou aguardam registo junto do ACNUR na Turquia. O país declarou ter gasto mais de 800 milhões de USD somente em campos de refugiados e mais de 1,5 mil milhões de USD incluindo todos os custos.

A UE está empenhada em continuar a prestar assistência aos países de acolhimento no intuito de manter a capacidade desses países para abrigar refugiados e incentivá-los a prosseguir a sua política de fronteiras abertas. Por conseguinte, a UE comprometeu-se a disponibilizar um montante global de 27 milhões de EUR à Turquia, dos quais seis milhões de EUR são canalizados através de assistência humanitária atualmente em fase de pagamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006229/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Syrian refugees

— The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Erdoğan, has admitted for the first time that Turkey cannot meet the expense of the 400 000 Syrian refugees in his country and has requested that the USA and EU contribute financially and accept Syrian refugees.

What is the Commission's assessment of this situation?

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

So far the Commission and the Member States have mobilised EUR 944.5 million for humanitarian assistance to persons in need, both those in Syria and those who fled Syria and found shelter in Turkey and other neighbouring countries. These funds are channelled through several UN-Agencies and NGO partner organisations.

In doing so, the EU has been paying close attention to the increasing burden for host communities in neighbouring countries due to the influx of refugees. Turkey is assuming an increased burden, providing high-quality shelter and humanitarian assistance. Currently, 412.789 million Syrian refugees have registered or are awaiting registration with UNHCR in Turkey. Turkey reports to have spent over USD 800 million on camps alone, over USD 1.5 billion with all costs reflected.

The EU is committed to continue providing assistance to the host countries, to maintain their capacities to shelter refugees and to encourage them to continue their open-border policy. The EU has therefore pledged an overall package of EUR 27 million for Turkey, from which EUR 6 million are channelled through humanitarian assistance, currently in the process of disbursement.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006230/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Novo vírus informático modifica o valor e o destinatário das transações bancárias

Considerando que:

— Os analistas de uma determinada empresa de segurança estão a alertar para uma variante do código malicioso *Trojan-banker:win32*;

— Se trata de um programa que modifica o montante e o destinatário das transações legítimas da banca eletrónica, sem o conhecimento da vítima;

— Circulam na Internet vários programas maliciosos com foco na banca, sendo o *Trojan-banker.win32*. *bifitAgent* o que mais se distingue dos restantes pela complexidade técnica, na medida em que o objetivo consiste em modificar os valores e os destinatários de uma transação em linha;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento deste novo vírus informático?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(22 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento da existência do *trojan* em questão, que é um dos múltiplos vírus e outros tipos de códigos maliciosos em circulação. Trata-se de um cibercrime que, tal como outros tipos de criminalidade associada à Internet, afeta a economia europeia, minando a confiança dos consumidores. De acordo com o Eurobarómetro especial de 2012, 15 % dos inquiridos não utilizam a banca em linha e 18 % evitam fazer compras pela Internet por motivos relacionados com a segurança. Por conseguinte, é essencial melhorar a resposta da UE ao fenómeno da cibercriminalidade, nomeadamente através de uma abordagem multidisciplinar e da cooperação entre as autoridades responsáveis por assegurar o cumprimento da lei e o setor privado.

O Centro Europeu da Cibercriminalidade (EC3) da Europol adota uma abordagem interdisciplinar, por exemplo, através da criação de conselhos consultivos, que contribuem para o seu funcionamento com conhecimentos e competências externas, nomeadamente em matéria de segurança na Internet, do setor financeiro e de questões intersetoriais. Neste processo, é essencial que haja um intercâmbio de informações entre todos os intervenientes, desde a pessoa cujo computador foi infetado e a empresa cujos sítios Web foram atingidos até à equipa de resposta a emergências informáticas (CERT), passando pelas autoridades responsáveis por garantir o cumprimento da lei. É por essa razão que a Comissão, na sua proposta de diretiva relativa à segurança das redes e da informação ([1]), introduziu a obrigação, tanto para a administração pública como para os operadores, de notificar os incidentes com um impacto significativo na segurança dos seus serviços essenciais, nomeadamente às autoridades responsáveis por garantir o cumprimento da lei em caso de suspeita de um incidente de natureza criminosa grave, e a obrigação recíproca para as autoridades competentes e a Comissão de emitir um alerta rápido em caso de risco significativo.

([1]) COM(2013) 48 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006230/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: New computer virus that alters the amount and recipient of bank transactions

— Analysts from a certain security company are warning of a variant of the malicious code known as 'Trojan-banker:win32'.

— This is a programme that alters the amount and recipient of legitimate electronic banking transactions without the victim's knowledge.

— Several malicious programmes with a focus on banking are circulating on the Internet, with Trojan-banker.win32.bifitAgent standing out amongst them due to its technical complexity in the pursuit its objective of altering the amounts and recipients of online transactions.

Is the Commission aware of this new computer virus?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

The Commission is aware of the existence of this trojan, one of a swarm of viruses and other types of malicious code in circulation. These and other cybercrimes affect the EU economy, undermining consumer confidence. As the 2012 Special Eurobarometer showed, 15% of respondents are less likely to bank online due to concerns about security issues; 18% avoid shopping online for this reason. It is therefore essential to further improve the EU response to the phenomenon of cybercrime, including by taking a cross-disciplinary approach and by fostering cooperation between law enforcement and the private sector.

The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) within Europol is pursuing such an interdisciplinary approach, for example through the creation of Advisory Boards designed to bring external knowledge and expertise to EC3's Programme Board on matters including Internet security, the financial sector and cross-industry issues. Exchange of information between all the different stakeholders involved, from the individual whose computer is infected or the business whose websites are targeted to the Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) and law enforcement, is essential in this process. That is why the Commission has introduced, in its Proposal for a directive on Network and Information Security ([1]), an obligation both for the public administration and for market operators to notify incidents having a significant impact on the security of their core services, including to law enforcement where the incident is of a suspected serious criminal nature, and a reverse obligation for the competent authorities or the Commission to provide early warnings in cases of significant risk.

([1]) COM(2013) 48 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006231/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Pílula Diane 35 II

Considerando que:

— segundo um parecer da Agência Europeia de Medicamentos (EMA), a pílula Diane 35 e os seus genéricos não devem ser prescritos como contracetivos, apenas no tratamento de acne e em casos de hirsutismo;

— a EMA afirma que esta pílula e os seus genéricos só devam ser usados nos tratamentos e quando as opções de primeira linha falham, ou seja, quando não for possível tratar acne e outros problemas com terapia tópica ou antibióticos, uma vez que só para este grupo específico de mulheres é que os benefícios deste medicamento superam os riscos. Ainda assim, nestes casos, o comité recomenda que devem ser reforçados os mecanismos de prevenção de incidentes adversos como tromboembolismos.

Pergunto à Comissão se tem conhecimento deste parecer emitido pela Agência Europeia de Medicamentos e que considerações tece sobre o mesmo.

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

Em janeiro de 2013, as autoridades francesas iniciaram um procedimento de consulta com vista à reavaliação do risco/benefício da Diane 35 e dos seus genéricos, medicamentos que contêm acetato de ciproterona/etinilestradiol (2 mg/0,035 mg).

Tal levou a uma recomendação científica do Comité de Avaliação do Risco de Farmacovigilância da Agência Europeia de Medicamentos, emitida em 16 de maio de 2013, como referido pelo Senhor Deputado.

Como o procedimento não diz respeito a quaisquer medicamentos autorizados pela Comissão, em conformidade com a legislação aplicável no domínio farmacêutico ([1]), a recomendação da Agência foi enviada ao grupo de coordenação composto por representantes dos Estados-Membros. Este grupo não chegou a um consenso e sua a posição, adotada pela maioria dos representantes dos Estados-Membros em 29 de maio de 2013, foi enviada à Comissão.

A Comissão prepara atualmente em colaboração com o Comité Permanente, uma decisão que terá de ser aplicada por todos os Estados-Membros no que diz respeito às autorizações nacionais de introdução no mercado da Diane 35 e dos seus genéricos.

A decisão proposta está em conformidade com o parecer da Agência e com a posição do grupo de coordenação dos Estados-Membros.

([1]) Diretiva 2001/83/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 6 de novembro de 2001, que estabelece um código comunitário relativo aos medicamentos para uso humano (JO L 311 de 28.11.2001, p. 67).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006231/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Diane 35 pills II

— According to the European Medicines Agency's (EMA) opinion on the Diane 35 pill and its generics, such pills must not be prescribed as contraceptives, but only for treating acne and for cases of hirsutism.

— The EMA has stated that this pill and its generics must only be used in these treatments and only when it has not been possible to treat acne and other problems with alternative treatments such as topical therapy and antibiotic treatment, as it is only for this specific group of women that the benefits of this medicine outweigh the risks. Even so, in these cases, the committee recommends that further measures be taken to minimise adverse effects, such as thromboembolism.

Is the Commission aware of the opinion issued by the EMA and what is its opinion of it?

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

In January 2013, the French authorities initiated a referral procedure aiming at the re-evaluation of the risk benefit of Diane 35 and its generics, medicinal products containing cyproterone acetate/ethinylestradiol (2 mg / 0.035 mg).

This led to the scientific recommendation of the European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee of 16 May 2013, as referred to by the Honorable Member.

As the procedure does not concern any medicinal products authorised by the Commission, in accordance with the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]), the Agency's recommendation was forwarded to the coordination group composed of Member States representatives. This group did not reach a consensus and its position adopted by the majority of Member State representatives on 29 May 2013, was forwarded to the Commission.

The Commission is in the process, involving the Standing Committee, of adopting a decision, which will have to be implemented by all Member States with regards to their national marketing authorisations of Diane 35 and its generics.

The proposed decision is in line with the Agency's opinion and the position of the Member States coordination group.

([1]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 201 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p. 67.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006232/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Bruxelas moderniza portos nacionais

Considerando que:

— a Comissão Europeia lançou, recentemente, uma iniciativa com o objetivo de melhorar as operações portuárias e as ligações às redes de transportes em 319 grandes portos marítimos da Europa;

— o objetivo desta iniciativa é garantir portos mais eficientes, melhores ligações ao interior e um quadro de investimento financeiro mais flexível;

— a Europa depende fortemente dos seus portos marítimos, pelos quais passa 74 % do volume de comércio externo da UE com todo o mundo;

— mesmo com cenários de crescimento económico modesto, o volume de tráfego de mercadorias movimentado nos portos deverá crescer 57 % até 2030. Dentro de 20 anos, as centenas de portos marítimos europeus confrontar-se-ão com grandes desafios nos planos da eficiência, do investimento e da sustentabilidade.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Para quando está prevista a conclusão da proposta de revisão da política portuária?

2. Quais as medidas concretas que visam zelar pela competitividade dos portos da UE?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(11 de julho de 2013)

Na sequência de uma avaliação de impacto exaustiva, incluindo uma vasta consulta pública, a Comissão adotou, em 23 de maio de 2013, uma comunicação ([1]) sobre a política portuária da UE, intitulada: «Portos: um motor para o crescimento» e uma proposta ([2]) de Regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho que estabelece um quadro normativo para o acesso ao mercado dos serviços portuários e a transparência financeira dos portos.

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a comunicação da Comissão acima citada, que descreve em pormenor as oito medidas que a Comissão propõe para melhorar a competitividade dos portos da UE ([3]).

([1]) COM(2013) 295 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 296 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/maritime/news/ports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006232/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Brussels modernises national ports

— The Commission recently launched an initiative aimed at improving port operations and onward transport connections at 319 large EU seaports.

— The initiative aims to make ports more efficient, improve inland connections and introduce a more flexible financial investment framework.

— The EU is highly dependent on its seaports, as 74% of the volume of EU external trade with the rest of the world passes through them.

— Even under modest economic growth scenarios, the volume of goods passing through ports is expected to grow by 57% by 2030. Within 20 years, the hundreds of European seaports will face great challenges in terms of efficiency, investment and sustainability.

1. When is the proposed port policy review due to be completed?

2. What concrete measures are intended to improve the competiveness of EU ports?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

Following a comprehensive impact assessment including extensive public consultation, the Commission adopted on 23 May 2013 a communication ([1]) on the EU ports' policy 'Ports: an engine for growht') and a proposal ([2]) for a regulation of the European Parliament and Council establishing a framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the abovementioned Communication, which explains in detail the eight measures that the Commission proposes to improve the competitiveness of EU ports. http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/maritime/news/ports_en.htm.

([1]) COM(2013) 295 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 296 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006233/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Bruxelas interroga grandes empresas europeias de comercialização de energia

Considerando que a Comissão Europeia iniciou uma investigação sobre uma possível manipulação dos preços dos produtos petrolíferos por parte das grandes empresas europeias de comercialização de energia, como a Glencore, a Vitol, a Gunvor e a Mercuria, pergunto à Comissão se já dispõe de dados que confirmem essa eventual manipulação dos preços dos produtos petrolíferos?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(23 de julho de 2013)

Conforme indicado na resposta à pergunta anterior E-006212/2013, é demasiado cedo para a Comissão tirar conclusões sobre os resultados do inquérito nos setores do petróleo bruto, produtos petrolíferos refinados e biocombustível.

A Comissão está a analisar as informações relevantes recolhidas nas empresas. Irá procurar concluir o inquérito o mais rapidamente possível. A duração do processo depende de certos fatores, nomeadamente a complexidade do caso, a medida em que as empresas em causa cooperarem com a Comissão e o exercício dos direitos de defesa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006233/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Large European energy supply companies under investigation by Brussels

Does the Commission have any data from the investigation it has opened into the possible manipulation of the prices of petroleum products by large European energy supply companies, such as Glencore, Vitol, Gunvor and Mercuria, to indicate that such price manipulation has taken place?

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

As indicated in its reply to previous Question E-006212/2013, it is too early for the Commission to draw conclusions about the findings of the investigation in the crude oil, refined oil products and biofuels sectors.

The Commission is analysing the relevant information gathered from the undertakings. It will seek to finalise the investigation as quickly as possible. The duration of the proceedings depends on a number of factors, including the complexity of the case, the extent to which the undertakings concerned cooperate with the Commission and the exercise of the rights of defence.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006234/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Cibercrime

Considerando que:

— Mais de um terço dos cerca de 500 milhões de cidadãos dos 27 países da UE fazem operações através de sistemas bancários online e estima-se que o custo total do cibercrime a cada ano ultrapasse os 290 mil milhões de euros;

— Uma empresa de segurança consegue identificar 200 mil novas amostras de códigos maliciosos por dia, um nível inédito na história da internet;

— A União Europeia criou o Centro Europeu contra o cibercrime, integrado na Europol.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que medidas estão inscritas na agenda do Centro Europeu contra o cibercrime para combate a este novo tipo de criminalidade?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(9 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão está consciente do número crescente de programas maliciosos distribuídos às máquinas, dos quais muitos se destinam apoiar a fraude, tais como fraudes contra os sistemas bancários em linha. Trata-se de um cibercrime que, tal como outros tipos de criminalidade associada à Internet, afeta a economia europeia, minando a confiança dos consumidores. De acordo com o Eurobarómetro especial de 2012, 15 % dos inquiridos não utilizam a banca em linha. Por conseguinte, é essencial melhorar a resposta da UE ao fenómeno da cibercriminalidade, nomeadamente através de uma abordagem multidisciplinar e da cooperação entre as autoridades responsáveis por assegurar o cumprimento da lei e o setor privado.

O Centro Europeu da Cibercriminalidade (EC3), da Europol, foi criado precisamente por este motivo. A sua abordagem interdisciplinar é facilitada através da criação de conselhos consultivos externos, concebidos para proporcionar conhecimentos e competências necessários para a administração do EC3 em matéria de segurança na Internet, do setor financeiro e de questões intersetoriais. Uma das três prioridades EC3 relaciona-se ao combate à fraude associada aos meios de pagamento. É essencial, em todos os tipos de cibercrime, o intercâmbio de informações entre todas as partes envolvidas, por parte de pessoas ou empresas às equipas de resposta a emergências informáticas (CERT) e aos organismos responsáveis pela aplicação da lei. É por essa razão que a proposta de Diretiva relativa à Segurança das Redes e da Informação ([1]) introduziu a obrigação, tanto para a administração pública como para os operadores, de notificar os incidentes com um impacto significativo na segurança dos seus serviços essenciais, nomeadamente às autoridades responsáveis por garantir o cumprimento da lei em caso de suspeita de um incidente de natureza criminosa grave, e a obrigação recíproca para as autoridades competentes e a Comissão de emitir um alerta rápido em caso de risco significativo.

([1]) Proposta de Diretiva relativa a medidas destinadas a garantir um elevado nível comum de segurança das redes e da informação em toda a União, Bruxelas, 7.2.2013, com (2013) 48 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006234/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Cybercrime

— More than a third of the nearly 500 million people living in the 27 EU Member States make transactions using online banking systems and the total cost of cybercrime each year is estimated to be more than EUR 290 billion.

— A security company can identify 200 000 new malicious code samples every day, an unprecedented rate in the Internet's history.

— The EU has established the European Cybercrime Centre, hosted by Europol.

What measures are on the European Cybercrime Centre's agenda to combat this new type of crime?

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

The Commission is aware of the growing numbers of malware programs disseminated to machines, of which much are intended to support fraud, such as fraud against online banking systems. These and other cybercrimes affect the EU economy, undermining consumer confidence. As the 2012 Special Eurobarometer showed, 15% of respondents are less likely to bank online due to concerns about security issues. It is therefore essential to further improve the EU response to the phenomenon of cybercrime, including by taking a cross-disciplinary approach and by fostering cooperation between law enforcement authorities and the private sector.

The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) within Europol was set up for this very reason. Its interdisciplinary approach is facilitated through the creation of Advisory Boards designed to bring external knowledge and expertise to EC3's Programme Board on matters including Internet security, the financial sector and cross-industry issues. One of the three EC3 priorities is on combating payment fraud. Across all types of cybercrime, exchange of information between all stakeholders involved, from individuals or businesses to the Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) and law enforcement bodies is essential. That is why the proposal for a directive on Network and Information Security ([1]) introduces an obligation both for the public administration and for market operators to notify incidents having a significant impact on the security of their core services, including to law enforcement authorities where the incident is suspected to be of a serious criminal nature, and a reverse obligation for the competent authorities or the Commission to provide early warnings in cases of significant risk.

([1]) Proposal for a directive concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union, Brussels, 7.2.2013, COM(2013) 48 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006235/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Descobertos perfis metabólicos dos portugueses

— Investigadores da Universidade de Coimbra (UC) identificaram, pela primeira vez, os perfis metabólicos da população portuguesa com implicações nas doenças neuropsiquiátricas.

— Os resultados da investigação, além de permitirem melhorar a segurança dos medicamentos, assumem-se como uma ferramenta essencial para a prática clínica, pois podem evitar o surgimento de efeitos patológicos, a partir da prescrição da medicação e dose mais adequadas.

1. Tem conhecimento desta importante investigação?

2. Está definido algum financiamento comunitário para este tipo de estudos?

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

1. O perfil metabólico pode de facto ter um elevado potencial, não apenas para melhorar a segurança dos medicamentos mas também, num sentido mais amplo, para o desenvolvimento de medicação personalizada que incida sobre a estratégia terapêutica e preventiva do paciente. O 7.° Programa-Quadro de atividades em matéria de investigação, desenvolvimento tecnológico e demonstração apoiou diversos projetos, tais como COMBI-BIO ([1]), META-Predict ([2]) e Lipidomicnet ([3]), que desenvolvem biomarcadores metabólicos e metodologias relacionadas. O 7.° Programa-Quadro em matéria de saúde 2011 incluía um capítulo específico sobre investigação, que incide sobre o desenvolvimento de tecnologias para a estratificação dos grupos de pacientes para aplicações médicas personalizadas.

2. A medicina personalizada constitui um dos domínios que poderá ser abordado no âmbito do programa «Horizonte 2020», o próximo Programa-Quadro para a Investigação e a Inovação que abrange o período de 2014-2020. Nesta fase do processo legislativo não é no entanto possível prever a possível atribuição de financiamento a esta área da investigação.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13202177
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=12581124
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/88230_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006235/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Metabolic profiles of Portuguese citizens discovered

— Researchers from the University of Coimbra (UC) have identified, for the first time, the metabolic profiles of the Portuguese population, which has implications for neuropsychiatric disorders.

— The research results, in addition to facilitating an improvement in medication safety, are an essential tool for clinical practice, as they may prevent the appearance of pathological effects, on account of more suitable medication and doses being prescribed.

1. Is the Commission aware of this important research?

2. Is any EU financing set aside for such studies?

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

1. Metabolic profiling may indeed have high potential, not only for the improvement of medication safety, but more broadly for the development of personalised medicine tailoring the right therapeutic and preventative strategy for the patient. The Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities supported several projects, such as COMBI-BIO ([1]), META-PREDICT ([2]), and LIPIDOMICNET ([3]), which develop metabolic biomarkers and related methodologies. The FP7 Health Work Programme 2011 included a specific research topic focusing on the development of technologies for patient group stratification for personalised medicine applications.

2. Personalised Medicine is one of the fields that is likely to be addressed in Horizon 2020, the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation covering the period 2014-2020. At this stage of the legislative process, however, it is not possible to predict the possible allocation of funds to this area of research.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13202177
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=12581124
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/88230_en.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006236/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Bruxelas investiga Apple

Considerando que:

— A Comissão Europeia está a investigar alegadas práticas anticoncorrenciais da Apple relacionadas com a distribuição dos seus produtos por parte das operadoras de telecomunicações;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Em que se fundam as suspeitas da Comissão face às alegadas práticas anticoncorrenciais da Apple?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão está atualmente a realizar um exercício de apuramento de factos para examinar se as práticas de distribuição da Apple poderão conduzir à exclusão de outros fabricantes de telefones do mercado dos telefones inteligentes, ao impedir os operadores de telecomunicações de promover telefones concorrentes.

A recolha de informações pela Comissão foi desencadeada por informações do mercado sobre o comportamento da Apple. Não foram apresentadas queixas formais, no entanto.

De um modo mais geral, a Comissão está a acompanhar de perto a evolução do mercado em matéria de telefones inteligentes e intervirá sempre que existam indícios de comportamento anticoncorrencial em detrimento dos consumidores.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006236/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Brussels investigates Apple

The Commission is investigating Apple over alleged anti-competitive practices related to the distribution of its products by telecommunications operators.

What are the Commission's suspicions regarding Apple's alleged anti-competitive practices based on?

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

The Commission is currently carrying out a fact-finding exercise to examine whether Apple's distribution practices could lead to the foreclosure of other handset manufacturers from the smartphones market, by preventing telecoms operators from promoting competing handsets.

The Commission's fact-finding was triggered by market information regarding Apple's behaviour. There have been no formal complaints, however.

More generally, the Commission is actively monitoring market developments regarding smartphones and will intervene if there are indications of anticompetitive behaviour to the detriment of consumers.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006237/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Adesão da Turquia à UE

Considerando o seguinte:

— A Turquia recusa-se a cumprir as obrigações decorrentes do processo de candidatura a Estado-membro da União Europeia;

— Após o último Conselho de Assuntos Gerais e Negócios Estrangeiros e um encontro com o chefe da diplomacia turca, Ahmet Davutogiu, refere o comunicado do Conselho que «a União Europeia constata que, apesar de repetidos pedidos, a Turquia se recusa a cumprir as obrigações»;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como avalia o processo de adesão da Turquia à UE, após o último Conselho de Assuntos Gerais e Negócios Estrangeiros?

Resposta dada por Štefan Füle em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão remete para as conclusões do Conselho de 11 de dezembro de 2012, em que reafirmava a importância que atribui às relações da União Europeia com a Turquia. A Turquia é um país candidato e um parceiro privilegiado da União Europeia devido ao dinamismo da sua economia e à sua localização estratégica. Para atingir o pleno potencial das relações UE-Turquia são necessárias negociações de adesão ativas e credíveis que respeitem os compromissos da UE e as condições estabelecidas. É do interesse de ambas as partes que as negociações de adesão recuperem rapidamente o ímpeto, a fim de que a UE continue a constituir a base de referência para as reformas na Turquia. A Turquia poderá acelerar o ritmo das negociações progredindo no cumprimento dos critérios de referência, em conformidade com os requisitos do quadro de negociação e respeitando as suas obrigações contratuais para com a UE.

O Conselho assinalou também, com crescente preocupação, a ausência de progressos substanciais no cumprimento dos critérios políticos. Com base em recentes melhoramentos a nível legislativo, o Conselho convida a Turquia a continuar a melhorar a observância dos direitos e liberdades fundamentais de fato e de direito, em especial no domínio da liberdade de expressão, e a intensificar os seus esforços para implementar todos os acórdãos do Tribunal Europeu dos Direitos do Homem.

Em 25 de junho de 2013, o Conselho «Assuntos Gerais» concordou em abrir o capítulo 22, e sublinhou que a Conferência Intergovernamental com a Turquia terá lugar após a apresentação do relatório intercalar anual da Comissão e na sequência de uma discussão do Conselho «Assuntos Gerais» para confirmar a posição comum do Conselho de abrir o capítulo 22 e fixar a data da conferência de adesão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006237/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Turkey's accession to the EU

— Turkey refuses to fulfil the obligations of its application for accession to the EU.

— Following the most recent General and Foreign Affairs Council and a meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, the Council released a statement saying that '[the EU] notes […] that Turkey, despite repeated calls, continues refusing to fulfil its obligation'.

What is the Commission's assessment of Turkey's EU accession process, following the most recent General and Foreign Affairs Council?

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

The Commission refers to the conclusions of 11 December 2012, of the Council, which reaffirmed the importance it attaches to EU relations with Turkey. Turkey is a candidate country and a key partner for the European Union considering its dynamic economy and strategic location. Active and credible accession negotiations which respect the EU's commitments and established conditionality will enable the EU-Turkey relationship to achieve its full potential. It is in the interest of both parties that accession negotiations regain momentum soon, ensuring that the EU remains the benchmark for reforms in Turkey. Turkey will be able to accelerate the pace of negotiations by advancing in the fulfilment of benchmarks, meeting the requirements of the Negotiating Framework and by respecting its contractual obligations towards the EU.

The Council noted at the same time with growing concern the lack of substantial progress towards fully meeting the political criteria. Building on recent legislative improvements, the Council called on Turkey to further improve the observance of fundamental rights and freedoms in law and in practice, in particular in the area of freedom of expression, and to enhance its efforts to implement all the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights.

On 25 June 2013 the General Affairs Council agreed to open Chapter 22 and underscored that the Inter-Governmental Conference with Turkey will take place after the presentation of the Commission's annual progress report and following a discussion of the General Affairs Council to confirm the common position of the Council for the opening of Chapter 22 and determine the date for the accession conference.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006238/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Bélgica — incumprimento do défice orçamental fixado pela UE

Considerando que:

— no quadro do pacto de estabilidade e crescimento (Resolução do Conselho Europeu sobre o Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento — Amesterdão, 17 de junho de 1997), a Comissão Europeia pode decidir aplicar uma multa à Bélgica por, durante 3 anos consecutivos, ter ultrapassado o limite do défice orçamental fixado pela União Europeia em 3 % do PIB;

— e que o Ministro das Finanças belga, Koen Geens (CD&V, democrata-cristão), afirmou que, por causa da recessão, a multa seria injustificada e que o seu caráter retroativo é ilegal;

pergunto à Comissão se confirma a aplicação desta multa por incumprimento do limite do défice orçamental fixado pela União Europeia em 3 % do PIB?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(28 de agosto de 2013)

Até 2012, a Bélgica não conseguiu diminuir o seu défice nominal para um nível inferior a 3 % do PIB, conforme recomendado pelo Conselho em 2009. Além disso, apesar dos esforços consideráveis desenvolvidos desde o final de 2011, o esforço orçamental médio registado durante o período de 2010-2012, avaliado em função da alteração do saldo estrutural, ficou aquém das recomendações do Conselho. Em especial, o esforço orçamental foi totalmente inexistente em 2011, o que se ficou a dever ao facto de estar em funções um governo interino a nível federal. Assim, em 21 de junho de 2013, o Conselho adotou uma decisão nos termos do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia, artigo 126.°, n.° 8, estabelecendo que a Bélgica não havia tomado medidas eficazes.

Em conformidade com o Regulamento (UE) n.° 1173/2011, que faz parte do pacote de seis atos legislativos («six-pack») e que entrou em vigor em 13 de dezembro de 2011, a Comissão recomenda ao Conselho a aplicação de uma multa assim que este determine que o Estado-Membro em questão não tomou medidas eficazes.

No entanto, no caso específico da Bélgica, a aplicação de uma multa nas atuais circunstâncias levanta problemas jurídicos no que respeita ao princípio de não-retroatividade da nova legislação acima referida: a Bélgica seria assim multada por falta de esforço estrutural, verificada sobretudo antes da entrada em vigor do pacote de seis atos legislativos.

A Comissão considera que a aplicação de uma multa nestas circunstâncias seria contrária ao princípio da não-retroatividade, na medida em que diz respeito a factos anteriores à data de entrada em vigor do pacote de seis atos legislativos. Por conseguinte, nos termos da decisão do Conselho, artigo 126.°, n.° 8, a Comissão concluiu que não pode recomendar ao Conselho a aplicação de uma multa à Bélgica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006238/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Belgium's failure to respect the budget deficit limit set by the EU

— The Stability and Growth Pact (Resolution of the European Council on the Stability and Growth Pact — Amsterdam, 17 June 1997) allows the Commission to impose sanctions on Belgium for exceeding, for three consecutive years, the budget deficit limit of 3% of GDP set by the EU.

— The Belgian Minister for Finance, Koen Geens (Christian Democrat and Flemish party (CD&V)), has said that a fine is not justified, because of the recession, and applying one retrospectively would be illegal.

Can the Commission confirm whether Belgium is to be fined for failing to respect the budget deficit limit of 3% of GDP set by the EU?

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

Belgium did not bring its headline deficit below the 3% of GDP threshold by 2012 as had been recommended by the Council in 2009. Moreover, despite sizeable efforts since the end of 2011, the average fiscal effort over 2010-2012, measured by the change in the structural balance, fell short of what was recommended by the Council. In particular, the fiscal effort was entirely absent in 2011, related to the government being in a care-taking position at federal level. Hence, on 21 June 2013, the Council adopted a decision on the basis of Article 126(8) TFEU establishing that no effective action has been taken by Belgium.

According to Regulation 1173/2011, which is part of the 'six-pack' that entered into force on 13 December 2011, the Commission shall recommend that the Council imposes a fine once the Council has decided that no effective action has been taken by the Member State in question.

However, in the specific case of Belgium, imposing a fine under the current circumstances raises legal concerns with regard to the principle of non-retroactivity of the abovementioned new legislation: Belgium would be fined for the lack of structural effort, which primarily occurred before the entry into force of the six-pack.

It is the Commission's view that imposing a fine under these circumstances would go against the principle of non-retroactivity, as it relates to facts dating before the entry into force of the six-pack. Therefore, the Commission came to the conclusion that it cannot recommend to the Council to impose a fine on Belgium after the adoption of the article 126(8) Decision by the Council.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006239/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Gripe H7N9 — possível resistência ao Tamiflu

— De acordo com a Organização das Nações Unidas para a Agricultura e Alimentação (FAO), a nova estirpe do vírus da gripe aviária já gerou perdas económicas na ordem dos 5 000 milhões de euros;

— O tratamento com o antigripal Tamiflu da farmacêutica suíça Roche foi muito utilizado, em 2009, no combate ao vírus da gripe aviária H5N1;

— Um grupo de cientistas de Xangai e Hong Kong descobriu que a nova estirpe do vírus H7N9, que já causou 37 mortos na China, mostrou resistência ao Tamiflu.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação?

Como a avalia?

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

1. A Comissão Europeia tem conhecimento do recente estudo publicado no «The Lancet» que descreve 14 doentes infetados pela gripe A (H7N9) em Xangai, na China. Três pacientes desenvolveram rapidamente pneumonia, mesmo após o tratamento com Oseltamivir (Tamiflu). A resistência ao Oseltamivir foi identificada em dois dos pacientes. Esta resistência foi associada a uma mutação do gene que exprime uma proteína essencial para a penetração do vírus nas células.

2. É conhecida a resistência antivírica emergente após o tratamento com o Oseltamivir (Tamiflu). A aparente facilidade com que a resistência surge no vírus da gripe A (H7N9) deve ser acompanhada de perto, bem como a estabilidade desta mutação e o papel dos corticosteroides para facilitar o aparecimento da mutação. Como não foram detetados quaisquer novos casos até à data, não existem informações adicionais para além do estudo referido.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006239/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: H7N9 flu — possible resistance to Tamiflu

— According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the new strain of the bird flu virus has already caused economic losses in the region of EUR 5 billion.

— Tamiflu, the flu remedy manufactured by the Swiss pharmaceutical company Roche, was widely used in 2009 to treat and tackle the H5N1 bird flu virus.

— A group of scientists from Shanghai and Hong Kong have found that the new H7N9 strain of the virus, which has already caused 37 deaths in China, has shown resistance to Tamiflu.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

What is its assessment of it?

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

1. The European Commission is aware of the recent study published in 'The Lancet' describing 14 patients with Influenza A(H7N9) infection in Shanghai, China. Three patients developed pneumonia rapidly even after treatment with Oseltamivir (Tamiflu). Oseltamivir-resistance was identified in two of them. This resistance was associated with a mutation of the gene that expresses a protein crucial for the penetration of the virus in the cells.

2. Emerging antiviral resistance following treatment with Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) is known to occur. The apparent ease with which the resistance is emerging in influenza A(H7N9) viruses should be closely monitored as well as the stability of this mutation and the role of corticosteroids in facilitating the emergence of the mutation. As no new cases have been identified so far, there is no additional information to the study mentioned.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006240/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Vacinação de crianças

Considerando que:

— De acordo com um comunicado da Unicef, uma em cada cinco crianças no mundo não beneficia das vacinas que se estima salvarem a vida de dois a três milhões de crianças por ano, e esta organização teme que «os esforços globais para vacinar todas as crianças tenham estagnado devido à diminuição do financiamento e ao enfraquecimento da vontade política».

— Motivos como a exclusão social ou geográfica, a falta de recursos, os sistemas de saúde deficientes ou os conflitos explicam a não vacinação das crianças, que em 2011 atingiram os 22,4 milhões, «mais quatro milhões que no ano anterior».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz da situação descrita?

Dispõe a Comissão de dados atualizados sobre a não vacinação de crianças na UE?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão concorda com os motivos apresentados pelo Senhor Deputado sobre o facto de as crianças não estarem devidamente imunizadas. A este respeito, a UE está empenhada em respeitar os direitos humanos e defende o acesso equitativo e universal a serviços de saúde de qualidade. Apesar de se terem registado progressos no que diz respeito ao Objetivo de Desenvolvimento do Milénio n.° 4, relativo à saúde, devemos combater as desigualdades mediante a definição de prioridades a nível das políticas e a atribuição de recursos de acordo com as necessidades (por exemplo, os *quintis* mais pobres, as regiões desfavorecidas, os grupos populacionais mais vulneráveis, as desigualdades entre os géneros, etc.); devemos também reforçar os sistemas de saúde para que possam prestar uma vasta gama de cuidados de saúde de qualidade, em especial cuidados de saúde de base, a toda a população.

Em relação à questão da falta de recursos, a posição da UE consiste em reforçar as capacidades de mobilização dos recursos internos, continuando simultaneamente a contribuir e a apoiar uma base de doadores mais vasta. Para esse efeito, incentivamos outros doadores, nomeadamente o setor privado e os países emergentes, de acordo com o seu papel cada vez mais importante na economia mundial. Para além destas atividades, a Comissão apoia ainda a campanha de vacinação através da sua contribuição para a Aliança Mundial para as Vacinas e a Imunização.

No que se refere à vacinação das crianças na União, o Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças está atualmente a controlar essa vacinação através do Consórcio VENICE II (Nova iniciativa europeia integrada de colaboração em matéria de vacinas), podendo os dados ser consultados no seguinte endereço:
http://ecdc.europa.eu/EN/Activities/Surveillance/EUVAC/Pages/index.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006240/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Vaccination of children

— According to a statement from Unicef, one in five children worldwide does not receive vaccines, which are estimated to save the lives of two to three million children a year. The organisation fears that 'global efforts to vaccinate every child are plateauing as funding falls and political will stagnates'.

— Social or geographical exclusion, lack of resources, weak health systems and conflicts are some of the reasons why children are not being immunised. In 2011, 22.4 million children did not receive vaccines, four million more than the previous year.

What is the Commission's assessment of this situation?

Does it have up-to-date data on the non-vaccination of children in the EU?

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

The Commission agrees with the reasons given by the Honourable Member for children not being adequately immunized. In this regard, the EU is committed to upholding human rights, an effort which is underpinned by the EU's support for equitable and universal coverage by quality health services. While progress has been made on the health-related Millennium Development Goal 4, we need to tackle inequalities by setting policy priorities and allocating resources according to needs (e.g. poorest quintiles, disadvantaged regions, potentially vulnerable population groups, gender inequalities) and we also need to strengthen health systems so that they are able to deliver comprehensive quality health services, in particular comprehensive primary healthcare, to the entire population.

With respect to the lack of resources the EU stance is to enhance capacities for the mobilisation of domestic resources while continuing to contribute and supporting a broader donor base. To this end we encourage other donors, such as the private sector and emerging donors, to continue to enhance their contributions in line with their increased role in the global economy. In addition to these activities, the Commission also supports vaccination through its contribution to Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation.

Concerning coverage of childhood vaccination in the Union, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control is currently monitoring it through the VENICE II Consortium (Vaccine European New Integrated Collaboration Effort) and data can be accessed at http://ecdc.europa.eu/EN/ACTIVITIES/SURVEILLANCE/EUVAC/Pages/index.aspx.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006241/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Ataques na república russa do Daguestão

O Daguestão é a região mais populosa do Cáucaso Norte, no Sul da Rússia, e nos últimos anos tem sido palco de vários atentados de rebeldes contra as autoridades pró-russas. No ataque mais recente, três adolescentes morreram na sequência da explosão de uma bomba colocada nas proximidades de um centro comercial em Makhachkala, e três polícias foram alvejados por um grupo de pessoas não identificadas.

Quais os dados de que a Comissão dispõe relativamente à situação atual na região do Daguestão?

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

A Comissão e a AR/VP estão a observar atentamente a situação no Cáucaso Norte e partilham a preocupação do Senhor Deputado relativamente à incidência regular de atos de violência, nomeadamente no Daguestão.

A delegação da UE em Moscovo monitoriza a evolução da situação no Cáucaso Norte a partir de informações disponíveis de fontes abertas, complementando-as com uma série de contactos oficiais e não oficiais. No entanto, a quantidade de informações disponíveis está, em certa medida, limitada pelo facto de se tratar de uma região sensível, implicando, nomeadamente, restrições de acesso. Embora continue a ser difícil determinar muitos detalhes no que respeita a incidentes específicos, bem como as razões que os motivam, de um modo geral a situação é, no entanto, bastante clara.

O Daguestão está a ser devastado por conflitos violentos há mais de uma década e, em linha com o que o próprio Senhor Deputado afirma, continua a ser atualmente a república mais volátil no Distrito Federal do Cáucaso Norte e, até, na Rússia. De acordo com os dados fornecidos por fontes independentes, a República registou pelo menos 143 vítimas (incluindo 89 vítimas mortais) de conflitos violentos nos primeiros quatro meses de 2013. Este valor é superior ao número cumulado de vítimas registado para as outras seis regiões do Distrito, que se elevou a 123 (incluindo 69 vítimas mortais). No mesmo período do ano passado, foram registadas 168 vítimas (incluindo 118 mortos).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006241/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Attacks in the Russian republic of Dagestan

Dagestan is the most populous region in the North Caucasus, in southern Russia. In recent years, it has been the scene of several rebel attacks against pro-Russian authorities. Three teenagers were killed in the most recent attack, following the explosion of a bomb left near a shopping centre in Makhachkala, and three policemen were shot by a group of unidentified persons.

What information does the Commission have regarding the current situation in the region of Dagestan?

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

The Commission and the HR/VP are observing the situation in the Northern Caucasus closely, and shares the Honorouble Member's concerns about the regular incidence of violence, in particular in Dagestan.

The EU Delegation in Moscow monitors developments in the North Caucasus from infromation available through open sources, supplementing these with a number of official and non-official contacts. However, the amount of information available is to some extent limited due to the sensitive situation in the region, including access restrictions. While many details of and the causal relationships behind specific incidents remain difficult to ascertain, the overall situation is nevertheless rather clear.

Dagestan has been plagued by violent conflict for more than a decade and in line with what the MEP himself says currently remains the most volatile republic in the North Caucasus Federal District and indeed in Russia. According to data provided by independent sources the Republic has registered at least 143 casualties (including 89 fatalities) of violent conflict in the first four months of 2013. This is more than the cumulative number of casualties, registered by all other six regions of the District, which was 123 (including 69 fatalities). In comparison to the same period a year ago 168 casualties (including 118 deaths) were registered.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006242/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Nova vaga de atentados no Iraque

No Iraque, a tensão entre as comunidades sunitas e xiitas tem vindo a agravar-se no último ano, com o pano de fundo do conflito sírio. O caráter sectário dos atentados, cujo alvo foram as comunidades xiitas, tenta capitalizar a profunda divisão da população iraquiana e dificultar ainda mais o governo do xiita al Maliki. Esta nova vaga de violência sectária no Iraque tem vindo a ganhar proporções preocupantes, e só durante o mês de Abril, que já foi considerado o mais sangrento dos últimos 5 anos, perderam a vida quase meio milhar de pessoas. Na passada segunda-feira, uma nova série de ataques causou mais de 200 feridos e resultou na morte de 78 pessoas.

1. Como tem a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante acompanhado a crescente vaga de atentados no Iraque?

2. Pode a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante indicar que iniciativas têm sido adotadas pela UE para ajudar a aliviar a tensão no referido país?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton segue atentamente a situação no Iraque. Tem condenado, de forma sistemática, os elevados níveis de violência no Iraque, incluindo o recrudescimento dos ataques nos últimos meses. Manifestou igualmente a sua preocupação em relação às crescentes tensões políticas que comprometem a estabilidade no Iraque.

A AR/VP lançou um debate sobre o Iraque nas reuniões do Conselho «Negócios Estrangeiros» de fevereiro e março, nas quais os Ministros dos Negócios Estrangeiros da UE chegaram a um acordo sobre a importância de promover a estabilidade política no Iraque e reforçar o compromisso da UE com o país. Consequentemente, o Conselho «Negócios Estrangeiros» de abril adotou conclusões relativas, em particular, à situação no Iraque.

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente visitou o Iraque em 17 de junho e instou todas as partes a colaborar para resolver questões políticas e de governação através do diálogo. Além disso, incentivou a consolidação das conquistas democráticas através de instituições fortes e eficientes — um elemento-chave de qualquer sistema democrático.

A UE tem apoiado sistematicamente os esforços democráticos do Iraque e incentivado a reconciliação nacional, como uma condição prévia para um sistema democrático inclusivo e efetivo. A AR/VP continuará a acompanhar de muito perto a evolução do Iraque.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006242/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — New wave of attacks in Iraq

Tension between Sunni and Shiite communities in Iraq has worsened in the last year, against the backdrop of the Syrian conflict. The sectarian nature of the attacks, targeting Shiite communities, aims to capitalise on the deep division of the Iraqi people and to make life even more difficult for Shiite Prime Minister al-Maliki and his government. This new wave of sectarian violence in Iraq has reached alarming proportions; in April alone, which has already been deemed the deadliest month in the last five years, almost 500 people were killed. Last Monday, a new series of attacks left more than 200 people injured and 78 dead.

1. How has the Vice-President/High Representative monitored the growing wave of attacks in Iraq?

2. Can she say what initiatives the EU has adopted to help ease tension in Iraq?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President Ashton follows the situation in Iraq very closely. She has condemned consistently the continuing high levels of violence in Iraq, including the spate of attacks in the recent months. She also expressed concern about the increased political tensions undermining Iraq's stability.

The HR/VP initiated a discussion on Iraq at the February and March Foreign Affairs Council meetings where EU Foreign Ministers agreed on the importance of promoting political stability in Iraq and enhancing EU's engagement with the country. Consequently, April Foreign Affairs Council adopted conclusions specifically on the situation in Iraq.

The HR/VP visited Iraq on 17 June and urged all parties to work together to address political and governance issues through dialogue. She also encouraged the consolidation of democratic gains through strong and efficient institutions — a key element in any democratic system.

The EU has consistently supported Iraq's democratic endeavours and encouraged national reconciliation as a prerequisite for an inclusive and effective democratic system. The HR/VP will continue to follow the internal developments in Iraq very closely.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006243/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Denúncias de tortura na Síria

A organização Human Rights Watch (HRW) denunciou que foram descobertos documentos e instrumentos de tortura em locais dos serviços de segurança da cidade de Raga, no norte da Síria, que revelam que detidos foram aí torturados. Os abusos do regime sírio — tortura, mas não só — são sistemáticos, mortíferos e em larga escala, segundo a HRW, que alerta, contudo, para o facto de as violações dos direitos humanos por parte dos rebeldes terem também vindo a aumentar nos últimos meses.

1. Tem a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante conhecimento das referidas denúncias de tortura?

2. De que forma tenciona a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante recriminar tais violações?

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

A AR/VP está consternada com a escalada de violência e as graves violações dos direitos humanos ocorridas de modo sistemático e em larga escala na Síria, e reiterou a sua condenação das atrocidades cometidas pelo regime sírio. Ao mesmo tempo, a União Europeia apela a todas as partes no conflito para que respeitem plenamente o direito internacional humanitário e a legislação internacional sobre direitos humanos, tendo declarado que todos os responsáveis pelas atrocidades e violações e abusos dos direitos humanos deverão prestar contas pelos seus atos. A União Europeia reitera que não deveria haver impunidade para violações deste tipo e recorda que o Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas (CSNU) pode remeter a situação da Síria para o Tribunal Penal Internacional (TPI) a qualquer momento. A UE congratulou-se com o último relatório da Comissão de Inquérito da ONU e exorta a Síria a permitir que a Comissão de Inquérito tenha de imediato acesso pleno e incondicional a todas as partes do país.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006243/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Allegations of torture in Syria

The organisation Human Rights Watch (HRW) has reported that documents and torture instruments have been found at government security facilities in the city of ar-Raqqah, in northern Syria, which show that detainees were tortured there. HRW says that abuses by the Syrian regime — including, but not limited to, torture — are systematic, deadly and widespread. It also warns that human rights violations by rebel forces have also increased in recent months.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these torture allegations?

2. How does she intend to condemn these violations?

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

The HR/VP is appalled by the escalating violence and the continued widespread and systematic gross violations of human rights in Syria and reiterated its condemnation of the atrocities committed by the Syrain regime. At the same time the EU urges all parties in the conflict to fully respect international humanitarian and human rights law and stated that all those responsible for atrocities and human rights violations and abuses must be held accountable. The EU reaffirms that there should be no impunity for any such violations and recalls that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) can refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court (ICC) at any time. The EU has welcomed the latest report of the UN Commission of Inquiry (CoI) and calls on Syria to allow the CoI immediate, full and unfettered accces thoughout the country.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006244/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Apoio às energias renováveis

A União Europeia definiu a estratégia «Europa 2020», que tem como objetivo criar um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo. Foram definidas sete iniciativas emblemáticas, sendo uma delas designada por «Uma Europa eficiente em termos de recursos», que tem como objetivo que 20 % do total da energia produzida seja proveniente de energias renováveis.

A Europa deve melhorar a sua independência energética face a países terceiros e diversificar as suas fontes de energia, devendo apostar cada vez mais em fontes energéticas amigas do ambiente. A 21 de maio de 2013, o Parlamento Europeu aprovou o relatório intitulado «As energias renováveis no mercado interno da energia da UE». A União Europeia pretende definir, para 2030, uma meta vinculativa de 40 a 45 % de produção de energia renovável face à globalidade da energia produzida. Atualmente, Portugal já produz 24,9 % da energia total através de fontes de energia renováveis.

1. Pode a Comissão indicar quais os incentivos e os montantes disponibilizados pela União Europeia para apoiar os investimentos realizados na área das energias renováveis entre 2014 e 2020?

2. Quais os países que estão a ter maior sucesso na implementação de estratégias de energia renovável?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(23 de julho de 2013)

A Diretiva Energias Renováveis adotada em 2009 ([1]) promove a implantação de energias renováveis mediante um conjunto de objetivos juridicamente vinculativos a nível dos Estados-Membros. Muitas das medidas necessárias para atingir esses objetivos, incluindo regimes de apoio financeiro, são da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros.

A UE contribui para a investigação no domínio das energias renováveis através dos seus programas de investigação e continuará a fazê-lo no próximo Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020. Foi afetado um montante de 5,4 mil milhões de EUR a investigação no domínio da energia para o período de 2014 a 2020. A Comissão esforçar-se-á por assegurar que pelo menos 85 % do orçamento atribuído ao desafio Energia do Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020 seja gasto em projetos no domínio dos combustíveis não fósseis.

Através do Fundo de Coesão, a UE tem concedido um financiamento significativo no domínio da energia sustentável, com mais de 10 mil milhões de EUR atribuídos na área da eficiência energética e das energias renováveis em toda a UE no período de 2007 a 2013. Além disso, tem sido colocada uma forte tónica na investigação e inovação. A parte dos fundos afetada a estes domínios é diferente consoante os Estados-Membros tendo em conta as necessidades e prioridades divergentes a nível nacional. Para o período de 2014 a 2020, a Comissão propôs um maior apoio através dos Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus (EIE), incluindo uma concentração significativa das ações da política regional da UE nas energias renováveis e na eficiência energética, bem como uma forte e contínua incidência na investigação, desenvolvimento tecnológico e inovação.

No que diz respeito ao desempenho individual dos Estados-Membros em matéria de promoção da utilização das energias renováveis, a Comissão publicou, em 27 de março de 2013, o seu primeiro relatório bianual sobre os progressos verificados na realização dos objetivos da Estratégia Europa 2020 ([2]).

([1]) Diretiva 2009/28/CE relativa à promoção da utilização de energia proveniente de fontes renováveis.
([2]) Relatório sobre os progressos no domínio das energias renováveis (COM(2013) 175 final).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006244/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Support for renewable energy

The EU has established the Europe 2020 strategy, which aims to generate smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It sets out seven flagship initiatives, one of which, entitled 'Resource-efficient Europe', aims to produce 20% of the EU's total energy from renewable sources.

Europe needs to become less dependent on third countries for its energy and diversify its energy sources, as well as invest more in environmentally friendly energy sources. On 21 May 2013, Parliament adopted a report entitled 'Renewable energy in the European internal energy market'. The EU aims to establish a binding target of 40-45% of total energy production from renewable sources by 2030. Portugal currently produces 24.9% of its total energy from renewable sources.

1. Can the Commission say what incentives and sums the EU has provided to support investments in the renewable energy sector between 2014 and 2020?

2. Which countries are having the most success implementing renewable energy strategies?

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

The Renewable Energy Directive adopted in 2009 ([1]) promotes the deployment of renewable energy through a set of legally binding targets at the level of the Member States. Many of the measures which are required to meet these targets, including financial support schemes, are the responsibility of Member States.

The EU contributes to research in renewable energy through its research programmes and will continue to do so in the upcoming Horizon 2020 programme. An amount of EUR 5.4 billion has been allocated to energy related research over the period 2014-2020. The Commission will endeavour to ensure that at least 85% of the energy challenge budget of Horizon 2020 is spent in non-fossil fuels areas.

By using the Cohesion Fund the EU has significantly funded sustainable energy, with over EUR 10 billion for energy efficiency and renewables across the EU as a whole over 2007-2013. In addition, a strong focus has been put on research and innovation. The share of funds allocated to these areas differs between Member States given diverging needs and priorities on national level. For the period 2014-2020, the Commission has proposed further support through the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds, including a significant concentration of EU Regional Policy efforts on renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as a continued strong focus on research, technological development and innovation.

As regards the individual performance of the Member States in promoting the use of renewable energy, the Commission on 27 March 2013 issued its first biannual report on progress towards the 2020 targets ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources.
([2]) Renewable energy progress report COM(2013) 175 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006245/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Luta contra a fraude e a evasão fiscal

Anualmente, a União Europeia perde mil milhões de euros de potenciais receitas fiscais devido à fraude, evasão e ao planeamento fiscal agressivo, o que representa um custo anual de 2 000 euros por cada cidadão europeu, sem que em resposta sejam tomadas medidas apropriadas.

A União Europeia deve tomar medidas imediatas e coordenadas contra os paraísos fiscais e o planeamento fiscal agressivo. Além disso, entendo que deve existir um acordo internacional sobre o intercâmbio automático de informação em matéria fiscal por forma a diminuir as fraudes e evasões fiscais.

Os Estados-Membros devem reduzir para metade o diferencial de tributação até 2020. Apesar de os países continuarem a ser competentes quanto aos respetivos sistemas fiscais, a fraude e a evasão exigem uma abordagem coordenada a nível nacional, europeu e internacional.

A Comissão Europeia deverá adotar um conjunto comum de critérios de identificação dos paraísos fiscais e criar uma lista negra pública europeia de paraísos fiscais até 31 de dezembro de 2014.

No Conselho Europeu de maio de 2013, os líderes europeus analisaram diversas medidas para combater a fraude e evasão fiscal, mas só em dezembro serão adotadas em nova cimeira europeia.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que propostas estão a ser discutidas e analisadas com vista a promover uma luta eficaz contra a fraude e a evasão fiscal?

2. Quando considera possível que essas propostas entrem em vigor?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(17 de julho de 2013)

A luta contra a fraude e a evasão fiscais é uma das principais prioridades da Comissão. Em 6 de dezembro, a Comissão adotou um pacote ambicioso que inclui um plano de ação para reforçar a luta contra a fraude e a evasão fiscais, bem como duas recomendações sobre o planeamento fiscal agressivo e a boa governação fiscal. O plano de ação inclui 34 medidas: iniciativas que a Comissão já tomou, novas iniciativas que ainda podem ser desenvolvidas no ano em curso e iniciativas que exigem um prazo mais longo. A Comissão considera que a combinação destas ações pode proporcionar uma resposta global e eficaz para os diversos desafios colocados pela fraude e a evasão fiscais, podendo, por conseguinte, contribuir para aumentar a equidade dos sistemas fiscais dos Estados-Membros, para garantir as receitas fiscais necessárias e, em última análise, para melhorar o funcionamento do mercado interno.

No que se refere às iniciativas propostas no plano de ação, a Comissão considera que a troca automática de informações é um instrumento muito eficaz para evitar e combater a fraude fiscal: aumenta a transparência e tem um efeito dissuasor sobre os autores das fraudes. Assim, a Comissão apresentou em 12 de junho de 2013, uma proposta ([1]) com vista a alargar o âmbito da troca automática de informações ao abrigo da diretiva relativa à cooperação administrativa, a partir de 1 de janeiro de 2015.

([1]) Proposta de uma Diretiva do Conselho que altera a Diretiva 2011/16/UE no que respeita à troca automática de informações obrigatória no domínio da fiscalidade, COM(2013) 348 final, de 12.6.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006245/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Fight against tax fraud and evasion

Each year, the EU loses billions of euros in potential tax revenue due to fraud, evasion and aggressive tax planning. This represents an annual cost of EUR 2 000 per EU citizen, unless appropriate measures are taken in response.

The EU must take immediate and coordinated action against tax havens and aggressive tax planning. Furthermore, I believe that an international agreement on the automatic exchange of tax information should be established to reduce tax fraud and evasion.

The Member States must halve the tax differential by 2020. Although countries remain responsible for their respective tax systems, fraud and evasion require a coordinated approach at national, European and international level.

The Commission should adopt a common set of criteria for identifying tax havens and create a public European blacklist of tax havens by 31 December 2014.

At the European Council of May 2013, EU leaders analysed several measures to combat tax fraud and evasion, but these will only be adopted at a new EU summit in December.

1. What proposals are being discussed and analysed to promote an effective fight against tax fraud and evasion?

2. When does the Commission believe that these proposals could enter into force?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

Combatting tax fraud and tax evasion is one of the key priorities of the Commission. On 6 December the Commission adopted an ambitious package comprising an Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion as well as two recommendations on aggressive tax planning and tax good governance. The action plan includes 34 measures: initiatives the Commission has already taken, new initiatives that can still be progressed this year and those requiring a longer timeframe. The Commission believes that the combination of these actions can provide a comprehensive and effective response to the various challenges posed by tax fraud and evasion and can thus contribute to increasing the fairness of Member States' tax systems, to securing much needed tax revenues and ultimately to improving the functioning of the internal market.

With regard to the initiatives proposed in the action plan, the Commission believes that automatic exchange of information is a most efficient instrument to prevent and combat tax fraud: it increases transparency and has a deterrent effect on fraudsters. The Commission therefore presented on 12 June 2013 a proposal ([1]) with a view to expanding the scope of automatic exchange of information under the directive on Administrative Cooperation from 1 January 2015.

([1]) Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 2011/16/EU as regards mandatory automatic exchange of information in the field of taxation, COM(2013)348 final of 12.6.2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006246/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Redes de Conhecimento e Inovação

Tendo em conta que:

— O artigo 162.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia aborda os objetivos do Fundo Social Europeu e refere, entre outros, o objetivo de facilitar a adaptação às mutações industriais e à evolução dos sistemas de produção;

— É necessário utilizar os fundos estruturais da Política de Coesão no sentido de apoiar as antigas regiões industrializadas para que possam encontrar eficazmente novas vias de desenvolvimento e potenciar a utilização dos espaços desocupados;

— As zonas industriais devem apostar na coexistência das funções produtivas baseadas na Sociedade do Conhecimento e atribuir maior destaque às atividades de investigação, inovação e aprendizagem, com funções residencial, lazer e comércio, assumindo-se como novos espaços integrados de desenvolvimento territorial;

— Devem ser criadas Redes de Inovação, Competitividade e Empreendedorismo a nível regional, com vista a incentivar uma crescente articulação entre empresas, universidades, centros tecnológicos, incubadores de negócios e ideias e investigadores, potenciando assim novas atividades industriais que criem riqueza e emprego à escala regional.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento da criação de Redes de Conhecimento e Inovação promovidas pela União Europeia? Se sim, em que áreas e com que objetivos foram criadas?

2. Tem intenção de criar uma verdadeira rede europeia de interação entre o mundo laboral, empresarial e académico com vista a dotar a UE de maior competitividade à escala global?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

Os programas do Feder ([1]) e da CTE ([2]) incluem apoio a redes empresariais, a parcerias público-privadas e pólos de inovação. No período atual, dos 86 mil milhões de euros afetados à investigação, à inovação, ao espírito empresarial e às TIC, montantes consideráveis destinam-se a apoiar iniciativas de pólos de inovação ([3]). É de prever que a parte dos programas de pólos de inovação nacionais apoiada pela política de coesão tenha registado um novo aumento, relativamente à parte de 19 % comunicada em 2008 ([4]). Através do objetivo CTE, que inclui mais de 80 programas e um orçamento de 8,7 mil milhões de euros, isto é, 2,5 % do total de afetações dos fundos estruturais para 2007-2013, a política de coesão apoia uma multiplicidade de projetos em rede transfronteiriços, transnacionais e inter-regionais, em matéria de inovação e de mudança industrial ([5]). Outros instrumentos são as Comunidades da Inovação e do Conhecimento do EIT, o Programa das regiões do conhecimento, o programa Eureka e as ações relacionadas com pólos de inovação do Programa Competitividade e Inovação ([6]). A Comissão lançou igualmente a Rede Europeia da Inovação no local de trabalho, com vista a estimular a adoção da inovação no local de trabalho nas empresas, através da ligação de partes interessadas a nível europeu e a nível regional.

([1]) Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional.
([2]) Cooperação Territorial Europeia.
([3]) Alguns exemplos podem ser consultados no documento de trabalho dos serviços da Comissão apenso à Comunicação «Contributo da política regional para um Crescimento Inteligente no quadro da estratégia Europa 2020» (COM(2010) 553 final), adotado em outubro de 2010. Muitos outros exemplos foram promovidos pelos prémios anuais RegioStars. As descrições de projetos da maioria de projetos cofinanciados pela UE estão acessíveis na base de dados KEEP, disponível em: http://www.interact-eu.net/keep/what_is_keep/227/2259
([4]) «Cluster policy in Europe — A brief summary of cluster policy in 31 European countries», disponível em: www.clusterobservatory.eu/system/modules/com.gridnine.opencms.modules.eco/providers/getpdf.jsp?uid=100146
([5]) Exemplos e informações pormenorizadas sobre a multiplicidade de nichos e de projetos em rede financiados por estas iniciativas podem ser consultados na base de dados KEEP: www.territorialcooperation.eu
([6]) Programa-Quadro para a Inovação.

Através de uma especialização inteligente, a Comissão promove a cooperação em três vertentes ([7]) na «descoberta empresarial» de novas oportunidades de crescimento, da cooperação e da ligação em polos de inovação para além das fronteiras, com vista a atingir uma massa crítica, sinergias, complementaridades e efeitos indiretos. Os regulamentos relativos aos fundos estruturais propostos estabelecem que os Estados-Membros devem definir nos seus programas os mecanismos que permitam adotar ações inter-regionais e transnacionais com beneficiários localizados, pelo menos, num outro Estado-Membro ([8])». A Comissão pretende também apoiar projetos de animação de pólos de inovação para novas cadeias de valor industrial no âmbito do Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020.

([7]) (Governo, investigação e empresas).
([8]) Artigo 87.°, n.° 2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006246/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Knowledge and innovation networks

— Article 162 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union addresses the objectives of the European Social Fund, including the aim of facilitating adaptation to industrial changes and to changes in production systems.

— Cohesion policy structural funds must be used to support former industrialised regions to enable them effectively to find new avenues of development and to promote the use of unoccupied spaces.

— Industrial areas need to focus on the coexistence of productive functions based on the knowledge society and put greater emphasis on research, innovation and learning activities, with residential, leisure and commercial functions, to become integrated spaces of territorial development.

— Regional innovation, competitiveness and entrepreneurship networks need to be established to encourage stronger links between businesses, universities, technology centres, business incubators and ideas and researchers, thereby fostering new industrial activities that create wealth and jobs at regional level.

1. Is the Commission aware of any knowledge and innovation networks promoted by the EU having been established? If so, in which areas and with what objectives?

2. Does it intend to create a genuine European network of interaction between the working, business and academic worlds to make the EU more competitive on a global scale?

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

The ERDF ([1]) and ETC ([2]) programmes include support for business networks, public-private partnerships and clusters. In the current period, from the EUR 86 billion allocated to research, innovation, entrepreneurship and ICT; considerable amounts go to supporting cluster initiatives ([3]). It can be expected that the share of national cluster programmes supported through cohesion policy has further increased from the share of 19% reported in 2008 ([4]). Through the ETC objective, including more than 80 programmes and a budget of EUR 8.7 billion or 2.5% of the total 2007-13 Structural Funds (SF) allocations, cohesion policy supports a multiplicity of cross-border, transnational and interregional networking projects on innovation and industrial change ([5]). Other tools are the EIT's Knowledge and Innovation Communities, the Regions of Knowledge programme, the Eureka programme and cluster-related actions of the Competiveness and Innovation Programme ([6]). The Commission also launched the European Workplace Innovation Network to stimulate the uptake of workplace innovation in companies by connecting stakeholders on European and regional level.

Through smart specialisation the Commission promotes triple-helix cooperation ([7]) in the 'entrepreneurial discovery' of new growth opportunities, the cooperation and clustering across borders to achieve critical mass, synergies, complementarities and spill-overs. The proposed SF regulations stipulate that Member States set out in their programmes 'the arrangements for interregional and transnational actions with beneficiaries located in at least one other Member State ([8])'. The Commission also intends to support cluster animated projects for new industrial value chains under Horizon 2020.

([1]) European Regional and Development Fund.
([2]) European Territorial cooperation.
([3]) Some examples can be found in the Commission Staff Working Document associated to the communication on 'Regional Policy contributing to smart growth in Europe 2020' (COM(2010) 553 Final), adopted in Oct. 2010. Many other examples have been promoted by the annual RegioStars awards. Project descriptions of most EU co-funded ETC projects are accessible through the KEEP database available at: http://www.interact-eu.net/keep/what_is_keep/227/2259.
([4]) 'Cluster policy in Europe — A brief summary of cluster policy in 31 European countries', available at www.clusterobservatory.eu/system/modules/com.gridnine.opencms.modules.eco/providers/getpdf.jsp?uid=100146.
([5]) Examples and detailed information on the multiplicity of cluster and networking projects funded by these initiatives can be found on the KEEP database: www.territorialcooperation.eu
([6]) Innovation Framework Programme.
([7]) (government, research, business).
([8]) Article 87.2.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-006247/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των τραπεζών και η συμμετοχή των συνταξιοδοτικών ταμείων

Η ανακεφαλαιοποίηση της Εθνικής Τράπεζας της Ελλάδας (ΕΤΕ) άρχισε πρόσφατα, σύμφωνα με το πρόγραμμα που συμφωνήθηκε με την Τρόικα και την ισχύουσα νομοθεσία (3864/2010). Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις τεράστιες απώλειες που έχουν υποστεί τα συνταξιοδοτικά ταμεία στην Ελλάδα μετά το πρόγραμμα PSI (συμμετοχή του ιδιωτικού τομέα), απαιτείται να δοθεί άμεση προσοχή εκ μέρους της Επιτροπής στα ακόλουθα ζητήματα:

1. Τα συνταξιοδοτικά ταμεία επιθυμούν να μετάσχουν στο πρόγραμμα ανακεφαλαιοποίησης, αλλά δεν έχουν τη δυνατότητα να το πράξουν. Ποια είναι η θέση της Επιτροπής επί του θέματος; Για ποιο λόγο κατά τη διάρκεια του προγράμματος PSI τα συνταξιοδοτικά ταμεία θεωρήθηκαν ιδιωτικοί επενδυτές, ενώ κατά τη διάρκεια της ανακεφαλαιοποίησης έχουν θεωρηθεί ιδρύματα του δημόσιου τομέα; Συμφωνεί η διαδικασία αυτή με την παράγραφο 1 του άρθρου 29 της οδηγίας 79/91/ΕΟΚ, σχετικά με τη διατήρηση των δικαιωμάτων προαίρεσης παλαιών μετόχων σε σύγκριση με νέους μετόχους, καθώς και με το άρθρο 42 το οποίο διασφαλίζει τη μη διακριτική μεταχείριση των επενδυτών;

2. Συμφωνεί με τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ η διατήρηση εκ μέρους των συνταξιοδοτικών ταμείων τίτλων αγοράς μετοχών που εικάζεται ότι είναι υψηλής απόδοσης, σε περίπτωση που η διαδικασία ανακεφαλαιοποίησης διεξαχθεί τόσο ομαλά όσο προβλέπεται; Εάν τούτο συμβαίνει, προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να προσφύγει ενδεχομένως σε ένδικα μέσα που μπορούν να παρεμποδίσουν ή και να ακυρώσουν τη διαδικασία ανακεφαλαιοποίησης, και ιδίως της ΕΤΕ;

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

Βάσει του Ν.3864/2010 και της πράξης του υπουργικού συμβουλίου 38/2012 δεν ισχύει επί του παρόντος απαγόρευση ή παρεμπόδιση της συμμετοχής φυσικού προσώπου ή νομικής οντότητας σε αυξήσεις κεφαλαίου των ελληνικών τραπεζών. Η πράξη του υπουργικού συμβουλίου 6 της 5.6.2013 ορίζει τον «ιδιωτικό τομέα» ως δικαιούμενο να λάβει τίτλους αγοράς μετοχών που θα εκδώσει το ΕΤΧΣ. Δεν παρεμποδίζει τους φορείς της γενικής κυβέρνησης, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των συνταξιοδοτικών ταμείων, από την άσκηση των δικαιωμάτων προτίμησης στις αυξήσεις του κεφαλαίου, αλλά διευκρινίζει ότι οι εν λόγω φορείς δεν ανήκουν στον «ιδιωτικό τομέα» βάσει του Ν.3864/2010, έτσι δεν δικαιούνται να λάβουν τίτλους αγοράς μετοχών του ΕΤΧΣ. Η πράξη 38/2012 ορίζει ότι μόνο οι επενδυτές ιδιωτικού τομέα θα είναι σε θέση να λαμβάνουν τίτλους αγοράς μετοχών των μετοχών που αγοράζουν. Κατά συνέπεια, οι φορείς που ανήκουν στη γενική κυβέρνηση, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των συνταξιοδοτικών ταμείων, δεν θα δύνανται, ενώ οι ιδιωτικοί φορείς, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των ιδιωτικών συνταξιοδοτικών ταμείων, θα δύνανται να λάβουν τίτλους αγοράς μετοχών. Με την οδηγία 2012/30/ΕΟΚ χορηγείται στους υφιστάμενους μετόχους το δικαίωμα απόκτησης νέων μετοχών μέσω της άσκησης των δικαιωμάτων προτίμησης (διαδικασία που ακολούθησαν οι τράπεζες κατά τις εν εξελίξει αυξήσεις κεφαλαίου). Οι τίτλοι αγοράς μετοχών που θα εκδώσει το ΕΤΧΣ συνδέονται με τις μετοχές του και ο κάτοχος τέτοιων τίτλων έχει το δικαίωμα να αποκτήσει ήδη εκδοθείσες μετοχές του ΕΤΧΣ, βάσει της πράξης 38/2012. Δεδομένου ότι η αντιμετώπιση των συνταξιοδοτικών ταμείων κατά τη συμμετοχή του ιδιωτικού τομέα στην ελληνική αναδιάρθρωση χρέους δεν εμπίπτει στο πεδίο εφαρμογής του δικαίου της ΕΕ, εναπόκειται στα κράτη μέλη και μόνο η διασφάλιση των υποχρεώσεών τους όσον αφορά την τήρηση των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων τους.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006247/13
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Recapitalisation of banks and the participation of pension funds

The recapitalisation of the National Bank of Greece (NBG) recently began, in accordance with the programme agreed upon with the troika and the legislation in force (3864/2010). Taking into account the tremendous losses suffered by pension funds in Greece following the PSI (private sector involvement) programme, the following questions require the immediate attention of the Commission:

1. Pension funds wish to participate in the recapitalisation programme, but are being prevented from doing so. What is the Commission's position on this matter? Why were pension funds treated as private investors during the PSI programme but as public sector institutions during recapitalisation? Does this process comply with EC Directive 79/91/EEC, Article 29(1) on safeguarding the options of established stockholders in relation to new owners, as well as Article 42, which ensures the non-discriminatory treatment of investors?

2. Is the withholding of presumably lucrative warrants from pension funds, should recapitalisation proceed smoothly as foreseen, compliant with EC law? If so, is the Commission prepared for the possibility of legal action that may hinder or indeed annul the recapitalisation process, particularly of the NBG?

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

Under law 3864/2010 and Cabinet Act 38/2012, there is neither a ban nor preventions currently in place for any person or legal entity to participating in capital increases of the Greek banks. Cabinet Act 6 of 5/6/2013 defines the term 'private sector' entitled to receive the warrants the HFSF shall issue. It does not prevent the entities of the general government, including pension funds, from exercising their pre-emption rights in capital increases, but it clarifies that these entities are not part of the 'private sector' under law 3864/2010 so they are not entitled to receive HFSF warrants. Act 38/2012 stipulates that only private sector investors should be able to receive warrants on top of the equity they acquire. Consequently, entities part of the general government, including pension funds, will not be able to receive warrants, while private entities, including private pension funds, will. Directive 2012/30/EEC grants existing shareholders the right to acquire new shares by exercising their pre-emption rights (procedure followed by the banks in the ongoing capital increases). The warrants HFSF shall issue are linked to its shares and the holder of such warrants has the right to acquire HFSF's shares already issued, under Act 38/2012. As the treatment of pension funds during the private sector involvement in Greek debt restructuring falls outside the implementation of EC law, it is for MS alone to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights are respected.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-006248/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(3 juin 2013)

Objet: Bois dans les constructions

Le bâtiment est un des secteurs clés de l'engagement de l'Union européenne contre le changement climatique dans lequel le bois a toute sa place, car il favorise le stockage de carbone et la lutte contre la pollution atmosphérique. Qu'il s'agisse de rénovation ou de nouvelles constructions, le bois se prête à tous les projets d'aménagement et de plus en plus de collectivités et de particuliers font le choix du bois pour ses qualités mécaniques, isolantes et esthétiques. Des mesures ont été prises dans les États membres de l'Union européenne, comme en France avec le Grenelle de l'environnement, afin de développer l'utilisation du bois dans la construction comme alternative à des produits énergivores et moins respectueux de l'environnement.

Néanmoins, saisi par le syndicat français de l'industrie cimentière et par la fédération de l'industrie du béton, le Conseil constitutionnel a annoncé, le 24 mai dernier, avoir censuré l'obligation de prévoir un minimum de matériaux en bois dans les nouvelles constructions. Les sages ont jugé que l'exigence de telles normes techniques était susceptible de n'avoir qu'une incidence indirecte sur l'environnement et qu'elle portait atteinte à la liberté d'entreprendre.

Il est à noter qu'au niveau européen, la construction durable figure parmi les six domaines de l'initiative «marchés porteurs» de 2007. Elle est également identifiée comme une ligne d'action prioritaire dans la mise à jour de la communication sur la politique industrielle européenne (COM(2012)0582).

À ce titre, de nouvelles normes européennes seront élaborées afin de fixer des critères concernant la durabilité des produits et des processus de construction et la compétitivité durable du secteur de la construction sera renforcée. En outre, afin d'accélérer le passage de la recherche à la commercialisation, des mesures concrètes seront proposées dans le cadre du partenariat public-privé «bâtiments économes en énergie» et d'une communication sur les bâtiments durables (2013).

Sans lui demander de commenter la décision du Conseil constitutionnel français, la Commission ne craint-elle pas que l'annulation de l'obligation d'introduire un quota de bois dans les constructions remette en cause la contribution de la construction en bois à la lutte contre le changement climatique en France?

La Commission a-t-elle réalisé une étude comparative entre les différents systèmes de soutien à la construction en bois dans les États membres et compte-t-elle proposer qu'ils soient harmonisés au niveau européen?

Quelle place occupera la construction en bois dans la communication sur les bâtiments durables?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(22 juillet 2013)

La conception des bâtiments peut faire intervenir de multiples combinaisons de matériaux, l'objectif étant d'atteindre un niveau élevé d'efficacité énergétique, de sécurité (protection contre les incendies ou les émissions, par exemple) et de confort, et de parvenir à une utilisation rationnelle des ressources. Le choix de ces matériaux est laissé à la discrétion des professionnels de la construction et de leurs clients. Les nouveaux modes de conception qui continuent de voir le jour offrent des possibilités inédites d'associer matériaux nouveaux et traditionnels en vue d'une performance encore accrue.

L'Union a adopté en la matière une démarche fondée sur la prise en compte de la performance, sans privilégier a priori le recours à un matériau plutôt qu'à un autre. En effet, la priorité donnée à un seul matériau, si elle ne s'accompagne pas d'une prise en compte de la performance de celui-ci dans le bâtiment considéré, ne garantit en rien une amélioration des performances globales de l'édifice (d'un point de vue énergétique ou dans d'autres domaines). En conséquence, la Commission ne juge pas opportun de commenter la décision du Conseil constitutionnel français. Elle a récemment engagé une étude visant à évaluer le bénéfice climatique qu'apporte l'utilisation de la biomasse forestière et des produits de bois récoltés dans des applications telles que la construction en bois.

S'il convient d'encourager, globalement, l'utilisation de matériaux de construction durables, la formulation de recommandations trop générales concernant des matériaux particuliers a été évitée jusqu'à présent, afin de permettre la poursuite de l'amélioration de la conception des bâtiments en Europe et d'encourager la compétitivité de l'ensemble du secteur européen de la construction.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006248/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Use of timber as a building material

The construction sector is central to the European Union's climate change strategy, which places special emphasis on the use of timber, reflecting the role trees play in storing carbon and in combating air pollution. Timber lends itself to being used in all kinds of building and renovation projects, and an increasing number of private individuals and public authorities are choosing it for its static and thermal properties, not to mention for aesthetic reasons. Steps have been taken by Member States, for example by France in organising the Grenelle environment summit, in an effort to increase the use of timber in construction as an alternative to materials which are less energy efficient and less environmentally sound.

Despite this, on 24 May 2013 the French Constitutional Court, to which the matter had been referred by organisations representing the French cement and concrete industries, announced that it had struck down the requirement to use a minimum amount of timber in new builds. The judges took the view that technical standards such as these were likely to have only an indirect impact on the environment and that they were restricting entrepreneurial freedom.

It should be borne in mind that at European level sustainable construction is one of the six areas targeted in the 2007 Lead Markets Initiative (LMI). It is also singled out as a Priority Action Line in the Industrial Policy Communication Update (COM(2012)0582).

On that basis, the EU will draw up new standards laying down criteria on the sustainability of construction materials and processes, which will in turn boost the long-term competitiveness of the construction industry. Moreover, in an effort to reduce research-to-market lead-in times, specific proposals will be put forward as part of the public-private partnership for energy-efficient buildings and in the communication on sustainable buildings to be published in 2013.

Without commenting on the ruling by the French Constitutional Court, can the Commission say whether it is concerned that doing away with the requirement to use a minimum amount of timber in construction projects may undermine the contribution that timber use can make towards France's efforts to tackle climate change?

Has the Commission carried out a comparative study of the schemes which Member States employ to encourage the use of timber in construction, and does it intend to propose the harmonisation of these schemes at European level?

How much emphasis will be placed on the use of timber in construction in the forthcoming communication on sustainable buildings?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

Building designs allow for a wide range of combinations of materials to achieve high levels of energy efficiency, resource efficiency, safety (e.g. fire, emissions) and comfort, which choice is left to the discretion of construction practioners and their clients. Even today, new designs are showing new potentials for the combination of new and traditional materials to achieve even higher performance.

The EU approach is a performance-based one, without pre-determination of any one material's use over that of another. Indeed, there is no indication that the focus on only one specific material, without taking its specific performance in the building into account, would improve the overall energy or other performance of a building. Accordingly, the Commission does not find it opportune to comment on the French Constitutional Court's decision. The Commission has recently launched a study to try and estimate the climate benefits of using forest biomass and harvested wood products for material applications, such as wood construction.

Therefore, while in general the use of sustainable building materials is supported, overly general recommendations for specific materials have so far been avoided to allow for further improving European designs and to help foster the competitiveness of the whole European construction sector.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006249/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Mutual recognition of qualifications

Under EU Directive 2005/36/EC, Member States are required to assist recognition of professional qualifications of citizens of other Member States who wish to practice an occupation within their jurisdiction. At a time of global economic uncertainty, such mutual recognition is vital for harnessing the growth potential offered by the cross-border mobility of labour and services.

However, in recent times, in my constituency, Northern Ireland, I have been made aware that professional qualifications held by workers and operators in the construction industry have not been properly recognised by some authorities in the Republic of Ireland.

To what extent has EU Directive 2005/36/EC been enforced by each of the 27 EU Member States?

What mechanisms exist through which individual workers or Member States may report a presumed failure to enforce EU Directive 2005/36/EC in another jurisdiction?

What specific EU legislation is in place to facilitate mutual recognition of professional qualifications in the area of construction?

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

Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications has been duly transposed into the national legislation of all EU Member States. Although it is for national authorities to ensure effective enforcement of the provisions of the directive, the Commission employs a number of methods for enforcement monitoring (e.g. gathering statistics on the cross-border mobility of the various professions and regular contacts with industry representatives).

In individual cases of a jurisdiction's presumed failure to enforce the provisions of the directive, affected citizens may seek assistance through national competent authorities or courts. In this respect, the national contact points ([1]) on the recognition of professional qualifications and especially the Solvit ([2]) network could be particularly useful. A complaint outlining all relevant information and the alleged breach of EC law may also be addressed to the Commission.

Construction-sector professions are covered by the general system of Directive 2005/36/EC and there are no specific EU-level recognition rules applicable to this sector (except for the profession of architect — one of the seven sectoral professions for which the directive sets out specific provisions). Finally, the proposal for modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive aims at further facilitating the cross-border mobility of professionals in the EU by simplifying the procedures for recognition of professional qualifications and enhancing trust among national authorities.

([1]) A list of national contact points on the recognition of professional qualifications is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/contact/national_contact_points_en.htm

([2]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006250/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Debt advice and support

In a study published in 2012 the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) determined that over 10% of people living in the EU were in debt in connection with a range of bills and payments. Worryingly, the same report estimated that in 2010 — at the height of the financial crisis — almost one third of EU residents aged 15 or over felt at risk of falling into debt due to loss of work, lower incomes and higher household bills.

In light of these findings, can the Commission kindly outline:

— what assistance the EU currently provides to families across the EU that have encountered household debt due to the global economic crisis;

— what financial or operational support — if any — the EU provides for personal debt advice services currently in operation throughout Member States;

— what steps is it taking to offset the negative impact of the economic downturn — such as unemployment and associated debt — on citizens across the EU who are:

(a) on low incomes;

(b) suffering from ill health;

(c) between the ages of 16 and 24?

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

The Commission cannot provide direct support for the families that have occurred debt. It cannot either provide direct financial support to personal debt advice services. However, it is aware of the issue and provides analytical support to Member States for them to help affected families.

The Commission is finalising a study on household over-indebtedness, that is looking at the definition of over-indebtedness, its causes and consequences and which will look into the existing measures at national level aimed at alleviating the impact of over-indebtedness, including the existing support at national level on personal debt advice services. The study is due to be published in autumn this year.

The Commission pay particular attention in its policy recommendation on mitigating the negative impact of the crisis, and particularly on the most fragile citizens. One of this year's Annual Growth Survey's priorities is precisely on 'tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis'. Besides in its proposals for Country Specific Recommendation ([1]) published on 29 May, the Commission also called on several Member States ([2]) to pay particular attention to child poverty and income support measures towards families and children. Housing cost overburden is monitored at EU level.

There are many initiatives targeting youth at EU level, e.g. the Youth Guarantee recommendation ([3]), and the Youth Employment Initiative ([4]) to support the objectives of the Youth Employment Package ([5]) and notably the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm
([2]) BG, HU, EE, IT, LV, RO, UK.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1829&furtherNews=yes.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036&newsId=1731&furtherNews=yes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006251/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Measles outbreak

The United Kingdom is currently experiencing a measles epidemic, with the number of confirmed cases rising to 1 039 in recent days. Worryingly, parents of young people between the ages of 10 and 18 have rushed to health centres across the country to have their children immunised with the MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccination.

In light of the fact that these young people were not vaccinated when they were infants, owing to a discredited report which linked the MMR vaccine to several health defects, can the Commission please outline:

What provision exists at EU level which promotes uptake of the MMR vaccine and warns parents of the dangers of failing to immunise their children against the disease?

How many cases of measles have been confirmed across the 27 EU Member States in the past three years?

How many EU citizens have died as a result of contracting measles in the past three years?

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

1. In June 2011, the Council of the EU adopted conclusions on childhood immunisation to strengthen the efforts to improve immunisation coverage to vaccine preventable diseases, including measles, mumps and rubella ([1]). In 2012 the European Commission, organised an international conference on childhood immunisation to follow up in particular the prevention of measles and rubella. During the conference, specific discussions took place to assess progress, challenges and priorities for further actions in the area ([2]). Within its five-year strategy for measles and rubella elimination, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has developed a number of evidence-based tools aimed at providing support to Member States in the area of communication for strengthening and promoting vaccination coverage. The most recent tool is targeted at improving vaccination coverage among hard-to-reach population groups in European countries ([3]).

2. Between 1 January 2011 and 19 June 2013, a total of 42 209 measles cases were reported in the EU/EEA.

3. From 1 January 2011 until 19 June 2013, a total of 9 deaths were reported through the EU surveillance system for communicable diseases operated by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Eight deaths were reported in 2011 and one death in 2012.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/122391.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/events/ev_20121016_en.htm
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?ID=1053.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006252/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Brain drain

In my constituency, Northern Ireland, a recent report, compiled and published by the Fermanagh Economic Development Organisation, found that many young people in the Fermanagh area are simply being 'educated for export' due to a lack of job opportunities when they leave education. One in five young people in Northern Ireland are unemployed, and growing numbers are moving abroad to seek work.

In this context, I kindly request that the Commission respond to the following queries:

Can the Commission please detail how many UK citizens a year have emigrated from the EU in search of employment in the past five years?

Can the Commission break down the figures for UK emigration in this period by a) age and b) region of the United Kingdom.

What steps are being taken at EU level to encourage young people, including school leavers and graduates, to remain in their country of birth and to wield their skills and knowledge locally for the benefit of the regional economy?

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

1. Eurostat emigration data indicate that over the period 2007-2011 an average of around 150 thousands UK citizens left the UK ([1]) each year, to both EU and non-EU countries ([2]).

2. As for the UK citizens having emigrated recently (i.e.: having left the UK during 2011 for an EU or non-EU country), Eurostat emigration statistics indicate that most of them were aged 25-34 (30% of all emigrants), 35-44 (22%) or 15-24 (20%). Eurostat emigration data broken down by individual region of origin are not available. Such detailed data may be available by the UK Statistical Office.

3. The Commission undertakes, particularly through the ESF, a vast range of measures increasing the employability of young people in Northern Ireland and enabling them to find a job, preferably in their region. The EU supports the establishment of national qualifications frameworks that facilitate communication between stakeholders on skills needs in the labour market, which may contribute to offering education and training that is specifically relevant for the local labour market in Northern Ireland. In April 2013, the Council adopted a recommendation on the Youth Guarantee ([3]) based upon the Commission's proposal. In July, the Commission launched the European Alliance for Apprenticeships and in December it will present a proposal related to a Quality Framework for Traineeships. The EU also supports policies and services of guidance and counselling ([4]), which aim to support citizens' decisions on learning and career paths.

None of these measures addressing youth employability are aiming at binding young people to the local labour market, neither at constraining them to migrate. The EU promotes mobility in the labour market in this respect also for young people ('Your first EURES job').

([1]) As Eurostat data on emigration flows are not broken down by nationality and next country of residence simultaneously, it is not possible to detail how many UK citizens have migrated to non-EU countries (i.e.: 'emigrated from the EU' as asked by the Honourable Member). In terms of destination countries, Eurostat data indicate that, among the 351 thousands emigrants from the UK in 2011 (including many non-UK nationals returning to their origin country), 226 thousands (or 65%) went to a non-EU country while 124 thousands went to another EU country (35%).

([2]) Net migration is however much lower as Eurostat immigration data indicate that on average around 85 thousands UK citizens settled in (or returned to) the UK each year over the same period.

([3]) The recommendation calls on Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

([4]) http://www.euroguidance.net/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006253/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Country-specific negotiations for allocating CSF funding 2014-2020

The Commission's Work Programme for 2013 includes the aim of agreeing country-specific negotiation mandates for the Common Strategic Framework funds for the period 2014-2020.

With this in mind, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

What is the current status of negotiations aimed at setting priorities for the allocation of EU Structural and Cohesion Funds in the United Kingdom, and in Northern Ireland as a region, between 2014-2020?

What efforts are being made to ensure that investment from these Funds will be allocated to projects that aim to tackle youth unemployment, reduce social exclusion and support small and medium-sized enterprises in Member States?

What steps are being taken to ensure that local and regional stakeholders are fully involved in the process of setting priorities for the allocation of CSF funds?

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

The Commission regulatory proposals for investment priorities and thematic objectives for European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) projects in the Member States were approved by the College on October 2011 and have since undergone a series of amendments in the discussions with the Council and European Parliament. In the absence of the definitive Multi-Annual Financial Framework for the 2014-2020 period, the funding priorities and corresponding financial envelopes for the Member States and component regions are not yet finalised.

The promotion of employment and labour mobility, the promotion of social inclusion, combating poverty and enhancement of SME competitiveness are included amongst the 11 thematic objectives that future ESIF projects will support, thus reflecting key challenges confronting Member State economies.

The draft regulatory framework specifies that, in the development of partnership agreements and programmes, Member States are obliged to organise partnership arrangements involving competent regional, local, urban and other public authorities, economic and social partners and civil society bodies. The Northern Ireland authorities have already established a consultative partnership group of regional stakeholders to consider potential activities for support from 2014 under the Investment for Growth and Jobs objective of cohesion policy, as well as Northern Ireland's contribution to a United Kingdom draft partnership agreement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006254/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Famine in Somalia

According to a report by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), approximately 260 000 people in Somalia died as a result of famine between 2010 and 2012.

With this in mind, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

What level of humanitarian assistance did the EU provide between 2010 and 2012 with a view to offsetting the impact of the famine in Somalia?

What actions are currently being taken at EU level to address the humanitarian needs of the population of Somalia and to ensure that early action is taken in the event of another famine?

What steps is the Commission taking to support the fight against terrorism in Somalia and to promote political stability?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The level of HA to Somalia was rapidly increased to respond to the food crisis, with EUR 77 million in 2011. In 2012, EUR 60.8 million were allocated to Somalia and EUR 46.6 million currently in 2013. This comes in addition to EUR 412 million provided by development since 2008 and which also contributed to alleviate the long term impact of the crisis.

The lessons learned from this period, in particular on early warning systems and build-up of resilience have helped the international community to avoid the repetition of such a situation in the Sahel in 2012.

The situation has improved since the peak of the famine but humanitarian aid remains essential to reach the more than 1 million people still in need. As 2/3 of these people live in Al Shebaab controlled areas, security and access are a challenge. Access can only be obtained if humanitarian aid continues to be purely needs based and fully compliant with humanitarian principles. For this reason, it is essential that humanitarian aid remains separate from the political and military agenda.

Main sectors of humanitarian interventions include support to livelihoods, water and sanitation, primary healthcare, shelter and non-food items, food security and protection initiatives.

The EU supports the African Union mission in Somalia with contributions to date of around EUR 479 million. Furthemore, the EU Training Mission provides advice to Somali institutions and supports the training of Somali security forces. Through the EU Special Representative and EU Special Envoy, the EU works closely with all regional parties to promote political stability. In September the EU and Somalia will co-host a high level international Conference in Brussels on 'a New Deal for Somalia', that will include a political and security framework.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006255/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Support for childcare across the EU

As a result of the global economic downturn, which has led to austerity measures and public-sector cuts across the Member States, household incomes have decreased and unemployment is on the rise. In many countries, such as Greece, the proportion of people out of work is over 25%. In many Member States this situation is compounded by a lack of effective, affordable childcare, which prevents women from entering the labour market.

With this in mind, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

What current EU provisions exist to support the creation of effective, affordable childcare across Member States, with a view to allowing more women to enter employment?

What EU funds currently support childcare initiatives and what plans are there to extend this focus for the 2014-2020 programming period?

Can the Commission please detail any figures it possesses regarding the relationship between access to childcare and female employment rates across the Member States?

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

Opening up access to the labour market and to employment for a second wage-earner from the household thanks to suitable tax incentives and the introduction of affordable, quality childcare services was identified as a priority in the Annual Growth Survey ([1]). Twelve Member States (AT, CZ, DE, EE, ES, HU, IT, MT, NL, PL, SK, UK) have received a recommendation on the employment of women and on the availability of childcare services in 2013.

The Commission has just adopted a report on the Member States performances towards the Barcelona targets ([2]) on childcare facilities and invites Member States to step up their efforts to achieve these objectives. The report highlights the positive relationship between the access to quality childcare and the participation of women in the labour market.

The Commission encourages Member States to make use of the financial support provided through the Structural Funds:

— In most Member States, European Social Fund operational programmes tackle sustainable participation of women in the labour market and reconciliation notably with measures to facilitate access to childcare and care to other dependents. In the next programming period 2014-2020 the ESF will continue to support such measures.

— The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supports women in employment through investments in childcare infrastructure. In the current period 74,3% of the planned amount for these investments (EUR 616 034 837) has been allocated to selected operations. For the next period, the improvement of the quality and access to childcare facilities is addressed in the Commission's preparatory work as a basis for the negotiations with the Member States.

([1]) COM(2012)750.
([2]) COM(2013) 322.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006257/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Support for wind farms

In my constituency, Northern Ireland, more and more farmers are seeking to harness the economic opportunities offered by the renewable energy sector by diversifying into the generation of wind energy. This has seen the assembly of many wind farms across the Province.

In this context, can the Commission kindly respond to the following queries:

What steps have been taken — and what funds are in place — at EU level to support diversification into the generation and storage of renewable energy and specifically toward the erection of wind turbines?

Can the Commission please detail what plans it has to continue its focus on expanding the renewable energy sector in the 2014-2020 programming period?

Can the Commission kindly provide any figures at its disposal relating to a) how many wind farms have been erected across the EU in the past three years and b) the average cost of connection to the electricity grid for individual wind turbines across Member States?

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

1. The EU budget does not provide any direct support to the production of renewable energy. However, the Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC allows Member States to provide such support and decide which renewable energy technologies (RES) should be supported to meet their legally binding national targets. Research in renewables is being supported with EU funding, with EUR 200 million spent on wind energy technology under the EU's 7th Framework Programme for Research (FP7) for the period 2007-2013. In addition, EUR 565 million have been allocated from the European Economic and Recovery Programme (EEPR) for the construction of renewable energy infrastructures. EUR 9 billion in loans have been provided from the European Investment Bank (EIB) from 2005 to 2013. Finally, in the 2007-2013 programming period of EU cohesion policy about EUR 4.5 billion have been allocated to renewable energy projects, including about EUR 660 million to wind energy projects.

2. For the period 2014-2020 the Commission remains committed to supporting the development of cost-effective RES under Horizon 2020 as well as cohesion policy. The exact amounts remain to be decided.

3. The number of onshore wind farms connected in the past three years can be calculated based on an estimated number of turbines installed per year onshore assuming a 2MW average capacity. On that basis 4500, 4400 and 5400 onshore turbines came online in 2010, 2011 and 2012, respectively. Individual turbines are seldom connected to the grid because they are generally part of a wind farm which is what is connected to the grid. The wind farm's connection costs will depend on the grid capacity available in a given area or possible reinforcement costs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006259/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Equine databases across the EU

In light of the horsemeat scandal which recently engulfed many EU Member States and raised questions as to the traceability of horses, the use of equine databases to record the movement of animals has become ever more important.

In this context, can the Commission please outline:

Which Member States currently operate a government-funded equine database to record the movement of horses within their jurisdictions?

What funding, in present terms and in the past, has the EU allotted to equine databases, both private and public, across EU Member States?

Whether EU funding will be made available in the future to invest in the design and administration of equine databases across Member States?

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

According to EC law, a national central database for horse passports is optional ([1]).

Following an inquiry within the framework of the action plan to address horse meat issues, Greece, Sweden and the UK have no central database, Cyprus and Finland have a single database for registered *equidae* and *equidae* for breeding and production respectively and Ireland is developing its central database. All other Member States have informed the Commission about the operation of a central database.

In accordance with Article 21 of Regulation (EC) No 504/2008, all central databases record the issuing of passports. Moreover, some of them require notifying the change of ownership. However, in the absence of a legal base in Union law, none of them records the movement of *equidae*.

The Commission has not provided any financial support to the establishment of existing central databases and under the current financial framework there are no plans to make such co-financing available to Member States.

([1]) Article 23 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 504/2008 of 6 June 2008 implementing Council Directives 90/426/EEC and 90/427/EEC as regards methods for the identification of *equidae* (OJ L 149, 7.6.2008, p. 3).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006260/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Heart disease deaths in the EU

In my constituency, Northern Ireland, a recent study by the British Heart Foundation found that the number of people dying as a result of coronary heart disease has halved in the past thirty years. However, approximately 23 000 people continue to live in Northern Ireland with heart disease.

In this context, can the Commission please:

— state how many EU citizens have died as a result of heart disease in the past 10 years;

— provide a breakdown of these figures by a) Member State and b) average age of the deceased;

— state what steps have been taken — and what funding has been allocated — at EU level to promote projects that focus on preventing heart disease and supporting those living with its consequences.

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

The Commission provides datasets on causes of death at EU level by disease, age, gender and regional level presented according to the International Classification of Diseases ([1]). From 2001-2010, over 7.3 million EU citizens died from ischaemic heart diseases with an annual number over 787 000 in 2001 and over 668 000 in 2010. In annex, this data is presented in a table broken down by Member State.

In view of the fact that cardiovascular diseases are preventable, the EU has concentrated on addressing its key risk factors in particular tobacco, through legislative action on Tobacco Products and on advertising of such products as well as awareness raising campaigns. The Commission has also developed action on obesity and lack of physical activity, through the work with Member States and stakeholders under the 'Strategy on nutrition, overweight, and obesity-related health issues' ([2]).

The implementation of the Nutrition Strategy builds on effective partnership with relevant stakeholders and Member States represented in the High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity, and the Platform for action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

There are a number of projects related to identifying and exchanging good practice on cardio vascular disease prevention under the Health Programme, notably the 'European Heart Health charter' ([3]) funded with EUR 1 499 958. In addition, the projects 'European Heart Health Strategy I and II' were funded with EUR 2 649 322, and the 'EU evidence-based Consensus Conference on Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases ([4])' was funded with EUR 226 351.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/implementation_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.escardio.org/about/what/advocacy/Pages/health-charter.aspx.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/projects/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006262/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Marking the centenary of the First World War

Next year, 2014, one hundred years will have elapsed since the start of World War I, which engulfed Europe and claimed the lives of approximately 16 million people across the world, including a lost generation of young people. To mark this centenary, several EU Member States have already committed to official programmes and commemorations, which will explain the causes and consequences of the war and, most importantly, remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the cause of peace.

In this context:

What steps are being taken at EU level to commemorate the centenary of the First World War, including remembering the colossal human loss experienced by nations across Europe?

What EU funding will be made available in the new programming period 2014-2018 for projects in Member States that seek to mark the centenary of World War I, educate future generations on the causes, events and consequences of the conflict, and remember those who lost their lives?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

With regards to funding projects commemorating the centenary of the First World War, the Commission acknowledges the importance of remembrance in the proposal for a regulation establishing the 'Europe for Citizens' programme for the period 2014-2020. The proposal is currently in the legislative process of adoption. It will broaden the focus of remembrance to defining moments in modern European history, including the First World War, and increase the share of remembrance actions from 4% to 20% of the total programme budget.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006263/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: EU-Israel ACAA

On 23 October 2012, the European Parliament voted by 379 votes to 230 in favour of approving the EU-Israel Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial products (ACAA). The Agreement, which removes several barriers to trade of pharmaceutical products between the EU and Israel — reducing manufacturing costs and enabling products to reach consumers faster — came into force on 4 January 2013.

With this in mind, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

Can the Commission kindly provide a status report as to the implementation of the EU-Israel ACAA?

What information — if any — is available regarding the initial impact of the Agreement on the level of bilateral trade between the EU and Israel in the area of pharmaceuticals?

Does the Commission plan to pursue increased EU-Israel relations in terms of trade in other policy areas moving forward?

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

1. The EU-Israel Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial products (ACAA) is in operation for the only sector it covers — pharmaceutical good manufacturing practice and the initial exchanges of information regarding the nomination of responsible authorities, foreseen in Articles 8 and 9, and regarding contact points, have taken place. However, since the Agreement entered into force only on 19 January 2013, it is too early in the process for the Commission to be able to provide a status report on its implementation.

2. The Agreement came into force only in January 2013, and it is difficult to discern the impact on trade over such a short period.

The table in annex shows figures up to April 2013 (the latest month for which such figures are available) for trade in pharmaceutical products between Israel and the EU, with the figures for 2012 for comparison.

3. The EU has expressed its intention, as was stated at the June 2009 EU-Israel Association Council and confirmed at the July 2012 Association Council, to upgrade bilateral relations with Israel when certain conditions related to shared values and the peace process are met.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006264/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Tackling organised crime across Member States

It is estimated that in the UK the National Crime Agency (NCA) will become fully operational by December 2013. This agency will specifically target and combat organised crime at our country's borders, focusing on fuel and money laundering, smuggling, and the exploitation of children and young people.

This being the case, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

How many EU Member States presently operate national agencies/bodies that aim to tackle organised crime, particularly in border areas?

What steps have been taken at EU level to combat the potential for illicit, fraudulent activity that emanates from greater cross-border mobility throughout the Union?

Specifically, what measures have been, and will be, taken to tackle the level of human trafficking and fuel laundering across EU borders?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2013)

1. All Member States have dedicated law enforcement agencies dealing with organised crime, notably in cross-border situation on varied issues. Some Member States also developed horizontal and specialized entities to ensure better coordination of actions within the relevant law enforcement community. This is notably the case for financial crime related activities.

2. From a legal point of view the Commission has adopted various key proposals concerning money laundering, concerning Europol and law enforcement training schemes, confiscation of criminal assets or attacks against information systems.

From a horizontal and strategic point of view, the Commission is implementing the Internal Security Strategy and the Stockholm programme, both framing the EU relevant actions.

From an operational point of view, the EU policy cycle 2011-2013 and 2014-2017 for organised and serious international crime aims to tackle priority areas characterised from strong organised crime presence notably in its cross-border dimension. The priorities recently retained notably concern trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking, excise fraud and Missing Trader Intra Community fraud or cybercrimes ([1]). Operational action plans on each of these priorities will be developed in the coming months for implementation in 2014. The Commission provides support and funding of relevant actions while ensuring coherence with other policies.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/137401.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006265/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Tarifa eléctrica en el Estado español

Junto al puerto de Tarragona se ubica la principal concentración de tejido industrial del sector químico de la península y una de las más importantes de Europa. Cabe destacar que el sector químico genera el 10 % del PIB español y ocupa a más de 500 000 empleados entre empleos directos e indirectos. El 44 % de la facturación de este sector se encuentra en Catalunya. La reactivación de la economía pasa indudablemente por apoyar a los sectores industriales estratégicos, atendiendo a sus demandas y diseñando políticas específicas que eleven su valor de proyección, así como su competitividad. Indudablemente la industria química es uno de estos sectores. No obstante, a pesar del enorme potencial y recorrido de este sector, la industria química padece graves problemas que amplían el diferencial de competitividad frente a la competencia internacional.

Uno de los más relevantes problemas es el creciente aumento de los costes eléctricos que debe sufragar el sector, a causa de su enorme consumo de energía eléctrica, 12,4 TWh de electricidad, valorados en unos 1 000 millones de euros anuales. Para hacer frente a esta problemática y paliarla, las propuestas que baraja el sector inciden sobre tres niveles distintos: la supresión de conceptos no imputables al servicio eléctrico en las tarifas de acceso; las exenciones para el caso de complejos industriales químicos cerrados tal y como está previsto en la Directiva 2009/72/CE del Parlamento Europeo y como podría aplicarse al complejo petroquímico de Tarragona, y la aplicación de las exenciones sobre impuestos eléctricos prevista en la Directiva Europea 2003/96/CE, cuando la electricidad sea utilizada a efectos de reducción química o procesos electrolíticos y metalúrgicos.

1. ¿ Tiene previsto la Comisión atender a las demandas del sector químico destinadas a suprimir conceptos no imputables al servicio eléctrico en las tarifas de acceso, para la industria química y en particular para el caso de complejos industriales químicos cerrados, como el Polígono Petroquímico de Tarragona?

2. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión recomendar al Gobierno del Estado español que atienda a las demandas del sector químico destinadas a aplicar exenciones para el caso de complejos industriales químicos cerrados, tal y como está previsto en la Directiva 2009/72/CE y tal y como podría aplicarse al complejo Petroquímico de Tarragona?

3. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión recomendar al Gobierno del Estado español atender a las demandas del sector químico destinadas a aplicación de las exenciones sobre impuestos eléctricos prevista en la Directiva Europea 2003/96/CE, cuando la electricidad sea utilizada a efectos de reducción química o procesos electrolíticos y metalúrgicos?

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

El 29 de mayo de 2013, la Comisión recomendó a España que abordara el amplio déficit tarifario del sector eléctrico mediante la adopción y aplicación de una reforma estructural del sector de la electricidad antes de acabar 2013. Para consultar la serie completa de documentos del Semestre Europeo de 2013, remitimos a:

http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/country-specific-recommendations/index_es.htm

El artículo 28 de la Directiva 2009/72/CE ([1]) permite a las autoridades reguladoras nacionales clasificar una red como «red de distribución cerrada» y eximir a este tipo de redes de determinadas normas de la UE en materia de energía si se cumplen las condiciones establecidas en el artículo 28. Incumbe a los Estados miembros decidir si desean incorporar el artículo 28 de la Directiva 2009/72/CE a su ordenamiento legislativo nacional y si quieren aplicarlo. España notificó la incorporación de la Directiva 2009/72/CE al Derecho español mediante el Real Decreto-ley 13/2012, aunque el artículo 28 de la Directiva 2009/72/CE no se ha incluido en la norma de transposición. Por lo tanto, parece que no existe actualmente ninguna posibilidad en el Derecho energético español de contemplar una excepción para las redes de distribución cerrada con arreglo al artículo 28 de la Directiva 2009/72/CE. En cualquier caso, el artículo 28 de la Directiva 2009/72/CE confía a los Estados miembros la decisión de conceder una exención o no, de acuerdo con el principio de subsidiariedad. Por consiguiente, la Comisión no suele recomendar a los Estados miembros que eximan o no determinadas redes de distribución cerrada.

([1]) DO L 211 de 14.8.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006265/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Electricity tariff in Spain

The chemical industry sector on the Spanish mainland is primarily concentrated next to the port of Tarragona and is one of the largest in Europe. It is worth pointing out that the chemical sector generates 10% of Spanish GDP and employs over 500 000 people in direct and indirect jobs. Catalonia accounts for 44% of the sector's turnover. Economic recovery must, without a doubt, take place through support for strategic industrial sectors; their demands must be met and specific policies must be designed that increase their long-term value, as well as their competitiveness. The chemical industry is undoubtedly one of those sectors. Nonetheless, despite the sector's huge potential and range, the chemical industry is experiencing serious problems which are making it increasingly uncompetitive vis-à-vis its international competitors.

One of the most significant problems is the increase in electricity costs borne by the sector, on account of the vast amounts of electricity it consumes. This totals 12.4 TWh, amounting to some EUR 1 000 million per year. In order to tackle this issue and mitigate it, the proposals being considered by the sector relate to three separate aspects: the removal of items not relevant to the electricity service within access tariffs; exemptions for closed chemical industry sites, as laid down in Directive 2009/72/EC of the European Parliament, such as could apply to the Tarragona petrochemical site; and the application of exemptions on taxes on electricity laid down in Directive 2003/96/EC, when the electricity is used for the purposes of chemical reduction and in electrolytic and metallurgical processes.

1. Does the Commission plan to agree to the chemical sector's requests to remove items not relevant to the electricity service within access tariffs, for the chemical industry and, in particular, for closed chemical industry sites such as the Tarragona petrochemical industrial site?

2. Does the Commission plan to recommend to the Spanish Government that it agree to the chemical sector's requests to apply exemptions to closed chemical industry sites, as laid down in Directive 2009/72/EC, which could apply to the Tarragona site?

3. Does the Commission plan to recommend to the Spanish Government that it agree to the chemical sector's requests regarding the application of exemptions on taxes on electricity laid down in Directive 2003/96/EC, when the electricity is used for the purposes of chemical reduction and in electrolytic and metallurgical processes?

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

On 29 May 2013 the Commission has recommended Spain to tackle the large electricity tariff deficit by adopting and implementing a structural reform of the electricity sector by the end of 2013. For the full set of the 2013 European Semester documents, please refer to:

http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

Article 28 of Directive 2009/72/EC [1] allows national regulatory authorities to classify a system as a 'closed distribution system' and to exempt such systems from certain EU energy rules if the conditions stipulated in Article 28 are fulfilled. It is up to Member States to decide whether they want to transpose Article 28 of Directive 2009/72/EC into their national legislative framework and whether they want to apply it. Spain notified the transposition of Directive 2009/72/EC into the Spanish legislation through the Royal Decree Law 13/2012, however Article 28 of Directive 2009/72/EC has not been included in the transposition measure. Therefore, it seems that currently no exemption possibility is foreseen for closed distributed systems pursuant to Article 28 of Directive 2009/72/EC in Spanish energy law. In any event, Article 28 of Directive 2009/72/EC leaves the competence for the decision whether to grant an exemption or not to the Member States, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. The Commission would therefore usually not give recommendations to Member States to exempt certain closed distribution systems or not.

[1] OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006266/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Niedrigschwellige Angebote zum Berufseinstieg für Jugendliche

Die Arbeitslosenzahlen bei Jugendlichen sind insbesondere in den südlichen Ländern der Eurozone kontinuierlich im Anstieg begriffen (in Spanien und Griechenland bei unter 25-Jährigen bis zu 60 %); in einigen Ländern gibt es bereits niedrigschwellige Programme, die Jugendlichen die Chance geben in eine Weiterbildung bzw. Ausbildung bzw. einen Beruf einzusteigen. Eine Hilfe auf psychosozialer Ebene ist oft eine konstruktive Ergänzung solcher Initiativen und sorgt längerfristig für mehr Jugendbeschäftigung und bessere Perspektiven der einzelnen Teilnehmer.

1. Gibt es bereits EU-weite Programme, die auf den Einstieg Jugendlicher in den Arbeitsmarkt bzw. die Weiterbildung von Jugendlichen angelegt sind (mit psychosozialer Ausrichtung) und als Ergänzung finanztechnischer Maßnahmen verstanden werden?

2. Wenn ja: Gibt es bereits eine gesamteuropäische Evaluation der Programme?

3. Gibt es andere EU-weite Maßnahmen (als die oben genannten), um arbeitslosen Jugendlichen eine positive Perspektive zu vermitteln?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(29. Juli 2013)

1. Der Europäische Sozialfonds bietet weitreichende Unterstützung für die Eingliederung junger Menschen in den Arbeitsmarkt, darunter auch Beratung und Motivation sowie Hilfestellung bei der Bewerbung für einen Arbeitsplatz ([1]). Für den Programmplanungszeitraum 2014-2020 ist im Vorschlag für die ESF-Verordnung eine eigene Investitionspriorität für die Eingliederung junger Menschen vorgesehen, die weder eine Arbeit haben noch sich in schulischer oder beruflicher Ausbildung befinden.

2. Die Verantwortung für die Evaluierung der erwähnten operationellen ESF-Programme teilen sich der jeweilige Mitgliedstaat und die Europäische Kommission. Die Evaluierungen können operativer oder strategischer Art sein. Die Kommission hat zahlreiche Evaluierungen durchgeführt und dabei eine breite Palette von Themen abgedeckt, die mithilfe des ESF angegangen werden ([2]). Ferner wird sie die Ex-post-Evaluierung zu jedem Ziel in enger Zusammenarbeit mit den Mitgliedstaaten und den Verwaltungsbehörden durchführen.

3. Die Bekämpfung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit steht ganz weit oben auf der Prioritätenliste der Kommission, die mehrere Initiativen dazu verabschiedet hat. Im April 2013 nahm der Rat eine Empfehlung zu einer Jugendgarantie an, die auf einem Kommissionsvorschlag fußte. Im Juli 2013 hat die Kommission die Europäische Ausbildungsallianz gestartet und im Dezember 2013 wird sie einen Qualitätsrahmen für Praktika vorschlagen. Im Mai 2012 wurde das neue europäische Programm für berufliche Mobilität „Dein erster EURES-Arbeitsplatz“ aufgelegt. Es soll jungen Menschen bei der Suche nach ihrem ersten Arbeitsplatz in einem der 27 Mitgliedstaaten helfen und Unternehmen, die Arbeitskräfte aus einem anderen EU-Land einstellen, unterstützen. Darüber hinaus bieten sowohl das Programm für lebenslanges Lernen als auch das Programm Erasmus+ Chancen, Arbeitserfahrung im Ausland zu sammeln. Junge Menschen mit besonderen Bedürfnissen werden gesondert finanziell unterstützt.

([1]) Näheres zur spezifischen Unterstützung von ESF-Projekten in diesem Bereich finden Sie hier: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=de&theme=534&list=0

([2]) Eine Liste dieser Studien finden Sie auf folgender Website: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?pager.offset=0&catId=3&langId=de&pubType=512

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006266/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Low-threshold career entry paths for young people

The unemployment rate among young people is continuously on the rise, especially in the southern countries of the eurozone (up to 60% among under-25s in Spain and Greece). In some countries there are already low-threshold programmes that give young people the opportunity to complete training or further training or embark on a career. Psychosocial assistance often represents a constructive accompaniment to these initiatives, and in the long term ensures higher levels of employment among young people and better prospects for individual participants.

1. Are there any EU-wide programmes that have already been set up to help young people enter the labour market or to offer further training to young people (with a psychosocial orientation), and that are regarded as a complement to financial measures?

2. If so, is there already a pan-European framework for the evaluation of such programmes?

3. Are there any EU-wide measures (other than those mentioned above) aimed at giving unemployed young people a positive outlook?

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

1. The European Social Fund provides ample support to the integration of young persons into the labour market, including counselling and motivation services, and assistance with job applications ([1]). For the 2014-2020 programming period the ESF Regulation proposal includes a specific investment priority on integration of young people not in employment, education or training into the labour market.

2. Evaluation of the ESF operational programmes referred to above is a shared responsibility of the Member State and the European Commission. Evaluations may be of operational or strategic nature. The Commission has carried out numerous evaluations covering a broad range of issues addressed with the ESF ([2]). The European Commission will also carry out the *ex-post* evaluation for each objective in close cooperation with the Member States and the managing authorities.

3. Fighting youth unemployment is a top priority for the Commission, which has adopted several initiatives In April 2013, the Council adopted a recommendation for a Youth Guarantee based upon the Commission's proposal. The Commission has launched the European Alliance for Apprenticeships in July 2013 and will propose a Quality Framework for Traineeships in December 2013. In May 2012, the new European job mobility scheme 'Your first EURES job' became operational. It aims at helping young people to find their first job in any of the 27 Member States, and supporting companies to recruit from another EU country. Moreover, the Lifelong Learning Programme, as well as the future educational programme Erasmus+, provide opportunities for gaining work experience abroad. Particular financial support is provided to young people with special needs.

([1]) Information on specific ESF project support in this area is available here: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&theme=534&list=0

([2]) A list of these studies is available here: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?pager.offset=0&catId=3&langId=en&pubType=512

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006267/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Schutz der Privatsphäre — Risiken flächendeckender Sicherheitsüberwachung

In Zeiten einer zunehmenden Gefahr terroristischer Anschläge und asymmetrischer Kriegsführung ist die Überwachung im öffentlichen Raum sprunghaft angestiegen und wird durch verschiedene technische Hilfsmittel zusätzlich ausgeweitet. Kameras, Software zur biometrischen Gesichtserkennung, Bildauswertungsverfahren zur Identifikation und vieles mehr ermöglichen in dichter besiedelten Gebieten und speziellen Sicherheitszonen (Flughäfen u. ä.) eine fast lückenlose Überwachung der Bürgerinnen und Bürger. Diese ernsten Eingriffe in das Privatleben sind — so Studien — nur bedingt mit Sicherheitsbedenken zu rechtfertigen; es ist nicht klar, ob Überwachung Kriminalität und Terroranschläge verhindern kann oder überhaupt einen Einfluss darauf hat.

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass dieser Zusammenhang zwischen Überwachung und Verhinderung von Kriminalität oder Terroranschlägen fehlt?

2. Wenn ja: Welche Ansichten vertritt die Kommission zu diesem Thema — speziell zu der Kritik an der Überwachung und generell zur Achtung der Privatsphäre in diesem Kontext?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(5. August 2013)

Die Kommission weist darauf hin, dass Überwachungssysteme zur Prävention von Kriminalität und terroristischen Handlungen durchaus einen Mehrwert liefern, wie aus zahlreichen Studien hervorgeht.

Unter anderem führte der schwedische nationale Rat für Verbrechensbekämpfung (Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå)) eine umfassende Untersuchung durch und veröffentlichte sie unter dem Titel „Effectiveness of public area surveillance for crime prevention“ (Studie von 2010) ([1]). Die Studie bietet ausführliche wissenschaftliche und statistische Daten über die Eindämmung der Kriminalität infolge von Überwachung.

Überwachungssysteme dienen sowohl zur Abschreckung und Vorbeugung als auch als Ermittlungsinstrumente zur Aufklärung von Verbrechen. Was die Prävention betrifft, so zeigen die Daten, dass Kameraüberwachung in Einkaufszentren, auf Parkplätzen und an sonstigen öffentlichen Orten zu einer Eindämmung der Kriminalität geführt hat. Die Einführung der Kameraüberwachung bei der Gepäcksortierung an Flughäfen und in verwandten Bereichen ergab eine wesentliche Verringerung der Diebstähle aus Fluggastgepäck. Im Hinblick auf die Verbrechensaufklärung sind unter anderem das Bombenattentat auf dem Madrider Flughafen und die Terrorangriffe in der Londoner U-Bahn Beispiele dafür, dass Täter mithilfevon Überwachungsbildern ermittelt werden können.

Durch jüngste Fortschritte in der „Smart-Camera“ Technik stehen sowohl Instrumente zur frühzeitigen Erkennung von Bedrohungen als auch solche zum Schutz der Privatsphäre zur Verfügung.

Gleichzeitig ist sich die Kommission bewusst, dass die Überwachung zu einer Einschränkung der Rechte auf Privatsphäre und des Schutzes personenbezogener Daten führt. Daher ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass eine Überwachung in öffentlichen Bereichen nur dann erfolgen sollte, wenn dies der Bedrohung angemessen ist und im Einklang mit behördlichen Risikobewertungen steht.

([1]) http://www.bra.se/bra/bra-in-english/home/publications/archive/publications/2010-06-09-effectiveness-of-public-area-surveillance-for-crime-prevention.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006267/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Protection of privacy — the risks of comprehensive security surveillance

At a time when the risk of terrorist attacks and asymmetric warfare is increasing, surveillance in public spaces has expanded by leaps and bounds and is also being stepped up using various technical equipment. Cameras, software for biometric face recognition, image analysis methods for identification purposes and many more techniques allow almost continuous surveillance of the public in densely populated areas and special security zones (airports etc.). According to studies, these serious forms of intrusion into people's private lives are only partly justified by security concerns; it is not clear whether surveillance can prevent crime and terrorist attacks or whether it has any impact on them.

1. Is the Commission aware of the fact that no connection has ever been proven between surveillance and the prevention of crime or terrorist attacks?

2. If so, what are the Commission's views on this issue, specifically with regard to the criticisms levelled at surveillance, and more generally with regard to respect for privacy in this context?

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

The Commission notes that a number of studies have demonstrated the value added by surveillance systems in prevention of crime and terrorist acts.

Among other studies, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention carried out and published a comprehensive study with an international perspective on Effectiveness of Public Areas Surveillance for Crime Prevention (2010 study) ([1]). The study provides extensive scientific and statistical data on crime reduction as a result of surveillance.

Surveillance systems serve both for deterrence/prevention and as crime investigative tools. On crime prevention, the data shows that camera surveillance in shopping malls, car parks and other public places have led to reduction of crime. The introduction of camera surveillance in airport baggage sorting and related areas has led to a notable reduction of theft from passenger baggage. On crime investigation, the cases of the Madrid airport bombing and the London Underground attacks, among other examples, showed that surveillance images provided investigative tools which led to the identification of attackers.

The latest technical advances in the smart camera technology provide tools for early identification of threats, but equally introduce tools which safeguard privacy.

At the same time, the Commission is aware that surveillance leads to a limitation of the rights to privacy and protection of personal data. Therefore, Commission is of the view that surveillance in public areas should be used only where this is proportional to the threat and in line with risk assessments carried out by the authorities.

([1]) http://www.bra.se/bra/bra-in-english/home/publications/archive/publications/2010-06-09-effectiveness-of-public-area-surveillance-for-crime-prevention.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006268/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Stereotype Frauenbilder in den Medien

Stereotype Frauenbilder werden durch mediale Vermittlung (namentlich TV-Shows) zunehmend weit verbreitet und können dadurch negativen Einfluss auf die jeweiligen Zuseher — unter ihnen auch Kinder und Heranwachsende — nehmen.

1. Da davon ausgegangen werden kann, dass der Kommission die oben genannten Entwicklungen bekannt sind: Gibt es bereits EU-weite Programme/Initiativen zu dem Zweck, einer derartigen Verbreitung von negativen Stereotypen entgegenzuwirken?

2. Wenn ja: welcher Art und mit welchem Erfolg?

3. Wie werden — sofern vorhanden — derartige Initiativen evaluiert?

4. Gibt es Pläne, Fernsehformate besonders zu fördern, die ein Gegengewicht zu den oben genannten darstellen?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(22. Juli 2013)

In der Richtlinie über audiovisuelle Mediendienste (AVMD-RL) ([1]) werden auf EU-Ebene Mindestharmonisierungsvorschriften in Bezug auf die Inhalte audiovisueller Mediendienste festgelegt.

Grundsätzlich genießen Rundfunkveranstalter in ihrer Programmgestaltung die Freiheit der Meinungsäußerung. Allerdings verbietet die AVMD-RL, was redaktionelle Inhalte anbelangt, die Aufstachelung zum Hass aufgrund von Rasse, Geschlecht, Religion oder Staatsangehörigkeit.

Auch bei der audiovisuellen kommerziellen Kommunikation sind Diskriminierungen aufgrund von Geschlecht, Rasse oder ethnischer Herkunft, Staatsangehörigkeit, Religion oder Glauben, Behinderung, Alter oder sexueller Ausrichtung verboten.

In ihrem Bericht über die Umsetzung der AVMD-RL stellte die Kommission stereotype Darstellungen von Geschlechterrollen in 21 % bis 36 % der analysierten Werbespots fest. In einigen Mitgliedstaaten werden jedoch bestimmte gesellschaftliche Positionen, Berufe oder Produkte systematischer mit einem bestimmten Geschlecht assoziiert als in anderen Mitgliedstaaten. Keines der überprüften Länder ist ganz frei von solchen stereotypen Darstellungen.

Die Bekämpfung starrer Geschlechterrollen ist ein übergreifender Handlungsschwerpunkt der Strategie der Kommission für die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern (2010-2015).

Im Jahr 2013 wirkte die Kommission an entschlossenen Schlussfolgerungen des Rates für eine „stärkere Förderung von Frauen als Entscheidungsträger in den Medien“ ([2]) mit, in denen insbesondere Sensibilisierungskampagnen, der Austausch bewährter Verfahren zur Bekämpfung der Geschlechterstereotypen und Fortschritte bei einer realistischen und nicht diskriminierenden Darstellung von Mädchen/Frauen und Jungen/Männern in den Medien gefordert werden. Diese Schlussfolgerungen beruhen auf einem Bericht des Europäischen Instituts für Gleichstellungsfragen ([3]).

([1]) Richtlinie 2010/13/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Koordinierung bestimmter Rechts- und Verwaltungsvorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten über die Bereitstellung audiovisueller Mediendienste.

([2]) Angenommen auf der auf der Tagung des Rats (Beschäftigung, Sozialpolitik, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz) am 20. Juni 2013, Dok. 11470/13, siehe insbesondere Nummer 28.

([3]) Bericht über die „Überprüfung der Umsetzung der Aktionsplattform von Beijing durch die EU-Mitgliedstaaten: Förderung der Geschlechtergleichstellung in Entscheidungsprozessen der Medienorganisationen“.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006268/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Stereotypical images of women in the media

Stereotypical images of women are being disseminated on an ever wider scale by the media (especially television shows) and may consequently have a negative effect on audiences, which include children and adolescents.

1. As it may be assumed that the Commission is aware of the abovementioned developments, are there already EU-wide programmes/initiatives in place which are designed to counteract this proliferation of negative stereotypes?

2. If so, what are they and how successful have they been?

3. If any such initiatives are in place, how are they evaluated?

4. Are there any plans to provide particular support for television formats that act as a counterbalance to the above?

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

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) ([1]) sets at EU level minimal harmonisation rules regarding the content of Audiovisual Media Services.

As a matter of principle, broadcasters enjoy freedom of expression in their programming. However, as regards editorial content, the AVMSD prohibits incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality.

Also as regards audiovisual commercial communications, discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation is prohibited.

In its implementation report on the AVMSD, the Commission found that stereotyped representation of gender roles was found in 21% to 36% of the TV advertising spots analysed. However, in some Member States a number of positions, professions or products are more systematically associated with a specific gender than in other Member States. None of the countries surveyed is immune to such stereotyped representations.

Combating rigid gender roles is considered as a crosscutting priority for action in the Commission' Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015).

In 2013, the Commission contributed to strong Council conclusions aimed at 'Advancing Women's Roles as Decision-makers in the Media' ([2]), which i.a call for awareness-raising, the exchange of good practice on combating gender stereotypes and the advancement of the realistic and non-discriminatory portrayal of girls/women and boys/men in the media. These conclusions are based on a report produced by the European Institute for Gender Equality ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services.
([2]) adopted by the EPSCO on 20 June 2013, 11470/13, see in particular point 28.
([3]) on the 'Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006269/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR) e Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(3 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Varietà vegetali europee ma senza libertà

La «Plant Reproductive Material Law» sembra fatta apposta per consentire alle multinazionali dei semi di raggiungere il dominio completo di tutte le sementi del pianeta. Rendere illegale, infatti, «coltivare, riprodurre o commerciare» semi di ortaggi che non sono stati «analizzati, approvati e accettati» dalla nuova Agenzia delle varietà vegetali europee significa — in un breve lasso di tempo — considerare come criminale il contadino che la domenica coltiverà nel suo orto piante con semi non regolamentari, cioè non autorizzati dalla suddetta Agenzia.

Quanti milioni sono nell'Unione europea i privati che coltivano piante e ortaggi nel loro giardino usando i semi conservati di un raccolto precedente? Ci sembra che questa proposta intenda stroncare non solo l'attività hobbystica domenicale dei privati, ma soprattutto i produttori di varietà regionali, i coltivatori biologici e gli agricoltori professionisti che operano su piccola scala, ritenendoli potenziali criminali e consegnando il controllo della catena alimentare nelle mani delle corporazioni. I piccoli coltivatori coltivano senza usare macchine e spesso rifiutano di utilizzare spray chimici, pertanto non c'è modo di registrare quali siano le varietà adatte a un piccolo campo, perché non rispondono ai criteri dell'Agenzia in questione, che si occupa solo dell'approvazione dei tipi di sementi utilizzati dagli agricoltori industriali. Inoltre i piccoli dovranno altresì pagare una tassa per l'apparato burocratico che dovrà registrare i semi.

La Commissione:

1. Pur considerando l'opportunità di disciplinare in un solo atto le 12 direttive attualmente in vigore, non ritiene che eliminare la coltura di sementi prodotte da coltivatori diretti nei loro appezzamenti limiti la libertà di coltivare?

2. Non ritiene che questa limitazione della libertà non possa essere affidata a un'Agenzia piuttosto che a dei politici eletti, rappresentati nel Consiglio dell'Unione e nel Parlamento?

3. Come giudica il fatto che, mentre nel sottotitolo si parla di biodiversità e di semplificazione della legislazione, negli articoli relativi, ad esempio, alle procedure per le varietà amatoriali non si fa nessun accenno alle accurate classificazioni già elaborate dal Defra?

4. Non pensa che criminalizzando l'abitudine di conservare i semi di un raccolto per la semina successiva si avvantaggino i grandi monopoli di sementi?

5. Tiene conto della perdita di consenso che simili provvedimenti generano nell'opinione pubblica?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2013)

1.-4. La legislazione non disciplina la produzione nelle aziende agricole di sementi per uso personale. Essa disciplina solamente la produzione di sementi ad uso commerciale con l'obiettivo di garantire l'identità, la sanità e la qualità delle sementi verso i consumatori.

2. La proposta accelera l'accesso al mercato di nuove varietà migliorate visto che, non appena introdotte nel registro nazionale, esse possono essere commercializzate in tutta la UE. Questa procedura è gestita dall'autorità nazionale competente. In alternativa, i selezionatori possono richiedere la registrazione delle varietà vegetali all'Ufficio comunitario delle varietà vegetali (UCVV) se lo desiderano. L'UCVV gestisce la banca di dati dell'UE sulle varietà.

3. Nel 2008-2009 la Commissione ha introdotto dei requisiti ridotti per la commercializzazione delle varietà da conservazione nonché di varietà prive di valore intrinseco per la produzione a fini commerciali ma sviluppate per la coltivazione in condizioni particolari (le cosiddette varietà amatoriali, direttive 2008/62/CE e 2009/145/CE). Il Regno Unito applica queste direttive. Nella proposta legislativa questi requisiti di commercializzazione sono resi ancora meno onerosi. Inoltre, è stato introdotto un nuovo concetto di materiale per mercati di nicchia. Le microimprese possono commercializzare qualunque tipo di materiale esente da registrazione varietale applicando soltanto le norme basilari concernenti l'etichettatura e l'imballaggio.

5. La proposta legislativa finale è il risultato di un esercizio collettivo condotto a partire dal 2007, in cui rientravano ad esempio la valutazione della legislazione in vigore tra il 2007-2008, la conferenza pubblica del 2009 e la consultazione pubblica del 2011 sulle opzioni future. Inoltre, hanno avuto luogo diverse consultazioni con gli Stati membri e con le altre parti interessate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006269/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR) and Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: European plant varieties but no freedom

The 'Plant Reproductive Material Law' seems to have been created specifically to allow multinational seed companies to achieve total domination over all the seeds on the planet. Making it actually illegal to 'grow, reproduce or trade' vegetable seeds which have not been 'tested, approved and accepted' by the new EU Plant Variety Agency means — in just a short period of time — criminalising farmers who grow plants in their garden on a Sunday using unregulated seeds, i.e. those not authorised by the aforementioned agency.

How many millions of private citizens across the European Union grow plants and vegetables in their garden using seeds kept from a previous harvest? It seems to us that this proposal intends not only to destroy this weekend hobby of private citizens, but, above all, damage producers of regional varieties, organic growers and small-scale professional farmers, branding them as potential criminals and placing the control of the food chain in the hands of the corporations. Small-scale farmers grow their products without using machines and often refuse to use chemical sprays, so there is no way of recording which varieties are most suited to small fields, since they do not meet the criteria of the agency in question, which is only concerned with approving the types of seeds used by industrial farmers. Furthermore, small-scale farmers will also have to pay a tax for the bureaucratic apparatus which will have to register the seeds.

Can the Commission state:

1. Although it is considering the opportunity to regulate, in one sole act, the 12 directives currently in force, does it not believe that eliminating the growing of seeds produced by farmers directly on their own plots of land restricts the freedom to farm?

2. Does it not believe that this limiting of that freedom cannot be entrusted to an agency rather than elected politicians, representatives of the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament?

3. How does it assess the fact that, whereas the subtitle refers to biodiversity and simplifying legislation, in the specific articles, such as that concerning the procedures for amateur varieties, no reference is made to the accurate classifications which have already been drawn up by Defra?

4. Does it not believe that criminalising the habit of keeping seeds from a harvest for the next sowing season favours the large seed monopolies?

5. Has it taken into account the lack of consensus which similar measures have achieved from the public?

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

1 and 4. The legislation does not cover the production of seed on farm for own use. It only covers the production of seed intended for marketing with the objective to ensure the identity, health and quality of seed for its users.

2. The proposal speeds up market access of new improved varieties as in the moment they are registered in the national register they can be marketed throughout the EU. This procedure is run by the national competent authority. As an alternative pathway, the breeders can apply for variety registration at Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO), if they so wish. CPVO will keep an EU database on varieties.

3. The Commission introduced in 2008-2009 less stringent requirements for the marketing conservation varieties and varieties with no intrinsic value for commercial production but developed growing under particular conditions (so called amateur varieties, Directives 2008/62/EC and 2009/145/EC). United Kingdom is applying these Directives. In the legislative proposal these marketing requirements are made even lighter. Moreover, a new concept of niche market material is introduced. Micro-enterprises can market any type of material with no variety registration and only basic labelling and packaging rules are applied.

5. The final legislative proposal is the result of a collective exercise since 2007 which included e.g. evaluation of the current legislation in 2007-2008, public conference 2009 and public consultation on future options 2011. Moreover, a number of consultations with the Member States and other stakeholders have taken place.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006270/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Use of quotas in the supply of medicines

A recent survey by the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) has found that the primary cause of branded medicine shortages is the legal diversion of supply intended for UK patients to other European countries by a small number of pharmacists and wholesalers.

Does the Commission have evidence of the benefits and/or drawbacks of parallel trading in the EU, especially with regard to price discovery?

I understand that the use and management of quotas can help to ensure that the supply chain is managed to meet patients' needs. What is the Commission doing to help Member States develop best practice in this area?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question P-000535/2011 ([1]) on a similar subject.

Currently the Commission has no hard evidence on either clear benefits and/or drawbacks of parallel trade. It is however aware of the ongoing intensive debates on the topic.

As regards the use and management of quotas, if they stem from actions of private companies, it should be pointed out that the Court of Justice held in its rulings in Joined cases C-468/06 to C-478/06 that although a pharmaceuticals company in a dominant position cannot be allowed to cease to honour the ordinary orders of an existing customer for the sole reason of partial exports, it is nonetheless permissible for that company to counter in a reasonable and proportionate way to protect its own commercial interests ([2]).

However, if the quotas are established by the Member State the rules on the free movement of goods of Articles 35 and 36 of the TFEU and the relevant jurisprudence of the Court apply. Article 35 TFEU prohibits all measures constituting quantitative restrictions on exports and measures having equivalent effect. Such a restriction can however be accepted under Article 36 TFEU if it can be justified on grounds of the protection of health and life of humans and if it is necessary and proportionate.

Each individual measure, be it company-driven or Member State-driven, requires an individual assessment on a case by case basis as regards its compliance with general principles of EC law, EU competition law and/or EU pharmaceutical law.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Joined Cases C-468/06 to C-478/06 Lelos, 71 p.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006271/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: National implementing measures in the ETS Directive

The Commission has acknowledged that it has missed its own deadline of February 2013 for the approval of national implementing measures (NIMs) in the context of the ETS Directive.

Key elements of the NIMs include the setting of values for the cross-sectoral correction factor and, in the case of new entrants, standard capacity utilisation factors (SCUFs).

Can the Commission answer the following questions on this subject:

1. What is the current timetable for the Commission's decision with regard to the cross-sectoral correction factor and standard capacity utilisation factors?

2. The ETS Directive states that the Commission shall publish the SCUFs. Can the Commission clarify the legal form that this decision shall take, and the process by which the Commission will adopt it?

3. What steps are being taken to consult affected industries in the development of the SCUFs?

4. With regard to the SCUFs, what steps is the Commission taking to ensure that there is equal treatment between installations, as set out in Recital 23 of the ETS Directive?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The decisions on the National Implementing Measures (NIMs), as well as on the cross sectoral correction factor (CSCF) and, in the case of new entrants, standard capacity utilisation factors (SCUFs) will be adopted in the form of Commission Decisions. The adoption schedule of the decisions does not depend fully on the Commission but also on cooperation from Member States.

With regard to the SCUFs, Member States collected data on the average annual production of each of the products concerned in the period 2005-2008 from installations as part of the overall baseline data collection for the submission of the NIMs. Pursuant to Article 18(2) of Commission Decision 2011/278/EU ([1]), the Commission, on the basis of this data, subsequently determines the 80-percentile of the average annual capacity utilisation of all installations producing the product concerned in the period 2005-2008, which then constitutes the standard capacity utilisation factor. A uniform SCUF will be applied to all the installations producing the same product for which a benchmark was determined in Annex I of Commission Decision 2011/278/EU.

Accordingly, the SCUFs are the result of a calculation based on the data provided by installation operators themselves. The legal proceedings reflect the requirements laid down in Commission Decision 2011/278/EU. The Commission has also taken note of views expressed by interested sectors.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32011D0278:EN:NOT.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006272/13
aan de Raad
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 juni 2013)

Betreft: Alle stoffen die kunnen worden gebruikt voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens moeten aan uitvoercontrole worden onderworpen

Op 22 mei 2013 werd bekend dat Nederlandse ondernemingen in 2003, 2008, 2009 en 2010 aanzienlijke hoeveelheden van de stof ethyleenglycol naar Syrië hebben geëxporteerd ([1]). Glycol kan worden gebruikt voor het aanmaken van zwavelmosterd, of mosterdgas, dat kan worden gebuikt voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens. Glycol staat niet op de lijst van militaire goederen, noch op de lijst van goederen voor tweeërlei gebruik van het gemeenschappelijk standpunt van de EU over uitvoercontrole ([2]). De uitvoer van glycol is daarom niet onderworpen aan een beoordeling van de lidstaten op grond van de acht criteria van het gemeenschappelijk EU-standpunt ([3]).

1. Kan de Raad verklaren waarom glycol niet voorkomt op de lijst van goederen die overeenkomstig de acht criteria van het gemeenschappelijk standpunt door de lidstaten moeten worden beoordeeld alvorens te worden uitgevoerd? Zo niet, waarom niet?

2. Is de Raad het ermee eens dat stoffen die gebruikt kunnen worden voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens zo spoedig mogelijk aan deze lijst moeten worden toegevoegd? Zo niet, waarom niet?

3. Heeft de Raad weet van andere stoffen die niet op de uitvoercontrolelijst voorkomen en die voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens zouden kunnen worden gebruikt?

4. Is de Raad bereid na te gaan of er andere stoffen zijn die niet op de uitvoercontrolelijst voorkomen en die voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens zouden kunnen worden gebruikt?

5. Welke stappen wil de Raad ondernemen om de uitvoer uit de EU van stoffen die kunnen worden gebruikt voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens te voorkomen?

6. Weet de Raad of ook andere lidstaten glycol hebben uitgevoerd? Zo ja, naar welke landen?

7. Wat is de totale hoeveelheid glycol die de laatste 10 jaar door de lidstaten is uitgevoerd?

8. Welke waarschuwingen heeft de Raad ontvangen met betrekking tot de uitvoer van glycol uit de EU naar derde landen?

Antwoord
(11 september 2013)

De EU beschikt over instrumenten ter voorkoming van de uitvoer van goederen die tot de verspreiding van massavernietingswapens (MVW) zouden kunnen bijdragen. Verordening nr. 428/2009 ([4]) regelt de uitvoer van „goederen voor tweeërlei gebruik", waaronder bepaalde chemische stoffen die als precursoren voor giftige chemische agentia kunnen worden gebruikt, maar niet de uitvoer van monoethyleenglycol als zodanig. De Raad heeft tot nu toe geen voorstellen tot plaatsing van deze stof op de betrokken lijsten ontvangen. Er wordt met name op gewezen dat met Verordening nr. 428/2009 uitvoering wordt gegeven aan internationaal overeengekomen controles op goederen voor tweeërlei gebruik, waaronder die van het Verdrag inzake chemische wapens, waarin monoethyleenglycol (glycol) niet wordt genoemd.

([1]) http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2013/05/22/grondstof-gif-uit-nederland-naar-syrie-geimporteerd/.
([2]) http://www.wassenaar.org/controllists/2012/WA-LIST%20%2812%29%201/WA-LIST%20%2812%29%201.pdf; http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2008/september/tradoc_140595.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:335:0099:0103:NL:PDF.
([4]) Verordening (EG) nr. 428/2009 van de Raad van 5 mei 2009 tot instelling van een communautaire regeling voor controle op de uitvoer, de overbrenging, de tussenhandel en de doorvoer van producten voor tweeërlei gebruik (PB L 134 van 29.5.2009, blz. 1).

Besluiten om stoffen die voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens zouden kunnen worden gebruikt, toe te voegen aan de controlelijst worden genomen in de multilaterale exportcontrole-instanties, met name de Australiëgroep. De EU is lid van de Australiëgroep, en de Commissie en de EDEO nemen aan die besprekingen deel. De besprekingen omvatten de afweging van verschillende factoren en zijn gericht op het bereiken van een evenwicht tussen het risico op verspreiding en de noodzaak om de gevolgen voor de legale handel zo klein mogelijk te maken. De meeste van de betrokken chemische stoffen worden immers gebruikt in een groot scala van civiele toepassingen, en generieke controles zouden onevenredig kunnen zijn. De Australiëgroep wisselt al enkele jaren informatie uit over de met chemische wapens verband houdende aankopen van precursoren door Syrië, en heeft glycol op 7 juni 2013 toegevoegd aan haar controlelijst die specifiek voor Syrië geldt.

Andere, niet op de EU-controlelijst voorkomende stoffen, zouden indirect voor de vervaardiging van chemische wapens kunnen worden gebruikt. Tijdens de besprekingen in de uitvoercontrole-instanties wordt voortdurend bekeken of goederen op de controlelijst moeten worden geplaatst. De verordening „goederen voor tweeërlei gebruik" omvat een „vangnetbepaling" waardoor de nationale autoriteiten beperkingen ten aanzien van niet op de lijst geplaatste producten kunnen opleggen, indien er aanwijzingen zijn dat deze mogelijk voor de vervaardiging van chemische wapens worden gebruikt.

De Raad beschikt niet over informatie over uitvoer van andere lidstaten, en heeft in dit verband geen waarschuwingen ontvangen.

Volgens artikel 8 van Verordening (EU) nr. 36/2012 van 18 januari 2012 betreffende beperkende maatregelen in het licht van de situatie in Syrië en tot intrekking van Verordening (EU) nr. 442/2011 is het verboden „diethyleenglycol" and „triethyleenglycol" te verkopen, te leveren, over te dragen aan of uit te voeren naar Syrische personen, entiteiten of lichamen of voor gebruik in Syrië.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006272/13
to the Council
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Any substance which could be used to manufacture chemical weapons should be subject to export control

On 22 May 2013, it was revealed that Dutch companies exported significant amounts of the substance monoethylene glycol (glycol) to Syria in 2003, 2008, 2009, and 2010 ([1]). Glycol can be used to manufacture sulphur mustard, or mustard gas, which can be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons. Glycol appears neither on the military goods list nor on the dual-use list of the EU Common Position on export control ([2]). The export of glycol is therefore not subject to an assessment by Member States in line with the eight criteria laid down in the EU Common Position ([3]).

1. Could the Council explain why glycol is not on the list of substances to be assessed before export by Member States, in line with the eight criteria of the Common Position? If not, why not?

2. Does the Council agree that substances which could be used to manufacture chemical weapons should be added to this list as soon as possible? If not, why not?

3. Is the Council aware of any other substances which are not on the export control list and which could be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons?

4. Is the Council willing to investigate whether there are substances which are not on the list and which could be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons?

5. What will the Council do to prevent the export from the EU of substances to be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons?

6. Is the Council aware of other Member States from which glycol has been exported? If so, to which countries was it exported?

7. What are the total amounts of glycol exported from Member States over the past 10 years?

8. What warnings, if any, has the Council received with regard to the export of glycol from the EU to third countries?

Reply
(11 September 2013)

The EU has instruments to prevent the export of items that could contribute to the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Regulation 428/2009 ([4]) controls the export of 'dual-use items', including certain chemicals which may be used as precursors for toxic chemical agents, but does not control the export of monoethylene glycol as such. The Council has received no proposals so far to include it on these lists. It may be noted, in particular, that regulation 428/2009 implements internationally agreed dual-use controls, including those of the Chemical Weapons Convention which does not refer to monoethylene glycol (glycol).

Decisions to add substances which could be used to produce chemical weapons to the control list are taken at the multilateral export control regimes, and in particular the Australia Group (AG). The EU is a member of the AG, and the Commission and the EEAS take part in those discussions. The discussions include consideration of various factors and attempt to strike a balance between the proliferation risk and the need to minimise the impact on legitimate trade. Indeed, most chemicals under consideration have wide-ranging civilian applications and generic controls could be disproportionate. The AG has exchanged information about Syria's chemical weapons-related procurement of precursors for some years, and added glycol to its Syria-specific control list on 7 June 2013.

([1]) http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2013/05/22/grondstof-gif-uit-nederland-naar-syrie-geimporteerd/
([2]) http://www.wassenaar.org/controllists/2012/WA-LIST%20%2812%29%201/WA-LIST%20%2812%29%201.pdf; http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2008/september/tradoc_140595.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:335:0099:0103:EN:PDF
([4]) Council Regulation (EC) No 428/2009 setting up a Community regime for the control of exports, transfer, brokering and transit of dual-use items, OJ L 134, 29.5.2009, p. 1.

Other substances, not on the EU control list, could be indirectly used in the manufacture of chemical weapons. The discussions in the export control regimes constantly review the need to place items under control. The 'dual-use items' Regulation includes a 'catch-all clause' allowing the national authorities to impose restrictions on non-listed products if there are indications that they might be used for the production of chemical weapons.

The Council has no information on exports from other Member States, and has not received any warnings in this respect.

According to Article 8 of Council Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 of 18 January 2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria and repealing Regulation (EU) No 442/2011, it is prohibited to sell, supply, transfer or export 'Diethyleneglycol' and 'Triethylene glycol' to any Syrian person, entity or body, or for use in Syria.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006273/13
aan de Commissie
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 juni 2013)

Betreft: Alle stoffen die kunnen worden gebruikt voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens moeten aan uitvoercontrole worden onderworpen

Op 22 mei 2013 werd bekend dat Nederlandse ondernemingen in 2003, 2008, 2009 en 2010 aanzienlijke hoeveelheden van de stof ethyleenglycol naar Syrië hebben geëxporteerd ([1]). Glycol kan worden gebruikt voor het aanmaken van zwavelmosterd, of mosterdgas, dat kan worden gebuikt voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens. Glycol staat niet op de lijst van militaire goederen, noch op de lijst van goederen voor tweeërlei gebruik van het gemeenschappelijk standpunt van de EU over uitvoercontrole ([2]). De uitvoer van glycol is daarom niet onderworpen aan een beoordeling van de lidstaten op grond van de acht criteria van het gemeenschappelijk EU-standpunt ([3]).

1. Kan de Commissie verklaren waarom glycol niet voorkomt op de lijst van goederen die overeenkomstig de acht criteria van het gemeenschappelijk standpunt door de lidstaten moeten worden beoordeeld alvorens te worden uitgevoerd? Zo niet, waarom niet?

2. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat stoffen die gebruikt kunnen worden voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens zo spoedig mogelijk aan deze lijst moeten worden toegevoegd? Zo niet, waarom niet?

3. Heeft de Commissie weet van andere stoffen die niet op de uitvoercontrolelijst voorkomen en die voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens zouden kunnen worden gebruikt?

4. Is de Commissie bereid na te gaan of er andere stoffen zijn die niet op de uitvoercontrolelijst voorkomen en die voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens zouden kunnen worden gebruikt?

5. Welke stappen wil de Commissie ondernemen om de uitvoer uit de EU van stoffen die kunnen worden gebruikt voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens te voorkomen?

6. Weet de Commissie of ook andere lidstaten glycol hebben uitgevoerd? Zo ja, naar welke landen?

7. Wat is de totale hoeveelheid glycol die de laatste 10 jaar door de lidstaten is uitgevoerd?

8. Welke waarschuwingen heeft de Commissie ontvangen met betrekking tot de uitvoer van glycol uit de EU naar derde landen?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(11 juli 2013)

De EU beschikt over instrumenten om de uitvoer van producten te voorkomen die de proliferatie van massavernietigingswapens (MVW) in de hand zouden kunnen werken. Verordening (EG) nr. 428/2009 zorgt voor controle op de uitvoer van „producten voor tweeërlei gebruik", waaronder chemische producten, om te waarborgen dat deze niet worden gebruikt voor de ontwikkeling van chemische wapens. Ook heeft de EU sancties opgelegd aan Syrië, waaronder beperkingen op de uitvoer van bepaalde chemische stoffen.

Verordening (EG) nr. 428/2009 zorgt voor controle op de uitvoer van bepaalde chemische stoffen, geschikt voor het vervaardigen van toxische stoffen, maar niet specifiek op de uitvoer van ethyleenglycol. Besluiten over het aan de controlelijst toevoegen van stoffen die voor het vervaardigen van chemische wapens kunnen worden gebruikt, worden genomen in het kader van de multilaterale uitvoercontroleregelingen, en met name de Australiëgroep ([4]). Bij de desbetreffende discussies worden uiteenlopende factoren in overweging genomen en wordt een afweging gemaakt tussen enerzijds het proliferatierisico en anderzijds de behoefte om de impact op legale handel zo veel mogelijk te beperken. De meeste chemische stoffen waarnaar onderzoek wordt verricht, hebben namelijk omvangrijke civiele toepassingen, en algemene controles zouden buiten verhouding kunnen zijn. De Australiëgroep heeft al sinds enkele jaren informatie uitgewisseld over de met chemische wapens samenhangende verwerving van precursoren door Syrië, en heeft op 7 juni 2013 glycol toegevoegd aan de controlelijst die specifiek op Syrië van toepassing is.

([1]) http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2013/05/22/grondstof-gif-uit-nederland-naar-syrie-geimporteerd/.
([2]) http://www.wassenaar.org/controllists/2012/WA-LIST%20%2812%29%201/WA-LIST%20%2812%29%201.pdf; http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2008/september/tradoc_140595.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:335:0099:0103:NL:PDF.
([4]) http://www.australiagroup.net/.

Andere stoffen, die niet in de controlelijst van de EU worden vermeld, kunnen onrechtstreeks worden gebruikt bij het vervaardigen van chemische wapens. Door middel van de discussies in het kader van de uitvoercontroleregelingen wordt de behoefte om producten onder controle te plaatsen, permanent getoetst. De EU is lid van de Australiëgroep en bijgevolg neemt de Commissie aan deze discussies deel.

De Commissie heeft geen informatie over uitvoer door andere lidstaten en heeft in dit verband geen waarschuwingen ontvangen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006273/13
to the Commission
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Any substance which could be used to manufacture chemical weapons should be subject to export control

On 22 May 2013, it was revealed that Dutch companies exported significant amounts of the substance monoethylene glycol (glycol) to Syria in 2003, 2008, 2009, and 2010 ([1]). Glycol can be used to manufacture sulphur mustard, or mustard gas, which can be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons. Glycol appears neither on the military goods list nor on the dual-use list of the EU Common Position on export control ([2]). The export of glycol is therefore not subject to an assessment by Member States in line with the eight criteria laid down in the EU Common Position ([3]).

1. Could the Commission explain why glycol is not on the list of substances to be assessed before export by Member States, in line with the eight criteria of the Common Position? If not, why not?

2. Does the Commission agree that substances which could be used to manufacture chemical weapons should be added to this list as soon as possible? If not, why not?

3. Is the Commission aware of any other substances which are not on the export control list and which could be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons?

4. Is the Commission willing to investigate whether there are substances which are not on the list and which could be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons?

5. What will the Commission do to prevent the export from the EU of substances to be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons?

6. Is the Commission aware of other Member States from which glycol has been exported? If so, to which countries was it exported?

7. What are the total amounts of glycol exported from Member States over the past 10 years?

8. What warnings, if any, has the Commission received with regard to the export of glycol from the EU to third countries?

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

The EU has instruments to prevent the export of items that could contribute to the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Regulation 428/2009 controls the export of 'dual-use items' including chemical items to ensure that they do not contribute to the development of chemical weapons. The EU has also introduced sanctions against Syria, including restrictions on the export of certain chemicals.

Regulation 428/2009 controls the export of certain chemicals which may be used as precursors for toxic chemical agents but does not control monoethylene glycol as such. Decisions to add substances which could be used to produce chemical weapons to the control list are made at the multilateral export control regimes, and in particular the Australia Group (AG) ([4]). Discussions include consideration of various factors and strike a balance between the proliferation risk and the need to minimise impact on legitimate trade. Indeed, most chemicals under consideration have wide-ranging civilian applications and generic controls could be disproportionate. The AG has exchanged information about Syria's chemical weapons-related procurement of precursors for some years, and added glycol to its Syria-specific control list on 7 June 2013.

([1]) http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2013/05/22/grondstof-gif-uit-nederland-naar-syrie-geimporteerd/
([2]) http://www.wassenaar.org/controllists/2012/WA-LIST%20%2812%29%201/WA-LIST%20%2812%29%201.pdf; http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2008/september/tradoc_140595.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:335:0099:0103:EN:PDF
([4]) http://www.australiagroup.net/

Other substances, not on the EU control list, could be indirectly used in the manufacture of chemical weapons. Discussions in the export control regimes constantly review the need to place items under control. The EU is a member of the AG and the Commission thus takes part in those discussions.

The Commission is not informed of exports from other Member States, and has not received warnings in this respect.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006274/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(3 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Militares en Collserola

El pasado 29 de mayo las tropas del cuartel del Bruc realizaron maniobras militares en la sierra de Collserola, espacio natural incluido en la Red Natura 2000 desde 2006 y espacio de paso habitual para la población civil. Precisamente se han tomado imágenes por parte de algunas personas en las que los militares practican sus ejercicios junto a ciclistas, senderistas o niños, al acercarse los ejercicios a una escuela municipal.

Pese a que la normativa del parque indica claramente que los ejercicios con armas están prohibidos, los militares van armados.

Los ayuntamientos de Sant Cugat del Vallès, Molins de Rei y Cerdanyola del Vallès pidieron el cese de los ejercicios militares. El mando militar, sin embargo, ha hecho caso omiso de dicha petición por parte de los representantes electos de la población y continúa con sus ejercicios sin ni siquiera cooperar con las autoridades locales.

¿Cree la Comisión que el uso militar es compatible con los espacios naturales de la Red Natura 2000? ¿Cree que la actividad militar en espacios eminentemente civiles puede suponer un problema para la población? ¿Qué opina de la negativa del poder militar de seguir las peticiones de los gobiernos municipales sobre el cese de sus actividades en Collserola?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de julio de 2013)

No hay a priori ninguna presunción contra la realización de maniobras militares dentro de un espacio de la red Natura 2000. El régimen de protección de la Directiva de Hábitats ([1]) ofrece mecanismos para resolver los conflictos que puedan surgir entre las actividades militares y la conservación de la naturaleza. El artículo 6, apartado 2, de esa Directiva dispone que los Estados miembros adopten las medidas apropiadas para evitar en los espacios de Natura 2000 el deterioro de los hábitats naturales, así como cualquier alteración que repercuta en las especies que los habiten. Por su parte, los apartados 3 y 4 del mismo artículo establecen un marco equilibrado para hacer frente a cualquier nuevo plan o proyecto que pueda tener un impacto negativo en el estado de conservación de esos espacios.

([1]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006274/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Soldiers in Collserola

On 29 May 2013, troops from the Bruc barracks carried out military exercises on the Collserola mountain range, a natural area that has been included in the Natura 2000 network since 2006, and a place often used by the civilian population. In fact, some pictures have been taken showing soldiers carrying out their exercises next to cyclists, walkers or children, because the exercises are close to a municipal school.

Despite the fact that the park regulations clearly indicate that exercises involving arms are prohibited, the soldiers are armed.

The municipalities of Sant Cugat del Vallès, Molins de Rei and Cerdanyola del Vallès asked for the military exercises to be halted. However, the military high command ignored this request by the elected representatives of the people and is continuing with its exercises, without any form of cooperation with the local authorities.

Does the Commission believe that military use is compatible with natural areas within the Natura 2000 network? Does it believe that military activity in eminently civilian areas can pose a problem to residents? What does it think of the refusal by the military to accede to the requests of the municipal authorities regarding the cessation of its activities in Collserola?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 2013)

There is no a priori presumption against military activities inside a Natura 2000 site. The protection regime of the Habitats Directive ([1]) provides mechanisms for addressing possible conflicts which could arise between military activities and nature conservation. Article 6(2) of this directive requires Member States to take the appropriate measures to avoid deterioration of habitats and disturbance of species in the Natura 2000 sites, while Articles 6(3) and 6(4) provide a balanced framework for dealing with any new plans or projects which may have a negative impact on the conservation status of the sites.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006275/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: FTA with the United States and Chemicals

A Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and the United States could help deliver a rise in the gross domestic product of the EU of EUR 190 bn.

1. The EU operates a hazard-based approach to the regulation of chemicals which offers greater levels of protection than that of the narrow risk-based approach in place in the US. What assurances can the Commission provide that current EU rules on the regulation of chemicals will not be weakened by any FTA with the US?

2. Can the Commission confirm whether the FTA is likely to include a 'fair and equitable treatment' clause similar to that existing within the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)?

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

The Commission considers that the existing high levels of protection established by the EU legislation on chemicals are appropriate, and there will be no compromise on them during the negotiations with the US. One of the objectives of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership is to explore how to reduce costs for economic operators and avoid unnecessary administrative delays derived from regulation of the two parties, but always guaranteeing that both parties continue to apply the levels of health, safety and environmental protection that they consider adequate.

Regarding the inclusion of a clause on 'fair and equitable treatment' in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, it should be noted that this is a clause that is consistently included by the USA and by Member States in their investment agreements. However, it is too early to say how such clause would be worded.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006277/13
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente / Haute Représentante)
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 juin 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Conditions de vie des Palestiniens en Zone C

L'association AIDA (Association of International Development Agencies), qui représente plus de 80 ONG d'aide humanitaire et de développement travaillant dans le Territoire palestinien occupé a publié un rapport («Un bilan décevant: comment l'UE peut agir pour améliorer les conditions de vie des Palestiniens en Zone C») pressant l'Union d'accompagner ses déclarations d'actions visant à contester les politiques du gouvernement israélien qui créent des conditions de vie insoutenables pour une grande partie des 150 000 Palestiniens vivant sous le contrôle militaire et civil d'Israël en Zone C, qui représente 60 % de la Cisjordanie.

Plus de 600 maisons ont été construites dans les colonies israéliennes durant les douze derniers mois, alors que 535 maisons et structures appartenant à des Palestiniens ont été détruites, privant ainsi de foyer ou déplaçant 784 personnes. Environ 30 structures financées par des fonds européens ont été détruites au cours de cette même période et des dizaines d'autres, dont des tentes, des citernes d'eau et des enclos d'animaux, sont menacées de démolition.

L'Union s'est clairement opposée à l'expansion de la colonisation et aux démolitions de projets palestiniens et européens par Israël. Cependant, cette opposition s'est essentiellement basée sur des déclarations.

Par ailleurs, Israël est légalement responsable du bien-être des hommes, femmes et enfants palestiniens qui vivent dans le Territoire palestinien occupé.

1. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a-t-elle eu connaissance du rapport AIDA?

2. Comment la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante compte-elle faire en sorte que l'Union respecte l'engagement pris d'augmenter l'aide au développement en Zone C, qui y est plus que nécessaire, et inciter le gouvernement israélien à lever les restrictions qui rendent les Palestiniens vulnérables aux démolitions et les empêchent de construire des foyers corrects, des écoles, des routes, des infrastructures hydrauliques et des réseaux d'électricité?

3. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante ne pense-t-elle pas que les États membres ont pour obligation de répondre aux violations du droit international et de faire pression collectivement sur Israël afin de mettre un terme à ces politiques qui freinent le développement palestinien?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présisente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(6 août 2013)

La Vice-présisente/Haute Représentante a connaissance du rapport auquel l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence.

L'UE a été l'un des premiers partenaires internationaux à reconnaître l'importance cruciale de la zone C en tant que principale réserve en termes de territoire pour un futur État palestinien. Elle a pris la tête des efforts déployés par la communauté internationale pour faire en sorte qu'Israël assume ses obligations en ce qui concerne les conditions de vie de la population palestinienne dans la zone C. Elle a encouragé le développement palestinien local dans la zone C au moyen de plans directeurs établis avec les communautés palestiniennes. En outre, elle fournit des fonds en vue du développement des infrastructures dans les zones couvertes par les plans directeurs et coordonne l'action des États membres à cet égard.

L'Union a suivi de près les démolitions, notamment en effectuant de nombreuses visites sur le terrain, et a demandé qu'il soit mis un terme à ces démolitions ainsi qu'aux déplacements forcés. Elle a plaidé en faveur d'un accès à l'eau et apporté une aide humanitaire aux personnes en détresse, tout en exprimant ses vives préoccupations au sujet des colonies et de la violence des colons dans la zone C. Elle a soulevé l'ensemble de ces questions dans le cadre d'un dialogue régulier avec les autorités israéliennes et a également coopéré étroitement avec les autorités palestiniennes en ce qui concerne le développement de la zone C.

L'UE compte fermement sur une évolution positive dans la zone C et entend intensifier ses efforts à cet égard. Elle continuera de promouvoir le développement économique et social de la zone C dans l'intérêt du peuple palestinien et de veiller à ce que celui-ci demeure une priorité majeure dans ses discussions tant avec les autorités israéliennes et palestiniennes qu'avec ses partenaires internationaux.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006277/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Living conditions of Palestinians in Area C

The Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA), which represents more than 80 humanitarian aid and development NGOs working in the occupied Palestinian territory, has published a report ('Failing to make the grade: How the EU can pass its own test and work to improve the lives of Palestinians in Area C') urging the EU to accompany its declarations with action aimed at contesting the policies of the Israeli Government which are creating unbearable living conditions for many of the 150 000 Palestinians living under Israeli military and civil control in Area C, which represents 60% of West Bank.

More than 600 houses have been built in the Israeli colonies in the last 12 months, while 535 houses and structures belonging to Palestinians have been destroyed, meaning that 784 people have been displaced or deprived of their homes. Approximately 30 structures financed by European funds have been destroyed in the same period and dozens of others, including tents, water tanks and animal enclosures, are threatened with demolition.

The EU is clearly opposed to the expansion of the colonisation and the demolition of Palestinian and European projects by Israel. However, this opposition is essentially based on declarations.

Furthermore, Israel is legally responsible for the well-being of the Palestinian men, women and children who live in the occupied Palestinian territory.

1. Is the VP/HR aware of the AIDA report?

2. How does the VP/HR intend to ensure that the EU respects its commitment to increase aid for the development of Area C, where it is most needed, and to encourage the Israeli Government to lift the restrictions that leave Palestinians at risk of demolitions and stop them from building decent homes, schools, roads, water infrastructures and electricity networks?

3. Does the VP/HR not believe that the Member States have an obligation to respond to violations of international law and to collectively put pressure on Israel in order to put an end to these policies, which are hindering Palestinian development?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the report referred to by the Honourable Member.

The EU was one of the first international partners to recognise the critical importance of Area C as the main land reserve for a future Palestinian state. It has led the international community's efforts to ensure that Israel meets is obligations regarding the living conditions of the Palestinian population in Area C. It has promoted local Palestinian development in Area C through master-plans developed with Palestinian communities. It is also providing funding for infrastructure development within the areas covered by the master plans and is also coordinating Member States efforts in this regard.

It has monitored closely demolitions including through numerous site visits, has called for them to end and for a halt to forced transfers. It has called for access to water and provided humanitarian assistance for those in need. It has expressed its deep concerns regarding settlements and settler violence in Area C. It has raised all of these issues in a regular dialogue with the Israeli authorities. It has also worked closely with the Palestinian authorities regarding the development of Area C.

The EU is fully committed to seeing positive change in Area C and to stepping up its efforts in this regard. It will continue to promote the social and economic development of Area C for the benefit of the Palestinian people and ensure that this continues to be a major priority in its discussions with the Israeli and Palestinian authorities and with international partners.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006279/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 juin 2013)

Objet: Fermeture Goodyear Dunlop à Amiens (France)

Goodyear France a annoncé l'échec des tentatives destinées à trouver un repreneur de son usine d'Amiens-Nord, ce qui devrait condamner le site à fermer, menaçant 1 173 emplois.

Goodyear Dunlop Tires France a annoncé, lors du comité central d'entreprise, qu'aucun repreneur n'est intéressé par Amiens à la suite de l'étude de l'Agence française des investissements internationaux (AFII). Au total, 57 entreprises ont été contactées par les bureaux de l'AFII dans le monde. Huit entreprises se sont déclarées intéressées, 5 ont signé un accord de confidentialité, 2 offres non engageantes ont été présentées. Aucun des candidats n'a été en situation de présenter une offre engageante.

Goodyear ajoute que le projet de coopérative formulé par un syndicat ne représentait pas une «solution au problème des pertes récurrentes de l'activité» ([1]).

1. La Commission est-elle au courant de la fermeture de Goodyear France?

2. Fournit-elle des aides à la mise en place de coopératives dans le cadre FEM?

3. Le groupe va-t-il bénéficier ou bénéficie-t-il d'autres mesures de soutien de l'Union européenne?

4. Quelles sont les garanties qui existent quant au respect des droits liés au travail, et notamment du droit à un emploi?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(6 novembre 2013)

1. Bien qu'elle ne soit pas au courant des détails de l'opération, la Commission est préoccupée par les conséquences économiques et sociales que pourrait entrainer la fermeture de l'usine Goodyear Dunlop à Amiens.

2. La décision de demander au Fonds européen d'ajustement à la mondialisation (FEM) de cofinancer une aide aux travailleurs appartient à l'État membre concerné. Si celui-ci introduit une telle demande, il propose les mesures qu'il juge appropriées en tant qu'éléments d'un paquet personnalisé d'aide aux travailleurs. Aucune demande cofinancée n'a comporté jusqu'à présent une aide spécifique à la création d'une coopérative. Cependant, la plupart des demandes ont proposé des contributions aux frais de démarrage d'entreprises. Si plusieurs travailleurs décidaient de créer une coopérative, ils pourraient mettre en commun leurs contributions et créer une nouvelle entreprise sous la forme d'une coopérative.

3. Il n'est pas prévu de financement ni d'aide du FSE pour Goodyear.

4. La législation de l'UE ([2]) impose à l'employeur l'obligation d'informer et de consulter les représentants des travailleurs sur la situation économique et de l'emploi de l'entreprise ainsi que sur les décisions de celle-ci qui touchent les salariés. En cas de restructuration ou de fermeture d'entreprise, cette consultation vise, entre autres, à éviter des licenciements collectifs ou à en réduire le nombre et à en atténuer les conséquences.

([1]) http://lexpansion.lexpress.fr/entreprise/goodyear-amiens-la-direction-rejette-le-projet-de-scop-de-la-cgt_382601.html

([2]) En particulier, la directive 2002/14/CE établissant un cadre général relatif à l'information et la consultation des travailleurs dans la Communauté européenne, JO L 80 du 23.3.2002, p. 29; la directive 98/59/CE concernant le rapprochement des législations des États membres relatives aux licenciements collectifs, JO L 225 du 12.8.1998, p. 16; et la directive 2009/38/CE concernant l'institution d'un comité d'entreprise européen ou d'une procédure dans les entreprises de dimension communautaire et les groupes d'entreprises de dimension communautaire en vue d'informer et de consulter les travailleurs, JO L 122 of 16.5.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006279/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Closure of Goodyear Dunlop in Amiens (France)

Goodyear France has announced that attempts to find a purchaser for its Amiens-Nord factory have failed, condemning the site to closure and threatening 1 173 jobs.

Goodyear Dunlop Tires France announced, during the central works council, that no purchasers were interested in Amiens following the study by the French Agency for International Investment (AFII). In total, 57 companies were contacted by AFII offices worldwide. Eight companies expressed their interest, five signed a confidentiality agreement and two non-binding offers were submitted. None of the candidates was in a position to submit a binding offer.

Goodyear adds that plans for a cooperative put forward by a trade union did not represent a 'solution to the problem of recurrent losses in activity'. ([1])

1. Is the Commission aware of the closure of Goodyear France?

2. Does it provide aid for the implementation of cooperatives within the framework of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF)?

3. Will the group benefit or does it benefit from other support measures from the European Union?

4. What guarantees have been made with regard to respect for rights relating to work, and in particular the right to a job?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

1. Without being aware of the details of the operation, the Commission is concerned about the social and economic consequences that the closure of the Goodyear Dunlop plant in Amiens may bring with it.

2. It is for the Member State to decide whether to apply for co-funding of support for the workers by the EGF. If it does so, it will propose the measures which it deems suitable as components of a personalized package of support for the workers. No application co-financed so far has included specific support to the setting up of a cooperative. However, most applications have proposed contributions to the start-up costs of businesses. If several workers decided to set up a cooperative, they could pool their individual contributions and start a new business in the form of a cooperative.

3. No ESF funding or support is foreseen for Goodyear.

4. EC law ([2]) imposes on the employer the obligation to inform and consult workers' representatives on the economic and employment situation of the undertaking as well as on his/her decisions which affect workers. In case of restructuring or closure of undertakings, such consultation aims, i.e., at avoiding collective redundancies or reducing their number and mitigating their consequences.

([1]) http://lexpansion.lexpress.fr/entreprise/goodyear-amiens-la-direction-rejette-le-projet-de-scop-de-la-cgt_382601.html

([2]) In particular, Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community, OJ L 80, 23.3.2002, p. 29; Directive 98/59/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998, p. 16; Directive 2009/38/EC on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees, OJ L 122 of 16.5.2009.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006280/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 juin 2013)

Objet: Insalubrité du travail dans le milieu des réseaux d'eaux résiduaires en France

Les personnels travaillant dans les égouts, les réseaux d'eaux résiduaires souterrains confinés ou de surface français réclament la reconnaissance par leur régime de retraite de l'insalubrité dans laquelle ils évoluent. Le milieu insalubre ne se limite pas aux seuls réseaux souterrains d'égouts, mais à l'ensemble des réseaux d'eaux résiduaires, qu'ils soient souterrains, confinés ou de surface. Ces réseaux débutent dès le collectage des eaux usées évacuées par les usagers, et se terminent à la fin de l'épuration de ces eaux usées et du traitement des déchets et de l'atmosphère.

Les travailleurs revendiquent la prise en compte de la situation de tous les salariés en contact avec les eaux résiduaires, afin que le caractère insalubre de leur travail soit reconnu et qu'ils puissent également bénéficier de l'ouverture de droits au départ à la retraite anticipée.

1. La Commission est-elle au courant des demandes légitimes des travailleurs français des réseaux d'eaux résiduaires?

2. La Commission a-t-elle élaboré une étude concernant le caractère insalubre du travail en contact avec les eaux résiduaires? Existe-t-il une évaluation sur la santé des travailleurs de ces services dans l'Union européenne?

3. Que peut proposer la Commission pour que les travailleurs du secteur soient protégés tant pendant la vie professionnelle qu'en vue de l'obtention des droits au départ à la retraite?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(31 juillet 2013)

La Commission n'a pas connaissance de telles demandes, qui, en tout état de cause, devraient être en premier lieu adressées aux autorités nationales compétentes chargées de faire respecter les dispositions nationales qui transposent la législation de l'Union européenne dans le domaine de la santé et de la sécurité au travail. Veuillez noter que les dispositions de la directive-cadre 89/391/CEE ([1]), de la directive sur les équipements de travail ([2]), de la directive sur les équipements de protection individuelle ([3]), de la directive 2000/54/CE relative aux agents biologiques ([4]) et de la directive 98/24/CE relative aux agents chimiques ([5]) s'appliquent.

La Commission n'a mené aucune étude de ce type et n'a pas connaissance de l'existence d'une évaluation sur la santé des travailleurs dans ces services.

Les dispositions des directives susmentionnées prévoient des mesures de prévention et de protection pour la santé et la sécurité des travailleurs en contact avec des eaux usées. Toutefois, elles établissent des exigences minimales et sont sans préjudice des dispositions nationales plus favorables à la protection des travailleurs. Il y a lieu de rappeler que la France a transposé ces directives et que, par conséquent, la législation nationale pertinente est applicable.

([1]) Directive 89/391/CEE du Conseil, du 12 juin 1989, concernant la mise en œuvre de mesures visant à promouvoir l'amélioration de la sécurité et de la santé des travailleurs au travail, JO L 283 du 29.6.1989, p. 1.

([2]) Directive 89/655/CEE du Conseil, du 30 novembre 1989, concernant les prescriptions minimales de sécurité et de santé pour l'utilisation par les travailleurs au travail d'équipements de travail (deuxième directive particulière au sens de l'article 16, paragraphe 1, de la directive 89/391/CEE), JO L 393 du 30.12.1989, p. 13, mise à jour par la directive 95/63/CE du Conseil du 5 décembre 1995 modifiant la directive 89/655/CEE concernant les prescriptions minimales de sécurité et de santé pour l'utilisation par les travailleurs au travail d'équipements de travail (deuxième directive particulière au sens de l'article 16, paragraphe 1, de la directive 89/391/CEE), JO L 335 du 30.12.1995, p. 28.

([3]) Directive 89/656/CEE du Conseil, du 30 novembre 1989, concernant les prescriptions minimales de sécurité et de santé pour l'utilisation par les travailleurs au travail d'équipements de protection individuelle (troisième directive particulière au sens de l'article 16, paragraphe 1, de la directive 89/391/CEE), JO L 393 du 30.12.1989, p. 18.

([4]) Directive 2000/54/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 septembre 2000 concernant la protection des travailleurs contre les risques liés à l'exposition à des agents biologiques au travail (septième directive particulière au sens de l'article 16, paragraphe 1, de la directive 89/391/CEE), JO L 262 du 17.10.2000, p. 21.

([5]) Directive 98/24/CE du Conseil du 7 avril 1998 concernant la protection de la santé et de la sécurité des travailleurs contre les risques liés à des agents chimiques sur le lieu de travail (quatorzième directive particulière au sens de l'article 16, paragraphe 1, de la directive 89/391/CEE), JO L 131 du 5.5.1998, p. 11.

En ce qui concerne les droits à la retraite, cette compétence relève des États membres. Pour autant, la Commission est d'avis qu'il convient de donner la priorité à la protection de la santé et de la sécurité des travailleurs et qu'il serait préférable de faciliter les transferts vers des emplois moins pénibles plutôt que de prendre des dispositions de départs anticipés à la retraite.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006280/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Hazardous nature of work in wastewater networks in France

Staff working in sewers, enclosed, underground or surface wastewater networks in France are calling for their pensions schemes to take into account the hazardous nature of their working environment. This hazardousness is not only limited to underground sewer networks, but applies to all wastewater networks, be they enclosed, underground or on the surface. These networks start with the collection of wastewater disposed of by users, and finish with the purification of this wastewater and the treatment of waste and the atmosphere.

The workers are calling for the situation of all employees who come into contact with wastewater to be taken into account so that the hazardous nature of their work is recognised and so that they can also benefit from the entitlement to early retirement rights.

1. Is the Commission aware of the legitimate requests of the French wastewater network workers?

2. Has the Commission carried out a study on the hazardous nature of work in contact with wastewater? Is there an assessment on the health of workers in these services in the European Union?

3. What can the Commission propose so that workers in the sector are protected both during their professional lives and with a view to obtaining early retirement rights?

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

The Commission is not aware of any such requests, which, in any event, should be submitted first to the competent national authorities who have the responsibility to enforce the national provisions transposing the legislation of the European Union in the field of health and safety at work. Please note that the provisions of the framework Directive 89/391/EEC ([1]), of the Work Equipment Directive ([2]), of the Personal Protective Equipment Directive ([3]), of the Biological Agents Directive 2000/54/EC ([4]) and of the Chemical Agents Directive 98/24/EC ([5]) apply.

The Commission has not conducted any such studies, nor is aware of any assessment on the health of workers in these services.

The provisions of the aforementioned Directives lay down preventive and protective measures for the health and safety of workers in contact with wastewaters. However they establish minimum requirements and are without prejudice to national provisions that are more favourable to protection of workers. It is to be reminded that France has transposed these Directives and therefore the relevant national legislation is applicable.

As to retirement rights, this is a competence of Member States. The Commission is, however, of the view that priority should be given to protecting the health and safety of workers, and that facilitating transfers to less arduous jobs would be preferable to early retirement provisions.

([1]) Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, OJ L 183, 29.6.1989.

([2]) Council Directive 89/655/EEC of 30 November 1989 concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the use of work equipment by workers at work (second individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC), OJ L 393, 30.12.1989, updated by Council Directive 95/63/EC of 5 December 1995 amending Directive 89/655/EEC concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the use of work equipment by workers at work (second individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC), OJ L 335, 30.12.1995.

([3]) Council Directive 89/656/EEC of 30 November 1989 on the minimum health and safety requirements for the use by workers of personal protective equipment at the workplace (third individual directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC), OJ L 393, 30.12.1989.

([4]) Directive 2000/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2000 on the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents at work (seventh individual directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC), OJ L 262, 17.10.2000.

([5]) Council Directive 98/24/EC of 7 April 1998 on the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks related to chemical agents at work (fourteenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC), OJ L 131, 5.5.1998.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006281/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 juin 2013)

Objet: Fermeture de raffineries en France et en Europe

D'après une déclaration du président-directeur-général du groupe Total France, de nouvelles fermetures de raffineries sont envisagées dans les années à venir en Europe et en France, du fait de la nécessité de réduire la consommation de carburants pour diminuer les émissions de gaz à effet de serre.

Le secteur du raffinage européen souffre actuellement de marges très faibles et l'ancienneté de ses installations nécessite des investissements de maintenance élevés dans un environnement de consommation déprimée. Ces pressions ont conduit à quatre fermetures de raffineries en 2012 et à l'annonce de trois autres cette année, dont celle de Petroplus à Petit-Couronne (Seine-Maritime).

Lors de la fermeture de celle de Dunkerque, en 2010, Total s'était engagé à maintenir son dispositif français jusqu'en 2016.

1. La Commission est-elle au courant des projets de fermeture de raffineries en Europe? Et en France?

2. Existe-t-il un bilan d'activités des raffineries installées sur le territoire de l'Union européenne?

3. Quels sont les fonds qui ont été octroyés aux raffineries dans l'Union européenne?

4. Le groupe Total a-t-il bénéficié d'aides de l'Union européenne pour maintenir son dispositif français jusqu'en 2016? Et en France?

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

1. La Commission européenne assure un suivi régulier de la situation des marchés du raffinage de l'Union européenne et est informée en permanence par le secteur de son évolution, et notamment des fermetures de raffineries.

2. La Commission n'établit pas de rapports réguliers sur les activités des raffineries dans l'Union européenne. Le dernier rapport de la Commission européenne sur ce secteur remonte à novembre 2010 ([1]). L'inquiétude de la Commission européenne à propos des fermetures de raffineries dans l'Union et les défis généraux à relever par le secteur ont donné lieu à l'organisation d'une table ronde sur le raffinage dans l'Union européenne en mai 2012 et à la création d'un forum sur le raffinage européen, qui se réunit deux fois par an pour rendre compte des défis existants dans ce secteur et en discuter.

3. Aucun fonds de l'Union n'a été octroyé de façon collective à des raffineries. La DG ENER n'a pas connaissance de cas individuels d'aides d'État, à l'exception de celui du site Petroplus Petit-Couronne en France, qui a fait l'objet d'une enquête de la DG COMP. La Commission est informée que l'État français a apporté une aide financière de 20 millions d'euros à Petroplus Petit-Couronne sous la forme d'une avance remboursable. Cette société a entre-temps été mise en liquidation judiciaire et a par conséquent cessé toutes ses activités.

4. Le groupe Total n'a bénéficié d'aucune aide de l'Union pour maintenir ses raffineries françaises en activité. La Commission européenne n'a pas connaissance d'aides d'État qui auraient été octroyées à Total par le gouvernement français.

([1]) Document de travail des services de la Commission sur le raffinage et l'approvisionnement en produits pétroliers dans l'Union européenne [SEC(2010) 1398].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006281/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Closure of refineries in France and in Europe

According to a statement from the chairman and managing director of the group Total France, there are plans for further closures of refineries over the coming years in Europe and in France, due to the need to reduce fuel consumption in order to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The European refining sector is currently suffering from very low margins, and the age of its installations means that higher maintenance investments are required against a backdrop of reduced consumption. Such pressures led to the closure of four refineries in 2012, and to three more being announced this year, including the closure of Petroplus in Petit-Couronne (Seine-Maritime).

At the time of the closure of the Dunkirk refinery in 2010, Total made a commitment to maintain its French refineries until 2016.

1. Is the Commission aware of the plans to close refineries in Europe? What about in France?

2. Is there a report on the activities of refineries situated in the European Union?

3. What funds have been granted to refineries in the European Union?

4. Has the Total group benefited from EU aid to maintain its French refineries until 2016? Has it received any aid from France?

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

1. The European Commission regularly monitors the situation on the EU's refining markets and is informed of developments, including refinery closures, by the industry on a continuous basis.

2. The Commission does not regularly report on the activities of refineries in the EU. The last report of the European Commission on the sector dates back to November 2010 ([1]). The European Commission's concern with regard to EU refinery closures and general challenges by the sector prompted the organisation of an EU Refining Roundtable in May 2012 and the setting up of an EU Refining Forum, which meets twice a year to report on and discuss the challenges in the sector.

3. No EU funds have been granted to refineries as a group. DG ENER is unaware of any individual cases of national state aid, except in the case of the Petroplus Petit-Couronne site in France, which DG COMP has investigated. The Commission is aware that the French State provided financial support of EUR 20 million to Petroplus Petit-Couronne in the form of a repayable advance. This company has meanwhile been put in judicial liquidation and has thus ceased all activities.

4. The Total group has not received any EU aid to keep its French refineries open. The European Commission is unaware of any state aid having been attributed to Total by the French Government.

([1]) Commission Staff Working Paper on Refining and the Supply of Petroleum Products in the EU [SEC(2010)1398] .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006282/13
to the Commission
Richard Ashworth (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Final escritura in Portugal

Where a citizen, purchasing a property in Portugal in 1989, was neither permitted to sign nor given a copy of the *final escritura* for the property, and today finds themselves in a situation where the ownership of the property lies with the bank that mortgaged the development of the property and this bank refuses to release the *final escritura*, despite accepting that the citizen paid the full price for the property, can the Commission confirm whether there is any recourse to EU consumer protection legislation?

Is the Commission aware of other examples of this practice of title deeds being withheld by banks in Portugal?

What actions has the Commission taken to date?

What actions does it intend to take?

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

The Commission was so far not aware of the problems reported by the Honourable Member in Portugal.

The reported issue seems to relate mainly to the lack of/or inadequate performance of contracts, which is a matter primarily regulated by the national contract laws of the Member States.

Nevertheless, EU consumers are protected by Community law in situations where rogue traders engage in unfair practices. Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]) which prohibits traders from engaging in misleading and aggressive practices towards consumers, is applicable to transactions made after its entry into application on 12 December 2007. Directive 84/450/EEC ([2]) which protects consumers against misleading advertising was applicable to business-to-consumer relations until the entry into application of Directive 2005/29/EC. Directive 93/13/EEC ([3]) according to which unfair contract terms are not binding on consumers may also be applicable to the problem at stake.

Combatting cross-border unfair practices is dealt with by the EU-wide enforcement network established by the regulation on Consumer Protection Cooperation ([4]), which coordinates the actions of the national enforcement authorities to detect, investigate and stop such infringements. Consumer complaints should therefore be brought to the attention of national enforcement authorities.

Consumers are also encouraged to contact the European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-Net) which provides assistance in case of violation of their rights in cross-border transactions.

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member, that it is engaged in a structured dialogue with those Member States where similar problems have been reported.

([1]) Unfair Commercial Practices Directive, OJ L 149 of 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([2]) Directive concerning misleading advertising, OJ L 250, 19.9.1984, p. 17.
([3]) Directive on unfair terms in consumer contracts, OJ L 95, 21.4.1993, p. 29.
([4]) OJ L 364 of 9.12.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006283/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Impact of Directive 2005/36/EC on the profession of midwifery

Certain recently submitted compromise amendments, released as part of the ongoing process of modernisation of EU Directive 2005/36/EC, are of significant concern to Irish and European organisations actively involved in shaping this directive.

Organisations advocating on behalf of midwives are of the opinion that the hours of theoretical and practical training offered to midwives are inadequate and not in line with the hours stipulated in points B and C, which require a minimum of 4 800 hours.

Furthermore, organisations have raised concerns about the lowering of the clinical practice requirement to one third of the training hours, which could potentially compromise the ability of a qualified midwife to practise.

Does the Commission intend to increase training hours to at least 5 000 hours, as per the suggestion put forward by the European Midwives Association (EMA)?

Does the Commission intend to amend the clinical practice requirement proposed in compromise amendment 29, so as to allow for an increase in the training hours being spent in direct clinical practice in order to achieve the best outcome for midwifery education?

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

On 12 June 2013, a first provisional agreement on the modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive was reached in trialogue negotiations ([1]). According to this political agreement, a possible reform of the conditions for midwifery training would contain the following elements: the access conditions to midwifery training would be raised from 10 to 12 years of general school education, together with a transitional regime of 6 years for countries currently applying a 10-year requirement. Furthermore, the revised Directive will considerably update the list of the knowledge and skills for midwives. Finally, the revised Directive is likely to require midwives to be trained in 3 years consisting of at least 4600 hours.

If confirmed by the European Parliament and the Council, the new Directive is likely to enter into force in early 2014. Member States would accordingly have two years to transpose the revised Directive.

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006284/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Nuove minacce per il «made in» di qualità: la Croazia imita il Prosecco veneto

Dopo la vicenda del Tocai friulano e del Tokaij ungherese, con l'ingresso della Croazia in Europa, programmato per il prossimo 1° luglio 2013, si ripresenta per i produttori italiani il problema dei falsi alimentari e delle imitazioni delle nostre eccellenze da parte di altri Stati membri. Ad essere messo a rischio, questa volta, è il Prosecco ovvero un vino di grande qualità prodotto in limitate quantità nella regione Veneto.

Con l'entrata nell'Unione anche la Croazia potrà commercializzare liberamente il suo Prosek, cioè la sua imitazione del Prosecco, prodotto con uve autoctone coltivate in Dalmazia.

Nonostante la Commissione abbia respinto l'istanza croata avanzata durante i negoziati di adesione di includere la denominazione Prosek tra quelle protette dall'Unione, perché l'uso di tale nome avrebbe provocato confusione tra i consumatori, il 4 aprile scorso il Ministro dell'agricoltura croato, Tihomir Jakovina, ha affermato che i produttori croati di Prosek potranno continuare ad utilizzare questa denominazione per il loro prodotto, danneggiando di fatto i produttori italiani di prosecco e ingannando i consumatori europei.

Può la Commissione dire:

— se è a conoscenza dei fatti;

— come valuta le affermazioni del Ministro croato rispetto agli impegni assunti durante i negoziati di adesione;

— se ritiene opportuno un intervento a tutela del diritto di informazione dei consumatori europei;

— come intende intervenire per tutelare i produttori veneti di Prosecco e salvaguardare l'eccellenza italiana;

— se intende chiedere alla Croazia di rinunciare all'uso della denominazione «Prosek» prima di entrare a far parte dell'UE, così da evitare che i consumatori europei siano ingannati e tutelare quindi i produttori veneti e italiani?

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(15 luglio 2013)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza dei fatti contenuti nell'interrogazione. L'uso del termine «Prosek» per prodotti vitivinicoli nell'UE non è contemplato dal trattato di adesione della Croazia e la Commissione non ha ricevuto nessuna specifica richiesta da parte della Croazia dopo la sua adesione all'UE riguardo all'uso di tale denominazione. In questo contesto, l'utilizzo in commercio del termine in questione può creare problemi giuridici nella misura in cui rientra nel campo d'applicazione dell'articolo 118 quaterdecies del regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007 ([1]), poiché la denominazione croata potrebbe entrare in conflitto con la protezione della DOP ([2]) italiana «Prosecco». Le autorità croate sono a conoscenza di tale problema giuridico.

Spetta alle autorità competenti degli Stati membri garantire l'applicazione di tale protezione nel mercato interno. L'UE ha inoltre negoziato accordi bilaterali con numerosi paesi terzi, per garantire anche nei loro territori alti livelli di protezione delle DOP, compresa la DOP «Prosecco».

Ciononostante, se dopo il 1° luglio 2013 sarà presentata una domanda di protezione per «Prosek» come IGP ([3]), DOP o menzione tradizionale, saranno applicate le disposizioni relative alla presentazione delle domande e le norme relative all'esame da parte della Commissione previste nella sezione I bis del capo I del titolo II del regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007, nonché le disposizioni dettagliate di cui al capo II e al capo III del regolamento (CE) n. 607/2009 ([4]). Nella fase d'esame che precede la decisione di concessione o di rifiuto della protezione sono prese in considerazione eventuali denominazioni di vini omonimi già registrati. Ad oggi la Commissione non ha ricevuto nessuna domanda.

([1]) GU L 299 del 16.11.2007.
([2]) Denominazione di origine protetta.
([3]) Indicazione geografica protetta.
([4]) GU L 193 del 24.7.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006284/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: New threats against 'made in Italy' quality: Croatia is imitating Prosecco from the Veneto Region

Following the incident with the Tocai grape from the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region and the Tokaij grape from Hungary, and now that Croatia is scheduled to enter the European Union on 1 July 2013, Italian producers will have to face a new problem of false foodstuffs and imitations of our excellence by other Member States. This time it is Prosecco, a high-quality wine produced in limited quantities in the Veneto Region, which is at risk.

Once Croatia has entered the European Union, it will be able to freely market its Prosek, an imitation of Prosecco, produced with local grapes grown in Dalmatia.

Despite the fact that the Commission rejected the Croatian petition, submitted during the accession negotiations, to include the name Prosek among those protected by the EU, since the use of such a name would have caused confusion among consumers, on 4 April, the Croatian Minister for Agriculture, Tihomir Jakovina, stated that Croatian Prosek producers would be able to continue using this name for their product, thus damaging Italian Prosecco producers and European consumers.

Can the Commission state:

— whether it is aware of these facts;

— how it assesses the Croatian Minister's statements compared with the commitments made during the accession negotiations;

— whether it believes measures should be taken to protect the right of European consumers to be correctly informed;

— what measures it intends to take to protect Prosecco producers from the Veneto Region and safeguard Italian excellence;

— whether it intends to ask Croatia to refrain from using the name 'Prosek' before entering the EU, in order to ensure that European consumers are not tricked and thus safeguard producers from the Veneto Region and Italy in general?

Answer given by M.Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the facts related to the question. The use of the term 'PROSEK' for wine products in the EU is not part of the Accession Treaty of Croatia and no specific Croatian request has been received by the Commission concerning the use of this denomination after accession to the EU. In this context, the use in trade of the term in question may raise legal problems as far as it may fall under the scope of Article 118m of Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([1]), since it could conflict with the protection of the Italian PDO ([2]) 'Prosecco'. The Croatian authorities are aware of that legal point of view.

The enforcement of that protection is ensured in the internal market by the competent authorities of the Member States. Furthermore, the EU has negotiated bilateral agreements with several third countries to ensure a high level of protection of EU PDO in those countries, including for the PDO 'Prosecco'.

Nevertheless, if an application for the protection of 'PROSEK' as PGI ([3]) or PDO or as a traditional term was received after 1 July 2013, the requirements concerning the submission of applications and the rules concerning the scrutiny by the Commission would apply, as foreseen in Section Ia of Chapter I of Title II of Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as well as the detailed provisions set out in Chapters II and III of Regulation (EC) No 607/2009 ([4]). Such scrutiny, preceding the decision of protection or refusal of protection, includes the consideration of eventual homonymous wines names already registered. However, until this date no application was received by the Commission.

([1]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007.
([2]) Protected Denomination of Origin.
([3]) Protected Geographical Indication.
([4]) OJ L 193, 24.7.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006286/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μεθοδευμένη κατάργηση του δημόσιου χαρακτήρα των παιδικών σταθμών

Αυτή την περίοδο, χιλιάδες νέοι γονείς στην Ελλάδα αναζητούν θέση για τα παιδιά τους στους παιδικούς σταθμούς και έρχονται αντιμέτωποι με την αδυναμία των δήμων να φιλοξενήσουν τα παιδιά τους στους σταθμούς από το Σεπτέμβριο. Ήδη στη χρονιά που τελειώνει, εκατοντάδες κτίρια έχουν μείνει ασυντήρητα λόγω έλλειψης χρηματοδότησης, ενώ το προσωπικό περιορίζεται διαρκώς, καθώς δεν γίνονται προσλήψεις μόνιμου προσωπικού, αντίθετα οι παιδαγωγοί προσλαμβάνονται με 2μηνες, 4μηνες, 8μηνες συμβάσεις, εις βάρος της σοβαρής ανάγκης να φροντίζουν τα ίδια πρόσωπα τα βρέφη και τα νήπια.

Η οικονομική κρίση δίνει το άλλοθι στην τρικομματική κυβέρνηση ΝΔ-ΠΑΣΟΚ-ΔΗΜΑΡ και στις δημοτικές αρχές να περικόψουν περαιτέρω τη χρηματοδότηση των παιδικών σταθμών, η ιδιωτικοποίηση των οποίων δρομολογήθηκε από το 2000, από τις κυβερνήσεις και την ΕΕ, όταν οι μέχρι τότε κρατικοί παιδικοί σταθμοί, που ήταν δωρεάν και με μόνιμο προσωπικό, πέρασαν στην αρμοδιότητα των Δήμων. Θύματα των περικοπών είναι οι χιλιάδες άνεργοι και ανασφάλιστοι γονείς που αποκλείονται ακόμα και από τη δυνατότητα της αίτησης, εις βάρος των αναγκών των παιδιών τους, τα βρέφη έως 2 ετών, καθώς τα βρεφικά τμήματα περιορίζονται δραστικά, αλλά και συνολικά οι νέοι γονείς που επωμίζονται όλο και μεγαλύτερα τροφεία, τη στιγμή που υποβαθμίζονται οι κτιριακές και υλικοτεχνικές υποδομές, η σίτιση, η θέρμανση, η ιατρική παρακολούθηση των νηπίων.

Οι εναπομείναντες σε λειτουργία παιδικοί σταθμοί όλο και περισσότερο στηρίζουν τη χρηματοδότησή τους σε ευρωπαϊκά προγράμματα με ημερομηνία λήξης, που όμως δεν μπορούν να καλύψουν τις ανάγκες, ενώ ετοιμάζεται το πλαίσιο παράδοσης των παιδικών σταθμών σε κοινωνικές επιχειρήσεις και ΜΚΟ, που θα βάλει τέλος στην επιστημονική φροντίδα των βρεφών και των νηπίων.

Οι γονείς απαιτούν αποκλειστικά κρατικούς, δημόσιους, δωρεάν, σύγχρονους και ασφαλείς παιδικούς σταθμούς με κτιριακή επάρκεια, καταλληλότητα, υποδομή, ποιότητα φαγητού, μόνιμο, εξειδικευμένο και επαρκές προσωπικό, ενιαίο φορέα προσχολικής αγωγής, ενιαίο παιδαγωγικό πρόγραμμα και χρηματοδότηση από τον κρατικό προϋπολογισμό.

Πώς τοποθετείται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στα δίκαια αιτήματα των γονέων;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή συμφωνεί με τον κ. βουλευτή ότι οι κοινωνικές επενδύσεις, ιδιαίτερα στην προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα, είναι πολύ σημαντικές για το μέλλον τόσο από οικονομικής όσο και από κοινωνικής πλευράς. Αυτό έχει σαφώς εξηγηθεί στην πρόσφατη ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τη δέσμη των κοινωνικών επενδύσεων ([1]), στη σύσταση για την επένδυση στα παιδιά ([2]), καθώς και στην έκθεση για τους στόχους της Βαρκελώνης ([3]). Η οργάνωση και η χρηματοδότηση των βρεφονηπιακών σταθμών στο πλαίσιο των διαθέσιμων δημοσιονομικών περιθωρίων είναι, ωστόσο, ένα θέμα το οποίο αφορά τις ελληνικές αρχές.

Όσον αφορά τους ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο δεν χρηματοδοτεί βρεφονηπιακούς σταθμούς κατά την τρέχουσα περίοδο προγραμματισμού. Μέσω του συγχρηματοδοτούμενου επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη των ανθρώπινων πόρων» (ΕΠ), προβλέπει στοχοθετημένη (εξατομικευμένη) στήριξη για τις γυναίκες ώστε να συνδυάσουν την επαγγελματική με την οικογενειακή ζωή με στόχο την αύξηση της συμμετοχής τους στην απασχόληση. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, το ΕΠ «Ανάπτυξη των ανθρώπινων πόρων» συγχρηματοδοτεί την παροχή ετήσιων κουπονιών σε γυναίκες για την πρόσβαση στις υπηρεσίες παιδικής φροντίδας με σκοπό την προώθηση της απασχολησιμότητάς τους. Το μέτρο αυτό έχει διαθέσει έως σήμερα περίπου 506 εκατ. ευρώ και 165 000 γυναίκες έχουν επωφεληθεί από αυτό.

Από την πλευρά του, το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) μπορεί να συμβάλει στην κατασκευή υποδομών παιδικής φροντίδας. Κατά την τρέχουσα περίοδο, έχει διατεθεί ποσό περίπου 150 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ για υποδομές παιδικής φροντίδας, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των βρεφονηπιακών σταθμών. Οι εθνικές, περιφερειακές και τοπικές αρχές θα πρέπει να διασφαλίζουν τη λειτουργικότητα αυτών των υποδομών.

([1]) «Στοχεύοντας στις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις για την ανάπτυξη και τη συνοχή — συμπεριλαμβανομένης της εφαρμογής του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου (2014-2020)», (COM/2013/083 τελικό).

([2]) «Επένδυση στα παιδιά: σπάζοντας τον κύκλο της μειονεξίας» (2013/112/ΕΕ).

([3]) «Στόχοι της Βαρκελώνης — η ανάπτυξη υπηρεσιών παιδικής φροντίδας για παιδιά μικρής ηλικίας στην Ευρώπη με σκοπό μια βιώσιμη και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς ανάπτυξη» (COM(2013)322).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006286/13
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Methodical abolition of state nurseries

At present, thousands of young parents in Greece need nursery places for their children and must face the fact that local councils will be unable to provide nursery places for their children in September. Hundreds of buildings have already been allowed to fall into disrepair over the past year, due to a lack of funding. Also, staff numbers are continually being cut back; no permanent staff are being recruited and nursery school teachers are being recruited on 2-month, 4-month and 8-month contracts, disregarding the serious need for continuity in the care of infants and babies.

The economic crisis is being used as a pretext by the three-party coalition (New Democracy, PASOK and DIMAR) and the local authorities to make further cuts to funding for nurseries. In 2000, when nurseries were free, had permanent staff and were the responsibility of local authorities, a nursery privatisation programme was launched by national governments and the EU. The cutbacks are affecting thousands of unemployed and uninsured parents who cannot even apply for places, in total disregard for the needs of their children (infants up to the age of two), as drastic cuts are being made to infant classes, and the young parents as a whole, who have to pay ever-rising fees, at a time when the standard of buildings and infrastructures, food, heating and medical care for infants is falling.

The nurseries which are still open are increasingly reliant on financing under European programmes with cut-off dates which cannot, however, meet their needs. At the same time, the framework for handing nurseries over to social organisations and NGOs, which will put an end to proper care for infants and babies, is being prepared.

Parents are calling for free, modern, safe, nurseries run by their local authorities, which are properly and suitably housed, have the necessary infrastructure, provide quality food and have permanent, trained staff in adequate numbers, a single pre-school education authority and a standard pedagogical programme, funded from the national budget.

What are the Commission's views on these reasonable requests by parents?

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

The European Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that social investment, particularly in early childhood education and care, is critical for the future in economic as well as social terms. This has been clearly explained in the Commission's recent communication on the Social Investment Package ([1]) the recommendation on Investing in Children ([2]) and the report on the Barcelona Objectives ([3]). The organisation and funding of nurseries within the available fiscal space is, however, a matter for the Greek authorities.

In terms of European resources, the European Social Fund does not fund nurseries in the current programming period. Through its co-financed Operational Programme 'Human Resources Development' (HRD OP) it provides targeted (personalized) support for women to reconcile work and family life aiming at increasing their participation in employment. More concretely, the HRD OP co-finances the provision of yearly vouchers to women for access to childcare facilities with the aim to promote their employability. This measure has been financed up to now with approximately EUR 506 million and has benefited 165.000 women.

From its side, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) can contribute to the construction of childcare infrastructures. In the current period, the amount of about EUR 150 million has been allocated to childcare infrastructures including nurseries. National, regional and local authorities should ensure the operability of these infrastructures

([1]) 'Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion — including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020' (COM/2013/083 final).
([2]) 'Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage' (2013/112/EU).
([3]) 'Barcelona objectives — the developement of childcare facilities for young children in Europe with a view to an inclusive and sustainable growth' (COM(2013)322).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006287/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Όχι στις ελαστικές σχέσεις εργασίας στον τουρισμό

Η συγκυβέρνηση ΝΔ-ΠΑΣΟΚ-ΔΗΜΑΡ στην Ελλάδα, με πρόσχημα την ανεργία των νέων, συμφώνησε με το Σύνδεσμο Ελληνικών Τουριστικών Επιχειρήσεων (ΣΕΤΕ) πρόγραμμα κατάρτισης νέων που θα απασχολούνται για την τουριστική περίοδο με μισθό 400 ευρώ, χωρίς κοινωνικοασφαλιστικά δικαιώματα (ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη, σύνταξη). Η συμφωνία αποτελεί ουσιαστικά «δώρο» προς τους μεγαλοεπιχειρηματίες του τουρισμού, καθώς οι εργαζόμενοι καλούνται να δουλεύουν 10-12 ώρες την ημέρα με μισθούς πείνας.

Την ίδια στιγμή, με την κατάρτιση του λεγόμενου «Master Plan για την Τουριστική Ανάπτυξη», η συγκυβέρνηση ετοιμάζει νέο πακτωλό δωρεάν χρήματος στους τουριστικούς ομίλους, με επενδύσεις μέσω ΕΣΠΑ, μείωση του ΦΠΑ, κρατικές ενισχύσεις και επιδοτήσεις.

Μεγαλοεπιχειρηματίες, κυβέρνηση και ΕΕ, με τον εκβιασμό της ανεργίας, ρίχνουν τους νέους και τις νέες στα δεσμά της πιο άγριας εκμετάλλευσης. Οι τουριστικοί όμιλοι και η συγκυβέρνηση υπονομεύουν θεμελιώδεις κατακτήσεις των εργαζομένων, Συλλογικές Συμβάσεις Εργασίας, κοινωνική ασφάλιση κ.α. Η ανασφάλιστη εργασία στις επιχειρήσεις του επισιτισμού-τουρισμού φτάνει το 60%.

Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι αυτά τα προγράμματα καταρτίζονται για να αντιμετωπίσουν την ανεργία των νέων ή για να διασφαλίσουν τα κέρδη των μονοπωλιακών ομίλων, εξασφαλίζοντάς τους πάμφθηνο εργατικό δυναμικό, χωρίς μισθολογικά και κοινωνικοασφαλιστικά δικαιώματα;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιουλίου 2013)

Το πρόγραμμα στο οποίο αναφέρεται πιθανότητα ο κ. βουλευτής είναι η «Επιταγή για την είσοδο των νέων ανέργων ηλικίας μέχρι 29 ετών στην αγορά εργασίας στον τομέα του τουρισμού».

Το πρόγραμμα αυτό αφορά την πρακτική άσκηση και συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) μέσω του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη των ανθρώπινων πόρων» (ΕΠ) στο πλαίσιο του σχεδίου δράσης για τη νεολαία το οποίο εγκρίθηκε από την Ελλάδα τον Ιανουάριο του 2013.

Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που παρείχε η διαχειριστική αρχή του ΕΠ για την ανάπτυξη των ανθρώπινων πόρων, ο προϋπολογισμός του προγράμματος ανέρχεται σε 39 εκατ. ευρώ και αναμένεται να ωφελήσει 10 000 ανέργους. Περιλαμβάνει κατάρτιση σε οριζόντιες και εξειδικευμένες δεξιότητες διάρκειας 80 ωρών και ενδοϋπηρεσιακή κατάρτιση/επαγγελματική πείρα διάρκειας 500 ωρών, σε συνδυασμό με κατευθυντήριες γραμμές/εκπαιδευτική καθοδήγηση. Οι ασκούμενοι θα έχουν λάβει έως το τέλος της ενδοϋπηρεσιακής κατάρτισης επίδομα συνολικού ποσού 2 700 ή 2 400 ευρώ ανάλογα με το επίπεδο της εκπαίδευσής τους. Θα καλύπτονται από ασφάλιση ασθένειας και ατυχήματος σε όλη τη διάρκεια του προγράμματος. Η ασφάλιση παρέχεται από το πρόγραμμα και ανέρχεται στο 6,45% του επιδόματος κατάρτισης.

Το πρόγραμμα των περιόδων άσκησης που αναφέρονται ανωτέρω θα μπορούσε να θεωρηθεί ως άνοιγμα της αγοράς εργασίας στους νέους, δεδομένου ότι θα μπορούσε να οδηγήσει σε προσλήψεις σε θέσεις εργασίας με τη βελτίωση της απασχολησιμότητας των νέων και με την κάλυψη των εργοδοτικών εισφορών για τις επιχειρήσεις που θα μετατρέψουν την ενδοϋπηρεσιακή κατάρτιση σε σύμβαση εργασίας. Η Επιτροπή είναι της άποψης ότι η πρακτική άσκηση δεν θα πρέπει να αντικαταστήσει την απασχόληση. Θα υποβάλει, έως το τέλος του 2013, ένα πλαίσιο ποιότητας για τις περιόδους πρακτικής άσκησης. Ταυτόχρονα η Επιτροπή έχει δρομολογήσει μια σειρά από πρωτοβουλίες που αποσκοπούν στην παροχή θέσεων εργασίας για τους νέους.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006287/13
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: No to flexible work contracts in tourism

The New Democracy/PASOK/DIMAR coalition in Greece has used youth unemployment as a pretext for agreeing with the Association of Greek Tourism Enterprises (SETA) on a training programme for young people, who will work during the tourist season for a wage of EUR 400 and no social security rights (medical/pharmaceutical care, pension). The agreement is, in essence, a 'gift' to large tourism companies, as workers are required to work 10-12 hours a day for a pittance.

At the same time, under its 'Master Plan for Tourist Development', the coalition is preparing a new package of free money for tourism groups, which includes investments via the NSRF, lower VAT rates, State aid and subsidies.

Large companies, the government and the EU, using unemployment as a form of coercion, are selling young people into a most savage form of slavery. Tourism groups and the coalition are undermining workers' fundamental rights, collective agreements, social security and so forth. Insecure work in companies in catering and tourism accounts for 60% of jobs.

Does the Commission believe that these programmes are being introduced in order to combat youth unemployment or to safeguard the profits of monopoly groups, by providing them with cheap labour with no wage and social security rights?

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

The programme the Honourable Member refers most likely to is the 'Cheque for the entrance of unemployed young people up to the age of 29 to the labour market, in the sector of tourism'.

This programme concerns traineeship and is co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) through the Operational Programme 'Human Resources Development' (HRD OP) in the context of the Youth Action Plan which was endorsed by Greece in January 2013.

According to information provided by the Managing Authority of the HRD OP, the programme has a budget of EUR 39 million and is expected to benefit 10.000 unemployed. It includes training in horizontal and specialized skills of a duration of 80 hours and in-service training/working experience of a duration of 500 hours, all combined with guidance/educational mentoring. Trainees will have received by the end of in-service training a training allowance of a total of EUR 2.700 or EUR 2.400 depending on their level of education. They will be covered by health and accident insurance throughout the duration of the programme. Insurance is provided for by the programme and amounts to 6,45% of the training allowance.

The traineeship programme mentioned above could be seen as an opening of the labour market to the youth as it could potentially lead to work placements by enhancing the employability of young people and through the coverage of employer's contributions for businesses that will convert in-service training to a work contract. The Commission is of the view that traineeships should not replace jobs. It will present by the end of 2013 a quality framework for traineeships. At the same time, the Commission has been launching a number of initiatives aimed at providing jobs for the young people.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006288/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(3 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Missioni umanitarie

L'«autunno arabo» in Siria con le sue tragiche violenze ha provocato, come è noto, l'esodo in massa di profughi verso la Turchia e la Giordania. Mentre in Turchia la loro presenza rappresenta al massimo lo 0.5 per cento della popolazione, in Giordania la situazione è molto più catastrofica poiché — secondo le stime più ragionevoli — i profughi siriani rappresentano un incredibile 11-12 per cento del totale della popolazione giordana (700-800.000 profughi).

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se l'UE è presente in quei campi profughi con le sue missioni umanitarie;

2. se queste missioni hanno operato anche in altri paesi (e, se sì, quali) investiti dalla cosiddetta «primavera araba»;

3. quanto sono costate al bilancio dell'UE?

Risposta di Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione
(8 agosto 2013)

Le conseguenze del conflitto siriano si estendono al di là dei confini del paese. Il Libano e la Giordania, che già prima dello scoppio della crisi dovevano far fronte a problemi importanti, si trovano ora in una situazione senza precedenti che minaccia la loro stabilità interna. Attualmente vi sono circa 501 057 rifugiati siriani in Giordania (434 298 registrati dall'ACNUR e 66 759 in attesa di registrazione ([1])). Secondo le stime dell'ACNUR al 19 luglio 2013 il numero di rifugiati in Libano ammontava a oltre 625 000 (530 000 registrati e 95 000 in attesa di registrazione). Si pensa che in entrambi i paesi il numero di rifugiati non registrati sia anche più elevato.

L'UE è presente nei campi profughi in Giordania. La Commissione ha stanziato 61,5 milioni di euro per gli aiuti umanitari alla Giordania, la maggior parte dei quali sostengono i progetti nel campo profughi di Za'atari.

L'UE ha anche finanziato progetti in Siria, Libano, Turchia e Iraq. Il 47 % degli aiuti della Commissione è destinato alla Siria e il restante 53 % ai paesi confinanti (Libano 24,3 %, Giordania 3,1 %, Iraq 3,3 %, Turchia 2,3 %). Obiettivo principale degli aiuti: interventi medici di emergenza per salvare vite umane, fornitura di generi alimentari, articoli nutrizionali e acqua potabile, misure igienico-sanitarie, fornitura di alloggi, distribuzione di prodotti di base non alimentari e protezione delle categorie più vulnerabili.

Oltre ai 428 milioni di euro di aiuti umanitari forniti dagli Stati membri, dalla fine del 2011 l'UE ha mobilitato complessivamente circa 840 milioni di euro (aiuti umanitari: 515 milioni di euro; assistenza economica, per lo sviluppo e per la stabilizzazione: 325 milioni di euro) in risposta diretta alla crisi per sostenere attività in Siria e al di fuori del paese.

([1]) Alto commissariato delle Nazioni Unite per i rifugiati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006288/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Humanitarian missions

As is well known, the 'Arab Autumn' in Syria with its tragic violence has led to the mass exodus of refugees to Turkey and Jordan. While their presence in Turkey amounts to at most 0.5 per cent of the population, the situation in Jordan is far more catastrophic given that — according to reasonable estimates — Syrian refugees make up an incredible 11-12 per cent of the total Jordanian population (700-800 000 refugees).

Can the Commission say:

1. whether the EU is present in those refugee camps with its humanitarian missions;

2. whether these missions have operated in any other countries (and, if so, which ones) affected by the so-called 'Arab Spring';

3. how much this has cost the EU budget?

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

The consequences of the Syrian conflict are being felt beyond Syria's borders. Lebanon and Jordan, which were already facing substantial challenges before the outbreak of the crisis, are now faced with an unprecedented situation that threatens their internal stability. Currently, there are approximately 501 057 Syrian refugees in Jordan (434 298 people registered and 66 759 people that are awaiting registration with UNHCR ([1])). In Lebanon, the UNHCR estimates the number of refugees at over 625 000 (530 000 registered with 95 000 awaiting registration) by 19 July 2013. In both countries the number of unregistered refugees is assumed to be even higher.

The EU is indeed present in the refugee camps in Jordan. The Commission has currently allocated EUR 61.5 million in humanitarian assistance to Jordan, a large proportion of which supports projects in the Za'atari refugee camp.

The EU has also funded projects inside Syria and in Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq. 47% of the Commission's humanitarian assistance is allocated to Syria and 53% to neighbouring countries (Lebanon 24.3%, Jordan 23.1%, Iraq 3.3%, Turkey 2.3%). The Commission's humanitarian assistance primarily supports life-saving medical emergency responses, the provision of food and nutritional items, safe water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, distribution of basic non-food items and protection to help the most vulnerable.

In addition to EUR 428 million of humanitarian assistance provided by Member States, the EU budget has, since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crisis, mobilised approximately EUR 840 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million; economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 325 million) of total support for activities inside and outside Syria.

([1]) United Nations Refugee Agency.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006289/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υψηλές αποκλίσεις στις τιμές των προϊόντων στην ΕΕ

Στο τελευταίο βαθμολόγιο για τους καταναλωτές (Consumer Scoreboard), ιδιαίτερη ανησυχία προκαλεί το γεγονός των υψηλών αποκλίσεων στις τιμές προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών, χωρίς να σχετίζεται με την αγοραστική δύναμη, που δείχνει ότι οι καταναλωτές στις λιγότερο εύπορες χώρες πληρώνουν σχετικά υψηλότερες τιμές. Χαρακτηριστικά, σύμφωνα μάλιστα και με πρόσφατα στοιχεία του ΟΟΣΑ (Οργανισμός Οικονομικής Συνεργασίας και Ανάπτυξης) το βασικό «καλάθι» αγαθών στην Ελλάδα κοστίζει 100 ευρώ τη στιγμή που στη Γερμανία, όπου το μέσο εισόδημα είναι υπερδιπλάσιο, το αντίστοιχο κόστος είναι μόλις 110 ευρώ, στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο 111 ευρώ, στην Αυστρία 114 ευρώ και στο Λουξεμβούργο 132 ευρώ.

Δεδομένου ότι:

— οι τιμές συγκαταλέγονται στις κύριες ανησυχίες των καταναλωτών και αποτελούν κύριο και καθοριστικό παράγοντα της ευημερίας τους,

— η αδικαιολόγητη απόκλιση τιμών μπορεί να είναι ένδειξη δυσλειτουργίας και κερματισμού της αγοράς και,

— οι καταναλωτικές οργανώσεις κάνουν λόγο για τα «παιχνίδια» των πολυεθνικών στο ράφι, θα ήθελα να υποβάλω τα ακόλουθα ερωτήματα στην Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς εξηγεί τέτοιου είδους αποκλίσεις στις τιμές όχι μόνο στην Ελλάδα αλλά και σε άλλα κράτη μέλη;

2. Αποτελούν ένδειξη δυσλειτουργίας και κερματισμού της αγοράς;

3. Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή, κατά πόσο εκτιμά ότι οι ενδοομιλικές συναλλαγές πολυεθνικών (transfer pricing), οι οποίες φουσκώνουν τις τιμές αλλά και το κόστος προκειμένου να αποφεύγουν τη φορολογία στην Ελλάδα, ευθύνονται για τις υψηλές τιμές των προϊόντων στην Ελλάδα;

4. Πιστεύει ότι η ύπαρξη ενός Ευρωπαϊκού Παρατηρητήριου τιμών θα μπορούσε να συμβάλει στη συγκράτηση των τιμών και στον περιορισμό κερδοσκοπικών πρακτικών;

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

Από την ανάλυση των δεδομένων που αφορούν τις τιμές στον *πίνακα αποτελεσμάτων για τους καταναλωτές (Scoreboard)* προκύπτει ότι, στις περισσότερες εξετασθείσες αγορές, οι αποκλίσεις στις τιμές μεταξύ των χωρών συνδέονται, εν μέρει, με τις αποκλίσεις στο σχετικό κατά κεφαλήν εισόδημα.

Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι ορισμένες εταιρείες πωλούν παρόμοια προϊόντα σε διαφορετικές τιμές εντός της ΕΕ. Η πρακτική αυτή δεν αντιβαίνει, εκ προοιμίου, στους κανόνες ανταγωνισμού της ΕΕ και της ενιαίας αγοράς. Η διαμόρφωση των τιμών εξαρτάται από διάφορους διαρθρωτικούς παράγοντες, όπως το κόστος των εισροών (π.χ. της εργασίας, των τιμών των βασικών γεωργικών προϊόντων, της διαφήμισης), το μέγεθος της αγοράς, οι φορολογικές πολιτικές (π.χ. ΦΠΑ), και τα κανονιστικά πλαίσια.

Η Επιτροπή εξετάζει τις αποκλίσεις στις τιμές μεταξύ κρατών μελών στο πλαίσιο των θεμάτων που επισημαίνονται στην πράσινη βίβλο για τις αθέμιτες εμπορικές πρακτικές ([1]). Επιπλέον, εκπονεί μελέτη για τον ανταγωνισμό στον τομέα του λιανικού εμπορίου τροφίμων στην ΕΕ ([2]). Εξάλλου, η ΕΚΤ έχει επίσης επιληφθεί του εν λόγω θέματος, διερευνώντας την ύπαρξη και το μέγεθος των αποκλίσεων των τιμών στη ζώνη του ευρώ.

([1]) Βλ. COM(2013)37 «Πράσινη Βίβλος για τις αθέμιτες εμπορικές πρακτικές στην αλυσίδα εφοδιασμού από επιχείρηση σε επιχείρηση τροφίμων και άλλων καταναλωτικών προϊόντων στην Ευρώπη».

([2]) Βλ. COMP/2012/015, μελέτη με τίτλο «The economic impact of modern retail on choice and innovation in the EU food sector», EE/S S244 της 19.12.2012.

Θα ήθελα επίσης να μνημονεύσω το μέσο παρακολούθησης των ευρωπαϊκών τιμών τροφίμων, το οποίο μπορείτε να συμβουλευθείτε στον δικτυακό τόπο της Eurostat ([3]). Στόχος του εργαλείου αυτού είναι να βελτιώσει τις γνώσεις ως προς την εξέλιξη των τιμών στα διάφορα στάδια της αλυσίδας εφοδιασμού, αυξάνοντας τη διαφάνεια των τιμών και διευκολύνοντας την πρόσβαση στα στατιστικά δεδομένα σχετικά με τις τιμές των τροφίμων. Θα μπορούσε επίσης να συμβάλει στο να γίνουν αντιληπτοί οι λόγοι στους οποίους οφείλονται οι αποκλίσεις στις τιμές μεταξύ των διαφόρων κρατών μελών της ΕΕ.

Πέραν των ανωτέρω, η Επιτροπή δεν μελετά άμεσα τη συγκεκριμένη κατάσταση των αγορών τροφίμων στην Ελλάδα. Η διάρθρωση του τοπικού λιανικού εμπορίου στην Ελλάδα, το οποίο χαρακτηρίζεται από σχετικά μεγάλο μερίδιο μικρών παραδοσιακών καταστημάτων, δυσχεραίνει τη δημιουργία κερδών αποδοτικότητας λόγω της μικρής κλίμακας, γεγονός στο οποίο μπορεί επίσης να οφείλεται η αύξηση των τιμών καταναλωτή.

([3]) Στην ακόλουθη διεύθυνση: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/hicp/methodology/prices_data_for_market_monitoring

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006289/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Large differences between product prices in the EU

The last Consumer Markets Scoreboard illustrated a most worrying fact: there are very large differences in the cost of goods and services between the Member States, which has nothing to do with purchasing power and proves that consumers in less prosperous countries are paying relatively high prices. For example, according to recent statistics released by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development), the basic 'basket' of goods in Greece costs EUR 100, compared with EUR 110 in Germany, where the average income is over double, EUR 111 in the United Kingdom, EUR 114 in Austria and EUR 132 in Luxembourg.

Given that:

— prices are one of consumers' main concerns and a major factor in terms of their wellbeing;

— the unwarranted difference in prices may be a sign of malfunction and fragmentation of the market; and

— consumer associations are talking about the 'games' being played out by multinationals on the supermarket shelves, will the Commission say:

1. How does it explain these price differences in both Greece and other Member States?

2. Are they a sign of malfunction and fragmentation of the market?

3. According to the Commission's sources, does it believe that transfer pricing by multinationals, which are inflating prices and costs in order to avoid taxation in Greece, is responsible for the high prices of products in Greece?

4. Does it believe that a European price observatory might help to hold down prices and limit speculative practices?

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

The analysis of price data in the Consumer Markets Scoreboard shows that in most markets analysed price differences across countries are linked, to a certain extent, to differences in relative income per capita.

However, the Commission is aware that certain companies are selling similar products at different prices across the EU. This is not *a priori* against EU competition rules and the Single Market. Price formation depends on several structural factors, such as input costs (e.g. labour, price of agricultural commodities, advertising), market size, tax policies (e.g. VAT), and regulatory frameworks.

The Commission is currently looking into price differences between Member States as one of topics identified in the Green Paper on Unfair Trading Practices ([1]). The Commission is also preparing a study on competition in the EU food retail sector ([2]). In addition to this, the ECB is working on the topic by investigating the presence and magnitude of price differences in the euro area.

I would also like to mention the European Food Prices Monitoring Tool, available on the Eurostat website ([3]). This tool aims to improve the understanding of price developments in the different steps of the supply chain, enhancing price transparency and facilitating the accessibility of statistical data on food prices. It could also help to understand the reasons behind the disparities between prices in different EU Member States.

([1]) Cf. COM(2013) 37 'Green Paper on Unfair Trading Practices in the Business-to-Business Food and Non-Food Supply Chain In Europe'.
([2]) Cf. COMP/2012/015 study on 'The economic impact of modern retail on choice and innovation in the EU food sector', OJ/S S244 of 19/12/2012.
([3]) At http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/hicp/methodology/prices_data_for_market_monitoring.

Except for such exercises, the Commission is not directly studying the particular situation of food markets in Greece. The local retail market structure in Greece, characterised by a relatively large share of small traditional shops, makes it difficult to generate efficiencies due to a lack of scale, which may also make consumer prices higher.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006290/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ενεργειακή ακρίβεια στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που έδωσε πρόσφατα στη δημοσιότητα η Ευρωπαϊκή Στατιστική Υπηρεσία (Eurostat) για το κόστος προμήθειας σχετικά με την οικιακή κατανάλωση 100 κιλοβατωρών ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος και φυσικού αερίου, παρατηρούνται τεράστιες διαφοροποιήσεις όσον αφορά την τιμή μεταξύ των κρατών μελών. Χαρακτηριστικό παράδειγμα αποτελεί η Ελλάδα, η οποία, παρά την παρατεταμένη ύφεση, κατατάσσεται στις ακριβότερες χώρες.

Συγκεκριμένα, στην αγορά του φυσικού αερίου για οικιακή χρήση, η Ελλάδα με 10,2 ευρώ ανά 100 κιλοβατώρες έχει τις υψηλότερες τιμές στην ΕΕ μετά τη Σουηδία με 12,7 και τη Δανία με 10,8 ευρώ, ενώ είναι η δεύτερη ακριβότερη μετά τη Βουλγαρία, με βάση τις μονάδες αγοραστικής δύναμης. Μάλιστα, οι τιμές του φυσικού αερίου για οικιακή χρήση στην Ελλάδα είναι σχεδόν διπλάσιες έναντι των αντίστοιχων στη Μεγάλη Βρετανία και στο Λουξεμβούργο, ενώ κατά 50% σχεδόν ακριβότερες έναντι της Γερμανίας, του Βελγίου και της Γαλλίας.

Ωστόσο, σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία για τα οικιακά τιμολόγια του ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος, η χώρα μας παρουσίασε, το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2012, τη δεύτερη μεγαλύτερη αύξηση μετά την Κύπρο.

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Πού οφείλονται οι τεράστιες αυτές αποκλίσεις στις τιμές της οικιακής κατανάλωσης του ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος και του φυσικού αερίου που παρατηρούνται μεταξύ των κρατών μελών στο σύνολό τους;

2. Πώς δικαιολογούνται και σε τι οφείλονται οι υψηλές τιμές στην κατανάλωση του φυσικού αερίου στην Ελλάδα; Στο πλαίσιο ανταλλαγής βέλτιστων πρακτικών, τι μέτρα έχουν υιοθετήσει χώρες όπως η Σλοβενία, η οποία εμφανίζει μείωση στη τιμή κατά 8% στην εν λόγω αγορά, καθώς και το Βέλγιο, η Δανία και η Σλοβακία, οι οποίες καταγράφουν σταθεροποιητικές τάσεις;

3. Με ποιον τρόπο θα εξασφαλίσει η Ευρώπη τον εφοδιασμό καταναλωτών και επιχειρήσεων, σε προσιτές και ανταγωνιστικές τιμές, όπως συμφωνήθηκε πρόσφατα στην Σύνοδο Κορυφής;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Ιουλίου 2013)

1. Οι αποκλίσεις στις τιμές οικιακής κατανάλωσης ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος στην Ευρώπη αντικατοπτρίζουν τις διαφορετικές καταστάσεις των επιμέρους κρατών μελών και μπορεί να έχουν πολλαπλές αιτίες: η αποτελεσματικότητα του ανταγωνισμού καθώς και η προσφορά και η ζήτηση καθορίζουν τις τιμές χονδρικής πώλησης, οι τιμές μεταφοράς/διανομής αντικατοπτρίζουν κανονιστικές πρακτικές και μεθοδολογίες που εφαρμόζονται στα επιμέρους κράτη μέλη, οι φόροι και οι εισφορές ενδέχεται να αντιπροσωπεύουν σημαντικό μέρος των τελικών τιμών και καθορίζονται από τα κράτη μέλη. Επιπλέον, ο έλεγχος των τιμών που χρησιμοποιείται σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη αντικατοπτρίζει εθνικές, πολιτικές και διοικητικές επιλογές και αποτελεί μια ακόμη αιτία αποκλίσεων.

2. και 3. Δεδομένου ότι η Ελλάδα συνάπτει μακροπρόθεσμες συμβάσεις με περιορισμένο αριθμό προμηθευτών για να καλύπτει σχεδόν το σύνολο της ζήτησης αερίου, του οποίου οι τιμές καθορίζονται με βάση τις τιμές του πετρελαίου, παρά την πρόσβαση τρίτων στο δίκτυο μεταφοράς και τον τερματικό σταθμό ΥΦΑ Ρεβυθούσας, δεν υπάρχει ακόμα μια εύρυθμα λειτουργούσα αγορά όπου ο αποτελεσματικός ανταγωνισμός και η διαφοροποίηση μπορεί να αποβεί επωφελής για τους καταναλωτές.

Παρόλο ότι δεν είναι εύκολο να γίνουν άμεσες συγκρίσεις μεταξύ των κρατών μελών ούτε να βγουν συμπεράσματα βάσει αυτών, ορισμένες κυβερνήσεις εντούτοις έλαβαν μέτρα πρόσφατα για τη διαφοροποίηση των πηγών εφοδιασμού, προκειμένου να διευκολυνθεί η εύρυθμη λειτουργία της αγοράς χονδρικής πώλησης, ιδίως μέσω της σύνδεσης με τα γειτονικά κράτη μέλη, της δημιουργίας αγοράς άμεσης παράδοσης και της εξάλειψης των στρεβλωτικών κανόνων αγοράς με την παράλληλη ενίσχυση του ανταγωνισμού σε επίπεδο λιανικής πώλησης. Πράγματι, η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να πιστεύει ότι τα εν λόγω μέτρα που έλαβαν τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν να εξασφαλίσουν με τρόπο αποτελεσματικό και βιώσιμο τις χαμηλότερες δυνατές τιμές για τα νοικοκυριά και τις επιχειρήσεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006290/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Rising energy prices in Greece

According to statistics released recently by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) on the cost per 100 kilowatts of electricity and natural gas for household consumption, there are huge price differentials between the Member States. One typical example is Greece which, despite the prolonged recession, is one of the most expensive countries.

On the domestic natural gas market, Greece has the highest prices in the EU, at EUR 10.2 per 100 kilowatts, after Sweden (EUR 12.7) and Denmark (EUR 10.8), and the second highest after Bulgaria based on purchasing power standards. In fact, the prices of natural gas to households in Greece are almost double the prices in Great Britain and Luxembourg and almost 50% higher than in Germany, Belgium and France.

However, according to the statistics on domestic electricity prices, Greece reported the second biggest increase in the second half of 2012, after Cyprus.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What is the reason for these huge discrepancies in the price of electricity and natural gas for household use between the Member States as a whole?

2. What is the justification and reason for the high prices of natural gas in Greece? Within the framework of exchanges of best practices, what measures have been adopted by countries such as Slovenia, which reported an 8% fall in prices on the market in question, and Belgium, Denmark and Slovakia, which reported stabilising trends?

3. How will Europe ensure that consumers and businesses are supplied at affordable and competitive prices, as recently agreed at the summit meeting?

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

1. Discrepancies in energy prices for households within Europe reflect different situations of individual Member States and can have multiple causes: the level of effective competition impacts supply and demand conditions that determine wholesale prices; transmission/distribution tariffs reflect regulatory practices and methodologies followed in individual Member States; taxes and levies can represent a substantial part of the final bill and are set by Member States. Moreover, price regulation, used in some Member States, reflects national political and administrative choices and gives further cause for disparities.

2 and 3. As Greece covers almost its entire gas demand from a limited number of suppliers and on the basis of oil-indexed, long term contracts, despite the introduction of third-party access to the transmission grid and to the Revithoussa LNG Terminal, there is not yet a well-functioning market where effective competition and diversification can benefit consumers.

While no direct comparisons and conclusions based thereon can be easily drawn between Member States, a number of governments have recently taken steps to diversify supply sources, facilitate a functioning wholesale market, in particular through integration with neighbouring Member States, setting up a spot market and removing distortive market rules while also boosting competition in retail. Indeed, the Commission continues to believe that such measures by Member States can most effectively and sustainably ensure lowest possible prices for households and businesses.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006291/13
à la Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE)
(3 juin 2013)

Objet: Taille des cages des poules pondeuses

La directive 1999/74/CE du Conseil du 19 juillet 1999 établit des critères de protection des poules pondeuses. Cette directive définit notamment les normes que les installations doivent respecter, qu'il s'agisse d'élevage en cages aménagées, non aménagées ou de systèmes alternatifs sans cages.

L'interdiction des cages non aménagées, entrée en vigueur le 1er janvier 2012, avait créé à l'époque des déséquilibres importants sur le marché des œufs, notamment pour les producteurs de biscuits qui ont vu le prix des œufs augmenter.

— Plus d'un an après l'entrée en vigueur de cette interdiction, où en est la mise en œuvre de cette disposition dans les États membres?

— Les déséquilibres sur les marchés liés à cette interdiction ont-ils été résorbés depuis?

— Quelles sont les dispositions législatives dans ce domaine aux États-Unis et les éleveurs de poules européens pourraient-ils être désavantagés en cas d'accord entre l'UE et les États-Unis pour conclure un accord de libre-échange?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(31 juillet 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire aux réponses qu'elle a données aux questions écrites E-8882/2011, E-11338/2012 et E-4668/2013 ([1]).

Le secteur des œufs est de retour à la normalité. En juin 2013, les prix des œufs en coquille se sont stabilisés au niveau du prix moyen de la période quinquennale 2008-2012 et sont inférieurs de 25 % par rapport à l'année exceptionnelle 2012. En ce qui concerne les œufs à casser destinés à l'industrie de la transformation, leur prix a chuté de plus de 30 % depuis le milieu de 2012.

Les cages non aménagées sont actuellement autorisées aux États-Unis; cependant, une loi proposant de les interdire [texte de la loi 112e Congrès (2011-2012) H.R.3798.IH — Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments] a été présentée en 2012. Son statut actuel depuis août 2012 est le suivant: «soumise au sous-comité sur les animaux d'élevage, les produits laitiers et la volaille». Le principal objectif d'un éventuel accord de libre-échange (partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement) est d'accélérer les évolutions économiques des deux côtés de l'Atlantique amenant à la création d'emplois et au renforcement de la croissance économique, tout en préservant la santé humaine et animale et en maintenant les autres valeurs sociales. L'UE vise à mettre en place des mécanismes de coopération pour comparer, notamment, le bien-être animal entre les deux parties.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006291/13
to the Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Size of cages for laying hens

Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 lays down criteria for the protection of laying hens. The directive defines in particular the standards that systems must respect, whether they use rearing in enriched cages, unenriched cages or alternative cageless systems.

The ban on unenriched cages, which entered into force on 1 January 2012, created at the time considerable imbalances on the egg market, particularly for biscuit producers, who faced an increase in the price of eggs.

— More than one year after the entry into force of this ban, what stage has been reached in the implementation of this provision in the Member States?

— Have the imbalances on the markets in connection with this ban been reabsorbed since then?

— What legislative provisions does the United States have in place in this regard, and could European poultry farmers be at a disadvantage should the EU and the United States agree to conclude a free trade agreement?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-8882/2011, E-11338/2012 and E-4668/2013 ([1]).

The egg sector is coming back to normality. In June 2013 shell egg prices have been stabilised at the level of the average price of the five year period 2008-2012 and are 25% lower than in the exceptional year 2012. As regards eggs for breaking for the processing industry, since the middle of 2012 prices have fallen more than 30%.

Un-enriched cages are today permitted in the USA however, a bill [Bill Text 112th Congress (2011-2012) H.R.3798.IH — Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments] was introduced in 2012 proposing to ban them. Its current status since August 2012 is: 'Referred to the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry'. The main objective of a possible Free Trade Agreement (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) is to enhance the economic developments in both territories leading to extra jobs and economic growth, while safeguarding public and animal health and other social values. The EU aims at establishing cooperation mechanisms which will, inter alia, discuss equivalence on animal welfare between the two Parties.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006292/13
à la Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE)
(3 juin 2013)

Objet: Règles en matière de bien-être animal dans le contexte des négociations commerciales Union européenne — États-Unis d'Amérique

L'agriculture et plus largement le secteur agroalimentaire occuperont une place essentielle dans les négociations commerciales à venir entre les États-Unis et l'Union européenne. Un accord commercial ne sera acceptable que s'il apporte des bénéfices économiques des deux côtés de l'Atlantique et ceci sans remettre en cause les valeurs des deux partenaires.

À cet égard, l'Union a depuis de nombreuses années pris des mesures de protection du bien-être des animaux, notamment pour ce qui relève des conditions d'élevage, de transport et d'abattage des animaux.

— En matière de bien-être animal, quelles sont les règles en vigueur aux États-Unis?

— Les contraintes applicables aux États-Unis sont-elles équivalentes à celles imposées à nos éleveurs?

— Si tel n'est pas le cas, quelles mesures pourraient être prises pour éviter que les éleveurs américains n'obtiennent un avantage compétitif par rapport aux éleveurs européens du fait d'une législation moins exigeante en matière de bien-être animal?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(31 juillet 2013)

Sur la base des informations dont dispose la Commission, la loi sur le bien-être des animaux ([1]) est la loi fédérale des États-Unis qui régit le traitement des animaux. D'autres lois et politiques peuvent contenir des dispositions ou des spécifications supplémentaires applicables à certaines espèces, mais elles se réfèrent toutes à la loi sur le bien-être des animaux en tant que norme minimale.

La loi sur l'abattage sans cruauté ([2]) exige un traitement approprié de tous les animaux producteurs d'aliments abattus dans les abattoirs inspectés par le ministère de l'agriculture des États-Unis. Elle ne s'applique pas aux poulets ou autres oiseaux. Il existe aussi une loi sur la protection des chevaux ([3]) et la loi sur la limitation à vingt-huit heures ([4]) des transports d'animaux.

La législation de l'UE impose que la viande exportée vers l'Union soit certifiée comme provenant d'abattoirs dans lesquels les animaux ont été traités suivant des normes au moins équivalentes à celles établies par le règlement (CE) n° 1099/2009 sur la protection des animaux au moment de leur mise à mort ([5]).

La Commission s'emploie depuis des années à favoriser l'émergence d'une communauté de vues au sujet de normes mutuellement acceptées avec les principaux partenaires commerciaux de l'UE. Plusieurs accords bilatéraux traitent la question du bien-être des animaux, le but étant de fixer des objectifs communs, de traiter les principaux problèmes de bien-être des animaux sur la base d'une approche commune et d'échanger les compétences techniques. Dans le cadre de la stratégie de l'UE pour le bien-être des animaux 2012-2015 ([6]), la Commission a annoncé son intention de continuer à inclure le bien-être des animaux dans les accords commerciaux bilatéraux ainsi qu'à coopérer avec l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale et l'Organisation pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture. Ces deux démarches encouragent des conditions de concurrence égales et devraient contribuer à améliorer la compétitivité des opérateurs de l'UE.

La Commission a aussi l'intention de traiter du bien-être des animaux dans le cadre des prochaines négociations Union européenne-États-Unis sur le partenariat transatlantique sur le commerce et l'investissement.

([1]) http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2009-title7/html/USCODE-2009-title7-chap54.htm
([2]) http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-92/pdf/STATUTE-92-Pg1069.pdf
([3]) http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/hp/index.shtml
([4]) http://awic.nal.usda.gov/government-and-professional-resources/federal-laws/twenty-eight-hour-law
([5]) JO L 303 du 18.11.2009, p. 1.
([6]) COM(2012) 6 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006292/13
to the Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Animal welfare rules within the context of EU-US trade negotiations

Agriculture and, more generally, the agri-food sector will play a key part in the forthcoming trade negotiations between the United States and the European Union. A trade agreement will only be accepted if it provides economic benefits for both sides of the Atlantic, without jeopardising the values of the two parties.

In this respect, for many years the EU has taken measures to protect animal welfare, particularly with regard to animals' farming, transport and slaughter conditions.

— What rules are in force in the United States in terms of animal welfare?

— Are the restrictions which apply to the United States the same as those imposed upon our farmers?

— If not, what measures could be taken to prevent US farmers from gaining a competitive advantage over European farmers as a result of less stringent animal welfare legislation?

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

Based on the information available to the Commission, the Animal Welfare Act ([1]) is the Federal law in the US that regulates the treatment of animals. Other laws and policies may include additional species coverage or specifications, but all refer to the Animal Welfare Act as the minimum standard.

The US Humane Slaughter Act ([2]) requires the proper treatment of all food-producing animals slaughtered in USDA inspected slaughter plants. It does not apply to chickens or other birds. There is also an act on Horse Protection ([3]) and the Twenty-Eight Hour Law ([4]) on the transportation of animals.

The EU legislation requires that meat exported to the EU is certified to come from slaughterhouses where animals have been handled at least equivalent to standards to those laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing ([5]).

The Commission has been working for years to promote shared understanding on mutually agreed standards with the main EU trading partners. Animal welfare has been included in several bilateral trade agreements to set up common objectives, address main animal welfare issues with a common approach and exchange technical expertise. In the EU strategy for animal welfare 2012-2015 ([6]), the Commission announced its intention to continue including animal welfare in bilateral trade agreements as well as working at the World Organisation for Animal Health and in the Food and Agriculture Organisation. These two paths promote a level playing field and should help to improve the competitiveness of EU operators.

The Commission intends to deal with animal welfare issues also in the framework of the forthcoming EU-US negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

([1]) http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2009-title7/html/USCODE-2009-title7-chap54.htm
([2]) http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-92/pdf/STATUTE-92-Pg1069.pdf
([3]) http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/hp/index.shtml.
([4]) http://awic.nal.usda.gov/government-and-professional-resources/federal-laws/twenty-eight-hour-law.
([5]) OJ L 303, 18.11.2009, p. 1.
([6]) COM(2012)6 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006293/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Sentencias del Tribunal de Justicia Europeo contra el Reino de España

En la respuesta a la pregunta E-003482/2013, el Sr. Barnier, en nombre de la Comisión, contestó: «En cuanto a los procedimientos de infracción incoados tras los dictámenes del Tribunal de Justicia de las Comunidades Europeas, a fecha de 1 de abril de 2013 son ocho las sentencias de dicho Tribunal pendientes de ejecución por parte del Reino de España».

¿Puede informar la Comisión sobre qué normativas son estas ocho sentencias del Tribunal de Justicia de las Comunidades Europeas?

¿En qué fechas hubo cada sentencia?

¿En qué parte del proceso están cada una de ellas? Es decir, ¿cuánto tiempo tiene el Reino de España para dar cumplimiento a la sentencia y si ya se ha pasado a multas económicas? ¿Cuáles son los siguientes pasos?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de julio de 2013)

Hay que subrayar que la información a que se refiere la respuesta a la E-003482/2013 se circunscribía exclusivamente a la legislación sobre mercado interior, puesto que la pregunta estaba relacionada con el Cuadro de indicadores del mercado interior.

A 1 de mayo de 2013, sigue habiendo ocho asuntos relacionados con el mercado interior pendientes de ejecución de la sentencia del Tribunal Europeo de Justicia por parte del Reino de España. Tres de ellos se refieren a la protección y gestión del agua y el resto a la sociedad de la información, la libre circulación de capitales, el transporte terrestre y la fiscalidad. El cuadro adjunto ofrece información más detallada.

Por lo que se refiere a las multas económicas, todavía no se han impuesto en ninguno de estos ocho asuntos. Según establece el artículo 260, apartado 2, del TFUE, si un Estado miembro no adopta las medidas necesarias para la ejecución de una sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia, la Comisión puede someter el asunto al Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea. La decisión relativa a una segunda remisión al Tribunal de Justicia sobre la base del artículo 260 del TFUE debe ir siempre acompañada por una propuesta de una multa coercitiva y/o una cantidad a tanto alzado.

Como su Señoría puede ver en el cuadro adjunto, la Comisión incoó el procedimiento contemplado en el artículo 260, apartado 2, del TFUE en tres asuntos.

Title	Field	Legal base (CELEX number)	Court ruling (date)	Case number	Last step in the infringement procedure	Date of latest procedural step
Wrong application of Directive "Television without frontiers"	Information society and media	31989L0552, 31997L0036	24/11/2011	C-281/09	Judgement CJ	24/11/2011
Water - Platja Motilla (Sueca)	Water protection and management	197A228,31991L0271	19/04/2007	C-219/05	Reasoned opinion 260	8/10/2009
Water - urban Waste Water	Water protection and management	197A228,31991L0271	14/04/2011	C-343/10	Judgement CJ	14/04/2011
Water - Water framework directive - Adoption / notification river basin management plans	Water protection and management	32000L0060	4/10/2012	C-403/11	Letter of formal notice 260	21/03/2013
Authorisation procedure of the Comisión Nacional de Energía (CNE)	Free movement of capital	12008E049,12008E063	17/07/2008	C-207/07	Letter of formal notice 260	29/10/2009
Transposition non conforme des dispositions des Directives du premier paquet ferroviaire	Inland transport	31991L0440, 31995L0018, 32001L0014	28/02/2013	C-483/10	Judgement CJ	28/02/2013
VAT – reduced rate on medical equipment	Indirect taxation	32006L0112	17/01/2013	C-360/11	Judgement CJ	17/01/2013
Exit taxes for companies	Direct taxation	12008E049,21994A0000	25/04/2013	C-64/11	Judgement CJ	25/04/2013

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006293/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Judgments by the European Court of Justice against Spain

In reply to Question E-003482/2013, Mr Barnier said, on behalf of the Commission: 'as regards infringement cases open after the European Court of Justice has ruled, as of 1 April 2013, there are still eight cases for which the Kingdom of Spain needs to comply with the judgment of the European Court of Justice'.

Can the Commission say what legislation these eight judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Communities relate to?

What dates were the judgments issued on?

What stage of the procedure is each judgment at? In other words, how much time does Spain have to implement the judgment, and have financial penalties already been imposed? What are the next steps?

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

It has to be stressed that the information referred to in reply to E-003482/2013 was strictly limited to the internal market legislation, as the question was related to the internal market Scoreboard.

As of 1st May 2013, there are still eight Internal Market related cases for which the Kingdom of Spain needs to comply with the judgment of the European Court of Justice. Three of them relate to water protection and management, and the rest refer to information society, free movement of capital, inland transport and taxation. More detailed information is in the attached table.

As regards financial penalties, in none of the eight cases these have been imposed yet. As Article 260.2 TFEU states, if a Member State has not taken the necessary measures to comply with a judgment of the Court of Justice, the Commission may refer the matter to the Court of Justice. The decision on a second referral to the Court of Justice on the basis of Art. 260 TFEU must always be accompanied by a proposal for a penalty and/or lump sum payment.

As the Honourable Member can see in the attached table, the Commission has initiated proceedings based on Article 260.2 TFEU in three cases.

Title	Field	Legal base (CELEX number)	Court ruling (date)	Case number	Last step in the infringement procedure	Date of latest procedural step
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Water - Platja Motilla (Sueca)	Water protection and management	197A228,31991L0271	19/04/2007	C-219/05	Reasoned opinion 260	8/10/2009
Water - urban Waste Water	Water protection and management	197A228,31991L0271	14/04/2011	C-343/10	Judgement CJ	14/04/2011
Water - Water framework directive - Adoption / notification river basin management plans	Water protection and management	32000L0060	4/10/2012	C-403/11	Letter of formal notice 260	21/03/2013
Authorisation procedure of the Comisión Nacional de Energía (CNE)	Free movement of capital	12008E049,12008E063	17/07/2008	C-207/07	Letter of formal notice 260	29/10/2009
Transposition non conforme des dispositions des Directives du premier paquet ferroviaire	Inland transport	31991L0440, 31995L0018, 32001L0014	28/02/2013	C-483/10	Judgement CJ	28/02/2013
VAT – reduced rate on medical equipment	Indirect taxation	32006L0112	17/01/2013	C-360/11	Judgement CJ	17/01/2013
Exit taxes for companies	Direct taxation	12008E049,21994A0000	25/04/2013	C-64/11	Judgement CJ	25/04/2013

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006294/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συμβόλαια ανταγωνιστικότητας και ανάπτυξης και μηχανισμοί αλληλεγγύης της ΟΝΕ

Σύμφωνα με τα Συμπεράσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου του Δεκεμβρίου 2012, ο Πρόεδρος κ. Van Rompuy εκλήθη να «υποβάλει, στο Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο του Ιουνίου του 2013, πιθανά μέτρα και χρονικά περιορισμένο χάρτη πορείας για τα ακόλουθα ζητήματα:

— ο συντονισμός των εθνικών μεταρρυθμίσεων,

— η κοινωνική διάσταση της ΟΝΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του κοινωνικού διαλόγου,

— η δυνατότητα και οι διαδικασίες εφαρμογής των αμοιβαίως συμφωνηθεισών συμβάσεων για την ανταγωνιστικότητα και την ανάπτυξη,

— οι μηχανισμοί αλληλεγγύης που μπορούν να ενισχύσουν τις προσπάθειες των κρατών μελών που εφαρμόζουν τις εν λόγω συμβατικές ρυθμίσεις για την ανταγωνιστικότητα και την ανάπτυξη.» ([1]).

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα την 1η Φεβρουαρίου 2013, ο Πρόεδρος Van Rompuy απέστειλε σχετική επιστολή στην Ιρλανδική Προεδρία ζητώντας την συνεισφορά της στα θέματα αυτά.

Η ιρλανδική προεδρία ερωτάται:

— Προετοιμάζει επίσημη απάντηση στην επιστολή του Πρόεδρου Van Rompuy;

— Υπάρχουν σχετικές εργασίες και προετοιμασίες στο Συμβούλιο σχετικά με «συμβόλαια ανάπτυξης και ανταγωνιστικότητας» και τους επακόλουθους μηχανισμούς αλληλεγγύης; Πώς αναμένει το περιεχόμενο τους; Ποιες οι αντιδράσεις των κρατών μελών;

— Ποια συγκεκριμένα μέσα εξετάζονται στο πλαίσιο αυτό για να αξιοποιηθεί η συμπληρωματικότητα μεταξύ των ευρωπαϊκών οικονομιών και να ενισχυθεί η συνοχή της ενιαίας αγοράς;

Απάντηση
(16 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο επανήλθε, στη συνέχεια, στα θέματα που ήγειρε η αξιότιμη κα βουλευτής. Στα συμπεράσματα της 27ης και 28ης Ιουνίου 2013, το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο ανακοίνωσε ότι *«Πρέπει να συνεχισθεί η επεξεργασία όλων των συστατικών στοιχείων μιας ενισχυμένης ΟΝΕ, καθώς είναι σαφώς αλληλένδετα:*

α) πρέπει να θεσπιστεί αποτελεσματικότερο πλαίσιο για τον συντονισμό των οικονομικών πολιτικών σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 11 της Συνθήκης για τη σταθερότητα, τον συντονισμό και τη διακυβέρνηση και με την αρχή της επικουρικότητας. Μετά από την ανακοίνωσή της στις 20 Μαρτίου, η Επιτροπή σκοπεύει να υποβάλει το φθινόπωρο πρόταση για τον εκ των προτέρων συντονισμό των σημαντικών οικονομικών μεταρρυθμίσεων,

β) ενώ υπάρχει σύγκλιση απόψεων σχετικά με τις βασικές αρχές στις οποίες θεμελιώνονται οι έννοιες των αμοιβαία συμφωνημένων συμβάσεων και των σχετικών μηχανισμών αλληλεγγύης, απαιτούνται περαιτέρω εργασίες για αυτά τα θέματα τους επόμενους μήνες, κυρίως με βάση την επικείμενη ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής για τον συντονισμό της οικονομικής πολιτικής,

γ) η κοινωνική διάσταση της ΟΝΕ πρέπει να ενισχυθεί. Ως πρώτο βήμα, είναι σημαντικό να παρακολουθείται καλύτερα και να λαμβάνεται υπόψη η κοινωνική κατάσταση και η κατάσταση της αγοράς εργασίας στο πλαίσιο της ΟΝΕ, κυρίως χρησιμοποιώντας κατάλληλους κοινωνικούς δείκτες και δείκτες απασχόλησης στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Εξαμήνου. Είναι επίσης σημαντικό να εξασφαλισθεί καλύτερος συντονισμός της πολιτικής απασχόλησης και της κοινωνικής πολιτικής, με πλήρη σεβασμό των εθνικών αρμοδιοτήτων. Βασικός είναι επίσης ο ρόλος των κοινωνικών εταίρων και του κοινωνικού διαλόγου, μεταξύ άλλων και σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Η Επιτροπή θα υποβάλει προσεχώς ανακοίνωση για την κοινωνική διάσταση της ΟΝΕ.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press/press-releases/latest-press-releases/newsroomrelated?bid=76&grp=22341&lang=en

Κατόπιν στενών διαβουλεύσεων με τα κράτη μέλη, το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο θα επανέλθει σε όλα αυτά τα θέματα. Τον Οκτώβριο του 2013, θα εξετάσει συγκεκριμένα τους δείκτες και τους τομείς πολιτικής που πρέπει να ληφθούν υπόψη στο πλαίσιο του ενισχυμένου συντονισμού οικονομικής πολιτικής, καθώς και την κοινωνική διάσταση της ΟΝΕ. Η συζήτηση θα συνεχισθεί τον Δεκέμβριο του 2013, με σκοπό να ληφθούν αποφάσεις για όλα τα ζητήματα, ιδίως όσον αφορά τα κύρια χαρακτηριστικά των συμβατικών ρυθμίσεων και των συνδεόμενων μηχανισμών αλληλεγγύης. Όλα αυτά τα μέτρα θα είναι προαιρετικά για τα κράτη που δεν ανήκουν στη ζώνη του κοινού νομίσματος και απολύτως συμβατά με όλες τις πτυχές της ενιαίας αγοράς.»

Το Συμβούλιο προσβλέπει στην παραλαβή των διαφόρων ανακοινώσεων και προτάσεων της Επιτροπής προκειμένου να συνεχίσει το έργο του επί αυτών των θεμάτων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006294/13
to the Council
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Competitiveness and growth contracts and EMU solidarity mechanisms

According to the conclusions of the European Council in December 2012, President Van Rompuy was called on to present possible measures and a time-bound road map to the June 2013 European Council on the following issues:

— coordination of national reforms;

— the social dimension of the EMU, including social dialogue;

— the feasibility and modalities of mutually agreed contracts for competitiveness and growth;

— solidarity mechanisms that can enhance the efforts made by Member States which enter into such contractual arrangements for competitiveness and growth ([1]).

According to articles published on 1 February 2013, President Van Rompuy has written to the Irish Presidency, asking for its help on these issues.

Will the Irish Presidency say:

— Is it preparing an official response to President Van Rompuy?

— Is any work or are any preparations under way in the Council in connection with 'competitiveness and growth contracts' and the associated solidarity mechanisms? What does it expect them to contain? How have the Member States reacted?

— What specific means are being considered within this framework in order to make use of complementarity between European economies and strengthen the cohesion of the single market?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

The European Council has subsequently reverted to the issues raised by the Honourable Member. In its conclusions of 27 and 28 June 2013, the European Council stated that 'work must be pursued on all the building blocks of a reinforced EMU, as they are closely interrelated:

(a) it is necessary to put into place a more effective framework for the coordination of economic policies in line with Article 11 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance and with the principle of subsidiarity. Following its communication of 20 March, the Commission intends to present a proposal on the ex ante coordination of major economic reforms in the autumn;

(b) while there are convergences around the key principles underpinning the concepts of mutually agreed contracts and associated solidarity mechanisms, further work is required on these issues in the coming months, drawing in particular on the forthcoming Commission communication on economic policy coordination;

(c) the social dimension of the EMU should be strengthened. As a first step, it is important to better monitor and take into account the social and labour market situation within EMU, notably by using appropriate social and employment indicators within the European semester. It is also important to ensure better coordination of employment and social policies, while fully respecting national competences. The role of the social partners and social dialogue, including at national level, is also key. The Commission will present a communication on the social dimension of the EMU shortly.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press/press-releases/latest-press-releases/newsroomrelated?bid=76&grp=22341&lang=en.

Following close consultations with the Member States, the European Council will return to all these issues. In October 2013, it will look in particular at indicators and policy areas to be taken into account in the framework of a strengthened economic policy coordination and at the social dimension of EMU. The discussion will be continued in December 2013, with the objective of taking decisions on these issues, in particular on the main features of contractual arrangements and of associated solidarity mechanisms. Any such measures would be voluntary for those outside the single currency and be fully compatible with the Single Market in all aspects.'

The Council looks forward to receiving the various communications and proposals from the Commission in order to take work forward on all these issues.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006295/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Safety issues relating to the use of vehicles that run on compressed or liquefied natural gas

As the USA seeks to reduce its dependency on oil imports, it seems likely that the use of compressed natural gas (CNG) for cars or liquefied natural gas (LNG) for larger vehicles will become more commonplace. Fiat-Chrysler is a world-leader in this area, and LNG filling-stations are already appearing on America's main roads and are already commonplace in Europe. CNG filling-stations for cars may soon themselves be a frequent sight.

Does the Commission foresee any public safety issues involving these technologies?

Do safety issues at filling stations (whether petrol, fuel cell, electric or CNG/LNG) constitute a European Union or Member State competence? If so, has the Commission corresponded with either Fiat-Chrysler or the US Federal Transport Authorities over any potential safety issues that may arise from CNG/LNG filling-stations as they become increasingly commonplace in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2013)

On 24 January 2013 the Commission adopted the 'Clean Power for Transport Package' *inter alia* containing a proposal for a directive on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure. This proposal establishes the adoption of common technical specifications to be met by LNG refuelling points for maritime and inland waterborne transport as well as LNG, CNG and Hydrogen refuelling points for motor vehicles. The Commission is aware of safety issues involving these technologies. The proposal also establishes common technical specifications to be met by slow and fast recharging points for electric vehicles and shore-side electricity supply for maritime and inland waterway transport. These technical specifications will include common safety rules.

Various consultations with industry experts and national experts have been carried out for the preparation of the Clean Power for Transport package, including potential safety issues. This did not include correspondence with US Federal Transport Authorities. The technical specifications for natural gas refuelling points will be based on international standards to be defined by the International Organisation for Standardisation-ISO.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006296/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Transparency over the allocation of fishing quotas between Member States

Although the UK's fisheries minister has committed his government in principle to publishing a list of private owners of the UK's fishing quotas, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), the body responsible within the UK for handing out fishing quotas to Fish Producer Organisations (FPO's) has resisted this, claiming bizarrely that 'transparency' is not possible.

Can the Commission indicate whether Member States are required to supply it with updated lists naming the recipients of the fishing quota allocations, and if so, whether this information is publicly available elsewhere? Would the Commission consider publishing these data on an EU-wide basis?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

Member States are not required to provide the Commission with lists of recipients of the quota they allocate.

The allocation of fishing opportunities as set out in Article 20 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the common fisheries policy requires the Council, acting on the basis of a proposal from the Commission, to distribute fishing opportunities to Member States in such a way as to assure relative stability of fishing activities for each stock or fishery.

Member States decide on the method of allocating these opportunities to vessels flying the flag of that state. They are required to inform the Commission of the method of allocation.

The Commission receives no detailed information on the list of the recipients as the implementation of the internal allocation is a task of the individual Member States.

Under the reformed CFP as politically agreed between the European Parliament and the Council, Member States remain responsible for deciding on how fishing opportunities are allocated to vessels; this may be done for example by creating individual fishing opportunities. Member States will be obliged under the reformed CFP to use transparent and objective criteria for the allocation of fishing opportunities, including those of an environmental, social and economic nature. These criteria may include other elements listed in the new CFP as well.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006297/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Conflicting scientific evidence over the impact of neonicotinoids on global bee populations

The Commission has recently imposed a two-year partial moratorium on the use of neonicotinoids within the EU.

Recounting his experiences as a beekeeper in an article earlier in the year, John Carey, Merton Professor of English Literature at the University of Oxford, wrote as follows:

'It is estimated that in America six million colonies have been destroyed since 2003 when new insecticides, systemic neurotoxins called neonicotinoids were first used on a large scale. A report by the European Food Safety Authority has recently concluded that these should be used only on crops not attractive to honey bees. The agrochemical companies that profit from neonicotinoids quickly pooh-poohed the findings, and no government seems prepared to act' (*The Times*, 5 March 2013).

The British satirical magazine *Private Eye* has reported (No 1336, p. 12) that an EU decision had been delayed while the UK Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA) completed field trials, whilst pointing out that two FERA reports, 'Honeybee Disease in Europe' and 'Neonicotinoid Pesticides and Bees', which reportedly had been produced not for the UK Government but, allegedly, for a commercial client, Syngenta, did not support the conclusions of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) that pesticides posed a 'high acute' risk to bee health.

Can the Commission state whether EFSA believes that the methodology of the two FERA reports was in any way flawed? Or does it have another explanation for results that differ from its own findings and scientific conclusions?

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

The Commission requested European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to perform an evaluation of the study carried out by FERA (UK Food and Environment Research Agency): 'Effects of neonicotinoid seed treatments on bumble bee colonies under field conditions' (March, 2013; Thompson et al.).

The EFSA statement was published on 4 June 2013 ([1]).

([1]) Evaluation of the FERA study on bumble bees and consideration of its potential impact on the EFSA conclusions on neonicotinoids. EFSA Journal 2013;11(6):3242, 20 pp. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2013.3242 Available online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006298/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Research into algae-based bio-fuels and wider patent issues within the European Union

As the Commission is well aware, the increasing use of bio-fuels has allegedly had a number of unintended consequences. For example in Brazil, the large-scale transfer of land use from food to cane sugar for ethanol production for use as a bio-fuel has allegedly contributed to global food shortages and damaging price inflation. This is why some effort has also been made to search for algae- or yeast-based bio-fuels.

Can the Commission indicate the level of EU funding for research into algae-based bio-fuels, and whether the EU holds any patents in this area, or whether the EU is actually permitted to hold patents when it pays for the underlying basic scientific research, or does the academic institute or scientific team receiving the EU research money always retain the right to hold the patents in their name?

More widely, can the Commission indicate approximately how many, if any, patents in the medical/scientific field are held by the EU and what procedures were used to transfer patents, if any were ever held by the European Community, to the Union following the Union's acquisition of legal personality under the Lisbon Treaty?

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

In the area of 'biofuels from algae' the Commission has allocated about EUR 36 million in research and demonstration projects under the 7th Framework Programme. Furthermore, under the same programme about EUR 30 million have been allocated to 'bio-based materials and chemical substances' production from algae. There is an ongoing evaluation for proposals on 'algae bio-refineries' with a primary focus on high added value products with an estimated total budget of EUR 23 million. Therefore under in FP7 about EUR 89 million have been allocated in total in the area of research for algae technologies.

The EU does not hold any patents. The intellectual property rights of all research projects supported by the Commission under the framework programmes are always assigned to the researchers or scientists whether from academic institutions or the industry.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006299/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Daniel Caspary (PPE), Elmar Brok (PPE), Michael Gahler (PPE) und Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(3. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Strategie der Europäischen Union im Südkaukasus

In seiner Entschließung vom 20. Mai 2010 zu der Notwendigkeit einer EU-Strategie für den Südkaukasus (P7_TA(2010)0193) hat sich das Parlament im Zusammenhang mit dem Konflikt zwischen Armenien und Aserbaidschan zutiefst besorgt darüber geäußert, dass den Flüchtlingen und Binnenvertriebenen fundamentale Rechte verwehrt werden. Das Parlament forderte alle Parteien auf, eine baldige Lösung dieses Problems unter Einhaltung der Grundsätze des Völkerrechts zu finden, und forderte in diesem Zusammenhang u. a. den Rückzug der armenischen Truppen aus allen besetzten Gebieten Aserbaidschans.

Das Parlament vertrat in der Entschließung die Auffassung, dass die EU die Gelegenheit hat, einen wichtigen Beitrag zur friedlichen Lösung des Konflikts um Berg-Karabach zu leisten.

1. Die Besetzung der Region um Berg-Karabach ist durch die Vereinten Nationen und andere internationale Organisationen mehrfach verurteilt worden. Wie ist in diesem Zusammenhang die Haltung der Europäischen Union?

2. Hat die Europäische Union eine Strategie, die zu einer Beilegung des Konflikts führen kann? Wie sieht diese Strategie konkret aus und welche konkreten Schritte haben die zuständigen Stellen bisher unternommen? In welcher Weise können die Bewohner von Berg-Karabach von ihrem Selbstbestimmungsrecht Gebrauch machen?

3. In seiner Entschließung vom 20. Mai 2010 bat das Parlament darum zu prüfen, ob der Bevölkerung von Berg-Karabach sowie den Binnenvertriebenen und Flüchtlingen der Region humanitäre Hilfe und Unterstützung gewährt werden kann. Welche konkreten Aktionen wurden bisher unternommen?

4. Aserbaidschan ist in den Bereichen Öl und Gas ein wichtiger Energiepartner für viele Staaten der Europäischen Union. Vor diesem Hintergrund ist die Sicherheit der Versorgungswege und der Pipeline-Infrastruktur von großer Bedeutung. Dabei birgt der Konflikt um Berg-Karabach ein besonderes Risiko. Wie bewertet die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin dieses Risiko, und wie ist ihre Strategie dafür, dieses Risiko zu minimieren?

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

1. Die EU unterstützt uneingeschränkt die Bemühungen der Minsker Gruppe und ihres Ko-Vorsitzes um eine Lösung des Konflikts auf der Grundlage der in der UN-Charta und der Schlussakte von Helsinki verankerten völkerrechtlichen Grundsätze und Normen. In diesem Rahmen wurden die „Grundprinzipien“ für die Beilegung des Konflikts ausgearbeitet.

2. Die EU hat durch ihre diplomatischen Bemühungen dazu beigetragen, kritische Situationen unter Kontrolle zu halten. Sie ist bereit, vertrauensbildende Maßnahmen verstärkt zu unterstützen, die die Anstrengungen der Minsker Gruppe untermauern und ergänzen, um den Friedensprozess zusätzlich zu fördern.

3. Direkt nach dem Krieg in den 1990er-Jahren hat die EU humanitäre Hilfe für Binnenvertriebene und Flüchtlinge bereitgestellt. Heute kann die EU den Vertriebenen am besten helfen, indem sie sich für eine dauerhafte Beilegung des Konflikts einsetzt. Die „Grundprinzipien“ sehen die Rückkehr der Binnenvertriebenen und Flüchtlinge an ihre früheren Wohnorte vor.

Seit 2010 finanziert die EU über das Instrument für Stabilität eine europäische zivilgesellschaftliche Initiative, die die Zusammenarbeit mit lokalen Partnern im Südkaukasus bei einer breiten Palette von Maßnahmen zur Friedenskonsolidierung umfasst, auch im Zusammenhang mit den Binnenvertriebenen und Flüchtlingen.

4. Ein bewusst herbeigeführter Krieg erscheint derzeit unwahrscheinlich. Allerdings besteht weiterhin das Risiko einer unkontrollierbaren Eskalation der Spannungen. Die EU unterstützt aktiv die Anstrengungen zum Abbau der Spannungen, insbesondere über ihren Sonderbeauftragten für den Südkaukasus und die Krise in Georgien.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006299/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Daniel Caspary (PPE), Elmar Brok (PPE), Michael Gahler (PPE) and Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — European Union strategy in the South Caucasus

In its resolution of 20 May 2010 on the need for an EU strategy for the South Caucasus (P7_TA(2010)0193), Parliament expressed its deep concern at the fact that refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) caught up in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan were being denied fundamental rights. Parliament called on all parties to find a speedy solution to this problem in accordance with the principles of international law and, in this context, demanded *inter alia* the withdrawal of Armenian forces from all occupied Azerbaijani territories.

In the resolution, Parliament took the view that the EU has the opportunity to make an important contribution to the peaceful resolution of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

1. The United Nations and other international organisations have repeatedly condemned the occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region. What is the European Union's position on this?

2. Does the European Union have a strategy that can lead to a resolution of the conflict? What is this strategy, specifically, and what concrete steps have the competent authorities taken so far? In what ways can the people of Nagorno-Karabakh exercise their right to self-determination?

3. In its resolution of 20 May 2010, Parliament requested an investigation into whether the population of Nagorno-Karabakh and IDPs and refugees in the region could be granted humanitarian aid and support. What specific action has been taken so far?

4. Azerbaijan is an important energy partner for many countries of the European Union when it comes to oil and gas. Against this background, the security of supply routes and pipeline infrastructure is of great importance. That is where the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh poses a particular risk. How does the Vice-President/High Representative assess this risk and what is her strategy for minimising this risk?

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

1. The EU fully supports the conflict resolution efforts led by the Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs, founded on the principles and norms of international law enshrined in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act. The Basic Principles have been elaborated in this framework, on which a settlement should be based.

2. Through diplomatic efforts, the EU has contributed to keeping crisis situations under control. The EU stands ready to provide enhanced assistance for confidence building measures, in support of and in full complementarity with the Minsk Group, with a view to help reinvigorate the peace process.

3. In the direct aftermath of the war in the 1990s, the EU provided humanitarian support to IDPs and refugees. Today, the grievances of displaced persons can be best addressed by the EU by encouraging and contributing to a lasting conflict settlement. The Basic Principles provide for the return of IDPs and refugees to their former places of residence.

Since 2010, through the Instrument for Stability, the EU has funded an European civil society initiative that works with local partners in the South Caucasus on a wide range of peacebuilding activities, including IDP and refugee issues.

4. The outbreak of war as a result of deliberate calculation seems unlikely for the moment, while the escalation of tension spiralling out of control remains a risk. The EU actively supports efforts to defuse tension, in particular through the EUSR for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006300/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Problem of rhino poaching

In 1977 the international trade in rhino horn was banned under the auspices of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). A notable rise in the number of illegally killed rhinos in South Africa, however, has sparked fresh debate as to the effectiveness of the ban. To put this into some context, in 2007 the number of illegally killed rhinos in South Africa stood at 13 but by 2012 the figure had reached 668 — an increase of over 5 000%.

Whilst traditional Chinese medicine is often cited as the leading market for rhino horn, this is not the commodity's sole outlet. It is estimated that between 1970 and 1992 the world rhino population fell by 96%. Many have argued that this is evidence of a flaw in the ban, arguing that the decline in the rhino population would have been expected to have abated soon after 1977.

Kruger National Park is now a significant target for poachers and accounts for nearly half of all illegal rhino killings in South Africa. It has been suggested that South Africa may propose to CITES that the international ban on rhino horn trading be removed, alongside the creation of a limited legal market. Whilst there is a body of conservationists who believe that this is the only realistic way to prevent rhino extinction in the face of growing demand for rhino horn, many are concerned that liberalisation may assist the illegal market in operating with impunity.

Will the Commission therefore confirm its opposition to any move towards liberalising the current CITES ban on the trade in rhino horn?

Will the Commission call for more rigorous enforcement of the CITES ban?

Will the Commission further encourage China to explain the negative impact of rhino horn 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
(19 July 2013)

The European Commission is aware that rhino poaching has reached levels of concern in South Africa. The EU is working with South Africa and all other affected countries to address the problem.

South Africa has taken important steps against rhino poaching, including the deployment of armed forces on the ground, in particular in the Kruger National Park. Beyond national action, international cooperation is also needed as poaching practices are conducted by international organised crime networks.

The European Union continues to be on the forefront of international work on means to address illegal trade in rhinoceros horns within the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

With a few limited exceptions, international trade in rhino horns is currently banned under the CITES Convention. Any liberalisation proposal will be assessed against the need to ensure strict protection and conservation of the species. In the CITES context, the EU played a leading role in the adoption, at the 16th CITES meeting in March 2013, of comprehensive and concrete recommendations against rhino horn trafficking addressed to the countries most involved in the illicit trafficking of rhino horns. Their implementation will be reviewed at the CITES Standing Committee meeting in July 2014. The EU is also the major donor to the 'International Consortium against Wildlife Crime' which brings together since 2010 Interpol, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Customs Organisation, CITES and the World Bank to tackle wildlife trafficking, including illegal trade in rhino horns.

The EU is discussing in a comprehensive manner the impact of rhino horns consumption with several countries allegedly end markets for rhino horn products.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006301/13
an die Kommission
Reimer Böge (PPE)
(3. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Haferangebot in der EU niedriger als es die Statistiken ausweisen

Trifft es zu, dass die offiziellen europäischen Erntestatistiken kein realistisches Bild des Haferangebots in der EU abgeben?

Was ist der Grund, dass in einigen Mitgliedstaaten Hafer in den Statistiken mit anderen Sommergetreiden vermischt wird und so die tatsächliche Hafermenge nicht mehr zu identifizieren ist?

Was gedenkt die Kommission zu tun, um das verwertbare Haferangebot in der EU in der Zukunft korrekt abzubilden und um zukünftig die unterschiedlichen Qualitätskategorien beim Getreide, die für die Verarbeitung von Nahrungsmitteln entscheidend sind, realistisch abzubilden?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(15. Juli 2013)

Die von Eurostat veröffentlichten Statistiken der pflanzlichen Erzeugung geben ein realistisches Bild der geernteten Hafermenge in der EU ab. Eurostat veröffentlicht nicht nur Statistiken über „Hafer“ und „Sommermenggetreide“, sondern auch über „Hafer und Sommermenggetreide“ insgesamt.

Da sich diese Statistiken auf die Erzeugung beziehen, spiegeln die Zahlen unter Umständen nicht die Hafermenge wider, die der lebensmittelverarbeitenden Industrie zur Verfügung steht, da Hafer auch als Futtermittel oder zu anderen Zwecken, beispielsweise als Saatgut, verwendet wird.

In Kooperation mit den Datennutzern arbeitet Eurostat ständig an der Verbesserung der Agrarstatistiken, um zu gewährleisten, dass die Statistiken den Nutzerbedarf soweit wie möglich decken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006301/13
to the Commission
Reimer Böge (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Oat supply in the EU lower than indicated by the statistics

Is it true that official European harvest statistics do not provide a realistic indication of oat supply in the EU?

What is the reason for some Member States mixing oats with other summer grain crops in their statistics, as a result of which the actual quantity of oats can no longer be ascertained?

What steps will the Commission take in order to obtain an accurate representation of utilisable oat supply in the EU in the future, and to ensure that the various categories of grain quality, which are decisive for food processing, are realistically depicted in future?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

European crop production statistics published by Eurostat provide a realistic picture of the harvested production of oats in the EU. Eurostat publishes not only statistics on 'oats' and 'mixed grain other than maslin' but also on the total of 'oats and mixed grain other than maslin'.

As these statistics refer to production, the figures may not correspond to the quantity of oats available for the food processing industry due to the fact that oats are used for animal feeding and for other purposes such as seeds for example.

Eurostat is constantly improving agricultural statistics in cooperation with the data users, to make sure that the statistics provided meet user needs as much as possible.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006303/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος καταστροφής του τάφου του Ανδρέα Κάλβου στην Αγγλία

Εδώ και 10 χρόνια ο ναός της Αγίας Μαργαρίτας στο Louth του Lincolnshire της Αγγλίας έχει περάσει μέσω πλειστηριασμού, από την Αγγλικανική Εκκλησία στα χέρια ιδιώτη. Στον εξωτερικό χώρο της εκκλησίας βρίσκεται και το κενοτάφιο του σπουδαίου Έλληνα ποιητή Ανδρέα Κάλβου ο οποίος θάφτηκε εκεί μετά το θάνατό του το 1869. Το 1960 τα οστά του μεταφέρθηκαν στη Ζάκυνθο. Σύμφωνα όμως με πληροφορίες, ο νέος ιδιοκτήτης του ναού της Αγ. Μαργαρίτας σκοπεύει να τον μετατρέψει σε κατοικία και χώρο εργασίας. Ο ναός του βρίσκεται σε πολύ άσχημη κατάσταση τόσο εσωτερικά όσο και εξωτερικά, ενώ το κενοτάφιο του Ανδρέα Κάλβου παρουσιάζει σήμερα μεγάλη φθορά που πρέπει να αποκατασταθεί. Εγείρεται έτσι το ζήτημα για το μέλλον του κενοταφίου και για τις πιθανές λύσεις με σκοπό να διατηρηθεί η μνήμη του Κάλβου, ενώ αυτή τη στιγμή υπάρχει μια διεθνής κινητοποίηση από τη Γαλλία, την Ιταλία, την Ισπανία, την Κύπρο για το θέμα.

Δεδομένου ότι το μνημείο αυτό αποτελεί μέρος τόσο της ελληνικής αλλά και της κοινής ευρωπαϊκής πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να εξετάσει το ζήτημα σε συνεργασία με τις βρετανικές και ελληνικές αρχές και να προβεί στις κατάλληλες ενέργειες ώστε να αποκατασταθεί η φθορά του κενοταφίου και να εξασφαλιστεί η ρητή διαβεβαίωση του ιδιοκτήτη ότι θα το σεβαστεί;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή αποδίδει ύψιστη σημασία στη διατήρηση της ευρωπαϊκής πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς. Ωστόσο, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 167 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, ο ρόλος της Ένωσης συνίσταται στην «ενθάρρυνση της συνεργασίας μεταξύ κρατών μελών και, αν αυτό είναι αναγκαίο, [στο να] υποστηρίζει και [να] συμπληρώνει τη δράση τους». Ως εκ τούτου, η διατήρηση, η προστασία, η συντήρηση και η αποκατάσταση της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς αποτελούν πρωτίστως εθνική ευθύνη και η Επιτροπή δεν έχει αρμοδιότητα να παρέμβει άμεσα όσον αφορά την περίπτωση που αναφέρεται στην ερώτηση.

Ωστόσο, αξίζει να υπομνησθεί ότι, εντός των ορίων των αρμοδιοτήτων της, η Επιτροπή παρέχει στον κλάδο ευκαιρίες υποστήριξης και χρηματοδότησης στο πλαίσιο του τρέχοντος προγράμματος «Πολιτισμός» (το οποίο, από το 2014, θα αντικατασταθεί από το μελλοντικό πρόγραμμα «Δημιουργική Ευρώπη»), καθώς και με ειδικά μέτρα όπως τα βραβεία πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς της ΕΕ. Τα εν λόγω βραβεία έχουν ως στόχο να αναδείξουν εξαιρετικά επιτεύγματα στον τομέα της διατήρησης, της έρευνας, της εκπαίδευσης, της κατάρτισης και της ευαισθητοποίησης σε ό,τι αφορά την πολιτιστική κληρονομιά.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006303/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Risk of destruction of the tomb of Andreas Kalvos in England

Ten years ago, St Margaret's Church in Louth, Lincolnshire, England, was purchased at auction from the Church of England by a private buyer. The cenotaph of the important Greek poet Andreas Kalvos, who was buried there on his death in 1869, lies in the churchyard. In 1960, his remains were removed to Zakynthos. However, according to our information, the new owner of St Margaret's Church intends to convert the church into a house and office. The church is in a very poor state of repair, both inside and out, and Andreas Kalvos's cenotaph is badly worn and requires restoration. The question is: what will become of the cenotaph and what can be done to keep Kalvos's memory alive? An international movement has started up in France, Italy, Spain and Cyprus.

Given that this monument forms part of both the Greek and the common European cultural heritage, does the Commission intend to consider the matter in cooperation with the British and Greek authorities and take appropriate action in order to restore the damage to the cenotaph and obtain an express assurance from the owner that he will respect it?

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

The Commission regards the safeguarding of European cultural heritage with utmost importance. However, according to Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the role of the Union should be 'encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action'. Therefore, the upkeep, protection, conservation and renovation of cultural heritage are primarily a national responsibility and the Commission has no competence to intervene directly as regards the case referred to in the question.

However, it is worth recalling that, within the limits of its competence, the Commission provides the sector with support and funding opportunities within the current Culture Programme (to be replaced by the future Creative Europe Programme as of 2014) and through specific measures like the EU Prizes for Cultural Heritage. The latter seeks to highlight outstanding achievements in the field of conservation, research, education, training and awareness raising in the field of cultural heritage.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006304/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(3 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Posible infracción de las Directivas 2010/75/UE y 2004/35/CE: Tarento (Italia)

Según estudios recientes encargados por un tribunal de Tarento, entre los que se incluye un informe elaborado por el ISS ([1]), la tasa de mortalidad de los afectados por cáncer es un 30 % mayor en Tarento que en el resto de Italia, y un 70 % de estos cánceres afectan a los aparatos digestivo y reproductivo. Además, los dueños de las acerías del Gruppo Riva, propietarios de las plantas desde 1995, han sido acusados estos últimos días de blanqueo de dinero ante un tribunal de Milán y de actos delictivos con resultado de catástrofe ecológica ante un tribunal de Tarento.

El 19 de diciembre de 2012, el Gobierno italiano adoptó el Decreto-ley 231/2012 ([2]), revocando así la decisión judicial tomada de embargar la planta, permitiendo así que esta volviera a funcionar a pleno rendimiento. El Decreto-ley 231/2012 incluye un protocolo (autorización integrada medioambiental) para controlar las consecuencias para el medio ambiente del ciclo productivo. Esta ley no se está cumpliendo, treinta y cinco de las noventa y cuatro disposiciones no se han aplicado y las plantas siguen produciendo con las mismas normas. No se han acometido acciones verdaderamente encaminadas a abordar los efectos devastadores sobre la ciudad y sus habitantes. Además, hay una gran preocupación en cuanto al cumplimiento del artículo 18 de la Directiva 2010/75/UE sobre las emisiones industriales, que trata de la necesidad del empleo de las mejores técnicas disponibles, dado que las acerías de ILVA se hallan en la ciudad.

Las plantas están actualmente en una situación complicada. El consejo de administración de ILVA y los jefes de departamento han dimitido tras la orden de embargo dictada por el tribunal de Tarento. El Gobierno italiano parece preferir que siga la política de no aplicar la autorización integrada medioambiental, y pronto se nombrará un comisionado para ILVA.

En su Resolución de 13 de diciembre de 2012 ([3]), que se refiere a la acería ILVA, el Parlamento pide la aplicación íntegra de la Directiva 2004/35/CE sobre responsabilidad medioambiental, especialmente del artículo 8, relativo al principio de que «quien contamina paga», para garantizar la rehabilitación de las zonas contaminadas. Además, en su dictamen motivado de 26 de enero de 2012 solicitando a Italia que cumpla la Directiva sobre responsabilidad medioambiental, la Comisión ya preveía que el caso pudiera remitirse al Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea.

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que el Decreto-ley 231/2012 y el mantenimiento de la producción en las plantas de ILVA como si no pasara nada respetan el principio de precaución en el contexto del artículo 18 de la Directiva sobre las emisiones industriales?

2. ¿Cree que Italia está incumpliendo lo dispuesto en la Directiva sobre responsabilidad medioambiental, en vista de la decisión del Gobierno italiano de aceptar retrasos y excepciones en la aplicación de los requisitos de la autorización integrada medioambiental?

3. ¿Por qué no acometió acciones la Comisión tras la conclusión del plazo de dos meses, como preveía en su dictamen motivado de 26 de enero de 2012, y qué medidas piensa tomar?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

1. La Comisión está siguiendo muy de cerca el funcionamiento de ILVA y sus emisiones, así como el nivel local de calidad del aire. Los informes italianos del período 2005-2011 indican que en varias zonas y aglomeraciones —entre las que se cuenta la localidad de Tarento, donde opera ILVA— se sobrepasan los valores límite diarios de partículas (PM10). La última información referente al funcionamiento de ILVA, recibida de las autoridades italianas el 14 de junio de 2013, se está sometiendo actualmente a una profunda evaluación. La Comisión decidirá la adopción de nuevas medidas para garantizar que Italia cumpla la normativa de la UE.

([1]) Istituto Superiore di Sanità: Instituto Superior de Salud del Ministerio de Sanidad.
([2]) La Ley Salva-ILVA.
([3]) Resolución del Parlamento Europeo sobre una nueva siderurgia sostenible y competitiva (a raíz de una petición), Textos aprobados, P7_TA(2012)0510.

2. La Directiva sobre la responsabilidad ambiental es de aplicación en caso de que por el funcionamiento continuado de ILVA tras el 30 de abril de 2007 se hayan causado daños significativos a la tierra o al agua. Según la información facilitada por las autoridades italianas en marzo de 2013, el procedimiento administrativo para ordenar la descontaminación de la zona de Tarento se inició en 2002, aplicándose medidas urgentes para combatir la contaminación del suelo. La Comisión realiza el seguimiento de las medidas que toman esas autoridades.

3. En respuesta al dictamen motivado de la Comisión de enero de 2012, Italia presentó varios proyectos legislativos destinados a reformar la normativa italiana para corregir las infracciones señaladas en el dictamen. Ahora bien, si esa normativa no se modifica a su debido tiempo, la Comisión estudiará la posibilidad de remitir el caso al Tribunal de Justicia de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006304/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Possible violation of Directives 2010/75/EU and 2004/35/EC: Taranto, Italy

According to recent studies commissioned by a court in Taranto, including a report compiled by the ISS ([1]), the mortality rate of those suffering from cancer is 30% higher in Taranto than it is in the rest of Italy, with 70% of cancers affecting the digestive and reproductive organs. Also, in recent days the owners of the Riva Group steel plants, who have owned the plants since 1995, have been accused of money laundering by a court in Milan and of criminal activities leading to environmental disaster by a court in Taranto.

On 19 December 2012, the Italian Government adopted law 231/2012 ([2]), overruling the previous judicial decision to sequester the plant and allow it to resume full production. Law 231/2012 includes a protocol (integrated environmental authorisation (IEA)) for the monitoring of environmental consequences of the production cycle. This law is not being respected, with 35 out of 94 provisions not being implemented and the plants continuing production according to the same standards. No real action has been taken concerning the devastating effects on the city and its population. Moreover, there are serious concerns regarding compliance with Article 18 of Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions, which deals with the need to use the best available techniques, considering that ILVA steel plants are located in the city.

The current situation at the plants is difficult. The board of directors of ILVA and the department heads have resigned, following the mandate for sequestration issued by the Court of Taranto. The Italian Government appears to be in favour of continuing its policy of non-application of the IEA and a commissioner for ILVA will be named shortly.

In its resolution of 13 December 2012 ([3]), which refers to the ILVA plant, Parliament called for a thorough implementation of Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability (ELD), in particular Article 8 on the 'polluter pays principle', to ensure the rehabilitation of the polluted areas. Also, in the Commission's reasoned opinion of 26 January 2012 requesting Italy to comply with the ELD, it was anticipated that the case would be referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

In light of the above, could the Commission answer the following:

1. Does the Commission consider Law 231/2012 and the continuation of 'business-as-usual' production at ILVA plants to be in compliance with the precautionary principle, in the context of Article 18 of the directive on industrial emissions?

2. Does it consider, in light of the decision of the Italian Government to accept delays and exceptions in implementing the requirements of the IEA, that Italy is in breach of the dispositions of the ELD?

3. Why did the Commission not take action following the expiry of the two-month deadline, as foreseen in its reasoned opinion of 26 January 2012, and how does it intend to proceed?

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

1. The operation of and the emissions from ILVA, as well as the local air quality situation are being closely monitored by the Commission. Reports from Italy for 2005-2011, indicate exceedance of the particulate matter (PM10) daily limit values in several zones and agglomerations including Taranto where ILVA operates. The latest information concerning the operation of ILVA, received from the Italian authorities on 14 June 2013, is currently under detailed assessment. The Commission will decide on further steps to ensure that Italy complies with EC law.

2. If through ongoing operation of ILVA after 30 April 2007 significant damage to water or land has been caused, the Environmental Liability Directive (ELD) applies. According to the information of March 2013 from the Italian Authorities, the administrative procedure for ordering the decontamination of the Taranto area started in 2002 and urgent measures addressing polluted soil have been implemented. The Commission is monitoring the steps being taken by the Italian Authorities.

([1]) Istituto Superiore di Sanità: High Health Institute of the Ministry of Health.
([2]) The 'Save-ILVA' law.
([3]) European Parliament resolution on a new sustainable and competitive steel industry, based on a petition received, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0510.

3. In reply to the Commission's reasoned opinion of January 2012, Italy submitted drafts aimed at amending the Italian legislation to solve the breaches. If the Italian legislation is not amended in due time, the Commission will consider referring the case to the EU Court.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006305/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Cypriot property title deeds

Following the lobbying by many UK MEPs in coordination with the Cyprus Property Action Group, it is gratifying that the Commission, as part of the Troika, has made sure that the title deed issue is addressed by Cyprus as part of the bailout conditions.

Nevertheless, in order to eradicate any doubt, could the Commission confirm that all buyers who have hitherto paid in full for properties will have access to their deeds, without exception, as a result of this exercise? Furthermore, could the Commission also confirm that none of these deeds will have any encumbrances placed upon them?

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

The Commission attaches priority to resolving the title deeds issue in the interest of the Cypriot economy, the European taxpayer, and the many EU citizens affected by the problem. In Article 5.4 of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) concluded between the Commission, acting on behalf of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), and the Republic of Cyprus, it is therefore stated that the Cypriot authorities will, by end 2014,

'Eliminate the title deed issuance backlog to less than 2,000 cases of immovable property sales contracts with title deed issuance pending for more than one year. The Cypriot authorities will enhance cooperation with the financial sector to ensure the swift clearing of encumbrances on title deeds to be transferred to purchasers of immovable property, and implement guaranteed timeframes for the issuance of building certificates and title deeds' (The text of the memorandum of understanding is also available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp149_en.pdf)

The MoU therefore envisages a specific deadline for the elimination of the observed backlog. The swift clearing of encumbrances on title deed transfers constitutes an important element of this agreement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006306/13
alla Commissione
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(3 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Il caso del porto di Trieste

La Turchia ha assunto un ruolo importante, forse anche strategico, per lo sviluppo dei traffici commerciali della regione Puglia.

Questo potenziale fa fatica a manifestarsi vista la condizione di oggettiva concorrenza sleale che i porti del Centro e Sud d'Italia subiscono a causa di alcuni privilegi di cui gode il porto di Trieste, che sono frutto di epoche passate e non più giustificati dalla competizione globale.

Trieste è l'unica città portuale europea a possedere un privilegio giuridico internazionale in tema di zone franche, uno strumento che è sovra-comunitario poiché istituito e garantito da norme specifiche di un Trattato internazionale preesistente, quello di Pace di Parigi del 1947, che assegna al Porto Franco di Trieste una propria libertà d'azione in materia doganale, fiscale, commerciale e industriale molto ampia e ben più estesa di quella delle zone franche di diritto comunitario pur sviluppate altrove (ad esempio in Irlanda) con successo.

Il porto giuliano, infatti, gode di maggiori disponibilità di permessi di transito e inoltre dell'esenzione dal pagamento delle tasse automobilistiche per i veicoli turchi sbarcati o imbarcati nello stesso porto.

A tal proposito, si chiede alla Commissione quanto segue:

1. ricordando che a oggi i benefici attuati del regime di Porto Franco di Trieste sono essenzialmente doganali, mentre ne possono e devono essere ancora sviluppate le potenzialità di natura fiscale (IVA, accise, imposte dirette, ecc.) in conformità alle consuetudini vigenti negli altri Porti Franchi del mondo, l'UE può tutelare anche la concorrenza?

2. L'UE può garantire che le possibilità di sviluppare nuovi aspetti normativi del Porto Franco di Trieste derivanti da una più completa attuazione delle prerogative stabilite dallo specifico allegato VIII al Trattato di Pace di Parigi del 1947 non danneggino ulteriormente gli altri porti italiani, specialmente quelli del Centro e Sud d'Italia?

3. L'UE può intervenire affinché siano limitati i danni economici e ambientali dovuti al transito a Trieste delle merci destinate al Centro e al Sud d'Italia e alle centinaia di chilometri che percorrono su strada?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(12 agosto 2013)

1. Se la zona franca di un porto prevede incentivi fiscali per talune imprese o per la produzione di determinati beni, ciò può comportare un aiuto di Stato che presuppone una notifica da parte dello Stato membro alla Commissione per approvazione. Attualmente, la Commissione non è a conoscenza dell'esistenza né le sono stati segnalati incentivi di questo tipo.

2. Tutte le operazioni che possono essere effettuate nella zona franca di Trieste devono essere conformi alle disposizioni doganali.

A norma degli articoli 156 e 160 della direttiva 2006/112/CE del Consiglio ([1]), del 28 novembre 2006, gli Stati membri, tramite la loro relativa legislazione nazionale e sotto la loro responsabilità per quanto riguarda la corretta applicazione, possono esentare dall'IVA le cessioni di beni destinati a essere collocati in una zona franca e le cessioni di beni e le prestazioni di servizi effettuate nella stessa.

Gli Stati membri sono liberi di organizzare i propri sistemi di recupero degli importi dovuti da parte dei cittadini a condizione che tali sistemi siano conformi alle regole generali dei trattati, e, in particolare, che non comportino discriminazioni in situazioni transfrontaliere.

La Commissione non è a conoscenza di una violazione del diritto dell'UE in questo contesto specifico.

([1]) Direttiva 2006/112/CE del Consiglio, del 28 novembre 2006, relativa al sistema comune d'imposta sul valore aggiunto, GU L 347 dell'11.12.2006.

3. Nell'UE gli operatori sono liberi di scegliere il porto di scalo che ritengono più idoneo per svolgere le loro operazioni di navigazione. Allo stesso tempo, l'UE sostiene pienamente l'obiettivo relativo alla fornitura di servizi di trasporto in modo sostenibile e alla riduzione al minimo delle esternalità negative legate ai modi di trasporto. Il Libro bianco dell'UE sui trasporti ([2]) inoltre ha fissato come obiettivo generale il passaggio graduale, per le distanze superiori a 300 km, dal trasporto di merci su gomma verso altri modi, quali la ferrovia o le vie navigabili. Un panorama completo delle iniziative della Commissione a tale riguardo è disponibile sul sito web della direzione generale della Commissione «Mobilità e trasporti ([3])».

([2]) COM(2011)144 def.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006306/13
to the Commission
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: The case of the port of Trieste

Turkey has assumed an important and possibly even strategic role for the development of commercial traffic in the Apulia Region.

This potential is struggling to develop because of the inherently unfair competition facing ports in the centre and south of Italy as a result of certain privileges enjoyed by the port of Trieste, benefits established in a different era and no longer justified by global competition.

Trieste is the only port city in the EU which possesses an international legal privilege: its free zone, an instrument which is supra-EU insofar as it was established and guaranteed by specific legislation in a pre-existing international treaty, the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947, which granted the Free Port of Trieste independence in customs, tax, commercial and industrial issues; an extremely broad independence, far more wide-ranging than that in free zones subject to EC law, even if developed successfully elsewhere (in Ireland, for example).

In Trieste, it is actually easier to obtain transit permits and the port also benefits from an extension of the payment of automobile taxes for Turkish vehicles which have embarked or disembarked in the same port.

In view of this, we wish to ask the Commission:

1. bearing in mind that the main benefits implemented today by the regime of the Free Port of Trieste are mainly related to customs, whereas fiscal potential could and should be developed (VAT, excise, direct taxes, etc.), pursuant to the conventions in force in other Free Ports around the world, can the EU also protect competition?

2. Can the EU guarantee that the possibilities of developing new legislative aspects enjoyed by the Free Port of Trieste, and derived from more complete implementation of the prerogatives established by the specific Annex VIII to the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947, do not further damage Italian ports, especially those in the centre and south of Italy?

3. Can the EU intervene in order to limit the economic and environmental damage caused by the shipping to Trieste of goods intended for the centre and south of Italy and the hundreds of kilometres they then travel by road?

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

1. If the free zone of a port involves tax incentives for certain undertakings or the production of certain goods, this may involve state aid which requires notification from the Member State to the Commission for approval. At present, the Commission is not aware of the existence and has not been notified of any such tax incentives.

2. All operations which may be carried out in the Free Zone of Trieste must be in line with the customs provisions.

By virtue of Articles 156 and 160 of the Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 ([1]) Member States can through their national legislation and under their responsibility regarding correct application, exempt from VAT the supply of goods which are intended to be placed under free zones and the supply of goods or services carried out therein.

Member States are free to organise their system to collect amounts due to them by citizens provided they comply with the general rules of the Treaties, and in particular that they do not discriminate against cross-border situations.

The Commission is not aware of any violation of EC law in this specific context.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax, OJ L 347, 11.12.2006.

3. In the EU operators are free to choose the port of call they consider as most appropriate for conducting their shipping operations. At the same time the EU fully supports the objective of providing transport services in a sustainable way and minimising the negative externalities linked to transport modes. The EU White Paper for Transport ([2]) furthermore sets as a general goal to increasingly shift road freight over 300 km to other modes such as rail or waterborne transport. A complete overview of the Commission's initiatives in that regard can be found in the website of the Commission's Directorate general for mobility and transport ([3]).

([2]) COM/2011/0144 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006307/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Exportação ilegal de madeira

Considerando o seguinte:

— As estatísticas oficiais de Moçambique dizem que, em 2012, foram exportados 260 385 metros cúbicos de troncos de madeira nativa e tábuas já cortadas para várias partes do mundo;

— Várias organizações que se dedicam a combater o tráfico de madeiras cortadas ilegalmente afirmam que, por exemplo, segundo as alfândegas chinesas, só a China importou muito mais madeira moçambicana do que toda a madeira que Maputo oficialmente vendeu;

— A União Europeia desenvolve esforços para tentar controlar a origem da madeira que chega à Europa, tendo sido aprovada uma diretiva em 2010, que entrou em vigor apenas este ano e que obriga a que os operadores da UE que vendam, pela primeira vez, madeira no mercado europeu, tenham que conhecer a origem da madeira, bem como manter registos que identifiquem o vendedor e o comprador dos produtos e, ainda, tomar iniciativas para se assegurarem de que a madeira foi extraída em conformidade com a legislação do país de extração;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Considera que tal legislação é garantia de que não tenha havido exploração madeireira ilegal, designadamente na exportação ilegal de troncos de espécies protegidas, cobiçadas no mercado internacional?

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

O Regulamento Madeira da UE, em vigor desde 3 de março de 2013, proíbe a colocação no mercado da UE de madeira e produtos derivados provenientes de exploração ilegal e estabelece que os operadores da UE devem ser cuidadosos quando do aprovisionamento de produtos de madeira. O encerramento do mercado da UE a madeira procedente de exploração ilegal deveria contribuir para reduzir os volumes globais do comércio internacional de produtos de madeira ilegais.

Os operadores europeus — que colocam produtos de madeira no mercado da UE pela primeira vez estão por conseguinte obrigados pelo Regulamento Madeira a minimizar o risco de importação para a UE de madeira proveniente de exploração ilegal, a partir de Moçambique ou de qualquer outro país, independentemente da rota comercial utilizada até à chegada desses produtos ao mercado europeu. A responsabilidade pelo cumprimento do Regulamento Madeira incumbe aos Estados-Membros da UE, que são obrigados a estabelecer sanções proporcionadas, eficazes e dissuasivas e a proceder a controlos dos operadores. Os Estados-Membros da UE têm também a obrigação de apresentar à Comissão, de dois em dois anos, relatórios sobre a aplicação do Regulamento Madeira da UE, estando a apresentação dos primeiros relatórios prevista até abril de 2015.

O Regulamento Madeira da UE é um dos instrumentos do Plano de Ação sobre a Aplicação da Legislação, a Governação e o Comércio no Setor Florestal (FLEGT). Entre as medidas tomadas pela UE no âmbito do Plano contam-se: a celebração de Acordos de Parceria Voluntários com países terceiros produtores de madeira, políticas de contratos públicos promotoras de uma utilização sustentável da madeira, medidas de cooperação para o desenvolvimento, etc..

No que diz respeito à exploração ilegal de espécies florestais protegidas, a UE dispõe de um instrumento específico para abordar o problema, nomeadamente o Regulamento CITES (Regulamento (CE) n.° 338/97 do Conselho ([1])).

([1]) JO L 61 de 3.3.1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006307/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(3 June 2013)

Subject: Illegal timber exports

— According to official statistics from Mozambique, 260 385 cubic metres of native timber logs and cut planks were exported to different parts of the world in 2012.

— Several organisations working to counter the sale of illegally cut timber have highlighted that, for example, China alone imported far more timber from Mozambique, according to Chinese customs officials, than the totally officially sold by Maputo.

— The EU is making efforts to check the origin of timber that arrives in Europe, having adopted a directive in 2010, which entered into force only this year and which, for the first time, obliges EU operators selling timber on the European market to know the origin of the timber and to maintain records to identify the seller and purchaser of the products, as well as to take steps to ensure that the timber was extracted in accordance with the legislation of the country of origin.

Does the Commission believe that such legislation guarantees that there has been no illegal timber exploitation and particularly that logs of protected species, which are in high demand on the international market, have not been illegally exported?

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

The EU Timber Regulation (EUTR), applicable since 3 March 2013, prohibits the placing of illegally harvested timber and products derived from such timber on the EU market and requires that EU operators are diligent when sourcing timber products. Closing the EU market for illegally harvested timber should help reduce the overall volumes of international trade in illegal wood products.

European operators — who place timber products on the EU market for the first time-are therefore bound by the EUTR to minimise the risk to import illegally logged wood into the EU, from Mozambique or any other country, whatever the trade route these products will use before reaching the European market. The responsibility to enforce the EUTR lies with the EU Member States, which are obliged to lay down proportionate, effective and dissuasive penalties and carry out checks on operators. The EU Member States are under an obligation also to submit every two years reports to the Commission on the application of the EUTR, and first reports are due by April 2015.

The EUTR is one of the instruments of the FLEGT Action Plan: among other measures taken by the EU in the framework of the Plan are: entering into Voluntary Partnership Agreements with third timber producing countries; public procurement policies promoting sustainable wood; development cooperation measures; etc.

With respect to illegal exploitation of protected tree species the EU has a specific instrument to address the problem, namely the CITES Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 ([1])).

([1]) OJ L 61, 3.3.1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006308/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Cost of European External Action Service

While the direction of foreign policy remains a competence of individual Member States, it is estimated that the European External Action Service continues to employ over 3 500 people, costing EU taxpayers over EUR 480 m each year. The Service aims to represent EU interests throughout the world.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries;

How many people has the European External Action Service employed in the past five years?

Can the Commission please detail the total annual expenditure by the European External Action Service in the past five years?

Does the Commission have any plans to reduce number of staff employed by the European External Action Service and to reduce its annual budget in line with widespread austerity measures and public sector cuts enacted by national governments across EU Member States?

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

The EEAS was created by the Lisbon Treaty. It was set up on 1 January 2011 by the decision 2010/427/EU unanimously approved by the Council.

The EEAS staff totalled 3156 in April 2011, 3383 in April 2012 and 3498 in April 2013 (including 1130 local agents in delegations). The increase reflects the additional posts granted by the budgetary authority to allow the EEAS to discharge the new political tasks assigned to the European Union by the Lisbon Treaty in the field of foreign affairs and security policy. These additional post helped the EEAS to recruit personnel from the diplomatic services of the Member States, who, according to the 2010 Council decision, should represent at least one third of the total population 'AD level' (staff with academic background) by 2013.

The EEAS spent 419 055 671 euros in 2011 and 475 390 217 euros in 2012. It was granted a budget of 508 762 493 euros for 2013.

Data on staff and spending, including detailed breakdowns, are published annually in the Working Document n°7 in support of the draft budget for the next year.

Fully aware of the difficult economic and financial situation in the European Union, the EEAS included savings representing 1.3% of its budget for 2013 and 3.8% of its draft budget for 2014. For next year, the EEAS is notably proposing to reduce the number of its establishment plan posts by 1%, downgrade 14 high level posts and cut appropriations for external staff by 1.84%.

The EEAS will of course comply with the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020 and the new Interinstitutional Agreement on budgetary discipline, cooperation in budgetary matters and sound financial management when these are approved by Parliament and the Council.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006309/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Sustainable tourism

As a result of decades of terrorism and political instability, the tourist potential offered by the natural heritage that exists in my constituency, Northern Ireland, has been far from realised. For instance, our region of the UK possesses the famous Giant's Causeway and Mourne Mountains.

At a time of economic downturn, it is vital that such potential is developed in a way that is sustainable and in line with best practice across the EU. A focus on the protection, conservation and management of our enduring, world-famous natural resources and habitats presents sizeable opportunities in this regard.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

What steps are being taken at EU level to promote the economic opportunities for Member States presented by the sustainable development of unique natural resources in many regions of the EU?

Specifically, what steps has the Commission taken to promote biodiversity across the EU, with a particular emphasis on the growth potential inherent in focused land and habitat management?

In the new programming period 2014-2020, what EU funding will be made available to project that aim to aid sustainable tourism — including job creation — in Member States?

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

In line with the EU's competence to complement, support, and coordinate the actions of the Member States, the Commission has already proposed several EU level initiatives to encourage sustainable, including environmentally friendly, tourism. These include an award for non-traditional 'European destinations of excellence' (EDEN) ([1]), as well as the development of a European system of indicators for the sustainable management of tourist destinations (ETIS) ([2]), which includes relevant indicators related to landscape and biodiversity protection.

The Commission has also co-financed several transnational projects related to cycling or hiking tourism ([3]), encouraging the reduction of CO_2 emissions in the tourism industry, and adopted a new strategy to halt the loss of biodiversity in the EU by 2020 ([4]). In this context, the Natura2000 network is a significant contributor to the tourism industry ([5]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/eden/index_en.htm
([2]) The European Tourism Indicator System was launched for destination use in February 2013. For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/indicators/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/cycling-tourism/index_en.htm
([4]) 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (COM(2011) 244)': http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7%5B1%5D.pdf
([5]) Several studies demonstrate these benefits: 'Estimating the economic value provided by tourism/recreation and Employment supported by Natura2000' — http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/Estimating_economic_value.pdf, 'The Economic benefits of the Natura2000 Network' Synthesis Report — http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/ENV-12-018_LR_Final1.pdf, 'Estimating the Overall Economic Value of the Benefits provided by the Natura 2000 network'. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/Economic_Benefits_of_Natura_2000_report.pdf

For the multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020, the Commission proposed the inclusion of an adequate budget allocation for tourism-related initiatives in the indicative split of operational appropriations and budget distribution for the COSME programme ([6]), including for the support of sustainable tourism transnational initiatives. Support for tourism investments also continues to be a potential activity area of the future Operational Programmes under the European Structural and Investment Funds, if they are connected to the thematic priorities and objectives of the funds ([7]). The future Cohesion Policy ([8]) as well as innovative financing ([9]) will be central in this sense.

([6]) COM(2011) 834 final of 30.11.2011. The Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME) has as objectives to improve access to finance and to markets for SMEs, to encourage an entrepreneurial culture in Europe, and to improve framework conditions for the competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises including in the tourism sector.

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

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

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006310/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Women in politics

Although 34.6% of Members of the European Parliament are female, only 22% of the 650 MPs elected to the UK Parliament at Westminster are women. In my EP constituency, Northern Ireland, this figure translates into only 19% of MLAs in the devolved legislative Assembly at Stormont being female.

In light of this apparent deficit between the percentage of women in society and the percentage of women elected to political office, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

Can the Commission please detail the percentage of members in the national parliament/assembly of each Member State who are female, as well as the percentage of women holding ministerial office in each jurisdiction?

Can the Commission please state what percentage of staff employed by the European Union are women?

What steps have been taken at EU level to encourage greater civic and political participation among women across Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

The European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015) ([1]) has amongst its five priorities the promotion of equality in decision-making. The Europe for Citizens programme 2007-2013 had 'equal opportunities as regards participation in political life' as one of its priorities and has funded projects encouraging women to play a full part in the democratic life of the EU.

The European Commission established a database on women and men in decision-making in high level positions in several sectors including the national parliaments and governments. The database is freely available for on line consultation since 2004 ([2]).

On 1 January 2013, 54,5% of all staff ([3]) were female at the European Commission.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/index_en.htm
([3]) Officials, temporary agents, contract agents, local agents, special advisers and agents under national law.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006311/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: UK European Fast Stream

The United Kingdom's Civil Service currently operates a European Fast Stream (EFS) service for university graduates who may want to have a permanent career within the EU institutions in Brussels and Luxembourg. The EFS offers graduates a combination of experience of working within the European Commission and the UK Civil Service, as well as language training and education on the EU.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

How many UK graduates has the European Fast Stream employed in the past 3 years? How many of those enrolled on the European Fast Stream have gone on to forge careers within the European institutions in the past 3 years?

How many UK citizens are currently employed by the European Union, including within the Commission, the Council and Parliament?

What steps have been taken at EU level to promote career opportunities within the EU for graduates across Member States?

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

There are currently 1230 British citizens employed by the Commission (all status). The Commission is not in position to communicate figures regarding other Institutions.

The Commission does not have any figures regarding the number of British graduates employed by the European Fast Stream or employed afterwards in the European institutions, since this programme is managed by the UK civil service and not by the Commission.

The Commission works closely with a network of contacts both within the EU institutions and in the Member States to actively promote career opportunities to graduates. A positive employer image for the EU institutions has been built reaching out to new talent through various publicity channels, including print and online media and job boards, but increasingly through more cost-effective and innovative solutions, including social media, and projects such as the EU Careers Ambassadors (student ambassadors based in top universities throughout Europe).

As a result of this work, awareness of EU career opportunities among graduates has risen markedly across Member States, enabling the Commission to attract highly motivated and qualified candidates.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006312/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Interreg V Programme

The European Council's Conclusions on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 make provision for EUR 500 million for interregional cooperation. At the end of 2012, the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB), which administers crossborder EU structural funding in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, launched a public consultation on the future direction of new PEACE and Interreg programmes for 2014-2020.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

What progress has been made toward determining priorities for the allocation of funding for interregional cooperation programmes across the EU for 2014-2020?

What assurances can the Commission provide that Interreg programmes for the period 2014-2020 will prioritise protecting the environment and sustainable tourism?

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

1. In the 2014-2020 period, resources of the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds ([1]) will be focused on thematic objectives directly derived from the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. These are set out in Article 9 of the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) as provisionally agreed by the co-legislators. The fund-specific regulations set out investment priorities for each of the ESI Funds. The European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) Regulation includes additional investment priorities for ETC programmes.

Under interregional cooperation, the ETC Regulation as provisionally agreed by the co-legislators provides for four EU-wide programmes. Two of these will focus on the exchange of experience on the thematic objectives referred to above, with one addressing more specifically urban development and urban rural linkages. The third is dedicated to the exchange of experience on the implementation of ETC programmes and actions as well as to the use of European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation and the fourth one to the analysis of territorial development trends.

2. ETC programmes for the next period will focus their interventions on actions contributing to the thematic objectives. Several of these target the protection of the environment, such as supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors, promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management and preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency. Sustainable tourism is not indicated as an objective in itself, but related investments can be financed provided that they contribute to one of the thematic objectives set out in the CPR.

([1]) The European Funds for Regional Development (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006313/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: CETA between the EU and Canada

The EU and Canada are currently in negotiations to finalise a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), which would seek to bring the trade and investment relationship between the two partners to a new level. Canada is the EU's 11th-largest trading partner, while the EU represents approximately 12% of Canada's external trade.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries;

What is the current status of the CETA negotiations? Is a conclusion envisaged in the near future?

Can the Commission please identify the main areas of focus within the negotiations, and outline its aims in this regard?

Can the Commission please state what impact it foresees on EU traders and consumers, and on economic growth more generally, as a result of any future agreement?

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

CETA negotiations are currently in a very intense phase with both sides trying to find solutions for the remaining issues which are mutually acceptable. In principle, the Commission would like to see these negotiations concluded quickly, however, the substance is more important than timing.

The overall aim is to conclude an agreement which is comprehensive and state of the art covering goods, services and investment, procurement, investment protection and a number of rules-based issues such as technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, intellectual property rights, competition and state owned enterprises, customs and trade facilitation, as well as sustainable development. In all these areas the EU is aiming for the highest level of ambition possible with a developed country like Canada. With respect to tariffs for example, the EU hopes to eliminate at least 99% of all tariff lines and most of them already at entry into force. With respect to services and investment market access, the EU aims for an outcome which is at least as ambitious as what both the EU and Canada have offered to other partners.

The potential impact of CETA has been assessed by a joint study and a Sustainability Impact Assessment — SIA ([1]). The joint study ([2]) concludes that CETA is expected to result in an increase of the EU's gross domestic product (GDP) by EUR 11.6 billion annually while two-way trade between the EU and Canada (as measured by exports of goods and services) could potentially expand by EUR 25.7 billion or by over 22.9%.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/canada/.
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2008/october/tradoc_141032.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006315/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: European Public Prosecutor's Office

The Commission's 2013 Work Programme provides for the establishment of a European Public Prosecutor's Office, which would aim to protect the financial interests of the Union.

Bearing this in mind, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

Can it please provide an update as to what progress has been made — and what action has been taken — toward establishing a European Public Prosecutor's Office?

What assurances can the Commission provide that the aim of establishing a European Public Prosecutor's Office will not impinge on the right of Member States to retain sovereignty over their own judicial affairs?

Does the Commission have at its disposal any relevant information as to where a potential European Public Prosecutor's Office would be based or how much per annum it would cost to administer?

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

The Commission wishes to inform the Honourable Member that the proposal for the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) has been adopted on 17 July 2013 ([1]). Under the EU Treaties, Denmark will not participate in the EPPO. The UK and IE will not participate either unless they voluntarily and explicitly decide to do so (opt-in).

The mandate of the EPPO is focused on the protection of the financial interests of the Union, as foreseen by the Treaty (Article 86). The decentralised model proposed by the Commission respects the national justice systems as the EPPO builds on national prosecution and investigation services. The investigations and prosecutions are carried out mainly in accordance with national law. The investigations and prosecutions will be conducted by a European Delegated Prosecutor from the Member State where the investigation measures need to be carried out. Moreover, the charges will be brought before the national courts. This structure will therefore be highly respectful of the national justice systems and traditions.

According to the proposal, the EPPO will not generate substantial new costs for the Union or the Member States. Its administration services will be handled by Eurojust and its human resources will come from existing entities such as OLAF. Further details on the costs are included in the Legislative Financial Statement which accompanies the proposal.

The seat of European judicial authorities was discussed by the Representatives of the Member States, meeting at Head of State or Government level in Brussels on 13 December 2003.

([1]) COM(2013) 534 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006316/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: EU support for Holocaust survivors

It has emerged in the last few days that Germany has agreed to pay an additional EUR 800 million to facilitate care support for elderly Jewish survivors of the Nazi Holocaust in the final years of their lives. It is estimated that almost 60 000 people across the world will be able to benefit from this financial assistance.

Bearing this in mind, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

What provision, if any, exists at EU level to provide elderly survivors of the Nazi Holocaust with effective support and assistance in the final years of their lives?

What efforts are being made by the Commission to ensure that the experiences and testimonies of Jewish survivors of the Nazi Holocaust are used as a means to portray the impact of intolerance to future EU generations?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The EU does not provide survivors of the Nazi Holocaust with direct financial support and assistance. However, the Commission supports stakeholders' activities aimed at fighting against anti-Semitism, including commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust. Both private and public organisations and institutions can receive financial support for instance through the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme.

The Commission underlines the importance of preserving the memory of the past crimes, in particular of the Holocaust and of the crimes committed during World War II, and urges Member States to take the necessary measures to ensure their remembrance. The Commission contributes to these goals by the Europe for Citizens programme which funded around 300 Remembrance projects in the period from 2007 to 2013. The Europe for Citizens will continue in the next financial period from 2014 to 2020 with a budget dedicated to Remembrance increased from current 4% to 20%.

Keeping the memory alive and fostering awareness of the past crimes are seen as essential tools to promote a culture of fundamental rights, especially among younger and future generations.

The Fundamental Rights Agency also collects data on issues of racism and xenophobia. The results of its survey of Jewish people's experiences and perceptions of anti-Semitism are expected to be published in November 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006317/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Clostridium difficile in the EU

According to data compiled by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), 840 people have died in my constituency, Northern Ireland, since 2002 as a result of *Clostridium difficile*, a bacterial infection that can affect people who have undergone a recent course of antibiotics in hospital.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

How many confirmed cases of *Clostridium difficile* have been recorded in the EU in the past three years, and can the Commission provide a breakdown by Member State of these cases?

Can the Commission kindly detail how many deaths in the EU in the past three years have been attributed to *Clostridium difficile*?

Given that *Clostridium difficile* is proven to be most prevalent among people over the age of 65, what steps have been taken at EU level to encourage robust preventive measures within the Member States' health systems?

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

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) estimates the total number of Clostridium difficile infections in the European Union per year at around 124 000 cases. C. difficile represented 3.6% of all healthcare associated infections with an average incidence of 1.4 cases per 1 000 discharges. Figure 1 in the annex shows the percentage of C. difficile infections per country, as a ratio of the total number of healthcare associated infections.

The number of deaths attributable to C. difficile infections in the Union is not reported.

The Council recommendation of 9 June 2009 on patient safety ([1]), supports the development of national policies and programmes on patient safety, including healthcare associated infections caused by C. difficile, and action to empower citizens by involving patient organisations in sharing information on patient safety standards and preventive measures.

The recommendation further promotes education and training of healthcare workers and invites stakeholders to share knowledge, experience and best practice. The Commission regularly assesses the state of implementation of the recommendation and reports to the Council ([2]). Member States can benefit from experience of other Member States, for instance through the network of national focal points for healthcare associated infections set up under the auspices of ECDC, which has developed guidance for the prevention of C. difficile infections.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/patient_safety/docs/council_2009_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/patient_safety/docs/council_2009_report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006318/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Assistance for EU homes affected by flooding

In the past week, at least four people have died as a result of landslides caused by severe rain in parts of central Europe, including Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic. Thousands of homes have been evacuated and in some areas rail services and electricity supply have been suspended as a precaution. In my constituency, Northern Ireland, recent years have seen localised flooding in parts of Belfast.

In this context, could the Commission please respond to the following queries:

What, if any, provisions exist at an EU level to give emergency support to EU citizens who have been negatively affected by severe flooding in Member States?

What preventive measures are in place at an EU level to ensure that EU citizens and their homes are adequately protected from the negative effects of potential flooding in Member States?

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

The EU Solidarity Fund upon application by a Member State may provide financial assistance for emergency measures such as for restoration of essential infrastructure, temporary accommodation, assistance of the population, protection of the cultural heritage and cleaning-up-operations. Private damage, such as damage of home-owners, damage to businesses and in agriculture, may not be compensated. Member States can also rely on support by the Commission's Emergency Response Centre (ERC) which closely monitors crises around the world, provides early warning information and acts as an information hub. When the scale of the emergency overwhelms national response capabilities, a disaster-stricken country can benefit from civil protection means or teams by initiating the Civil Protection Mechanism via the ERC.

As regards prevention measures, Member States can draw on the cohesion policy funding for risk prevention measures in the framework of the 2007-2013 period, including for programmes and projects dealing with flood prevention. In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, Member States are responsible to select and implement the relevant projects according to the priorities set in the relevant programmes.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-006319/13
alla Commissione
Salvatore Caronna (S&D)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Anno europeo contro lo spreco alimentare

— Considerata la grande attenzione che negli ultimi anni è stata riservata dall'opinione pubblica al tema dello spreco alimentare e, contestualmente, alla risoluzione approvata dal Parlamento europeo lo scorso 19 gennaio 2012 (2011/2175(INI)) sul medesimo argomento,

— considerata la strategia europea 2020 della Commissione, in particolare gli obiettivi della riduzione dei gas serra e della lotta alla povertà,

— considerato il problema dello spreco alimentare che, in questi tempi di crisi, sta assumendo un valore particolare in fasce sempre più ampie di popolazione,

— considerate le numerose iniziative da parte di associazioni, centri di ricerca, enti pubblici che stanno crescendo in tutti gli Stati Membri e ottenendo un notevole successo e attenzione,

— considerando che una campagna di sensibilizzazione a livello europeo darebbe una visione più omogenea e unitaria del problema e sarebbe in grado di sostenere e rafforzare tutte le iniziative sul tema che già sono avviate con successo,

— considerando che dichiarare il 2014 Anno europeo contro lo spreco alimentare, come proposto dal Parlamento, sarebbe un forte sostegno nei confronti delle suddette iniziative e permetterebbe una più forte presa di coscienza del problema da parte dell'opinione pubblica,

può la Commissione far sapere quale sia lo stato di implementazione delle misure proposte nella risoluzione approvata dal Parlamento europeo lo scorso 19 gennaio 2012 (2011/2175(INI)), in particolare, riguardo alla decisione di dichiarare il 2014 Anno europeo contro lo spreco alimentare?

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

La Commissione sta preparando una comunicazione su «L'alimentazione sostenibile» prevista per la fine del 2013 in cui si darà grande rilevanza al problema degli sprechi alimentari. Fra breve verrà avviata una consultazione pubblica.

Sull'opportunità di dichiarare il 2014 «Anno europeo contro gli sprechi alimentari» si adotterà una decisione tra breve.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006319/13
to the Commission
Salvatore Caronna (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: European Year against Food Waste

The problem of food wastage has attracted considerable public attention in recent years, as did the resolution Parliament adopted on the subject on 19 January 2012 (2011/2175(INI)).

Attention should also be drawn to: the Commission's Europe 2020 strategy, and in particularly its objectives as regards reducing greenhouse gases and combating poverty; the problem of food waste, which, at this critical time, is assuming increasing significance for increasingly broad swathes of public opinion, and the many initiatives launched by associations, research organisations and public bodies, which are expanding in all the Member States, achieving great success and attracting considerable attention. An awareness-raising campaign at European level would put this issue into sharper focus by presenting it in a more unified way, and could support and reinforce all the initiatives which have already been successfully set in motion.

Declaring 2014 the European Year against Food Waste, as proposed by Parliament, would give strong support to the abovementioned initiatives and raise public awareness of the issue.

In the light of all these considerations, could the Commission explain the current state of play as regards implementing the proposals contained in the resolution approved by Parliament on 19 January 2012 (2011/2175(INI) and, in particular, the decision to declare 2014 the European Year against Food Waste?

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

The Commission is currently preparing a communication on 'Sustainable Food' foreseen for end 2013 where food waste will be a key issue. A public consultation will be launched soon.

On the decision to declare 2014 the European Year against Food Waste a decision will be taken shortly.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006321/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, Ley de Desindexación

El pasado 29 de mayo el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un paso adelante en la política de austeridad que no podrá sino agudizar aún más la caída de los niveles de bienestar de la población española.

Dentro de estas recomendaciones específicas de la Unión Europea se produce un ataque directo contra el bienestar de los pensionistas españoles. El texto contiene la recomendación de desarrollar una «Ley de Desindexación» que pretende desvincular partidas de gasto público para reducir el impacto de la inflación sobre las arcas públicas. Esta recomendación supone un nuevo paso para destruir tanto el nivel de bienestar de los españoles, como las posibles opciones de recuperación. En la actualidad, las pensiones muchas de ellas míseras, son los ingresos fundamentales que permiten que muchos de los más de seis millones de parados del país puedan subsistir.

El gasto de España en sus pensiones supone un 10,1 % del PIB, considerablemente por debajo de la media europea, que se sitúa en el 11,3 %, lo que significa que se pretende reducir la calidad de vida de los pensionistas pese a estar ya por debajo de la media europea. La sostenibilidad de la deuda pública española, más allá de plantear lógicas dudas sobre su legitimidad, se encuentra mucho más en riesgo debido a la caída de los ingresos públicos asignados a esta partida de gasto. Las pensiones son una de las principales fuentes de ingresos que alimentan el consumo del país y por tanto uno de los mayores contribuyentes, tanto a través de la imposición directa como de la imposición indirecta. Atacar las pensiones no solo supone reducir la calidad de vida de los pensionistas y de sus respectivas familias, por lo que es necesario conocer las estimaciones y la información existente sobre cómo esta «Ley de Desindexación» afectará a España.

¿Cuál es el impacto que el Consejo estima que la desindexación de las pensiones podría tener sobre el consumo y, como consecuencia, sobre los ingresos públicos?

¿Está al tanto del número de familias completas que disponen como únicos ingresos de las pensiones de sus miembros mayores?

¿Qué efectos ha estimado que la erosión de ingresos a través de la desindexación tendrá para la capacidad de adquisición de alimentos, el pago de la vivienda, el pago de servicios sanitarios, etc.?

¿Qué efectos calcula que tendrá esta ley sobre el número de familias en riesgo de pobreza?

Respuesta
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

Como no ignora Su Señoría, la Comisión presentó sus recomendaciones de recomendaciones específicas por país (REP) del Consejo el 29 de mayo de 2013.

El Consejo adoptó las REP el 9 de julio de 2013 ([1]).

Conforme al principio «cumplir o dar explicaciones» introducido en 2011 en la reforma de la vigilancia de las políticas del primer paquete de gobernanza económica (en particular el Reglamento (UE) n° 1175/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 16 de noviembre de 2011, por el que se modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 1466/97 del Consejo, relativo al reforzamiento de la supervisión de las situaciones presupuestarias y a la supervisión y coordinación de las políticas económicas), el Consejo presentó explicaciones sobre los casos en los que sus REP no corresponden a las propuestas por la Comisión ([2]).

En lo relativo a las cuestiones concretas a que se refiere Su Señoría, las recomendaciones del Consejo a España corresponden con las propuestas por la Comisión.

([1]) Véase 11505/1/13.
([2]) Véase 11336/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006321/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain, de-indexation law

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's national reform programme for 2013. These recommendations are another phase in the austerity policy, which will only serve to aggravate further the deterioration in the well-being of the Spanish people.

These specific recommendations from the European Union include a direct attack on the welfare of Spanish pensioners. The text contains a recommendation to develop a 'de-indexation law' designed to dissociate some items of public spending in order to reduce the impact of inflation on public funds. This recommendation is a new step towards annihilating the well-being of Spaniards and any possible options for recovery. Currently, pensions, many of them measly, are the main income that enables many of the country's six million unemployed to survive.

Spain's spending on pensions totals 10.1% of GDP, which is considerably lower than the European average of 11.3%. This would mean reducing pensioners' quality of life despite the fact that it is already below the European average. The sustainability of Spain's public debt, over and above consistent doubts about its legitimacy, is much more at risk from the fall in public income from this type of spending. Pensions are one of the country's main source of income that fuels consumption and, thus, some of its largest contributors in terms of both direct and indirect taxation. Attacking pensions not only reduces pensioners' quality of life but also that of their families, so it is important to be aware of the projections and the existing information about how this 'de-indexation law' will affect Spain.

In the Council's view, what impact could the de-indexation of pensions have on consumption and, consequently, on government revenue?

Does it have up-to-date figures for the number of entire families whose only source of income is the pensions of their older members?

In its view, what effects will the reduction of income brought about by de-indexation have on the capacity to buy food, pay for housing, pay for healthcare, etc.?

In its view, what effects will this law have on the number of families on the poverty line?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

As the Honourable Member is aware, the Commission put forward its recommendations for the Council's country-specific recommendations (CSRs) on 29 May 2013.

The Council adopted the CSRs on 9 July 2013 ([1]).

In accordance with the 'comply or explain' principle introduced in 2011 in the 'six-pack' reform of policy monitoring (in particular Regulation (EU) No 1175/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1466/97 on the strengthening of the surveillance of budgetary positions and the surveillance and coordination of economic policies), the Council has issued explanations in cases where its CSRs did not comply with those proposed by the Commission ([2]).

As regards the specific issues raised by the Honourable Member, the Council's recommendations to Spain complied with those proposed by the Commission.

([1]) See 11505/1/13.
([2]) See 11336/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006322/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, Ley de Desindexación

El pasado 29 de mayo, el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un paso adelante en la política de austeridad que solo podrá profundizar aún más la caída de los niveles de bienestar de la población española.

Dentro de estas recomendaciones específicas de la Unión Europea se produce un ataque directo contra el bienestar de los pensionistas españoles. El texto contiene la recomendación de desarrollar una «Ley de Desindexación» que pretende desvincular partidas de gasto público para reducir el impacto de la inflación sobre las arcas públicas. Esta recomendación supone un nuevo paso para destruir tanto el nivel de bienestar de los españoles, como las posibles opciones de recuperación. Las pensiones en la actualidad, muchas de ellas míseras, son los ingresos fundamentales que permiten que muchos de los más de seis millones de parados del país puedan subsistir.

El gasto de España en sus pensiones supone un 10,1 % del PIB, considerablemente por debajo de la media europea que se sitúa en el 11,3 %, lo que significa que se pretende hacer descender la calidad de vida de los pensionistas pese a estar ya por debajo de la media europea. La sostenibilidad de la deuda pública española, más allá de plantear las consistentes dudas sobre su legitimidad, se encuentra mucho más en riesgo debido a la caída de los ingresos públicos a esta partida de gasto. Las pensiones son una de las principales fuentes de consumo del país y, por tanto, uno de los mayores contribuyentes, tanto a través de la imposición directa como la imposición indirecta. Atacar las pensiones no solo supone reducir la calidad de vida de éstos y de sus respectivas familias, por lo tanto es necesario conocer las estimaciones y la información existente sobre cómo esta «Ley de Desindexación» afectará a España.

¿Cuál es el impacto que la Comisión estima que la desindexación de las pensiones podría tener sobre el consumo y como consecuencia sobre los ingresos públicos?

¿Está al tanto del número de familias completas que disponen como únicos ingresos las pensiones de los miembros mayores?

¿Qué efectos ha estimado que la erosión de ingresos a través de la desindexación tendrá para la capacidad de adquisición de alimentos, el pago de la vivienda, pago de servicios sanitarios, etc.?

¿Qué efectos calcula que tendrá esta ley sobre el número de familias en riesgo de pobreza?

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

Garantizar la sostenibilidad a largo plazo del sistema de pensiones es fundamental para preservar las pensiones futuras y la equidad intergeneracional. El régimen de seguridad social en España es deficitario desde 2011 y se prevé que el gasto público en pensiones en España aumente del 10,1 % del PIB en 2010 al 13,7 % en 2060, cifra superior a la media de la UE, que será del 12,7 % en 2060 ([1]). Por esta razón, la Comisión recomendó el 29 de mayo que se finalizara para finales de 2013 la regulación del factor de sostenibilidad. Se supone que el factor de sostenibilidad garantiza la estabilidad financiera a largo plazo del sistema de pensiones, al contemplar, entre otras cosas, que la edad de jubilación se aplace en consonancia con el aumento de la esperanza de vida. Vincular la edad de jubilación a la evolución de la esperanza de vida tendría un efecto positivo en la idoneidad y la sostenibilidad de las pensiones. En cuanto a la desindiciación, es un hecho ampliamente reconocido que una indiciación generalizada de los precios y los salarios ha contribuido a la pérdida de competitividad, lo que constituye un factor que dificulta el crecimiento y el empleo. La propuesta de legislación sobre la desindiciación es una iniciativa loable para cambiar esta práctica.

([1]) Véase el informe de 2012 sobre la sostenibilidad de las finanzas públicas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006322/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain, de-indexation law

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's national reform programme for 2013. These recommendations are another phase in the austerity policy, which will only serve to aggravate further the deterioration in the well-being of the Spanish people.

These specific recommendations from the European Union include a direct attack on the welfare of Spanish pensioners. The text contains a recommendation to develop a 'de-indexation law' designed to dissociate some items of public spending in order to reduce the impact of inflation on public funds. This recommendation is a new step towards annihilating the well-being of Spaniards and any possible options for recovery. Currently, pensions, many of them measly, are the main income that enables many of the country's six million unemployed to survive.

Spain's spending on pensions totals 10.1% of GDP, which is considerably lower than the European average of 11.3%. This would mean reducing pensioners' quality of life despite the fact that it is already below the European average. The sustainability of Spain's public debt, over and above the constant doubts about its legitimacy, is much more at risk from the fall in public income from this type of spending. Pensioners are some of the country's main consumers and, thus, some of its largest contributors in terms of both direct and indirect taxation. Attacking pensions not only reduces pensioners' quality of life but also that of their families, so it is important to be aware of the projections and the existing information about how this 'de-indexation law' will affect Spain.

In the Commission's view, what impact could the de-indexation of pensions have on consumption and, consequently, on government revenue?

Does it have up-to-date figures for the number of entire families whose only source of income is the pensions of their older members?

In its view, what effects will the reduction of income brought about by de-indexation have on the capacity to buy food, pay for housing, pay for healthcare, etc.?

In its view, what effects will this law have on the number of families on the poverty line?

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

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the pension system is key to preserve future pensions and inter-generational fairness. The social security system in Spain has been in deficit since 2011and public pension expenditure in Spain are projected to increase from 10.1% of GDP in 2010 to 13.7% in 2060, higher than the EU average of 12.7% in 2060 ([1]). For this reason, the Commission has recommended on 29 May to finalise by end-2013 the regulation of the sustainability factor. The sustainability factor is supposed to ensure the long-term financial stability of the pension system, including by providing that the retirement age will rise in line with gains in life expectancy. Linking the retirement age to changes in life expectancy would have a positive impact on both adequacy and sustainability of pensions. Regarding de-indexation, it is widely recognised that widespread indexation of prices and wages has contributed to the loss of competitiveness that is a factor hampering growth and employment. The planned proposal for a de-indexation law is a welcome initiative to change this practice.

([1]) See Fiscal Sustainability Report 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006323/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, sanidad pública

El pasado 29 de mayo, el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un paso adelante en la política de austeridad que solo podrá profundizar aún más la caída de los niveles de bienestar de la población española.

Dentro de estas recomendaciones específicas de la Unión Europea se recomienda realizar un ajuste en la Sanidad española al suponer una de las partidas de gasto más importantes. La reducción del gasto en este sector está siendo drástica y con un impacto terrible sobre la vida de los residentes en España, por ejemplo, se han producido casos donde hospitales españoles no han aceptado la tarjeta sanitaria europea y han dejado morir a un inmigrante ilegal llamado Alpha Pam, debido precisamente a las medidas de ajuste propuestas por Bruselas. Las recomendaciones sostienen que se debe «aumentar la relación coste-eficacia del sector sanitario, manteniendo al mismo tiempo la accesibilidad de grupos vulnerables», recomendación claramente contradictoria según muestran hechos como los mencionados.

La reducción del gasto en este sector supone la privatización, operación que está profundizando la corrupción en algunas Comunidades Autónomas, donde los propios políticos relacionados con la sanidad trabajan para las empresas que luego resultan subcontratadas. Los servicios sanitarios privatizados en España han conducido a un incremento del gasto, dejando en evidencia que la gestión pública es más eficiente para garantizar este derecho. El gasto de España en sanidad alcanza un 9,4 % del PIB, significativamente por debajo del gasto de otros países de la Unión y que sin embargo es capaz de garantizar un sistema de salud pública muy bien valorado en los rankings internacionales. La sanidad pública está recogida en la Constitución Española como un derecho fundamental y estas recomendaciones terminan siendo una agresión a este derecho.

¿Cómo considera el Consejo que España podrá garantizar el acceso de los grupos vulnerables al derecho a la salud a sabiendas de la muerte del inmigrante ilegal, Alpha Pam, causada por los recortes en sanidad?

¿Cómo está estimando el golpe que la reducción del gasto tendrá en la calidad de los servicios sanitarios?

¿Considera que la privatización de servicios sanitarios puede suponer un incremento del gasto y un descenso en la calidad?

¿Considera que existe riesgo de subcontrataciones que no obedezcan a necesidades racionales debido a casos de corrupción como la puerta giratoria?

Respuesta
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

El 29 de mayo de 2013, la Comisión presentó al Consejo una Recomendación de Recomendación del Consejo relativa al Programa Nacional de Reformas (PNR) de 2013 de España y por la que se emite un dictamen del Consejo sobre el Programa de Estabilidad de España para 2012-2016 ([1]).

El Consejo Europeo refrendó las recomendaciones específicas para cada país (REP) a los Estados Miembros en su reunión de 27 y 28 junio de 2013, concluyendo así el semestre europeo ([2]). Estas recomendaciones fueron aprobadas por el Consejo el 9 de julio.

La recomendación sobre la necesidad de mejorar más la rentabilidad del sector de la sanidad, a que se refiere Su Señoría, se basó en las conclusiones del programa nacional de reformas de 2013 de España, aprobado por el Gobierno español y presentado el 30 de abril de 2013.

La ejecución de las REP es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros. Por otra parte, según el artículo 168 del TFUE, los Estados miembros son responsables de la definición de su política de salud y de la organización y prestación de servicios sanitarios y asistencia médica.

En la medida en que se ven afectadas las cuestiones concretas planteadas por Su Señoría, éstas son competencia nacional y no han sido debatidas por el Consejo.

([1]) 10025/13.
([2]) Conclusiones del Consejo Europeo, EUCO 104/2/13, p. 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006323/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain regarding public health

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's 2013 national reform programme.

These recommendations represent a further entrenchment of the austerity policy, which can do nothing but further depress the declining standard of living of Spain's population.

Among its specific recommendations, the European Union recommends that Spain adjust its spending on healthcare, since this is one of the most significant areas of spending. Healthcare spending is already being reduced drastically, with a terrible impact on the lives of Spain's residents. For example, in some cases, Spanish hospitals have not accepted the European Health Insurance card, and an illegal immigrant named Alpha Pam was allowed to die because of the very adjustment measures proposed by Brussels. The recommendations state that 'the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare sector' should be increased 'while maintaining accessibility for vulnerable groups'. This recommendation is obviously contradictory, as incidents of this kind make clear.

Reducing spending in the healthcare sector entails privatisation, and this shift is worsening corruption in some Autonomous Communities where the same politicians who are involved in healthcare work for the companies that end up being subcontracted. Privatised healthcare services in Spain have led to an increase in spending, proving that public management is a more effective means of ensuring the right to healthcare. Spain's spending on healthcare totals 9.4% of GDP, which is significantly below the spending of other EU countries, but which nevertheless is sufficient to ensure a public healthcare system that scores very well on international rankings. Public healthcare is included in the Spanish Constitution as a fundamental right, and these recommendations in effect are an attack on this right.

How does the Council envisage that Spain will be able to ensure access by vulnerable groups to the right to health, in view of the death of the illegal immigrant Alpha Pam, which was caused by cuts to healthcare?

How is it estimating the impact that the spending reduction will have on the quality of healthcare services?

Does it take the view that the privatisation of healthcare services may lead to an increase in spending and a decline in quality?

Does it see a risk that subcontracting may not be based on rational needs because of instances of corruption, such as the revolving door?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

On 29 May 2013, the Commission submitted to the Council a recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Spain's 2013 National Reform Programme (NRP) and delivering a Council opinion on Spain's stability programme for 2012-2016 ([1]).

The European Council endorsed the country-specific recommendations (CSRs) to the Member States at its meeting of 27-28 June 2013, thus concluding the European Semester ([2]). These recommendations were adopted by the Council on 9 July.

The recommendation on the need to further improve the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare sector, referred to by the Honourable Member, was based on the findings of Spain's 2013 NRP, as adopted by the Spanish Government and submitted on 30 April 2013.

The implementation of CSRs is the responsibility of Member States. Furthermore, according to Article 168 of the TFEU, Member States are responsible for the definition of their health policy and for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care.

([1]) 10025/13.
([2]) European Council Conclusions, EUCO 104/2/13, p. 4.

As far as the specific questions raised by the Honourable Member, are concerned, these issues fall within national competence and have not been discussed by the Council.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006324/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, sanidad pública

El pasado 29 de mayo, el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un paso adelante en la política de austeridad que solo podrá agravar aún más la caída de los niveles de bienestar de la población española.

Dentro de estas recomendaciones específicas de la Unión Europea está la de realizar un ajuste en la Sanidad española, que supone una de las partidas de gasto más importantes. La reducción del gasto en este sector está siendo drástica y tiene un impacto terrible sobre la vida de los residentes en España; por ejemplo, ha habido casos en los que hospitales españoles no han aceptado la tarjeta sanitaria europea y han dejado morir a un inmigrante ilegal llamado Alpha Pam, debido precisamente a las medidas de ajuste propuestas por Bruselas. Las recomendaciones sostienen que se debe «aumentar la relación coste-eficacia del sector sanitario, manteniendo al mismo tiempo la accesibilidad por parte de grupos vulnerables», recomendación claramente contradictoria según muestran hechos como los mencionados.

La reducción del gasto en este sector supone la privatización, operación que está profundizando la corrupción en algunas Comunidades Autónomas en las que los propios políticos relacionados con la sanidad trabajan para las empresas que luego resultan subcontratadas. Los servicios sanitarios privatizados en España han conducido a un incremento del gasto, dejando en evidencia que la gestión pública es más eficiente para garantizar este derecho. El gasto de España en sanidad alcanza un 9,4 % del PIB, de manera que es significativamente inferior al gasto de otros países de la Unión y sin embargo es capaz de garantizar un sistema de salud pública muy bien valorado en los ránkings internacionales. La sanidad pública está recogida en la Constitución Española como un derecho fundamental y estas recomendaciones terminan siendo una agresión a este derecho.

¿Cómo considera la Comisión que España podrá garantizar el acceso de los grupos vulnerables al derecho a la salud en vista de la muerte del inmigrante ilegal Alpha Pam causada por los recortes en sanidad?

¿Cómo se evalúa el daño que la reducción del gasto causará en la calidad de los servicios sanitarios?

¿Considera que la privatización de servicios sanitarios puede suponer un incremento del gasto y un descenso de la calidad?

¿Considera que existe riesgo de subcontrataciones que no obedezcan a necesidades racionales debido a casos de corrupción como la puerta giratoria?

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

Las recomendaciones específicas por país adoptadas por la Comisión el 29 de mayo de 2013 siguen las recomendaciones del Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento de 2013, en el que se afirmaba que, también en el contexto de los desafíos demográficos y de la presión sobre los gastos derivados del envejecimiento de la población, debían emprenderse reformas de los sistemas de asistencia sanitaria para garantizar su rentabilidad y sostenibilidad, evaluando el rendimiento de dichos sistemas con respecto al doble objetivo de hacer un uso más eficiente de los recursos públicos y garantizar el acceso a una asistencia sanitaria de alta calidad.

En España, el gasto público en asistencia sanitaria disminuyó del 7,1 % del PIB en 2010 al 6,7 % en 2011. Sin embargo, sigue habiendo problemas de sostenibilidad. Según las previsiones a largo plazo más recientes, el gasto público en asistencia sanitaria se incrementará en 1,3 puntos porcentuales del PIB para 2060, influido por el envejecimiento de la población. Esto hace que sea aún más necesario evaluar el rendimiento de los sistemas sanitarios y realizar reformas para lograr un uso más eficiente del dinero público, apoyando la sostenibilidad y estableciendo una base fuerte que permita seguir ofreciendo una asistencia sanitaria de alta calidad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006324/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain regarding public health

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's 2013 national reform programme. These recommendations represent a further entrenchment of the austerity policy, which can do nothing but worsen the declining standard of living of Spain's population.

Among its specific recommendations, the European Union recommends that Spain adjust its spending on healthcare, which is one of the most significant areas of spending. Healthcare spending is already being reduced drastically, and this is having a terrible impact on the lives of Spain's residents. For example, there have been cases in which Spanish hospitals have not accepted the European Health Insurance card, and they allowed an illegal immigrant named Alpha Pam to die because of the very adjustment measures proposed by Brussels. The recommendations state that 'the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare sector' should be increased 'while maintaining accessibility for vulnerable groups'. This recommendation is obviously contradictory, as incidents of this kind make clear.

Reducing spending in the healthcare sector entails privatisation, and this shift is worsening corruption in some Autonomous Communities where the same politicians who are involved in healthcare work for the companies that end up being subcontracted. Privatised healthcare services in Spain have led to an increase in spending, proving that public management is a more effective means of ensuring the right to healthcare. Spain's spending on healthcare totals 9.4% of GDP. This is significantly below the spending of other EU countries; nevertheless, it is sufficient to ensure a public healthcare system that scores very well on international rankings. Public healthcare is included in the Spanish Constitution as a fundamental right, and these recommendations in effect are an attack on this right.

How does the Commission envisage that Spain will be able to ensure access by vulnerable groups to the right to health, in view of the death of the illegal immigrant Alpha Pam, which was caused by cuts to healthcare?

How is it assessing the damage that the spending reduction will have on the quality of healthcare services?

Does it take the view that the privatisation of healthcare services may lead to an increase in spending and a decline in quality?

Does it see a risk that subcontracting may not be based on rational needs because of instances of corruption, such as the revolving door?

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

The country-specific recommendations adopted by the Commission on 29 May 2013 follow the recommendations in the 2013 Annual Growth Survey, which stated that, also in the context of the demographic challenges and the pressure on age-related expenditure, reforms of healthcare systems should be undertaken to ensure cost-effectiveness and sustainability, assessing the performance of these systems against the twin aim of a more efficient use of public resources and access to high quality healthcare.

In Spain, public healthcare expenditure decreased from 7.1% of GDP in 2010 to 6.7% in 2011. However, sustainability challenges remain. According to the latest long-term projections, public healthcare spending will increase by 1.3 percentage points of GDP by 2060, influenced by population ageing. This enhances the need to assess the performance of health systems and implement reforms to achieve a more efficient use of public money, underpinning sustainability and setting a strong basis for the continued provision of high quality healthcare.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006325/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, Política tributaria

El pasado 29 de mayo el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un paso adelante en la política de austeridad que no podrá sino agudizar aún más la caída de los niveles de bienestar de la población española.

Dentro de estas recomendaciones se establece una serie de indicaciones para «llevar a cabo una revisión sistemática del sistema tributario para marzo de 2014». Las recomendaciones en este ámbito afirman que se debe «considerar una mayor limitación del gasto fiscal relativo a la imposición directa». Esta frase supone que España debe relajar las partidas de gasto que aseguran el cumplimiento de las obligaciones tributarias en la imposición directa. Cada euro invertido en el sistema tributario multiplica los ingresos, debido al incremento de la capacidad de control, pero las recomendaciones presentadas sostienen esta limitación como un objetivo, mostrando cómo no se pretende mejorar el déficit, sino simplemente desmantelar el Estado a través de la agresiva reducción del gasto.

El único proyecto que pretende mejorar los ingresos del Estado es un nuevo incremento de la recaudación del IVA y los impuestos indirectos como aquellos sobre los carburantes. Esta medida no tiene justificación alguna, puesto que con la caída en picado del consumo un incremento de este impuesto potenciará la caída reduciendo aún más los ingresos tanto indirectos como directos. Teniendo en cuenta que el consumo de carburante está cayendo considerablemente, tampoco existe motivación racional alguna y supone un fuerte impacto a autónomos y PYME. Estas recomendaciones de política tributaria son plenamente contraproducentes en una recesión de las características que sufre el continente: se pretende restringir el gasto de la manera más agresiva, mientras que resulta necesario un incremento de la presión fiscal directa progresiva en lugar de la indirecta que es la que más afecta al consumo.

¿Qué efectos estima que tendrá una limitación del gasto fiscal relativo a la imposición directa?

¿Cómo compaginar dicha limitación con la lucha contra el fraude y la economía sumergida?

¿Cuáles son los motivos para no recomendar incrementar la presión fiscal directa progresiva, en un país con tan baja presión fiscal como España?

¿Qué efectos estima que una subida de los impuestos sobre los carburantes tendrá sobre los márgenes de autónomos y pequeñas empresas?

¿En qué medida estima que caerá el consumo con este incremento de la recaudación a través del IVA?

Respuesta
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

Como no ignora Su Señoría, la Comisión presentó sus recomendaciones de recomendaciones específicas por país (REP) del Consejo el 29 de mayo de 2013.

El Consejo adoptó las REP el 9 de julio de 2013 ([1]).

Conforme al principio «cumplir o dar explicaciones» introducido en 2011 en la reforma de la vigilancia de las políticas del primer paquete de gobernanza económica (en particular el Reglamento (UE) n° 1175/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 16 de noviembre de 2011, por el que se modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 1466/97 del Consejo, relativo al reforzamiento de la supervisión de las situaciones presupuestarias y a la supervisión y coordinación de las políticas económicas ([2])), el Consejo presentó explicaciones sobre los casos en los que sus REP no corresponden a las propuestas por la Comisión ([3]).

En lo relativo a las cuestiones concretas a que se refiere Su Señoría, las recomendaciones del Consejo a España corresponden con las propuestas por la Comisión.

([1]) Véase el documento 11505/1/13.
([2]) DO L 306 de 23.11.2011, p. 12.
([3]) Véase el documento 11336/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006325/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain regarding tax policy

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's 2013 national reform programme. These recommendations represent a further entrenchment of the austerity policy, which can do nothing but worsen the declining standard of living of Spain's population.

The recommendations include a series of suggestions related to conducting 'a systematic review of the tax system by March 2014'. The recommendations in this area state that Spain should 'consider further limiting tax expenditure in direct taxation'. This suggestion means that Spain should reduce spending that is intended to ensure compliance with direct taxation obligations. Every euro invested in the tax system multiplies revenue by increasing oversight capability, but the Commission's proposed recommendations uphold this limit as a goal, making clear that the aim is not to reduce the deficit, but rather to dismantle the State through aggressive cuts in spending.

The only recommendation aimed at increasing State revenue is an increase in the collection of VAT and indirect taxes, such as taxes on motor fuels. Such a measure is completely unjustified, since motor fuel consumption is plummeting and an increase in this tax would further the decline, reducing still more both indirect and direct tax revenue. Considering that motor fuel consumption is dropping significantly, there is no rational reason for such an increase, which would have a large impact on self-employed workers and SMEs. These recommendations on tax policy are completely counterproductive during a recession like the one that Europe is suffering: they attempt to restrict spending in the most aggressive manner, when what is needed is an increase in the progressive direct tax burden, rather than the indirect tax burden, which affects consumption more.

What effects does the Council believe that a limit on tax expenditure would have on direct taxation?

How can such a limit be reconciled with the fight against fraud and the underground economy?

What are the reasons for not recommending an increase in the progressive direct tax burden in a country like Spain where the tax burden is so small?

What effects does it believe that an increase in motor fuel taxes will have on the margins of self-employed workers and small businesses?

To what extent does it believe that consumption will drop with this increase in VAT collection?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

As the Honourable Member is aware, the Commission put forward its recommendations for the Council's country-specific recommendations (CSRs) on 29 May 2013.

The Council adopted the CSRs on 9 July 2013 ([1]).

In accordance with the 'comply or explain' principle introduced in 2011 in the 'six-pack' reform of policy monitoring (in particular Regulation (EU) No 1175/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1466/97 on the strengthening of the surveillance of budgetary positions and the surveillance and coordination of economic policies ([2])), the Council has issued explanations in cases where its CSRs did not comply with those proposed by the Commission ([3]).

As regards the specific issues raised by the Honourable Member, the Council's recommendations to Spain complied with those proposed by the Commission.

([1]) See 11505/1/13.
([2]) OJ L 306, 23.11.2011, p. 12.
([3]) See 11336/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006326/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, Política tributaria

El pasado 29 de mayo el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un paso adelante en la política de austeridad, que solo podrá profundizar aún más la caída de los niveles de bienestar de la población española.

Dentro de estas recomendaciones se establecen una serie de indicaciones para «llevar a cabo una revisión sistemática del sistema tributario para marzo de 2014». Las recomendaciones en este ámbito afirman que se debe «considerar una mayor limitación del gasto fiscal relativo a la imposición directa». Esta frase supone que España debe relajar las partidas de gasto que aseguran el cumplimiento de las obligaciones tributarias en la imposición directa. Cada euro invertido en el sistema tributario multiplica los ingresos, debido al incremento de la capacidad de control. Sin embargo, las recomendaciones presentadas sostienen esta limitación como un objetivo, mostrando cómo no se pretende mejorar el déficit sino, simplemente, desmantelar el Estado a través de la agresiva reducción del gasto.

El único proyecto que pretende mejorar los ingresos del Estado es un nuevo incremento de la recaudación del IVA y los impuestos indirectos como aquellos sobre los carburantes. Esta medida no tiene justificación alguna, puesto que con la caída en picado del consumo, un incremento de este impuesto potenciará la caída reduciendo aún más los ingresos tanto indirectos como directos. Teniendo en cuenta que el consumo de carburantes está cayendo considerablemente, tampoco existe motivación racional alguna y supone un fuerte impacto para autónomos y pymes. Estas recomendaciones de política tributaria son plenamente contraproducentes en una recesión de las características que sufre el continente. Se pretende restringir el gasto de la manera más agresiva, mientras que resulta necesario un incremento de la presión fiscal directa progresiva en lugar de la indirecta, que es la que más afecta al consumo.

¿Qué efectos estima que tendrá una limitación del gasto fiscal relativo a la imposición directa?

¿Cómo compaginar dicha limitación con la lucha contra el fraude y la economía sumergida?

¿Cuáles son los motivos para no recomendar incrementar la presión fiscal directa progresiva, en un país con tan baja presión fiscal como España?

¿Qué efectos estima que una subida de los impuestos sobre los carburantes tendrá sobre los márgenes de autónomos y pequeñas empresas?

¿En qué medida estima que caerá el consumo con este incremento de la recaudación a través del IVA?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

España tiene que lograr sanear las cuentas públicas y completar el proceso de ajuste económico. La revisión sistemática del sistema tributario puede contribuir a alcanzar ambos objetivos. En particular, España debería plantearse la posibilidad de seguir desplazando la presión fiscal hacia los impuestos que gravan el consumo y los tributos medioambientales, que se consideran menos perjudiciales para el crecimiento y la creación de empleo. Así pues, el 29 de mayo de 2013 la Comisión recomendó que España explorase el margen existente para limitar en mayor medida la aplicación de los tipos de IVA reducidos y adoptara medidas adicionales en lo que respecta a los impuestos medioambientales, sobre todo los gravámenes aplicados a los carburantes. Esa recomendación pretende mejorar la eficiencia del sistema tributario, aumentando el peso de los impuestos indirectos, más favorables al crecimiento. Refleja también la opinión de la Comisión, de que la utilización de los tipos reducidos del IVA no siempre constituye el instrumento más adecuado para alcanzar objetivos políticos de mayor alcance, como garantizar la redistribución de rentas en favor de los hogares pobres ([1]). La Comisión también recomendó que se siguieran reduciendo los gastos fiscales (las exenciones fiscales, las desgravaciones, los tipos reducidos, etc.) en relación con los impuestos directos. Los gastos fiscales elevados reducen los ingresos tributarios, introducen distorsiones y pueden resultar ineficientes para alcanzar sus objetivos. También pueden introducir diferencias en el tratamiento fiscal de los distintos contribuyentes, reduciendo así la equidad del sistema. Además, pueden dejar margen para la manipulación e incrementar la complejidad del sistema tributario. Por lo tanto, la limitación de los gastos fiscales podría ayudar a España a obtener ingresos adicionales, aumentando al mismo tiempo la equidad y eficiencia del sistema impositivo.

([1]) COM(2011) 851.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006326/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain regarding tax policy

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's 2013 national reform programme. These recommendations represent a further entrenchment of the austerity policy, which can do nothing but further depress the declining standard of living of Spain's population.

The recommendations include a series of suggestions related to conducting 'a systematic review of the tax system by March 2014'. The recommendations in this area state that Spain should 'consider further limiting tax expenditure in direct taxation'. This suggestion means that Spain should reduce spending that is intended to ensure compliance with direct taxation obligations. Every euro invested in the tax system multiplies revenue by increasing oversight capability. However, the Commission's proposed recommendations uphold this limit as a goal, making clear that the aim is not to reduce the deficit, but rather to dismantle the State through aggressive cuts in spending.

The only recommendation aimed at increasing State revenue is an increase in the collection of VAT and indirect taxes, such as taxes on motor fuels. Such a measure is completely unjustified, since motor fuel consumption is plummeting and an increase in this tax would further the decline, reducing still more both indirect and direct tax revenue. Considering that motor fuel consumption is dropping significantly, there is no rational reason for such an increase, which would have a large impact on self-employed workers and SMEs. These recommendations on tax policy are completely counterproductive during a recession like the one that Europe is suffering. They attempt to restrict spending in the most aggressive manner, when what is needed is an increase in the progressive direct tax burden, rather than the indirect tax burden, which affects consumption more.

What effects does the Commission believe that a limit on tax expenditure would have on direct taxation?

How can such a limit be reconciled with the fight against fraud and the underground economy?

What are the reasons for not recommending an increase in the progressive direct tax burden in a country like Spain where the tax burden is so small?

What effects does it believe that an increase in motor fuel taxes will have on the margins of self-employed workers and small businesses?

To what extent does it believe that consumption will drop with this increase in VAT collection?

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

Spain has to achieve both fiscal consolidation and economic adjustment. A systematic review of the tax system can support these processes. In particular, Spain should consider further rebalancing the tax burden towards consumption and environmental taxation which are considered less detrimental to growth and job creation. On 29 May 2013, the Commission therefore recommended that Spain should explore the scope to further limit the application of reduced VAT rates and take additional steps in environmental taxation, notably as regards fuel taxes. This recommendation seeks to improve the efficiency of the tax system by increasing the share of more growth-friendly indirect taxes. It also reflects the Commission's view that the use of reduced VAT rates is often not the most suitable instrument for pursuing wider policy objectives (such as ensuring redistribution to poor households) ([1]). The Commission also recommended further limiting tax expenditures in direct taxation (such as tax exemptions, allowances, and reduced rates). High tax expenditures reduce fiscal revenues, introduce distortions and can be inefficient tools for achieving their policy objectives. They may also introduce differentiated tax treatment between taxpayers and thus reduce the fairness of the system. They can also create opportunities for manipulation and make the tax system more complex. Therefore, limiting tax expenditures could help Spain raise additional revenue while at the same time increasing the fairness and efficiency of the tax system.

([1]) COM(2011) 851.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006327/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Wirtschaftliche Entwicklung Zyperns

Kann die Kommission angesichts der jüngsten Entwicklungen bei der Kreditwürdigkeit Zyperns durch die Herabstufung des Ratings für Anleihen (durch die Ratingagentur Fitch) folgende Fragen beantworten:

Wie sieht die Kommission insbesondere die Auswirkungen dieser Entwicklung auf den Euro-Raum beziehungsweise auf die Europäische Union?

Hat die Kommission Lehren aus dem Weg Griechenlands gezogen? Wenn ja, welche Schritte plant die Kommission nun konkret in Zypern zu unternehmen, um einen solchen Weg zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(16. Juli 2013)

Ratingagenturen sind auf den heutigen Finanzmärkten zentrale Akteure und ihre Tätigkeit hat unmittelbare Auswirkungen auf das Verhalten von Anlegern, Kreditgebern, Emittenten und Regierungen. Ab dem 20. Juni 2013 gelten neue, strengere Vorschriften, durch die für mehr Transparenz hinsichtlich der Tätigkeit von Ratingagenturen gesorgt und deren Rechenschaftspflicht gestärkt wird. Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf die Verordnung 462/2013 ([1]), die Richtlinie 2013/14/EG ([2]) und die entsprechende Pressemitteilung ([3]).

Zypern ist — angesichts der Größe seines Bankensektors sowie dessen Struktur, Risikobereitschaft und einer suboptimalen Aufsicht — ein ganz spezieller Fall. Die ergriffenen Maßnahmen sind auf die in Zypern bestehende Ausnahmesituation zugeschnitten. Ziel ist es, die Existenzfähigkeit eines kleineren Bankensektors wiederherzustellen und gleichzeitig die Einleger zu schützen, namentlich — im Einklang mit den EU-Grundsätzen — alle Einlagen unter 100 000 EUR.

Die Herabstufung zyprischer Staatsanleihen durch die Ratingagentur Fitch scheint sich nicht auf die Einlagen in anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten ausgewirkt zu haben, die stabil geblieben sind.

Die Kommission überwacht und analysiert die wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungen nicht nur in Zypern, sondern in allen Mitgliedstaaten. Dabei werden die Erfahrungen aller Mitgliedstaaten herangezogen und sämtliche möglichen Lösungen eingehend geprüft. Zyperns Wirtschaft befindet sich derzeit in einer Ausnahmesituation und nach wie vor kommt es entscheidend darauf an, das Anpassungsprogramms weiter umzusetzen, um die Finanzstabilität wiederherzustellen und das Fundament für einen nachhaltigen Wachstumspfad zu legen. In Anbetracht der Herausforderungen, denen sich die zyprische Wirtschaft und das zyprische Volk gegenübersehen, hat die Kommission eine Unterstützungsgruppe für Zypern gegründet. Die neue Gruppe wird eng mit den zyprischen Behörden zusammenarbeiten, ihren Sachverstand zur Verfügung stellen und die Umsetzung des wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprogramms begleiten.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:146:SOM:DE:HTML
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:145:SOM:DE:HTML
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-555_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006327/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Economic development of Cyprus

Can the Commission answer the following questions, given the recent developments concerning the creditworthiness of Cyprus that are a result of the Fitch rating agency having downgraded the country's bonds ?

How does the Commission view, in particular, the impact of this development on the euro area and the European Union?

Has the Commission learned lessons from the Greek experience? If so, what specific steps is the Commission now going to take in Cyprus in order to prevent a similar outcome?

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

Credit rating agencies are major players in today's financial markets, and their actions have a direct impact on the behaviour of investors, borrowers, issuers and governments. As of 20 June 2013, new stricter rules have been enforced that will increase the transparency of credit rating agencies and make them more accountable for their actions. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to Regulation 462/2013 ([1]), Directive 2013/14/EC ([2]) and the associated press release ([3]).

Cyprus is a unique case because of its banking sector's size combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. Measures taken are tailor-made to the exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while protecting depositors, and in particular preserving all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

The fact that Fitch rating agency has downgraded Cyprus' sovereign bonds doesn't seem to have had an impact on deposits in other EU Member States (MS), which were stable.

The Commission monitors and analyses economic developments, not only in Cyprus, but in all MS. Experiences from all MS are considered and all possible solutions have been carefully analysed. The Cypriot economy faces an exceptional situation at the moment and it remains essential to proceed with the implementation of the adjustment programme in order to restore financial stability and to lay the foundations for a sustainable path of growth. Given the challenges faced by the Cypriot economy and by the Cypriot people, the Commission has created a Support Group for Cyprus. The new team will work closely with the Cypriot authorities and provide technical expertise to underpin the implementation of the economic adjustment programme.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:146:SOM:EN:HTML
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:145:SOM:EN:HTML
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-555_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006328/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten für Schadenersatz nach Gerichtsverfahren gegen die Kommission im Jahre 2012

1. Wie hoch waren die Schadenersatzansprüche, die Gerichte gegen die Kommission im Jahre 2012 verhängt haben?

a. im Wettbewerbsbereich,

b. in allen anderen Bereichen?

2. Wie viele Klagen wurden 2012 gegen die Kommission angestrengt?

a. im Wettbewerbsbereich,

b. in allen anderen Bereichen?

3. Wie hoch sind die Schadenersatzforderungen gegen die Kommission in laufenden gerichtlichen Verfahren gegen die Kommission?

a. im Wettbewerbsbereich,

b. in allen anderen Bereichen?

4. Wie hoch sind die Schadenersatzansprüche, die die Kommission im Jahre 2012 im Wettbewerbsbereich verhängt hat?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(5. August 2013)

Nach Untersuchung aller einschlägigen Schadenersatzansprüche aus außervertraglicher Haftung auch im Rahmen von Personalangelegenheiten beantwortet die Kommission die Fragen der Frau Abgeordneten wie folgt:

1a) Im Jahr 2012 wurde die Kommission nicht dazu verurteilt, im Wettbewerbsbereich Schadenersatz zu zahlen.

1b) Im Jahr 2012 wurde die Kommission dazu verurteilt, in anderen Bereichen Schadenersatz in Höhe von 5 000 EUR zu zahlen.

2a) Im Jahr 2012 wurde gegen die Kommission im Wettbewerbsbereich eine Klage auf Schadenersatz angestrengt.

2b) Im Jahr 2012 wurden gegen die Kommission in anderen Bereichen zwölf Klagen auf Schadenersatz angestrengt.

3a) Die Gesamtsumme (ohne Zinsen) der Schadenersatzforderungen gegen die Kommission in laufenden gerichtlichen Verfahren (d. h. am 12. Juli 2013) bei den Gerichten der Union im Wettbewerbsbereich beträgt 2 677 416,46 EUR. Diese Summe setzt sich zusammen aus einem festen Betrag in Höhe von 1 472 000,00 EUR und regelmäßigen Zahlungen ab dem 11. März 2008, die sich derzeit auf 1 205 416,46 EUR belaufen.

3b) Die Gesamtsumme (ohne Zinsen) der Schadenersatzforderungen gegen die Kommission in laufenden gerichtlichen Verfahren (d. h. am 12. Juli 2013) bei den Gerichten der Union in anderen Bereichen beträgt 441 219 660,19 EUR und 347 520,68 GBP.

4) Im Jahr 2012 hat die Kommission im Wettbewerbsbereich keine Schadenersatzansprüche verhängt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006328/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: The cost of damages against the Commission following court cases in 2012

1. What were the costs of claims for damages against the Commission imposed by the courts in 2012?

a. in the area of competition,

b. in all other areas?

2. How many claims were brought against the Commission in 2012?

a. in the area of competition,

b. in all other areas?

3. What are the costs of claims for damages for the Commission in pending legal proceedings against it?

a. in the area of competition,

b. in all other areas?

4. What are the costs of claims for damages brought by the Commission in 2012 in the area of competition?

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

Having examined all relevant claims relating to non-contractual liability including staff matters, the Commission would like to reply to the questions of the Honourable Member in the following way:

1a. In 2012 the Commission was not condemned to pay damages in the area of competition.

1b. In 2012 the Commission was condemned to pay EUR 5000,00 pursuant to claims for damages in other areas.

2a. In 2012 one claim for damages was brought against the Commission in the area of competition.

2b. In 2012 12 claims for damages were brought against the Commission in other areas.

3a. The total amount (without interests) of compensation for damages claimed from the Commission in cases currently (i.e. on 12 July 2013) pending before the Union judicature in the area of competition is EUR 2.677.416,46. This amount consists of a fixed amount of EUR 1.472.000,00 and periodical payments, running from 11 March 2008, which currently amount to 1.205.416,46.

3b. The total amounts (without interests) of compensation for damages claimed from the Commission in cases currently (i.e. on 12 July 2013) pending before the Union judicature in areas other than competition are EUR 441.219.660,19 and GBP 347.520,68.

4. In 2012 no claims for damages were brought by the Commission in the area of competition.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006329/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Umzugsbeihilfen im Jahre 2012

1. Wie hoch waren die Kosten für Umzüge von Bediensteten der Kommission und ihrer Familien im Jahre 2012?

2. Wie vielen Bediensteten der Kommission und ihren Familien wurden im Jahre 2012 die Umzugskosten erstattet? Wie viele Personen waren das?

3. Für Umzüge aus welchen Staaten fielen die höchsten Umzugskosten an? Für wie viele Personen?

4. Für Umzüge in welche Staaten fielen die höchsten Umzugskosten an? Für wie viele Personen?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juli 2013)

Die Kommission gewährt keine „Umzugsbeihilfen". Ihr ist auch nicht bekannt, wie hoch die Kosten für „Umzüge" der Bediensteten der Kommission und ihrer Familien waren.

Gemäß den Bestimmungen von Anhang VII des Statuts zahlt die Kommission wie alle anderen Organe, Agenturen oder Einrichtungen der EU eine Einrichtungsbeihilfe, eine Wiedereinrichtungsbeihilfe und Umzugskosten. Die Einzelheiten zu diesen Zahlungen können Teil VI des Arbeitsdokuments (Entwurf des Gesamthaushaltsplans der Europäischen Union für das Haushaltsjahr 2014) auf Seite 40 unter folgendem Link entnommen werden: http://www.cc.cec/budg/bud/proc/adopt/_doc/_pdf/2014/db-2014-wd-VI-administrative-expenditure-h5.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006329/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Relocation allowances in 2012

1. What were the costs of relocation of Commission staff and their families in 2012?

2. How many members of Commission staff and their families received reimbursement for relocation expenses in 2012? How many people are we talking about?

3. For relocation from which Member States were the costs the highest? For how many people?

4. For relocation into which Member States were the costs the highest? For how many people?

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

The Commission does not grant any 'relocation allowances' and is not aware of the cost of 'relocation' incurred by its staff and their families.

However, the Commission, like every other EU institution, agency or body, pays an installation allowance, resettlement allowance and removal expenses according to the provisions in Annex VII of the Staff Regulations. The Honourable Member will find the financial details of such payments in the Working Document Part VI (Draft General Budget of the European Commission for the financial year 2014) on page 40 that is available on the following site: http://www.cc.cec/budg/bud/proc/adopt/_doc/_pdf/2014/db-2014-wd-VI-administrative-expenditure-h5.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006330/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(4 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απαγωγή Τούρκου πρόσφυγα από την Ελληνική αστυνομία και παράδοσή του στις τούρκικες αρχές

Σε κοινή ανακοίνωσή τους, το Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες, το Δίκτυο Κοινωνικής Υποστήριξης Προσφύγων και Μεταναστών, καθώς και η Ομάδα Δικηγόρων για τα δικαιώματα Προσφύγων και Μεταναστών ([1]) καταγγέλλουν την απαγωγή του Τούρκου πολιτικού πρόσφυγα Υ.Β. την Πέμπτη 30 Μαΐου 2013. Σύμφωνα με αυτόπτες μάρτυρες που κατέγραψαν το περιστατικό, 5 άνδρες πετάχτηκαν από ένα αυτοκίνητο, του επιτέθηκαν, τον ακινητοποίησαν, τον ξυλοκόπησαν άγρια και τον έσπρωξαν στο αυτοκίνητο με τη βία, φράζοντας του το στόμα για να μην ακούγεται. Η αστυνομία στο σύνολο της αρνήθηκε κατηγορηματικά ότι έχει οποιαδήποτε γνώση για το περιστατικό (παρότι πρόκυψε ότι είχε ειδοποιηθεί). Την ίδια ημέρα αναρτήθηκε, σε διαδικτυακό τόπο, κείμενο πολίτη που περιέγραφε τα περιστατικά και έδινε τα στοιχεία (πινακίδα) του αυτοκινήτου της απαγωγής. Από την δημοσιοποίηση της πινακίδας πρόεκυψε ότι το αυτοκίνητο ανήκει στην Ελληνική Αστυνομία ([2]). Την ίδια στιγμή από το Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες στάλθηκε κατεπείγουσα έκκληση (αίτηση ασφαλιστικών μέτρων) προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων για την αποτροπή της επιστροφής ή επαναπροώθησης του πρόσφυγα στην Τουρκία. Η καθ' οιονδήποτε τρόπο επιστροφή του ή η επαναπροώθησή του στην Τουρκία συνιστά παραβίαση της αρχής της μη επαναπροώθησης και του άρθρου 3 ΕΣΔΑ (απαγόρευση βασανιστηρίων ή άλλης σκληρής, απάνθρωπης και εξευτελιστικής μεταχείρισης ή τιμωρίας). Ο Τούρκος πρόσφυγας τελικά παραδόθηκε στις τουρκικές αρχές. Σύμφωνα με τη μαρτυρία του ίδιου στον δικηγόρο του, μετά την παράδοσή του στις τουρκικές αρχές, οι απαγωγείς του τον πέρασαν παράνομα από τα σύνορα, αφού ένιωσε να τον περνούν κάτω από συρματοπλέγματα και καθόλη τη διάρκεια της μεταφοράς του, είχε περασμένη κουκούλα στο κεφάλι του.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς κρίνει η Επιτροπή την στάση της ελληνικής πολιτείας σε σχέση με την πολιτική προστασίας των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ;

2. Πώς κρίνει η Επιτροπή την στάση κρατών μελών της ΕΕ των οποίων οι αρχές ή οι μυστικές υπηρεσίες συνεργάζονται για την επαναπροώθηση και παράδοση προς βασανισμό υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών;

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

Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει ιδιαίτερη ανησυχία για την κατάσταση των αιτούντων άσυλο και των μεταναστών στην Ελλάδα.

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει υπόψη της τη συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση την οποία επισημαίνει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, αλλά θα έρθει σε επαφή με το Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες και, εφόσον χρειάζεται, θα εξετάσει το θέμα με τις ελληνικές αρχές.

Η Επιτροπή κίνησε διαδικασία επί παραβάσει κατά της Ελλάδας το 2009, στην οποία διατύπωνε ανησυχίες σχετικά με ποικίλα ζητήματα που άπτονται της ενωσιακής νομοθεσίας περί ασύλου, περιλαμβανομένων του ζητήματος της πρόσβασης στη διαδικασία ασύλου σε παραμεθόριες περιοχές, της μεταχείρισης των ασυνόδευτων ανηλίκων που ζητούν άσυλο, των συνθηκών υποδοχής σε εγκαταστάσεις κράτησης όπου παραμένουν οι μετανάστες και των διαδικασιών που καθορίζει η Ελλάδα για την αξιολόγηση των αιτήσεων ασύλου.

Οι ελληνικές αρχές δεσμεύθηκαν να προβούν σε μεταρρύθμιση της πολιτικής για το άσυλο και τη μετανάστευση βάσει εθνικού σχεδίου δράσης που εγκρίθηκε το 2010 και επικαιροποιείται σε τακτά χρονικά διαστήματα. Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει την Ελλάδα μέσω της παροχής χρηματοδοτικής βοήθειας και εμπειρογνωμοσύνης. Επίσης, η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί στενά την κατάσταση επί τόπου και, εφόσον απαιτείται, θα λάβει περαιτέρω διαδικαστικές ενέργειες σύμφωνα με τις Συνθήκες.

([1]) http://migrant.diktio.org/el/node/277
([2]) https://www.avgi.gr/article/395492/mpoulout-giaila-apixthi-ton-perasan-paranoma-ta-sunora-kai-krateitai-stin-tourkia-me-autokinito-tis-elas-egine-i-apagogi

Τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει πάντοτε να διασφαλίζουν ότι τα άτομα δεν επαναπροωθούνται σε τόπο όπου θα κινδύνευε η ζωή τους ή όπου θα αντιμετώπιζαν τον κίνδυνο να υποβληθούν σε βασανιστήρια ή σε απάνθρωπη ή ταπεινωτική μεταχείριση. Η Επιτροπή, ως θεματοφύλακας των Συνθηκών, παρακολουθεί τη νομοθεσία και τις πολιτικές των κρατών μελών και δεν θα διστάσει να προβεί σε διαδικαστικές ενέργειες, όπου χρειάζεται, ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί η τήρηση της αρχής της μη επαναπροώθησης σε όλες τις περιπτώσεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006330/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Abduction of a Turkish refugee by the Greek police and his surrender to the Turkish authorities

In their joint communication, the Greek Council for Refugees, the Network for the Social Support of Refugees and Migrants and the Team of Lawyers for Refugee and Migrant rights ([1]) condemned the abduction of the Turkish political refugee Y.B on Thursday, 30 May 2013. According to eyewitnesses, 5 men jumped out of a car, attacked him, immobilised him, beat him violently and threw him into a car, covering his mouth so that he could not speak. The whole police force categorically denies any knowledge of the event (even though it was revealed that they had been notified). On the same day, an account of the incident by a citizen was posted on the Internet, providing the details (number plate) of the car used in the abduction. The publication of the number plate revealed that the car belonged to the Greek Police ([2]). At the same time, the Greek Council for Refugees sent an urgent appeal (adoption of interim measures) to the European Court of Human Rights to prevent the return, or refoulement, of the refugee to Turkey. His return, or refoulement, to Turkey, in any way, constitutes a violation of the principle of non-refoulement and Article 3 of the ECHR (prohibition of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment). In the end, the Turkish refugee was surrendered to the Turkish authorities. According to the statement he gave to his lawyer, after his surrender to the Turkish authorities, his abductors took him illegally across the border, as he could feel them taking him underneath the barbed wire and, throughout the journey, he had a hood over his head.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. How does the Commission consider the position of the Greek State with regard to the EU human rights protection policy?

2. How does the Commission consider the position of EU Member States whose authorities or secret services cooperate with a view to returning and surrendering third-country nationals to torture?

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

The Commission is very concerned about the situation of asylum applicants and migrants in Greece.

The Commission is not aware of the specific case pointed to by the Honourable Member, but will take contact with the Greek Council for Refugees and, if appropriate, take the matter up with the Greek authorities.

The Commission opened infringement proceedings against Greece in 2009 setting out concerns about various issues in the area of EU asylum law, including the question of access to the asylum procedure at the border areas, the treatment of asylum seeking unaccompanied minors, the reception conditions available in detention facilities holding migrants and the procedures which Greece has in place for assessing asylum claims.

The Greek authorities committed to reform their asylum and migration policies on the basis of a national Action Plan adopted in 2010, and updated at regular intervals of time. The Commission is supporting Greece via the provision of financial assistance and expertise. The Commission also closely monitors the situation on the ground and, if needed, will take further procedural steps in accordance with the Treaties.

Member States must always ensure that persons are not sent back to places where their life would be in danger or where they would face the risk of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment. The Commission, as guardian of the Treaties, monitors Member States' law and policies and will not hesitate to take procedural steps, where needed, in order to ensure that the principle of non-refoulement is respected in all cases.

([1]) http://migrant.diktio.org/el/node/277.
([2]) https://www.avgi.gr/article/395492/mpoulout-giaila-apixthi-ton-perasan-paranoma-ta-sunora-kai-krateitai-stin-tourkia-me-autokinito-tis-elas-egine-i-apagogi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006331/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Revision of the SEA Directive and inclusion of social acceptance clauses

Is the Commission planning on a future revision process of the Strategic Assessment Directive? Specifically, would it consider including 'social acceptance' legislation in this revision?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

Before making any proposals for amending Directive 2001/42/EC [1] (known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive), the Commission has to evaluate its application and effectiveness across the EU. The second evaluation report will be prepared in 2016. In this context, the Commission will consider the need to revise the SEA Directive.

The issue of social acceptance is already covered by the current Directive, as information and consultation of the public is one of the essential elements of the SEA process.

[1] OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-006332/13
до Комисията
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Sophie Auconie (PPE), Mary Honeyball (S&D), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) и Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE)
(4 юни 2013 г.)

Относно: Конвенцията на ООН за преследване на търговията с хора и експлоатацията на чужда проституция (1949 г.)

На 15 април 2013 г. Комисията публикува данни относно мащаба на трафика на хора в Европа. Мнозинството от идентифицираните и предполагаеми жертви са обект на трафик с цел сексуална експлоатация, тоест проституция (62 %). 68 % от идентифицираните и предполагаеми жертви са жени, 12 % — момичета. 84 % от заподозрените трафиканти осъществяват трафик на хора за сексуална експлоатация.

В отговора си на парламентарен въпрос E-008411/2012 от члена на Европейския парламент Зубер, Комисията заяви, че „признава връзката между проституцията и трафика на хора“.

Въпреки това нито директивата на ЕС, нито стратегията на ЕС относно трафика на хора се позовават на Конвенцията на ООН за преследване на търговията с хора и експлоатацията на чужда проституция. Тя отчита пряката връзка между проституцията и трафика на жени. Конвенцията изяснява, че трафикът на хора, преобладаващата част от които са жени, се подхранва от проституцията. „Проституцията и съпътстващото я зло — трафикът на хора с цел проституция, са несъвместими с достойнството и ценността на човешката личност.“

— Защо Комисията не се позовава на този международен инструмент в законодателството на ЕС и действията относно трафика?

— Като се има предвид, че 18 държави — членки на ЕС са ратифицирали Конвенцията на ООН от 1949 г., счита ли се Конвенцията за част от достиженията на правото на Общността? Ако не, защо?

Много доклади и проучвания, включително доклада на специалния докладчик за трафика на хора, в частност жени и деца, показват, че съществува пряка връзка между политиките относно проституцията и мащаба на трафика на хора. Доказано е, че политическите подходи, които криминализират търсенето (например „доставчиците“ на секс), като в същото време подкрепят проституиращите лица, имат успех при изкореняването на трафика, а законодателството, което урежда проституцията и сводничеството, не успява да го намали.

— Защо Комисията продължава да възприема „неутрален“ подход към проблема с проституцията, въпреки че официално заявява, че изкореняването на трафика е един от политическите ѝ приоритети?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Малмстрьом от името на Комисията
(22 юли 2013 г.)

Комисията не толерира никаква форма на сексуална експлоатация на жени и момичета и е много загрижена относно увеличаването на трафика на хора, от който 62 % вероятно е с цел сексуална експлоатация.

Подходът на Комисията е отражение на компетенциите, предоставени от Договорите на ЕС. С член 83 (ДФЕС) се предоставят правомощия във връзка със сексуалната експлоатация на жени и трафика на хора. Следователно това Комисията има мандат да води борба с проституцията, доколкото тя е свързана със сексуалната експлоатация и трафика на хора, но политиката относно проституцията като такава продължава да бъде въпрос от компетенциите на държавите членки.

Комисията признава, че нито в Директива 2011/36/ЕС, нито в стратегията на ЕС няма позоваване на Конвенцията на ООН от 1949 г., но това не означава, че позицията на Комисията няма отношение към проблема. Комисията е готова да се позове на тази конвенция в бъдещи политически документи и в законодателни предложения в зависимост от случая.

В член 18 от Директивата държавите членки настоятелно се призовават да разгледат мерки за инкриминиране на използването на услуги със знанието, че лицето е жертва на трафик на хора. Както се изисква от член 23 от Директивата, до 2016 г. Комисията ще представи доклад, в който ще се направи оценка на въздействието на съществуващото национално законодателство, при необходимост придружен от съответните предложения относно инкриминирането на потребителите на услуги, предоставяни от жертви на трафик на хора.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006332/13
à la Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Sophie Auconie (PPE), Mary Honeyball (S&D), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) et Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Convention des Nations unies de 1949 pour la répression de la traite des êtres humains et de l'exploitation de la prostitution d'autrui

Le 15 avril 2013, la Commission a publié des données sur l'étendue de la traite des être humains en Europe. La majorité des victimes identifiées ou présumées sont exploitées à des fins sexuelles, c'est-à-dire vouées à la prostitution (62 %). Les femmes représentent 68 % des victimes identifiées ou présumées. Les filles, quant à elles, en représentent 12 %. Dans 80 % des cas, la traite des êtres humains est pratiquée à des fins d'exploitation sexuelle.

Dans sa réponse à la question E-008411-12 du député Zuber, la Commission a indiqué qu'elle «reconnaît la corrélation qui existe entre la prostitution et la traite des êtres humains».

Cependant, ni la directive ni la stratégie de l'Union européenne relative à la traite des êtres humains ne fait mention de la Convention des Nations unies de 1949 pour la répression de la traite des êtres humains et de l'exploitation de la prostitution d'autrui. Or cette convention fait état du lien direct qui existe entre prostitution et traite des êtres humains. Elle établit clairement que la traite des êtres humains, dont la grande majorité sont des femmes, est alimentée par la prostitution. «La prostitution et le mal qui l'accompagne, à savoir la traite des êtres humains en vue de la prostitution, sont incompatibles avec la dignité et la valeur de la personne humaine».

— Pourquoi la Commission ne fait-elle pas référence à cet instrument international dans la législation de l'Union et dans les mesures qu'elle adopte pour lutter contre la traite des êtres humains?

— Si 18 États membres de l'Union ont ratifié la Convention des Nations unies de 1949, cette convention est-elle censée faire partie de l'acquis communautaire? Dans la négative, pour quelles raisons?

Bon nombre de rapports et d'études, y compris le rapport 2006 du rapporteur spécial des Nations unies sur la traite des personnes, notamment des femmes et des enfants, établissent l'existence d'un rapport direct entre les politiques menées en matière de prostitution et l'étendue des trafics. Il est avéré que les approches politiques qui érigent en infraction la demande (c'est-à-dire le proxénétisme), tout en défendant les personnes prostituées, découragent efficacement la traite des êtres humains, alors que les lois qui règlementent la prostitution et le proxénétisme ne contribuent pas à réduire les trafics.

— Pourquoi la Commission persiste-t-elle dans une approche «neutre» de la prostitution, alors même qu'elle affirme officiellement placer la traite des êtres humains au centre de ses priorités politiques?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(22 juillet 2013)

La Commission ne tolère aucune forme d'exploitation sexuelle des femmes et des jeunes filles et est très préoccupée par la hausse de la traite des êtres humains, qui est dans 62 % des cas estimée être pratiquée à des fins d'exploitation sexuelle.

L'approche suivie par la Commission est le reflet des compétences conférées par les traités de l'UE, telles que celles en matière d'exploitation sexuelle des femmes et de traite des êtres humains visées par l'article 83 du TFUE. Par conséquent, la Commission dispose d'un mandat pour aborder la prostitution dans la mesure où celle-ci concerne l'exploitation sexuelle des femmes et la traite des êtres humains, tandis que la politique en matière de prostitution en tant que telle reste du ressort des États membres.

La Commission reconnaît qu'il n'y a aucune référence à la Convention des Nations unies de 1949 dans la directive 2011/36/UE, ni dans la stratégie de l'UE en la matière; cependant, cette omission ne change rien à la position de la Commission relative à la question sous-jacente. La Commission est prête à faire référence à ladite convention, le cas échéant, dans de futurs documents de politique et propositions législatives.

L'article 18 de la directive contraint les États membres à envisager d'adopter les mesures nécessaires pour conférer le caractère d'infraction pénale au fait d'utiliser des services tout en sachant que la personne concernée est victime de la traite des êtres humains. Conformément à l'article 23 de ladite directive, la Commission présentera en 2016 au plus tard un rapport dans lequel sera évaluée l'incidence des législations nationales en vigueur avec, le cas échéant, des propositions appropriées érigeant en infraction pénale le recours à ces services.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006332/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Sophie Auconie (PPE), Mary Honeyball (S&D), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) e Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE)
(4 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Convenção das Nações Unidas para a Supressão do Tráfico de Pessoas e da Exploração da Prostituição de Outrem, de 1949

Em 15 de abril de 2013, a Comissão Europeia publicou dados sobre a dimensão atingida pelo tráfico de seres humanos na Europa. A maioria das vítimas identificadas e presumidas são traficadas para fins de exploração sexual, ou seja, para a prostituição (62 %). As mulheres representam 68 % das vítimas identificadas e presumidas, ao passo que as jovens representam 12 %. Oitenta e quatro por cento dos suspeitos traficam seres humanos para fins de exploração sexual.

Na sua resposta à pergunta parlamentar E-008411-12 da eurodeputada Zuber, a Comissão afirmou que «reconhece a interação entre a prostituição e o tráfico de seres humanos».

Porém, nem a diretiva da UE, nem a estratégia europeia em matéria de tráfico de seres humanos, se referem à Convenção das Nações Unidas para a Supressão do Tráfico de Pessoas e da Exploração da Prostituição de Outrem, de 1949. Este documento reconhece a ligação direta entre a prostituição e o tráfico de mulheres. A Convenção deixa claro que o tráfico de seres humanos, a grande maioria dos quais são mulheres, é alimentado pela prostituição. «A prostituição e o concomitante mal do tráfico de seres humanos para fins de prostituição são incompatíveis com a dignidade e o valor da pessoa humana».

— Por que motivo não faz a Comissão referência a este instrumento internacional na legislação e nas ações da UE sobre o tráfico de seres humanos?

— Tendo 18 Estados-Membros da UE ratificado a Convenção das Nações Unidas de 1949, poderá a Convenção ser considerada como parte do acervo comunitário? Em caso de resposta negativa, por que razão?

— Muitos relatórios e estudos, incluindo o relatório de 2006 do Relator Especial das Nações Unidas sobre o Tráfico de Seres Humanos, em particular, de mulheres e crianças, mostram que há uma articulação direta entre as políticas relativas à prostituição e a dimensão do tráfico. As abordagens políticas que criminalizam a procura (ou seja, os clientes), se bem apoiem as pessoas que se prostituem, constituem comprovadamente um entrave bem sucedido ao tráfico, ao passo que a legislação que regulamenta a prostituição e o lenocínio não logra minorar o fenómeno.

— Por que motivo continua a Comissão a adotar uma abordagem «neutra» à problemática da prostituição, apesar de oficialmente afirmar que o fim do tráfico de seres humanos é uma das prioridades das suas políticas?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(22 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão não tolera quaisquer formas de exploração sexual de mulheres e raparigas e está fortemente preocupada com o aumento do tráfico de seres humanos que, em 62 % dos casos, é presumivelmente praticado para fins de exploração sexual.

A abordagem seguida pela Comissão resulta das competências conferidas pelos Tratados da UE, nomeadamente as competências em matéria de exploração sexual de mulheres e de tráfico de seres humanos previstas no artigo 83.° do TFUE. Por conseguinte, a Comissão dispõe de um mandato para abordar a prostituição apenas enquanto questão relacionada com a exploração sexual e o tráfico de seres humanos. A política em matéria de prostituição propriamente dita continua, porém, a ser da competência dos Estados-Membros.

A Comissão reconhece que não existe nenhuma referência à Convenção das Nações Unidas de 1949 na Diretiva 2011/36/UE, nem na estratégia da UE na matéria. Contudo, essa omissão em nada altera a posição da Comissão quanto à questão de fundo. A Comissão está disposta a mencionar a referida convenção, se necessário, em futuros documentos estratégicos e propostas legislativas.

Nos termos do artigo 18.° da referida diretiva, os Estados-Membros devem considerar a possibilidade de criminalizar a utilização de serviços quando o utilizador tenha conhecimento de que a pessoa em causa é vítima do tráfico de seres humanos. Em conformidade com o artigo 23.° da mesma diretiva, a Comissão apresentará, até 2016, um relatório no qual avaliará o impacto das legislações nacionais em vigor, acompanhado, se necessário, de propostas adequadas em matéria de criminalização da utilização desses serviços.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006332/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Sophie Auconie (PPE), Mary Honeyball (S&D), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) and Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: 1949 UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others

On 15 April 2013 the Commission published data on the scale of trafficking in human beings in Europe. The majority of identified and presumed victims are trafficked for sexual exploitation, i.e. prostitution (62%). Women account for 68% of identified and presumed victims, girls 12%. Eighty-four per cent of suspected traffickers traffic human beings for sexual exploitation.

In its answer to parliamentary Question E-008411/2012 from MEP Zuber, the Commission said that it 'acknowledges the interplay between prostitution and trafficking in human beings'.

However, neither the EU directive nor the EU Strategy on trafficking in human beings refers to the 1949 United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. This acknowledges the direct link between prostitution and trafficking in women. The Convention makes it clear that trafficking in human beings, the great majority of whom are women, is fuelled by prostitution. 'Prostitution and the accompanying evil of the traffic in persons for the purpose of prostitution are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person'.

— Why does the Commission not refer to this international instrument in EU legislation and action on trafficking?

— While 18 EU Member States have ratified the 1949 UN Convention, is the Convention regarded as part of the Community's *acquis*? If not, why not?

Many reports and studies, including the 2006 report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, show that there is a direct link between policies on prostitution and the scale of trafficking. Policy approaches that criminalise the demand (i.e. procurers of sex) while supporting prostituted persons, are proven to deter trafficking successfully, while legislation that regulates prostitution and pimping fails to reduce trafficking.

— Why does the Commission keep on taking a 'neutral' approach to the issue of prostitution, despite stating officially that ending trafficking is one of its policy priorities?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

The Commission does not tolerate any form of sexual exploitation of women and girls and is very concerned about the increasing trafficking of human beings out of which 62% is estimated to be for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

The Commission's approach reflects the competences conferred by the EU treaties. Article 83 (TFEU) confers competence over sexual exploitation of women and trafficking in human beings. The Commission thus has a mandate to address prostitution in so far as this relates to sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings, but policy on prostitution as such remains a matter for the Member States.

The Commission acknowledges that there was no reference to the 1949 UN Convention in Directive 2011/36/EU or the EU Strategy; however, the omission has no bearing on the Commission's position on the underlying subject. The Commission stands ready to refer to this convention in future policy documents and in future legislative proposals as relevant.

Article 18 of the directive urges Member States to consider measures for criminalising the use of services with the knowledge that the person is a victim of human trafficking. As required by Article 23 of the directive, The Commission will submit a report by 2016 assessing the impact of existing national laws accompanied, if necessary, by appropriate proposals on the criminalisation of users of services.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006333/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Flooding in the Somerset levels

The Environment Agency in the UK is apparently claiming that the reason action cannot be taken to control flooding is EU regulation. In fact a twenty-acre site in North Somerset, which has taken years to drain and bring back to agriculture, has had to be re-flooded, at a cost of GBP 20 000 000. The River Parrett has not been dredged for over twenty years on account that it might damage wildlife, although local residents believe that the wildlife has diminished much more since river maintenance activities were halted.

Will the Commission confirm whether or not these restrictions are the result of EU legislation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Floods Directive ([1]) establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks, aiming at the reduction of the adverse consequences of flooding. Member States have to adopt Flood Risk Management Plans by 2015. The directive does not fix any concrete objective in terms of risk reduction, nor does it prescribe specific measures. Setting of objectives and selection of measures are left to Member States.

The Water Framework Directive ([2]) (WFD) establishes a framework for the protection and enhancement of water resources, with the aim of achieving good status of all surface and groundwater by 2015. The main tool to achieve the environmental objectives is the river basin management plan and the programme of measures, adopted in 2009. The WFD provides ample flexibility for Member States to select the most cost-effective measures to achieve the objectives in the light of local conditions.

In general terms, the restoration of natural floodplains and other forms of 'green infrastructure' ([3]) can be an effective and cost-efficient solution to reduce the adverse consequences of flooding ([4]), and at the same time provide additional benefits in terms of water quality and biodiversity. The choice of measures depends on local conditions and is a matter for Member States to decide.

([1]) Directive 2007/60/EC, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007.
([2]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([3]) See Commission Communication COM(2013) 249 on Green Infrastructure (GI) — Enhancing Europe's Natural Capital (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/).
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/flood_risk/better_options.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006334/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Système de dédommagement pour les retards de transfert de numéros par les fournisseurs de télécommunications

Dans les États membres, des systèmes nationaux ont été mis en place pour faciliter le transfert de numéros de téléphone entre les opérateurs: c'est le principe de la portabilité. Mais certaines compagnies de télécommunications ne respectent pas ces règles et rendent les procédures trop longues et coûteuses pour leurs usagers.

Il n'existe pas les mêmes règles dans tous les pays en termes de système de dédommagement pour les retards de transfert de numéros par les fournisseurs de télécommunications. Ainsi, il n'existe aucun système de dédommagement en Allemagne, alors que la France en prévoit un.

La Commission estime-t-elle que des règles communes en matière de dédommagement pour les retards de transfert de numéros de téléphone devraient être établies dans les États membres?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(8 juillet 2013)

Le cadre réglementaire révisé de l'UE relatif aux communications électroniques a renforcé les droits des utilisateurs en matière de portabilité des numéros afin de faciliter les démarches du consommateur lors d'un changement de fournisseur. En particulier, la directive 2002/22/CE contient des dispositions spécifiques garantissant le droit de portabilité pour les numéros de téléphone fixe et de téléphone mobile et offrant une protection aux consommateurs tout au long de la procédure de changement de fournisseur avec un dédommagement en cas de retard dans la réalisation du portage des numéros.

Conformément à l'article 30, paragraphe 4, les États membres veillent à ce que des sanctions appropriées soient prévues à l'encontre des entreprises, notamment l'obligation d'indemniser les abonnés en cas de retard à réaliser le portage ou d'abus du portage par ces entreprises ou en leur nom. Les autorités nationales peuvent établir la procédure globale de portage des numéros compte tenu des dispositions nationales en matière de contrats, de la faisabilité technique et de la nécessité de maintenir la continuité du service fourni à l'abonné, et il incombe aux États membres de veiller au respect de l'exigence susmentionnée relative au dédommagement des abonnés.

La Commission assure le suivi de la transposition et de la mise en œuvre effective de la législation de l'UE dans les États membres et a insisté sur la nécessité d'une application cohérente de ces dispositions dans toute l'Union européenne ([1]). Elle coopère également avec l'ORECE à la mise en œuvre de procédures de changement de fournisseur au sein des États membres ([2]).

La Commission élabore actuellement des mesures visant à créer un marché unique des télécommunications et notamment à faciliter la procédure de changement de fournisseur, et jugera ensuite de la nécessité de dispositions supplémentaires en matière de portabilité des numéros.

([1]) EU Report on Telecommunications Market and Regulatory Developments (2012) [Rapport de l'UE sur le marché des télécommunications et les évolutions réglementaires (2012)]: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/Telecom_Horizontal_Chapter.pdf

([2]) BEREC Report on best practices to facilitate consumer switching (2010) [Rapport de l'ORECE sur les bonnes pratiques visant à faciliter le changement de fournisseur (2010)]: http://berec.europa.eu/doc/berec/bor_10_34_rev1.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006334/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: A system of compensation for delays in the transfer of numbers by telecommunications providers.

In Member States, national systems have been implemented to facilitate the transfer of telephone numbers between operators: this is the principle of portability. But some telecommunications companies do not comply with these rules and make procedures too long and costly for their users.

Not all countries have the same rules in terms of a compensation system for delays in the transfer of numbers by telecommunications providers. Thus, there is no compensation system in Germany, while France does provide one.

Does the Commission consider that common rules concerning compensation for delays in the transfer of telephone numbers should be established in the Member States?

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

The revised EU regulatory framework for electronic communications has reinforced users' rights regarding number portability with the objective of facilitating the change of provider for the benefit of consumers. In particular, Directive 2002/22/EC contains specific provisions ensuring the right to port fixed and mobile numbers and protecting consumers throughout the switching process, including the compensation for delays in the porting of numbers.

In accordance with Article 30(4), Member States shall ensure that appropriate sanctions on undertakings are provided for, including an obligation to compensate subscribers, in case of delay of porting or abuse of porting by them or on their behalf. Whilst national authorities may establish the global process of porting of numbers, taking into account national provisions on contracts, technical feasibility and the need to maintain continuity of service to the subscriber, the above referred requirement regarding the compensation of subscribers must be ensured by the Member States.

The Commission monitors the transposition and effective implementation of EU legislation in the Member States and has pointed out to the need for a consistent implementation of these provisions across the EU ([1]). The Commission also cooperates with BEREC as regards the implementation of switching processes in the Member States ([2]).

The Commission is currently preparing measures to achieve a single market for telecoms, including measures to facilitate the change of provider and will consider whether further provisions with regard to number portability are necessary.

([1]) EU Report on Telecommunications Market and Regulatory Developments (2012): https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/Telecom_Horizontal_Chapter.pdf

([2]) BEREC Report on best practices to facilitate consumer switching (2010): http://berec.europa.eu/doc/berec/bor_10_34_rev1.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006335/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Établissement d'une Cour européenne des brevets

Lors du Conseil européen de juin 2012, les États membres se sont prononcés en faveur de la création d'une Cour européenne des brevets. Son siège sera à Paris, et la Cour d'appel sera installée à Luxembourg avec la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne.

Comment la Commission envisage-t-elle le bon fonctionnement d'un organe qui fonctionnerait sur deux sites situés dans deux pays différents (Paris et Luxembourg)? Pour empêcher que des frais excessifs de justice ne dissuadent les groupes d'intérêts ou toute personne agissant à titre individuel d'entamer des procédures juridiques, ou de faire appel devant la Cour d'appel à Luxembourg, la Commission estime-t-elle que des mesures complémentaires sont nécessaires?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(23 juillet 2013)

Lors de la réunion du Conseil européen, fin juin 2012, les chefs d'État et de gouvernement ont effectivement convenu d'établir le siège de la division centrale de la juridiction unifiée du brevet à Paris. Des chambres spécialisées seront également créées dans deux sections de la division centrale, l'une à Londres (chimie, incluant les produits pharmaceutiques, classification C, et nécessités courantes de la vie, classification A), l'autre à Munich (mécanique, classification F). La Cour d'appel aura son siège à Luxembourg.

La mise en place de la juridiction unifiée du brevet est confiée au comité préparatoire des États membres contractants, dans lequel la Commission a le statut d'observateur. Les travaux préparatoires ont commencé mais il n'a pas encore été décidé des règles en ce qui concerne les frais de justice.

Cela dit, la Commission ne doute pas qu'avec une attribution claire des tâches et un système informatique performant, la juridiction pourra effectuer son travail efficacement. La Commission reconnaît qu'il est nécessaire d'éviter des frais de justice élevés afin de garantir l'accès effectif de tous à la justice et fera ce qui est en son pouvoir à cet égard.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006335/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Establishment of a European Patent Court

At the June 2012 European Council, Member States agreed to set up a European Patent Court. Its seat will be in Paris, and the court of appeal will be attached to the Court of Justice of the European Union in Luxembourg.

Does the Commission believe that the court will be able to carry out its work effectively despite being located in two different countries? Does it see a need to take further measures in an effort to ensure that excessive legal costs do not deter individuals or groups from initiating legal proceedings or seeking to have decisions overturned by the court of appeal in Luxembourg?

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

At the European Council meeting at the end of June 2012, the Heads of State and Government indeed agreed that the seat of the central division of the Unified Patent Court will be in Paris; in addition, thematic clusters will be created in two sections of the Central Division, one in London (chemistry, including pharmaceuticals, classification C, human necessities, classification A), the other in Munich (mechanical engineering, classification F). The Court of Appeal will have its seat in Luxembourg.

The setting up of the Unified Patent Court is being carried out by the Preparatory Committee of the Contracting Member States in which the Commission has an observer status. The preparatory work has started but the rules on the court fees are still to be decided.

Having said this, the Commission is confident that, with a clear attribution of tasks and a well-functioning IT system, the court will be able to carry out its work effectively. The Commission agrees with the need to avoid high legal costs in order to ensure effective access to justice for everyone and will use its influence in this respect.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006336/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Études d'impact dans le cadre de projets transfrontaliers

Récemment, la République tchèque a construit un parc éolien sur son territoire, situé à la frontière avec l'Allemagne.

L'étude d'impact a été correctement effectuée sur le territoire tchèque. Mais aucune étude d'impact n'a été menée du côté allemand, alors que la population située à proximité de la frontière tchèque, donc près du nouveau parc éolien, se trouve affectée.

Il en est de même pour un projet éolien entre la Belgique et la France, un projet belge ayant des répercussions sur la commune française de Sebourg.

La Commission estime-t-elle que, dans le cadre de projets environnementaux transfrontaliers, les consultations menées dans le cadre de l'étude d'impact devraient aussi inclure la population étrangère située à proximité de la frontière?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(18 juillet 2013)

La population d'un État membre affecté par un projet réalisé dans un autre État membre doit être consultée conformément à l'article 7 de la directive 2011/92/UE concernant l'évaluation des incidences de certains projets publics et privés sur l'environnement, appelée la directive sur l'évaluation de l'impact sur l'environnement (EIE) ([1]) ainsi qu'aux dispositions de la convention d'Espoo ([2]) sur l'évaluation de l'impact sur l'environnement dans un contexte tranfrontière de la Commission économique pour l'Europe des Nations unies, lorsqu'une évaluation de l'impact sur l'environnement s'impose sur la base des instruments susmentionnés (à savoir, lorsqu'un État membre, sur le territoire duquel il est envisagé de réaliser un projet, constate qu'un projet est susceptible d'avoir des incidences notables sur l'environnement d'un autre État membre ou lorsqu'un État membre susceptible d'être affecté de manière notable le demande).

Les modalités de mise en œuvre des dispositions susmentionnées, y compris pour ce qui est de la manière dont la population concernée établie sur le territoire de l'État membre affecté participe effectivement aux procédures décisionnelles en matière d'environnement relatives au projet, sont définies par l'État membre concerné.

([1]) JO L 26 du 28.1.2012.
([2]) http://www.unece.org/fr/env/eia/eia_f.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006336/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Impact assessments for cross-border projects

The Czech Republic recently built a wind farm on its own territory, located on the border with Germany.

The impact assessment was duly conducted on Czech Republic soil. However, no impact assessment was conducted on the German side, where the population near to the Czech border, and therefore close to the new wind farm, is affected.

The same goes for a wind farm between Belgium and France, a Belgian project affecting the French district of Sebourg.

Does the Commission think, in cross-border environmental projects, that the consultations conducted as part of the impact assessment should also include the foreign population living close to the border?

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

The public in a Member State affected by a project carried out in another Member state has to be consulted in accordance with Article 7 of the directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, known as the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive ([1]), as well as the provisions of the UNECE Espoo Convention ([2]) on EIA in a transboundary context, when an EIA is triggered on the basis of the above instruments (i.e. where a Member State, in whose territory the project is intended to be carried out, is aware that a project is likely to have significant effects on the environment in another Member State or where a Member State likely to be significantly affected so requests).

The detailed arrangements for implementing the above provisions, including on how the public concerned in the territory of the affected Member State participates effectively in the environmental decision-making procedures for the project, are determined by the Member States concerned.

([1]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) http://www.unece.org/env/eia/eia.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006337/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Appels en masqué des institutions européennes

Les téléphones fixes de certaines institutions européennes sont par défaut programmés pour appeler des numéros externes en inconnu. Ainsi, le personnel du Parlement européen ne peut appeler qu'en appel masqué des numéros externes au Parlement, alors que la Commission européenne n'est pas sujette à cette restriction.

En termes d'image, il est étonnant de voir que le Parlement appelle en masqué alors qu'il se doit d'être le symbole de la transparence et de l'accessibilité.

Ne serait-il pas intéressant durant l'Année européenne du citoyen d'en venir à des règles communes pour toutes les institutions pour les appels extérieurs?

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(25 juillet 2013)

Toutes les institutions de l'UE ont le droit de fixer librement leurs méthodes de travail internes, indépendamment les unes des autres. La Commission ne voit aucune raison d'émettre des observations sur les règles appliquées par le Parlement en matière de communication avec l'extérieur.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006337/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Use of the 'withheld number' setting in EU institutions

Some but not all EU institutions have 'withheld number' as the standard setting for outgoing calls made from their office phones: at Parliament outside calls can only be made using this setting, whereas the Commission imposes no such restriction.

It is remarkable that Parliament, which ought to be setting an example in terms of transparency and accessibility, should use the 'withheld number' setting.

Given that this is the European Year of Citizens, would it not make sense to agree on common rules on outgoing calls applicable to all the institutions?

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

All EU institutions are free to set their internal working methods independently of each other. The Commission sees no reason to comment on the rules that the European Parliament applies for its external communication.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006339/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Obsolescence programmée en Europe

L'obsolescence programmée est une pratique qui vise à réduire la durée de vie ou d'utilisation d'un produit afin d'en augmenter le taux de remplacement. Cette pratique implique que les entreprises prévoient, dans la planification de la construction ou du montage des objets, le remplacement rapide des composants.

Le problème est qu'ils sont souvent intégrés dans un ensemble d'autres composants afin de compliquer l'accès à ces mêmes pièces lors de leur réparation rendant ainsi le prix plus élevé au point de devoir remplacer complètement le produit.

Cette pratique présente deux problèmes majeurs: elle porte atteinte aux droits des consommateurs en les contraignant à racheter des composants pour réparer leur matériel et ce, de façon prématurée. Elle porte aussi atteinte à l'environnement puisqu'elle entraîne une surconsommation et une fabrication excessive de matériels.

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que des règles strictes devraient être mises en place pour protéger le consommateur de ce manque d'information sur la longévité du matériel au moment de l'achat?

Dans une démarche de protection de l'environnement, des critères environnementaux des produits à durée de vie limitée pourraient-ils être mis en place par la Commission?

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

La Commission est très attentive à la durabilité des produits, en particulier dans ses politiques relatives à l'utilisation efficace des ressources, à l'écoconception et aux déchets. Elle soutient également la lutte contre l'obsolescence programmée durant la phase de conception ainsi que la maximisation de la durée vie des produits par des mesures spécifiques aux produits prévues par les politiques de l'UE. À cet égard, l'Honorable Parlementaire est invité à consulter les réponses données par la Commission aux questions E-3441/2013 et E-5352/2013 de M. Mario Borghezio ([1]).

La Commission réalise des études préparatoires qui évaluent, entre autres, la possibilité de prolonger la durée de vie pour certains groupes de produits liés à l'énergie visés dans les trois plans de travail annuels établis en vertu de la directive sur l'écoconception ([2]). C'est de cette manière que la Commission gère les questions de l'obsolescence programmée et de l'amélioration de l'information des consommateurs concernant les produits qui sont déjà concernés ou le seront dans un avenir proche, comme les lampes (durée de vie), les aspirateurs (durée de vie du tuyau et du moteur) ou les ordinateurs et écrans (mode «veille» prolongeant la durée de vie, mise hors tension automatique). Sur la base de ces études et d'études d'évaluation, des exigences impératives portant sur l'écoconception et l'information — ainsi que des exigences de durabilité — sont instaurées lorsque les conséquences pour l'environnement s'avèrent importantes.

En outre, le fait qu'un opérateur économique n'informe pas le consommateur lorsqu'un produit a été conçu pour avoir une durée de vie limitée pourrait être considéré comme une pratique commerciale déloyale, en vertu des dispositions de la directive 2005/29/CE ([3]).

Enfin, un récent sondage Eurobaromètre (publié le 5 juillet 2013) indique que les citoyens de l'Union européenne sont largement en faveur de l'indication de la durée de vie prévue d'un produit (92 % d'avis favorables).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Directive 2009/125/CE relative à l'écoconception.
([3]) Directive 2005/29/CE relative aux pratiques commerciales déloyales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006339/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Planned obsolescence in Europe

Planned obsolescence is a practice that aims to reduce the life expectancy or duration of use of a product in order to increase its replacement rate. This practice involves companies, when planning the construction or assembly of products, planning for components to be replaced before long.

The problem is that they are often part of a set of other components in order to make access to those parts difficult during repair, thus making the price higher to the point that the product has to be replaced altogether.

This practice presents two major issues: it undermines the rights of consumers by forcing them to purchase components to repair their equipment prematurely; it is also harmful to the environment as it leads to overconsumption and excessive manufacturing of equipment.

Does the Commission not think that strict rules should be put in place to protect consumers from this lack of information on the longevity of equipment at the point of purchase?

As a measure to protect the environment, could the Commission introduce environmental criteria for products with a limited life expectancy?

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

The Commission is highly attentive to the subject of the durability of products, particularly in its policies concerning resource efficiency, ecodesign and waste. It also supports combating planned obsolescence during the design phase, as well as maximising product life-span through product specific measures under existing EU policies. In this regard, the Honourable Member is invited to refer to the Commission's replies to questions E-3441/2013 and E-5352/2013 by Mr Mario Borghezio ([1]).

The Commission undertakes preparatory studies which evaluate *inter alia* the potential of lifetime-extension for energy-related product groups as set out in the three annual working plans under the Ecodesign Directive ([2]). Thereby the Commission addresses the issues of planned obsolescence and the strengthening of consumer information for products that are already covered and will be covered in the near future, for example lamps (lifetime), vacuum cleaners (hose and motor lifetime), or computers/displays (life prolonging sleep mode, automatic power down). On the basis of these and of review studies, mandatory ecodesign and information requirements are set whenever the associated environmental impacts are found to be significant, including durability requirements.

Moreover, the fact that a trader does not inform the consumer when a product has been designed to have a limited lifetime could be considered as an unfair commercial practice under the provisions of Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]).

Lastly, a recent Eurobarometer survey (published on 5 July 2013) showed a very strong support by EU citizens on the indication of the expected life-span of a product (92% in favour).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Ecodesign Directive 2009/125/EC.
([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006340/13
à la Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Développement des réseaux de transport transeuropéens

Dans le but de favoriser la mobilité en Europe et les déplacements entre les États membres, l'Union européenne, par l'intermédiaire du Parlement et du Conseil, a arrêté un programme de développement des infrastructures de transport, appelé réseau de transport transeuropéen (RTE-T).

Il s'agit là d'un élément important de la politique de transport de l'Union qui définit les projets prioritaires à réaliser à l'horizon 2020. Or, depuis quelques années, les États membres ont tendance à développer leurs projets nationaux au détriment des projets transnationaux. À cela s'ajoutent le problème des contributions au budget de l'Union destiné à la politique des transports et celui du montant global du futur cadre financier pluriannuel pour 2014-2020.

1. La Commission juge-t-elle toujours que le réseau de transport transeuropéen est un programme majeur et prioritaire?

2. Si tel est le cas, compte-t-elle prendre des initiatives pour favoriser la mise en place de ce réseau qui semble actuellement délaissé?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(11 juillet 2013)

1. La politique en matière de RTE-T demeure l'une des priorités de la Commission et il s'agit d'un élément déterminant pour la création d'un réseau transeuropéen de transport qui constitue l'épine dorsale du marché intérieur.

2. En octobre 2011, la Commission a proposé un réexamen en profondeur de la politique existante en matière de RTE-T ([1]). En mai 2013, le Parlement et le Conseil sont parvenus à un accord sur les points principaux de la proposition de la Commission, notamment sur la détermination d'un réseau central européen sur la base d'une méthode objective, l'élaboration de normes garantissant l'interopérabilité et la qualité de l'infrastructure, la finalisation de ce réseau central d'ici à 2030, et la présence de coordonnateurs européens qui faciliteront la mise en œuvre coordonnée des corridors. L'ensemble du programme est fortement centré sur les projets qui apportent une valeur ajoutée européenne, ce qui est tout particulièrement le cas des projets transfrontières. L'adoption formelle et l'entrée en vigueur du nouveau cadre juridique devraient avoir lieu avant la fin de l'année.

([1]) COM(2011)650.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006340/13
to the Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Developing trans-European transport networks in Europe

In an attempt to encourage mobility in Europe and make it easier for people to travel between Member States, Parliament and the Council agreed on a scheme to modernise Europe's transport infrastructure, called the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T).

The network forms an important part of the EU's overall transport policy, which sets the priorities to be achieved by 2020. For a number of years now, however, Member States have tended to push ahead with national projects to the detriment of transnational ones. The situation is also being exacerbated by issues surrounding the EU transport policy budget and the overall size of the multiannual financial framework for the period 2014-2020.

1. Does the Commission still regard the Trans-European Transport Network as an important scheme and a major priority?

2. If so, what steps does it intend to take to move the TEN-T project forward, given that it appears to be on the backburner for the time being?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

1. The TEN-T policy continues to be one of the priorities of the Commission and constitutes an essential element to create a trans-European transport network which serves as the backbone of the internal market.

2. The Commission proposed in October 2011 a fundamental review of the existing TEN-T policy ([1]). In May 2013, Parliament and Council reached an agreement on the main elements of the Commission proposal: the identification of a European core network based on an objective methodology, standards to ensure interoperability and quality of the infrastructure, a deadline for the realisation of this core network by 2030, European Coordinators who will facilitate the coordinated implementation of the corridors, etc.. The whole policy is strongly focused on the European added value of projects, which is particularly the case of cross-border projects. It is expected that the new legal framework will be formally adopted and enter into force before the end of this year.

([1]) COM(2011)650.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006341/13
à la Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre le chômage des jeunes européens

Les jeunes européens sont particulièrement touchés par la crise et par le chômage. Le nombre de sans-emploi parmi les moins de 25 ans atteint désormais un niveau alarmant dans de nombreux États membres de l'Union. Aujourd'hui, les principales politiques sont orientées sur les jeunes peu ou pas qualifiés. Or, il apparaît désormais que les jeunes diplômés sont aussi durement touchés par le chômage. Dans ce contexte, le Parlement européen a voté très récemment en faveur d'un soutien accru de l'UE aux jeunes de moins de 30 ans titulaires d'un diplôme dans des amendements au projet de règlement sur le Fonds social européen.

1. Sans réduire les politiques pour les jeunes peu ou pas qualifiés, la Commission compte-t-elle prendre des mesures supplémentaires pour les jeunes diplômés sans emploi?

2. Plus globalement, quelle est la stratégie de la Commission à moyen et long terme pour lutter contre le chômage des jeunes au sein de l'Union?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(22 juillet 2013)

Le 19 juin 2013, la Commission a publié la communication «Œuvrer ensemble pour les jeunes Européens — Un appel à l'action contre le chômage des jeunes». Cette communication pour lutter contre le chômage des jeunes, notamment la mise en œuvre de l'initiative Garantie pour la jeunesse, l'utilisation du Fonds social européen (FSE), un soutien à la mobilité de la main-d'œuvre à l'intérieur de l'UE avec le concours d'EURES et des mesures visant à faciliter le passage des études à la vie active ([1]).

La Commission aidera les États membres à appliquer rapidement la recommandation du Conseil sur l'établissement d'une garantie pour la jeunesse, dans le cadre d'une stratégie intégrée en faveur de l'emploi des jeunes. Dans ce contexte, le FSE 2014-2020, et en particulier l'initiative pour l'emploi des jeunes, apportera une aide précieuse. Ladite recommandation cible surtout — et la Commission a proposé que l'initiative pour l'emploi des jeunes dotée de 6 milliards d'euros fasse de même — les personnes âgées de 25 ans au maximum, pour lesquelles le chômage et l'inactivité sont les plus dommageables du point de vue du développement des compétences professionnelles. Une des principales priorités consiste à soutenir toutes les personnes rentrant dans cette catégorie. Néanmoins, la Commission reconnaît pleinement les difficultés rencontrées par les jeunes diplômés et rappelle que le FSE peut aussi bénéficier à l'emploi de ces derniers.

En décembre 2013, la Commission présentera une proposition relative à un cadre de qualité pour les stages destiné à permettre aux jeunes de profiter d'une expérience de travail de qualité dans des conditions sûres.

Pour aider les jeunes à acquérir des compétences et des expériences professionnellement utiles en dehors du système d'éducation formelle, la Commission encourage également la reconnaissance des acquis non formels, en accord avec la stratégie de l'UE en faveur de la jeunesse et la recommandation sur la validation de l'apprentissage non formel et informel.

([1]) COM(2013) 447 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006341/13
to the Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Combating youth unemployment in Europe

Young Europeans are particularly affected by the crisis and by unemployment. The unemployment rate amongst the under-25s has now reached an alarming level in many EU Member States. Currently, the main policies are focused on young people with few or no qualifications. Now, it appears that young graduates are also badly affected by unemployment. In light of the above, Parliament very recently voted in favour of increased EU support for young people under 30 years of age with a degree, in amendments to the draft regulation on the European Social Fund.

1. Without reducing the number of policies for young people with few or no qualifications, does the Commission intend to take any additional measures for young unemployed graduates?

2. What is the Commission's overall strategy in the medium and long term for combating youth unemployment in the European Union?

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

On 19 June 2013 the Commission issued a communication 'Working together for Europe's young people: a call to Action'. It calls for urgent action on youth unemployment including the implementation of the Youth Guarantee; the use of EU funds; support to intra-EU labour mobility through EURES; and measures to ease the transition from education to work ([1]).

The Commission will support Member States to swiftly implement the Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee, as an integrated approach towards youth employment. The European Social Fund 2014-2020 and in particular the Youth Employment Initiative will provide important EU support. The Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee focuses, and the Commission proposed that the EURO 6 billion Youth Employment Initiative should also focus, on people up to age 25, for whom unemployment or inactivity result in the greatest damage in terms of non-development of professional skills. A key priority is that all people in this category should be supported. However, the Commission fully recognises the difficulties faced by young graduates and recalls that their employment can also be supported from the ESF.

In December 2013 the Commission will present a proposal for a Quality Framework for Traineeships to help ensure that traineeships provide young people with high quality work experience under safe conditions.

To help young people gain work-relevant skills and experiences outside formal education the Commission also promotes recognition of non-formal learning experiences, in accordance with the EU Youth Strategy and the recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

([1]) COM(2013) 447 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006342/13
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Consultation publique de la Commission européenne sur l'énergie

La Commission européenne a lancé une consultation publique sur l'énergie, close le 20 mars 2013. Elle y considère pour acquis «*le développement des combustibles fossiles non conventionnels*» puisqu'elle y propose de «*l'accompagner de garanties sanitaires, climatiques et environnementales adéquates et d'un maximum de sécurité et de prévisibilité juridiques*».

Le gaz de schiste fait partie des principaux combustibles fossiles non conventionnels identifiés en Europe. Partout sur le territoire, les populations se mobilisent contre cette source d'énergie dont le seul processus d'extraction existant, la fracturation hydraulique, est très dommageable pour l'environnement. Rappelons qu'en juillet 2011, le Parlement européen avait publié une étude présentant les lacunes de la réglementation européenne actuelle sur le gaz de schiste. Certains États membres ont d'ailleurs déposé des moratoires sur l'exploitation de cette ressource. En France, cette interdiction a été confirmée par la conférence environnementale de septembre 2012.

De même, depuis juin 2009 et l'entrée en vigueur du paquet énergie-climat, les États membres sont juridiquement contraints d'obtenir des résultats en matière de réduction des émissions de CO_2 et d'utilisation des énergies renouvelables. L'exploitation du gaz de schiste semble contraire à ces objectifs.

Enfin, la politique énergétique est actuellement en discussion au niveau européen puisqu'il y a une semaine, un Conseil européen se réunissait à ce sujet. Il y a quelques jours, Günther Oettinger, commissaire européen chargé de l'énergie, déclarait dans le journal allemand *Die Welt*: «*Il est tout à fait juste de tenter de protéger des zones contenant des eaux potables et souterraines, comme dans le lac de Constance. À l'échelle de l'Union, la fracturation hydraulique et la protection de l'environnement seront analysées de plus près cette année*».

1. La Commission est-elle consciente de l'incompatibilité entre l'exploitation des gaz de schiste et les objectifs européens en termes d'énergie et de climat?

2. De quelle manière la Commission compte-t-elle prendre en compte les réticences des citoyens européens vis-à-vis des énergies non conventionnelles dans la définition d'une nouvelle politique énergétique européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(30 juillet 2013)

La Commission ne considère pas que l'éventuelle exploitation du gaz de schiste au sein de l'UE soit nécessairement incompatible avec les objectifs européens en matière d'énergie et de climat. Elle a intégré dans son programme de travail pour 2013 une initiative, faisant l'objet d'une analyse d'impact, concernant un «cadre d'évaluation des questions liées à l'environnement, au climat et à l'énergie visant à permettre une extraction sûre et sécurisée des hydrocarbures non conventionnels». Ce cadre vise à étudier les différents moyens de diversifier notre approvisionnement en énergie et d'améliorer notre compétitivité tout en veillant à ce que le développement des hydrocarbures non conventionnels, notamment du gaz de schiste, s'effectue dans le respect de mesures de protection climatique et environnementale adéquates et avec un maximum de clarté et de prévisibilité juridiques pour les citoyens, les autorités compétentes et les opérateurs. Cet exercice fait suite à une consultation publique dont les résultats sont actuellement analysés dans le contexte de la préparation de l'initiative susmentionnée. En outre, la Commission a adopté, le 27 mars 2013, un livre vert intitulé «Un cadre pour les politiques en matière de climat et d'énergie à l'horizon 2030» ([1]), qui a lancé une consultation publique afin que toutes les parties prenantes puissent donner leur avis concernant les aspects importants de la politique de l'UE en matière de climat et d'énergie.

([1]) COM(2013)169 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006342/13
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Public consultation on energy by the Commission

In a public consultation on energy launched by the Commission, which ended on 20 March 2013, the development of unconventional fossil fuels is taken for granted since it is proposing to accompany it with suitable health, climate and environmental guarantees and the utmost legal certainty and predictability.

Shale gas is one of the main unconventional fossil fuels identified in Europe. People across Europe are rallying against this energy source for which the only existing extraction process, hydraulic fracturing, is very harmful to the environment. In July 2011, Parliament published a study highlighting the gaps in current European legislation on shale gas. Moreover, some Member States have placed moratoriums on the exploitation of this resource. In France, this ban was confirmed at the environmental conference held in September 2012.

Likewise, since the climate and energy package entered into force in June 2009, Member States have been legally obliged to produce results in terms of reducing CO_2 emissions and using renewable energy. The exploitation of shale gas appears to stand at odds with these objectives.

Finally, EU energy policy is currently under discussion as a European Council meeting on this subject was held a week ago. Several days ago, Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for Energy, stated in the German newspaper *Die Welt* that it was absolutely correct to seek to protect areas containing drinking water and groundwater, such as those at Lake Constance. He also said that, at EU level, hydraulic fracturing and environmental protection would be looked at in more detail this year.

1. Is the Commission aware of the incompatibility between the exploitation of shale gas and EU energy and climate objectives?

2. How does the Commission plan to deal with the reticence of the European public with regard to unconventional energy when drawing up a new EU energy policy?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The Commission does not consider that the possible exploitation of shale gas in the EU would be necessarily incompatible with EU energy and climate objectives. It included in its Work Programme for 2013 an initiative (subject to an impact assessment) for an 'Environmental, climate and energy assessment framework to enable safe and secure unconventional hydrocarbon extraction'. It aims at investigating how possibilities to diversify our energy supply and to improve our competitiveness can be utilised while ensuring that unconventional hydrocarbon developments, notably shale gas, are carried out with proper climate and environmental safeguards in place and under maximum legal clarity and predictability for citizens, competent authorities and operators. This exercise has been preceded by a public consultation the outcome of which is being considered in the preparation of the abovementioned initiative. In addition, the Commission adopted on 27 March 2013 a Green Paper on 'A 2030 framework for climate and energy policies' ([1]) which launched a public consultation allowing stakeholders to express their views on important aspects of EU climate and energy policy.

([1]) COM(2013) 169 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006343/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Proteste in Turchia contro il processo di islamizzazione del governo Erdogan

L'approvazione definitiva da parte dell'Assemblea generale turca il 24 maggio scorso della legge sul consumo di alcool ha scatenato un'ondata di protesta nell'intero paese.

Le nuove norme, che impongono restrizioni al commercio e alla pubblicità di bevande alcoliche, oltre a vietarne la vendita al dettaglio tra le dieci di sera e le sei del mattino, hanno provocato dal 31 maggio scorso oltre 235 manifestazioni in 67 città, con 58 civili e 115 agenti feriti.

Ad Ankara sono stati presi d'assalto gli uffici del premier Erdogan, mentre le tv, sotto la pressione del governo, minimizzano la rivolta. 1.700 manifestanti, che non condividono la progressiva islamizzazione imposta al paese sono stati arrestati, anche se il Ministero degli interni fa sapere che la maggior parte di loro è già stata rilasciata.

Può la Commissione riferire:

— se è a conoscenza degli eventi;

— se ritiene che i nuovi divieti siano in contrasto con la linea riformista finora seguita dal paese per rispettare i parametri imposti dall'Unione europea;

— come valuta il nuovo orientamento del governo turco in prospettiva di una futura adesione della Turchia quale membro a pieno titolo dell'Unione europea?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 agosto 2013)

La Commissione ha seguito con attenzione le questioni e gli avvenimenti menzionati dall'onorevole deputato.

Per quanto riguarda la nuova legge sulla distribuzione e sulla vendita di alcolici, le restrizioni in questo campo sono di competenza esclusiva delle autorità nazionali. La Commissione deplora tuttavia che una questione così importante e delicata per la società in generale non sia stata discussa in modo approfondito prima dell'adozione della legge. In linea generale, qualsiasi misura adottata deve rispettare i diritti fondamentali, compreso il diritto al rispetto della vita privata.

Gli avvenimenti attuali sottolineano l'importanza di intensificare il dialogo con la Turchia nel quadro del processo di adesione all'UE, anche per quanto riguarda i capitoli di negoziato più fondamentali per il suo processo di riforma: capitolo 23 — Sistema giudiziario e diritti fondamentali e capitolo 24 — Giustizia, libertà e sicurezza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006343/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Protests in Turkey against the Erdogan Government's islamisation process

The definitive adoption of the law on alcohol consumption by the Turkish General Assembly on 24 May 2013 sparked a wave of protests across the country.

The new measures, which impose restrictions on the sale and advertising of alcoholic drinks in addition to a ban on their retail sale between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., have resulted in over 235 protests in 67 cities, with 58 civilians and 115 police officers injured since 31 May.

In Ankara, Prime Minister Erdogan's offices were stormed, while the TV channels, under government pressure, are playing down the revolt. One thousand seven hundred protestors who do not agree with the progressive islamisation of the country have been arrested, although the Turkish Ministry for Internal Affairs says that most of them have already been released.

Can the Commission state:

— whether it is aware of these events;

— whether it believes that the new bans run counter to the reform approach which the country has been following until now in order to comply with the criteria laid down by the European Union;

— its opinion of the new line taken by the Turkish Government with a view to Turkey's future accession to the EU as a fully fledged member?

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

The Commission has followed the issues and events mentioned by the Honourable Member closely.

Regarding the new law on distribution and sale of alcohol, limitations of alcohol fall under the exclusive competence of national authorities. However, the Commission regrets that such a sensitive issue for the society at large has not been debated thoroughly before its adoption. Generally, any measure adopted needs to respect fundamental rights, including the right to respect for private life.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006344/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(4 juni 2013)

Betreft: Uitbreiding afmetingen vervoerbare rolstoel voor treinen

In haar antwoord op vraag E-003954/2013 verwees de Commissie naar bijlage M van de Beschikking 2008/164/EG van de Commissie (TSI personen met beperkte mobiliteit), waarin de maximumafmetingen voor een vervoerbare rolstoel zijn opgenomen.

Daarnaast wees ze erop dat het Europees Spoorwegbureau momenteel de laatste hand legt aan een aanbeveling aan de Commissie voor een herziene „TSI personen met beperkte mobiliteit" en daarbij zal aanbevelen om het gewicht van een vervoerbare rolstoel te verhogen.

Voor personen met een handicap en/of beperkte mobiliteit die specifiek gebruik maken van een rolstoel van het scootmobieltype („mobility scooters") is niet alleen het gewicht, maar zijn ook de maximumafmetingen voor vervoerbare rolstoelen een probleem.

Zo is de maximumlengte van een vervoerbare rolstoel vastgelegd op 1200 mm, terwijl de meeste scootmobielen een lengte hebben van minimum 1400 mm. Door deze beperkte afmetingen kunnen een groot aantal personen met een handicap en/of beperkte mobiliteit die gebruik maken van een scootmobiel geen gebruik maken van het openbaar vervoer, in het bijzonder de trein.

Nochtans groeit het aantal personen dat gebruik maakt van dergelijke scootmobiel jaar na jaar (in Nederland zijn er momenteel al meer dan 250 000 scootmobielgebruikers). Een uitbreiding van de basisafmetingen van een vervoerbare rolstoel dringt zich dus op.

— Hoe kijkt de Commissie aan tegen een uitbreiding van de basisafmetingen van een vervoerbare rolstoel?

— Zal de Commissie de basisafmetingen van een vervoerbare rolstoel — en in het bijzonder de lengte — verhogen bij de herziening van de „TSI personen met beperkte mobiliteit"?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(11 juli 2013)

De Commissie heeft de aanbeveling voor een herziene „TSI personen met beperkte mobiliteit" van het Europees Spoorwegbureau (ESB) ontvangen op 6 mei 2013. Het Bureau stelt voor om de basisafmetingen van een vervoerbare rolstoel te verhogen. De afmetingen zijn vastgesteld in bijlage M van de TSI: Het totaalgewicht is verhoogd van 200 kg naar 300 kg (rolstoel en gebruiker) voor een elektrische rolstoel waarvoor geen hulp is vereist bij het instappen via een instaphulpmiddel. De maximumlengte van een vervoerbare rolstoel is verhoogd van 1200 mm naar 1250 mm (+ 50 mm voor de voeten).

Dit is het resultaat van intensieve besprekingen in de werkgroep die verantwoordelijk is voor opstellen van de aanbevelingen van het Bureau. In de werkgroep zitten vertegenwoordigers van de nationale veiligheidsagentschappen, en van sector- en gebruikersorganisaties. De uiteindelijk vastgestelde hoogte is een compromis waarbij rekening is gehouden met het feit dat de breedte van rollend materieel fysiek beperkt is. Als een rolstoel te lang is, kan de gebruiker niet omkeren aan boord van de trein. Het compromis is eveneens aanvaard door het Europees Gehandicaptenforum, dat oorspronkelijk had gevraagd om bij de herziening van de afmetingen met de „langst mogelijke rolstoel" rekening te houden, d.w.z. met de elektrische scootmobiel.

Bijgevolg is de Commissie voornemens de aanbeveling van het ESB op dit punt te volgen bij de opstelling van de verordening van de Commissie betreffende de herziene „TSI personen met beperkte mobiliteit".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006344/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Extending transportable wheelchair dimensions for use on trains

In its answer to Question E-003954/2013 the Commission referred to Annex M of Commission Decision 2008/164/EG (PRM TSI), which sets out the maximum dimensions for a transportable wheelchair.

It also pointed out that the European Railway Agency is currently finalising a recommendation to the Commission for a revised PRM TSI which will recommend increasing the weight of a transportable wheelchair.

For persons with disabilities and/or reduced mobility who use mobility scooters specifically the problem is not just the weight limit for transportable wheelchairs but their maximum dimensions too.

For example, the maximum length of a transportable wheelchair is set at 1 200 mm, while most mobility scooters are at least 1 400 mm long. These limited dimensions make it impossible for a large number of persons with disabilities and/or reduced mobility who use mobility scooters to travel by public transport, and in particular by train.

And yet, the number of persons using such mobility scooters grows year on year (in the Netherlands there are currently more than 250 000 mobility scooter users). Therefore, there is a pressing need to extend the basic dimensions of a transportable wheelchair.

— What is the Commission's view on extending the basic dimensions of a transportable wheelchair?

— Will the Commission increase the basic dimensions of a transportable wheelchair — the length in particular — as part of the PRM TSI review?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

The Commission received the European Railway Agency (ERA)'s recommendation for a revised PRM TSI on 6 May 2013. The Agency suggests increasing the basic dimensions of a transportable wheelchair, set out in Annex M of the TSI, as follows: The maximum fully laden weight has been increased from 200kg to 300kg (wheelchair and occupant) in the case of an electrical wheelchair for which no assistance is required for crossing a boarding aid. The maximum length of a transportable wheelchair has been raised from 1200 mm to 1250 mm (+ 50 mm for the feet).

This is the result of intensive discussions in the Working Party in charge of preparing the ERA recommendation. The Working Party includes representatives from National Safety Authorities, sector and users organisations. The final height value is a compromise which reflects the fact that the width of rolling stock is physically limited. If a wheelchair is too long, it is impossible for its user to turn on board the train. The compromise was also accepted by the European Disability forum which had initially requested considering the 'longest possible wheelchair', i.e. the electric scooter, when revising the dimensions.

Therefore, the Commission intends to follow the ERA recommendation on this point when drafting the Commission Regulation concerning the revised PRM TSI.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006345/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(4 juni 2013)

Betreft: Europese bijdrage tot verbetering van werkomstandigheden in textielsector in Bangladesh

In de resolutie van 23 mei 2013 roept het Europees Parlement de Europese Commissie op om een actieve rol te spelen bij de verbetering van de werkomstandigheden in de textielindustrie in Bangladesh.

— Welke maatregelen wil de Commissie nemen om, ook in het licht van de strategie ter bevordering van het maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen 2011-2014, de ontbrekende Europese textieldetailhandelaars en kledingmerken aan te sporen het Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh te ondertekenen?

— Hoe zal de Commissie toezien op de implementatie van de engagementen van de textielfabrikanten en de regering van Bangladesh?

— Hoe kan de Commissie Europese bedrijven die door onderaanneming bij de Rana Plaza ramp in Savar betrokken zijn, aansporen om aan een billijke compensatieregeling voor de slachtoffers en de nabestaanden bij te dragen?

— Welke actie zal de Commissie ondernemen om gevolg te geven aan de vraag van het Europees Parlement om met de betrokken actoren samen te werken aan een vrijwillig sociaal label dat de consument ervan verzekert dat het product met respect voor de kernarbeidsnormen van de Internationale Arbeidsorganisatie vervaardigd werd?

— Wat is de positie van de Commissie aangaande het instrument van een sociale audit en de uitwisseling van deze auditgegevens, zoals deze bijvoorbeeld succesvol wordt toegepast door de leden van de Initiative Clause Sociale, in de strijd tegen sociale misbruiken bij onderaannemers?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(31 juli 2013)

Op 8 juli 2013 zijn de Europese Commissie, de regering van Bangladesh en de Internationale Arbeidsorganisatie (IAO) gestart met een Duurzaamheidspact ([1]) om de arbeidsomstandigheden en gezondheids- en veiligheidsnormen voor werknemers in kledingfabrieken in Bangladesh binnen overeengekomen termijnen te verbeteren. De regering van Bangladesh heeft de hoofdverantwoordelijkheid voor het versterken van de rechten van werknemers en het verbeteren van de veiligheid van gebouwen. De IAO zal bijdragen aan het coördineren van de inspanningen en het mobiliseren van technische middelen. De EU zal de inspanningen van Bangladesh blijven steunen vanuit haar huidige hulpprogramma's, en overweegt verdere ondersteuning in het kader van de programma's voor 2014-2020. In dit pact wordt begroet dat meer dan 70 grote ondernemingen die zaken doen met Bangladesh het akkoord inzake brandveiligheid en veiligheid van gebouwen („Accord on Fire and Building Safety") hebben ondertekend, en worden andere ondernemingen aangemoedigd om dit voorbeeld te volgen.

Een vergadering voor follow-up inzake het pact vindt plaats in 2014.

In haar Strategie voor maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen ([2]) promoot de Commissie actief het overnemen van verantwoorde zakenpraktijken door in de EU gevestigde ondernemingen, met inbegrip van internationaal erkende beginselen en richtsnoeren zoals de „Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises" (Richtsnoeren voor multinationale ondernemingen) van de Organisatie voor Economische Samenwerking en Ontwikkeling (OESO) en de „Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights" (Richtsnoeren inzake het bedrijfsleven en mensenrechten) van de Verenigde Naties.

Ingevolge de OESO-richtsnoeren dienen onderschrijvende landen nationale contactpunten op te zetten die behulpzaam zijn bij de toepassing van en het geven van meer bekendheid aan de richtsnoeren, alsmede bij het opzetten van een klachten- en bemiddelingsmechanisme.

De Commissie verwelkomt particuliere initiatieven inzake regelingen voor sociale labels en sociale audits. Zij is niet voornemens zelf een initiatief voor sociale labels of een regeling voor sociale audits in het leven te roepen.

([1]) „Staying engaged: A Sustainability Compact for continous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready-Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh"; http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/juli/tradoc_151601.pdf

([2]) Mededeling „Een vernieuwde EU-strategie voor maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen 2011-2014"; COM(2011) 682 definitief.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006345/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: European contribution to improving working conditions in Bangladesh textile industry

In its resolution of 23 May 2013, the European Parliament calls on the European Commission to play an active role in improving the working conditions in the Bangladesh textile industry.

— What measures will the Commission take, including in the light of the EU strategy 2011-2014 promoting corporate social responsibility, to encourage the remaining European textile retailers and clothing brands to sign the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh?

— How will the Commission monitor the implementation of the commitments undertaken by the textile manufacturers and the Government of Bangladesh?

— How can the Commission encourage the European companies whose subcontractors were involved in the Rana Plaza disaster in Savar to contribute to a fair compensation arrangement for the victims and their families?

— What action will the Commission take in response to the appeal by the European Parliament to work together with the actors involved on a voluntary social label which would guarantee to consumers that a product has been manufactured in accordance with ILO core labour standards?

— What is the Commission's position on using social audits and the exchange of data from these audits, as has been applied successfully, for example, by the members of the Social Clause Initiative, in the fight against social abuses by subcontractors?

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

On 8 July 2013, the European Commission, the Government of Bangladesh and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), launched a Sustainability Compact ([1]) to improve labour, health and safety conditions for workers in Bangladeshi garment factories within agreed periods.

Bangladesh's Government has the main responsibility for strengthening workers' rights and for improving building safety. The ILO will help to coordinate efforts and mobilise technical resources. The EU will continue to support Bangladesh's efforts through its current aid programmes, and is considering further support under the 2014-2020 programmes. The Compact welcomes that over 70 major companies sourcing from Bangladesh have signed up to the Accord on Fire and Building Safety, and encourages other companies to follow suit.

A follow-up meeting on the Compact will take place in 2014.

In its Corporate Social Responsibility strategy ([2]), the Commission actively promotes the uptake of responsible business practices by EU-based companies, including internationally recognised principles and guidelines such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which also refer to remediation.

It is specified in the OECD Guidelines that adhering countries have to establish National Contact Points tasked with assisting in implementing and raising awareness of the Guidelines and with setting up a complaints and mediation mechanism.

The Commission welcomes private initiatives on social labelling and social audit schemes. It does not intend to create its own social labelling initiative or social audit scheme.

([1]) 'Staying engaged: A Sustainability Compact for continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready-Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh'; http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf

([2]) Communication 'A renewed EU strategy for Corporate Social Responsibility 2011-2014'; COM(2011) 682 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006347/13
à Comissão
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(4 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Regime de isenção fiscal em Portugal

O governo português aprovou um regime de isenção de IRS para estrangeiros reformados, de forma a atrair capitais e incentivar à compra de casa em Portugal. A alteração ao Código do IRS deverá permitir uma dupla isenção fiscal aos reformados estrangeiros que passem parte do ano em Portugal, uma vez que não pagam imposto em Portugal, nem o equivalente no país que lhes paga a pensão. Este regime é claramente ofensivo aos princípios de justiça fiscal, pois garante isenções a estrangeiros abastados que venham comprar casa em Portugal, sem que os reformados portugueses e/ou emigrantes que retornem possam beneficiar de regime semelhante.

Tendo em mente a resposta do Comissário Olli Rehn, em nome da Comissão, à minha anterior pergunta sobre assistência financeira a Chipre, na qual declarou: «Tributar os cidadãos estrangeiros com taxas mais elevadas do que os nacionais é contrário ao direito e aos princípios da UE», gostaria de colocar a questão:

Considera a Comissão que o regime proposto pelo governo português, que desfavorece os cidadãos portugueses face a estrangeiros, é lícito, justo, e conforme ao direito e aos princípios da UE?

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

No domínio da tributação direta, há pouca legislação da UE, sendo a tributação essencialmente da competência dos Estados-Membros, que têm liberdade para conceber os seus sistemas fiscais e para determinar as relações necessárias ao exercício dos seus direitos de tributação. Os Estados-Membros, porém, não estão autorizados a exercer discriminações com base na nacionalidade ou a criar ou manter uma discriminação contra os cidadãos da UE que exercem as suas liberdades consagradas no Tratado UE. Têm igualmente de respeitar as competências dos outros Estados-Membros. Em especial, Portugal não está em posição de decidir unilateralmente sobre o tratamento fiscal dado por outro país a uma pensão paga nesse país.

O regime fiscal que está a ser introduzido prevê que, ao contrário do que acontece com os reformados residentes em Portugal, que podem ser sujeitos a uma taxa de imposto de até 40 % sobre a sua pensão, os reformados que estabelecem a sua residência em Portugal não veriam as suas pensões tributadas pelas autoridades portuguesas nos próximos dez anos. No caso de o Estado-Membro de origem da pensão também não a tributar, estas pensões não serão tributadas durante os dez anos em causa. No entanto, a Comissão não pode contestar esta situação, uma vez que não vai contra os princípios consagrados no TFUE.

Todavia, a Comissão considera que os sistemas de tributação dos Estados-Membros devem basear-se, nomeadamente, em considerações de equidade. Assim, as novas regras fiscais que beneficiem um segmento dos contribuintes em detrimento de outro devem ser cuidadosamente analisadas.

O Código de Conduta da UE no domínio da fiscalidade das empresas visa combater a concorrência desleal a nível fiscal. Como se limita à fiscalidade das empresas, não se aplica às medidas fiscais aplicáveis às pessoas singulares. No seu plano de ação de 6 de dezembro de 2012, a Comissão propôs alargar o âmbito de aplicação do Código aos regimes fiscais especiais para expatriados e para possuidores de elevados rendimentos ou património.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006347/13
to the Commission
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Tax exemption in Portugal

The Portuguese Government has approved an income-tax exemption system for retired foreigners, in order to attract capital and encourage property buying in Portugal. The change to the Income Tax Code will grant retired foreigners who spend part of the year in Portugal a dual tax exemption since they will pay no tax in Portugal nor in the country that pays their pension. This system clearly clashes with the principles of fair taxation since it grants exemptions to wealthy foreigners who buy property in Portugal, while retired Portuguese citizens and/or returning emigrants will not benefit from a similar system.

In view of Commissioner Olli Rehn's answer to my previous question on financial aid to Cyprus, in which he stated that 'Taxing foreigners at higher rates than nationals is fundamentally against EC law and principles', does the Commission believe that the system proposed by the Portuguese Government, which penalises Portuguese nationals in favour of foreigners, is fair and in accordance with EC law and principles?

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

In the area of direct taxation, there is limited EU legislation and taxation falls essentially within the competence of Member States which are largely free to design their tax systems and to determine the links required for exercising their taxing rights. Member States are however not allowed to discriminate on the basis of nationality or to create or maintain discrimination against EU nationals who exercise their freedoms under the EU Treaty. They have also to respect the competences of the other Member States. In particular, Portugal is not in a position to unilaterally decide on the tax treatment in another country of a pension paid in that country.

The taxation regime being introduced provides that, unlike pensioners resident in Portugal who might be subject up to a tax rate of 40% on their pension, pensioners establishing their residence in Portugal would not have their pensions taxed by the Portuguese authorities for the next 10 years. In case the Member State of source of the pension does not also tax it, these pensions will not be taxed at all for the 10 years in question. However, the Commission cannot challenge this as it does not go against the principles enshrined in the TFEU.

This said, the Commission considers that Member States' taxation systems should be based, *inter alia*, on the considerations of fairness. Thus, new tax rules that benefit one segment of the taxpayers over another should be carefully scrutinised.

The EU Code of Conduct for business taxation is aimed at fighting unfair tax competition. As it is limited to company taxation it does not apply to tax measures for individuals. In its Action Plan of 6 December 2012 the Commission has suggested extending the scope of the Code to special tax regimes for expatriates and wealthy individuals.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-006348/13
till kommissionen
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(4 juni 2013)

Angående: Konflikten emellan Etiopien och Eritrea

Under åren 1998–2000 var Eritrea och Etiopien i krig med varandra över var gränsen mellan länderna ska dras. Det internationella samfundet försökte lösa konflikten genom att FN och USA fick de båda parterna att skriva på fredsavtal. I fredsavtalen fastställdes att gränsstaden Badme skulle tillhöra Eritrea – ett beslut som fastlades av skiljedomstolen i Haag. Trots påskrivna fredsavtal och beslut från Haag så vägrar Etiopen att överlämna Badme till Eritrea. Detta har lett till fortsatta konflikter i området. I slutet av april i år träffade FN:s generalsekreterare Ban Ki-moon den etiopiska utrikesministern Tedros Adhanom som då sa att Etiopien är villigt att hålla fredssamtal med Eritrea för att lösa den decennier långa gränskonflikten mellan länderna. Eritrea har inte reagerat på detta, men har sedan tidigare krävt att Etiopien först måste dra tillbaka sina trupper från Badme innan de går med på att återuppta fredssamtalen.

De båda länderna har tagit mycket skada av krigsföringen. Civila och soldater har dödats, framtidshopp har släckts och industrier slås ut. Ekonomierna har raserat. För att båda länderna ska ha möjlighet till en god framtid med investeringar, framtidshopp och stärkta ekonomier behövs fred.

Mot bakgrund av detta skulle jag vilja fråga kommissionen

1. Hur ser EU:s arbete ut i dessa länder och mer specifikt för att lösa konflikten?

2. Vad gör EU för att beslutet om gränsdragning från skiljedomstolen i Haag ska upprätthållas?

Svar från den höga representanten/vice ordföranden Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar
(16 juli 2013)

1. EU, som vittne till Algeravtalet från 2000, står fast vid sitt åtagande om dess genomförande.

EU vägleds av den strategiska ramen för Afrikas horn som antogs av EU:s ministerråd i november 2011. Den strategiska ramen syftar bland annat till att uppmuntra till samarbete mellan Etiopien och Eritrea och stödjer ett fullständigt genomförande av Algeravtalet.

EU är fortfarande övertygat om att båda parterna måste genomföra Algeravtalet fullt ut och utan förbehåll. Denna ståndpunkt har upprepats både gemensamt av vittnena samt ensidigt av EU under politiska dialoger med parterna, även senast i februari 2013 med Etiopien.

2. EU är inte behörigt att se till att beslutet om gränsdragningar verkställs, men ska med hjälp av den strategiska ramen använda alla verktyg som står till dess förfogande för att främja stabilitet och goda förbindelser mellan parterna och att lägga grunden för en hållbar fred i regionen. Bland dessa verktyg är följande: Utvecklingssamarbete, EU:s politiska dialog med båda parter och andra berörda parter, samt uppdraget för EU:s särskilda representant för Afrikas horn.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006348/13
to the Commission
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea

Eritrea and Ethiopia were at war with each other from 1998 to 2000 over where the border between the two countries should be drawn. The international community tried to resolve the conflict, with the UN and the USA getting the two parties to sign a peace agreement. This peace agreement stipulated that the border town of Badme should belong to Eritrea — a decision that was taken by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague. Despite signing the peace agreement and the decision taken in the Hague, Ethiopia refuses to hand Badme over to Eritrea. This has led to further conflict in the area. At the end of April this year, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon met the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Tedros Adhanom, who said that Ethiopia is willing to hold peace talks with Eritrea to resolve the decades-long border dispute between the two countries. Eritrea has not responded to this, but has previously demanded that Ethiopia must first withdraw its troops from Badme before it will agree to the resumption of peace talks.

The war has been seriously damaging to both countries. Civilians and soldiers have been killed, hope for the future has been extinguished and industries have gone out of business. Their economies have been destroyed. Peace is essential for both countries to have a chance of a brighter future featuring investment, hope and stronger economies.

1. What work is the EU doing in these countries and, more specifically, to resolve the conflict?

2. What is the EU doing to ensure the enforcement of the border demarcation decision by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague?

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

1. The EU, as a witness of the Algiers Agreement of 2000, remains committed to its implementation.

In its approach the EU is guided by the Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa, adopted by the EU Council of Ministers in November 2011. The Strategic Framework, among others, aims at encouraging cooperation between Ethiopia and Eritrea and supports the full implementation of the Algiers Agreement.

The EU remains convinced that both parties must implement the Algiers Agreement fully and without qualification. This position has been repeated both jointly by the witnesses, as well as unilaterally by the EU in the course of political dialogues with the parties, including as recently as February 2013 with Ethiopia.

2. The EU is not competent to ensure enforcement of the border demarcation decision, but, advised by the Strategic Framework, it uses all instruments at its disposal to promote stability and good relations between the parties and to lay foundations for sustainable peace in the region. Among these tools are: development cooperation, the EU political dialogue with both parties and other stakeholders, and the engagement of the EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006349/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Prohibición de las parrillas de barbacoa con alto riesgo sanitario

Según un reciente estudio publicado por el Instituto Tecnológico Metalmecánico, asociación de investigación sin ánimo de lucro y colaboradora de la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (se adjunta), las parrillas de asar recubiertas por un baño metálico de níquel, cromo, cobre, estaño o cinc y que aún se comercializan en la mayoría de los países de la UE presentan un grave riesgo para la salud de la población dado que, al calentarse la parrilla en el proceso de asado, el recubrimiento metálico se desprende en forma de cascarillas y se adhiere al alimento, de manera que estos metales pesados cancerígenos son ingeridos por los comensales.

El Reglamento (CE) n° 1935/2004 sobre los materiales y objetos destinados a entrar en contacto con alimentos prescribe que los utensilios deberán ser fabricados «para que no transfieran sus componentes a los alimentos en cantidades que puedan representar un peligro para la salud humana». Teniendo en cuenta los resultados de los análisis de migración que aporta el citado estudio para cada uno de los metales antes enunciados, ya sea por migración de componentes de la parrilla a los alimentos, o bien por pérdida de adherencia o desprendimiento del recubrimiento de la parrilla, y teniendo en cuenta:

— que existen alternativas seguras para la fabricación de parrillas, como por ejemplo el acero inoxidable,

— que en el marco del Sistema de Alerta Rápida se produjeron en 2011 un total de 48 notificaciones de migración de cromo en material básicamente importado de China,

— que algunas legislaciones, como la española, incluyen los metales pesados antes citados dentro de una «lista positiva» de materiales autorizados,

— y que no existen actualmente a nivel de la UE disposiciones legales concretas aplicables a materiales metálicos en contacto con alimentos, como el aquí descrito, pero que existen disposiciones legales como la italiana, que sí contempla en parte la migración de metales a los alimentos,

cabe preguntar a la Comisión lo siguiente:

¿Estaría dispuesta la Comisión a presentar disposiciones legislativas especificas en el marco del Reglamento (CE) n° 1935/2004 o de otro acto legislativo nuevo para la prohibición del uso del níquel, cromo. cobre, estaño y cinc para la fabricación de parrillas?

Dado que algunos países como Italia o Alemania ya han legislado en parte para prevenir dichos peligros, ¿podría considerar la Comisión la posibilidad de prohibir provisionalmente la comercialización de dichas parrillas de hierro con recubrimientos metálicos tóxicos, en espera de aprobar la legislación especifica, evitando con ello los peligros que la comercialización de dichos productos supone para los consumidores en la actualidad?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de julio de 2013)

Los metales níquel, cromo, cobre, estaño y cinc son necesarios para producir artículos metálicos y están presentes en el metal para conseguir determinadas propiedades funcionales. Según la legislación vigente sobre materiales en contacto con los alimentos, el fabricante debe garantizar que estos metales no se liberen en los alimentos en concentraciones que puedan constituir un riesgo para la salud humana ([1]). Los Estados miembros están facultados para retirar del mercado las parrillas que no cumplan estos requisitos.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1935/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 27 de octubre de 2004, sobre los materiales y objetos destinados a entrar en contacto con alimentos y por el que se derogan las Directivas 80/590/CEE y 89/109/CEE, DO L 338 de 13.11.2004, p. 4.

La Comisión está investigando actualmente con mayor detenimiento los ámbitos en que puede resultar necesario adoptar medidas y está considerando diversas opciones para poder elegir los instrumentos más efectivos y eficaces a fin de garantizar la libre circulación de mercancías y el cumplimiento de las normas más estrictas de protección de los consumidores. Los metales están incluidos en dicha investigación, de acuerdo con lo establecido en el plan de trabajo sobre materiales no armonizados ([2]). Sobre la base de este análisis, la Comisión decidirá si es necesario adoptar medidas complementarias a escala de la UE y, en su caso, qué medidas deben adoptarse.

([2]) La hoja de ruta puede consultarse en http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/docs/2014_sanco_005_fcm_specific_provisions_for_materials_other_than_plastics_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006349/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Ban on barbecue grills with a high health risk

According to a recent study (attached) published by the Metalwork Technology Institute, which is a non-profit research association working with the Polytechnic University of Valencia, roasting grills with a metal coating of nickel, chromium, copper, tin or zinc — still sold in most EU countries — pose a serious health risk to the population. This is because, when the grill is heated in the roasting process, the metal coating peels off and sticks to the food, meaning that people ingest these heavy metal carcinogens.

Regulation (EC) 1935/2004, on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food, requires utensils to be manufactured 'to preclude substances from being transferred to food in quantities large enough to endanger human health'. Given the migration analysis results provided by the aforementioned study for each of the metals mentioned, whether by migration of components from the grill to the food or by loss of adhesion or peeling of the grill's coating, and considering that:

— safe alternatives, such as stainless steel, exist for the manufacture of grills,

— in 2011, under the Rapid Alert System, 48 notifications were made of chromium migration in materials imported generally from China,

— some legislation, such as in Spain, include the aforementioned heavy metals in a 'positive list' of approved materials,

— and there are currently no specific legal provisions at EU level applicable to metallic materials in contact with food, such as the grill described above, but there are legal provisions, such as in Italy, that do deal with metal migration to food,

I ask the Commission the following:

Would the Commission be prepared to present specific legislative provisions within the framework of Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004, or of another new legislative act, to ban the use of nickel, chromium, copper, tin and zinc in the manufacture of grills?

Since some countries, such as Italy and Germany, have already partly legislated to prevent these hazards, would the Commission consider the possibility of provisionally banning the sale of such iron grills with toxic metal coatings, pending adoption of specific legislation, in order to avoid the dangers that the sale of these products pose to consumers today?

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

The metals nickel, chromium, copper, tin and zinc are necessary to produce metal articles and are present in the metal to achieve certain functional properties. According to the existing legislation on food contact materials the manufacturer has to ensure that these metals are not released into food in concentrations that could pose a risk to human health ([1]). Member States are empowered to take grills from the market that do not respect these requirements.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food and repealing Directives 80/590/EEC and 89/109/EEC, OJ L 338, 13.11.2004, p. 4.

The Commission is currently investigating further those areas in which provisions may be necessary and considers different options to be able to choose the most effective and efficient instruments to achieve free movement of goods while complying with highest standards of consumer protection. Metals are part of this as set out in the roadmap for non-harmonised materials ([2]). Based on this analysis the Commission will decide if and which additional measures are necessary to be adopted at EU level.

([2]) Roadmap available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/docs/2014_sanco_005_fcm_specific_provisions_for_materials_other_than_plastics_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006350/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Imġiba aktar responsabbli tal-impriżi tal-UE

Insegwitu tal-nirien u t-tiġrif ta' bini reċenti fil-Bangladexx, ħafna Membri tal-PE talbu li tiġi promossa mġiba aqwa u aktar responsabbli tal-impriżi tal-UE Huma jridu wkoll li l-Kummissjoni tiżgura li l-obbligi legali kollha fil-qasam tax-xogħol, l-ambjent u d-drittijiet tal-bniedem jiġu sodisfatti.

Il-Kummissjoni investigat il-kwistjonijiet relatati man-nirien u t-tiġrif ta' bini fil-Bangladexx?

Jekk għamlet dan, adottat pjan ġdid sabiex tiżgura mġiba aktar responsabbli tal-impriżi tal-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur De Gucht f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(12 ta' Lulju 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni tirreferi għat-tweġibiet għall-mistoqsijiet preċedenti PE E-005631/2013, E-005674/2013, E-005812/2013, E-005713/2013 ([1]). Il-Kummissjoni ttenni l-impenn tagħha li tippromwovi mġieba kummerċjali responsabbli inklużi kumpaniji tal-UE, skont l-istrateġija tagħha ta' Responsabbiltà Soċjali Korporattiva. ([2])

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm
([2]) COM(2011) 681.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006350/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: More responsible business conduct on the part of EU companies

Following the recent fires at a building that collapsed in Bangladesh, many MEPs have asked for the promotion of better and more responsible business conduct for EU companies. They also want the Commission to ensure that all legal obligations in the areas of labour, environment, and human rights are fulfilled.

Has the Commission investigated the issues in Bangladesh relating to the fires and collapse of the building in question?

If so, has the Commission adopted a new plan to ensure more responsible business conduct on the part of EU companies?

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

The Commission refers to replies to earlier EP Questions E-005631/2013, E-005674/2013, E-005812/2013, E-005713/2013 ([1]). The Commission reiterates its commitment to promote responsible business conduct including the EU companies, in accordance with its Corporate Social Responsibility strategy ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm
([2]) COM(2011) 681.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006351/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Kontijiet bankarji unifikati

Il-Kummissjoni ressqet proposta għal Direttiva tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill (COM(2013)0266) dwar sistema ta' kontijiet bankarji unifikati li ttaffi l-piż fuq il-vjaġġaturi tal-Unjoni Ewropea u tippermetti trasferiment aktar faċli lejn provveditur ieħor. Il-Kummissjoni pproponiet ukoll numru ta' miżuri dwar il-komparabbiltà tat-tariffi relatati mal-kontijiet tal-ħlas, il-bdil tal-kontijiet tal-ħlas u l-aċċess għal kontijiet tal-ħlas b'karatteristiċi bażiċi.

Il-Kummissjoni kif qed tippjana li timplimenta dawn il-miżuri, u kif se tiżgura li jiġu segwiti b'mod strett minn kull bank u Stat Membru?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(12 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Fit-8 ta' Mejju 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta għal Direttiva dwar Kontijiet ta' Pagamenti ([1]). Huwa mistenni li din il-proposta tiġi adottata mill-koleġiżlaturi fl-2014. Ladarba tiġi adottata u trasposta fl-Istati Membri, il-Kummissjoni se tieħu l-miżuri meħtieġa biex timmonitorja u tiżgura l-implimentazzjoni korretta tagħha fil-livell nazzjonali.

Barra minn hekk, skont l-Artikolu 20 ta' din il-proposta, l-Istati Membri jkollhom jinnominaw l-awtoritajiet nazzjonali kompetenti biex jiżguraw u jissorveljaw il-konformità effettiva tad-Direttiva minn fornituri ta' servizzi ta' pagament, u tinfurzaha meta jkun hemm bżonn.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/20130506-proposal_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006351/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Unified bank accounts

The Commission has put forward a proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council (COM(2013) 0266) on a unified bank account system that would ease the burden on European Union travellers and allow for an easier transfer to another provider. The Commission has also proposed a number of measures on the comparability of fees related to payment accounts, payment account switching and access to payment accounts with basic features.

How is the Commission planning on implementing these measures, and how is it going to ensure that they are being strictly followed by every bank and Member State?

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

On 8 May 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on Payment Accounts ([1]). This proposal is expected to be adopted by the co-legislators in 2014. Once adopted and transposed in Member States, the Commission will take the necessary measures to monitor and ensure its correct implementation at national level.

In addition, according to Article 20 of this proposal, Member States will have to designate national competent authorities to ensure and monitor effective compliance with the directive by payment service providers, and enforce it when necessary.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/inclusion/20130506-proposal_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006352/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Il-protezzjoni tal-vittmi ta' vjolenza fl-UE kollha

Fit-22 ta' Mejju, il-Parlament ivvota li jadotta r-riżoluzzjoni P7_TA(2013)0210 tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill dwar ir-rikonoxximent reċiproku ta' miżuri ta' protezzjoni fi kwistjonijiet ċivili. Hemm pjanijiet stretti biex tiżdied is-sigurtà taċ-ċittadini tal-UE.

Madankollu, il-Kummissjoni kif bi ħsiebha tittratta b'mod armonjuż is-sistemi legali differenti fis-seħħ fl-UE kollha, li jiżguraw il-protezzjoni tal-vittmi b'modi differenti?

Il-Kummissjoni kif tipprevedi l-implimentazzjoni b'suċċess ta' dan il-pjan ta' sigurtà mill-Istati Membri kollha?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea hija konxja tad-differenzi fis-sistemi legali tal-Istati Membri u tal-fatt li miżuri ta' protezzjoni nazzjonali jvarjaw fl-ambitu, il-perjodu ta' validità u n-natura tagħhom.

Il-qafas legali tal-UE li jeżisti bħalissa ma jarmonizzax il-miżuri ta' protezzjoni fl-Istati Membri. Huwa bbażat fuq il-prinċipju ta' rikonoxximent reċiproku u dan jiżgura li l-vittmi jkunu jistgħu jserrħu rashom fuq ordnijiet ta' trażżin jew ta' protezzjoni maħruġa kontra l-persuna li tkun wettqet reat f'pajjiżhom jekk jivvjaġġaw jew jiċċaqilqu.

Ir-Regolament (UE) Nru 606/2013 dwar ir-rikonoxximent reċiproku ta' miżuri ta' protezzjoni f'materji ċivili, li ġie adottat dan l-aħħar, se jissupplimenta d-Direttiva 2011/99/UE tat-13 ta' Diċembru 2011 dwar l-ordni Ewropea ta' protezzjoni, li tapplika għall-miżuri ta' protezzjoni addottati f'materji kriminali.

Id-Direttiva u r-Regolament għandhom, flimkien, jiżguraw li l-aktar tliet tipi magħrufa ta' miżuri ta' protezzjoni (li jiġi pprojbit jew regolat il-kuntatt mal-vittma, li jkun hemm limitu fuq kemm wieħed ikun jista' jersaq lejn il-vittma jew li jkun jista' jidħol fil-post fejn il-vittma tirrisjedi, taħdem jew tistudja) ikunu koperti u rikonoxxuti fi ħdan l-UE kull fejn huma stabbiliti fi proċeduri ċivili jew kriminali.

Id-Direttiva u r-Regolament għandhom ikunu għal kollox disponibbli lill-vittmi mid-data tal-iskadenza tat-traspożizzjoni fil-bidu tal-2015. Il-Kummissjoni se tassisti lill-Istati Membri permezz ta' djalogu reċiproku, il-ħruġ ta' dokumenti ta' gwida u l-organizzazzjoni ta' laqgħat ta' esperti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006352/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Protection for victims of violence throughout the EU

On 22 May, Parliament voted to adopt resolution P7_TA(2013)0210 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters. There are strict plans for increasing the safety of EU citizens.

However, how does the Commission plan to deal in a harmonious manner with the various legal systems in place throughout the EU, which see to the protection of victims in different ways?

How does the Commission envisage the successful implementation of this safety plan by all Member States?

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

The European Commission is aware of differences in legal systems of the Member States and of the fact that the national protection measures differ in scope, duration and nature.

The EU legal framework in place does not harmonise protection measures in the Member States. It is based on the principle of mutual recognition and it will ensure that victims can rely on restraint or protection orders issued against the perpetrator in their home country if they travel or move.

The recently adopted Regulation (EU) No 606/2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters will supplement Directive 2011/99/EU of 13 December 2011 on the European protection order, which applies to protection measures adopted in criminal matters.

The directive and Regulation will, together, ensure that the three most known types of protection measures (prohibiting or regulating contact with the victim, limiting aproaching the victim or entering the place where the victim resides, works or studies) are covered and recognised within the EU whenever they are ordered in civil or criminal proceedings.

The directive and the regulation must be fully available to victims by the transposition deadline at the beginning of 2015. The Commission will assist Member States by mutual dialogue, issuing guidance documents and organising experts' meetings.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006353/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Il-moviment liberu tal-ħaddiema fi ħdan l-UE

Il-Kummissjoni ipproponiet ċerti miżuri li jipprovdu lill-UE lill-ħaddiema tal-UE b'iktar libertà li jiċċaqalqu, abbażi tar-rapport tal-Kummissjoni bl-isem "Is-Suq Intern: Sensibilizzazzjoni, Perċezzjonijiet u Impatti". Waħda mill-miżuri proposti hija li jinħolqu kanali għal min iħaddem u għall-ħaddiema tal-UE, li jipprovduhom b'informazzjoni, assistenza u konsulenza dwar id-drittijiet tagħhom. F'bosta każijiet, iċ-ċittadini tal-UE mhumiex konxji minn kif jistgħu jaċċedu għal informazzjoni b'rabta mal-protezzjoni tad-drittijiet tagħhom.

Il-Kummissjoni kif biħsiebha timplimenta din l-inizjattiva?

X'inhi l-iskadenza prevista għall-implimentazzjoni ta' din l-inizjattiva?

Il-Kummissjoni kif biħsiebha timplimenta b'mod armonjuż il-miżuri proposti, b'mod partikolari b'rabta mal-Istati Membri li jeżitaw li jħallu lill-ħaddiema tal-UE minn Stati Membri oħra jidħlu fis-swieq tax-xogħol tagħhom?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(24 ta' Lulju 2013)

Fis-26 ta' April 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta għal Direttiva tal-Parlament u tal-Kunsill dwar miżuri li jiffaċilitaw l-eżerċizzju tad-drittijiet konferiti fuq il-ħaddiema fil-kuntest tal-moviment liberu tal-ħaddiema ([1]). Il-proposta partikolarment tirrikjedi li l-Istati Membri: jiżguraw l-eżistenza ta' korp fuq livell nazzjonali li jippromwovi t-trattament ugwali tal-ħaddiema migranti tal-UE u l-membri tal-familja tagħhom u biex tassistihom biex jasserixxu d-drittijiet tagħhom tal-UE; jipprovdu u jxerrdu informazzjoni komprensiva u aċċessibbli dwar id-drittijiet konferiti fuq il-ħaddiema migranti tal-UE mil-liġi tal-UE; u jiżguraw l-eżistenza ta' proċeduri amministrattivi jew ġudizzjarji li jippermettu li jiġu difiżi dawn id-drittijiet. Kif xieraq, il-proposta tirrikjedi wkoll il-kooperazzjoni bejn il-korpi nazzjonali tal-infurzar u l-inizjattivi fil-livell tal-UE, bħal "L-Ewropa tiegħek" u EURES, sabiex jiżguraw li l-ħaddiema mobbli huma konxji tat-tagħrif eżistenti u s-servizzi ta' assistenza.

Issa huwa ż-żmien għall-koleġiżlaturi sabiex jieħdu pożizzjoni dwar il-proposta tal-Kummissjoni. Il-Kummissjoni tispera li bl-adottar tal-proposta kmieni biżżejjed fl-2013, hija pprovdiet il-koleġiżlaturi b'biżżejjed żmien biex jilħqu ftehim fl-ewwel qari taħt din il-leġiżlatura.

Għandu jiġi inkoraġġat djalogu mal-NGOs u mal-imsieħba soċjali xierqa bil-għan li jippromwovu trattament ugwali tal-ħaddiema migranti tal-UE.

In-natura legali vinkolanti tal-istrument propost teħtieġ li l-Istati Membri kollha jieħdu azzjoni sabiex jiżguraw li l-miżuri nazzjonali effettivi kienu fis-seħħ biex jipprovdu għal infurzar aħjar tal-leġiżlazzjoni eżistenti tal-UE dwar il-moviment ħieles tal-ħaddiema. Il-Kummissjoni tissorvelja li l-liġi nazzjonali tkun konformi mal-liġi tal-UE u l-Kummissjoni tista' tieħu l-azzjonijiet meħtieġa jekk ikun hemm nuqqas ta' konformità.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006353/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Free movement of workers within the EU

The Commission has proposed certain measures that would provide EU workers with greater freedom to move, based on the Commission report entitled 'Internal Market: Awareness, Perceptions, and Impacts'. One of the proposed measures is to create channels for EU employers and workers which would provide them with information, assistance, and advice about their rights. In many instances, EU citizens are unaware of how to access information relating to the protection of their rights.

How does the Commission propose to implement this initiative?

What is the foreseen timescale for the implementation of this initiative?

How does the Commission envisage the harmonious implementation of the proposed measures, particularly in relation to Member States which are reluctant to allow EU workers from other Member States enter their labour markets?

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

On 26th April 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers ([1]). The proposal requires Member States in particular: to ensure the existence of a body at national level to promote equality of treatment for EU migrant workers and their family members and to assist them to assert their EU rights; to provide and disseminate comprehensive and accessible information on the rights conferred on EU migrant workers by EC law; and to ensure the existence of effective administrative or judicial procedures to permit such rights to be defended. The proposal also requires, as appropriate, cooperation between the national enforcement bodies and EU-level initiatives, such as Your Europe and EURES, in order to ensure that mobile workers are aware of existing information and assistance services.

It is now for the co-legislators to take a position on the Commission's proposal. The Commission hopes that by adopting the proposal early enough in 2013, it provided the co-legislators with sufficient time to reach a first reading agreement under this parliamentary term.

Dialogue with appropriate NGOs and social partners with a view to promoting equal treatment of EU migrant workers must also be encouraged.

The binding legal nature of the instrument proposed would require all Member States to take action to ensure effective national measures were in place to provide for an improved enforcement of the existing EU *acquis* on the free movement of workers. The Commission monitors the national law's compliance with EC law and should there be non-compliance, the Commission can effectuate necessary actions.

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

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006354/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Miżuri tal-UE għall-protezzjoni tad-data personali

Bħalissa l-UE qed twettaq reviżjoni b'reqqa tar-regoli dwar il-protezzjoni tad-data abbażi tar-rapport LIBE_AM (2013) 506 biex tiżgura l-privatezza tad-data għaċ-ċittadini tal-UE. L-Internet huwa spazju vast ta' informazzjoni fejn huwa diffiċli li wieħed jikseb protezzjoni tad-dejta.

Il-Kummissjoni kif biħsiebha tiżgura l-protezzjoni tad-dejta għaċ-ċittadini tal-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Lulju 2013)

Il-qafas tal-ħarsien tad-dejta attwali b'mod partikolari tad-Direttiva 95/46/KE ([1]) għadu sod safejn l-għanijiet u l-prinċipji tiegħu huma kkonċernati, iżda dan ma waqqafx il-frammentazzjoni fil-mod kif il-protezzjoni tad-dejta personali hija implimentata fl-Unjoni, in-nuqqas ta' ċertezza legali u l-perċezzjoni pubblika mifruxa li hemm riskji sinifikanti assoċjati mal-attività onlajn ([2]).

Il-proposta tal-Kummissjoni għal Regolament dwar il-Protezzjoni ta' Dejta Ġenerali (RPDĠ) ([3]) eżaminata mill-koleġiżlaturi, li se tieħu post id-Direttiva 95/46/KE, tipprevedi drittijiet modernizzati tal-individwi, u tinkludi *inter alia* dritt li tintesa, u dritt għall-portabbiltà tad-dejta, li huma rilevanti għall-internet. Il-proposta tapplika *inter alia* għall-kontrolluri, fosthom dawk li jaħdmu mill-internet, li joffru oġġetti u servizzi lill-individwi tal-UE. L-RPDĠ se joħloq qafas iżjed b'saħħtu u aktar koerenti għall-protezzjoni tad-dejta fl-Unjoni, appoġġjat b'infurzar qawwi li se jippermetti lill-ekonomija diġitali tiżviluppa fis-suq intern, iqiegħed lill-individwi fil-kontroll tad-dejta tagħhom stess kif ukoll isaħħaħ iċ-ċertezza legali u prattika għall-operaturi ekonomiċi u l-awtoritajiet pubbliċi.

([1]) Id-Direttiva 95/46/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-24 ta' Ottubru 1995 dwar il-protezzjoni tal-individwi fir-rigward tal-ipproċessar ta' data personali u dwar il-moviment liberu ta' dik id-data, ĠU L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31.

([2]) Special Eurobarometer (EB) 359, Data Protection and Electronic Identity in the EU (2011): http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_359_en.pdf

([3]) COM (2012) 11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006354/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: EU data protection measures

The EU is currently in the process of carefully reviewing data protection rules on the basis of the LIBE_AM (2013) 506 report in order to ensure data privacy for EU citizens. The Internet is a vast space of information where data protection is difficult to achieve.

How is the Commission planning to ensure data protection for EU citizens?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The current data protection framework in particular of Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) remains sound as far as its objectives and principles are concerned, but it has not prevented fragmentation in the way personal data protection is implemented across the Union, legal uncertainty and a widespread public perception that there are significant risks associated with online activity ([2]).

The Commission's proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ([3]) under examination of the co-legislators, which will replace Directive 95/46/EC, provides for modernised rights of the individuals, and it includes *inter alia* a right to be forgotten, and a right to data portability, which are relevant to the Internet. The proposal applies *inter alia* to controllers, including those operating from the Internet, offering goods and services to EU individuals. The GDPR will build a stronger and more coherent data protection framework in the EU, backed by strong enforcement that will allow the digital economy to develop across the internal market, put individuals in control of their own data and reinforce legal and practical certainty for economic operators and public authorities.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31.

([2]) Special Eurobarometer (EB) 359, Data Protection and Electronic Identity in the EU (2011): http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_359_en.pdf

([3]) COM(2012) 11.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006355/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: L-industrija tal-karozzi Ewropea

Saru xi proposti biex tiżdied il-kompetittività tas-settur tal-karozzi tal-UE abbażi tar-rapport finali tas-sena li għaddiet dwar il-Kompetittività u t-Tkabbir Sostenibbli tal-Industrija tal-Karozzi fl-Unjoni Ewropea (il-Grupp ta' Livell Għoli CARS 21). Waħda minnhom hija li tingħata spinta lill-prestazzjoni tal-haddiema permezz tat-titjib tal-ħiliet u tat-taħriġ abbażi tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni ta' CARS 2020.

Fil-fehma tal-Kummissjoni, liema ħiliet partikolari l-forza tax-xogħol tal-UE hi nieqsa minnhom?

Liema huma d-differenzi bejn l-Istati Membri?

Liema Stat Membru għandu l-aktar bżonn ta' tali taħriġ?

Jekk dan it-taħriġ se jkun tassew ta' benefiċċju għas-settur tal-karozzi, għaliex is-settur tal-karozzi għadu mhux qed jipprovdih?

X'inhu l-vantaġġ uniku għall-gvernijiet tal-UE jew tal-Istati Membri tagħha li jipprovdu taħriġ?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' Lulju 2013)

L-Analiżi Trimestrali tal-Impjieg u l-Qagħda Soċjali tal-UE ppubblikata f'Marzu 2013 eżaminat il-qagħda tas-suq tax-xogħol fis-settur tal-karozzi. Is-settur intlaqat ħażin mill-kriżi u dan ġab telf kbir ta' impjiegi fis-settur ta' madwar 15 % jew aktar bejn l-2008 u l-2010 fl-Awstrija, il-Belġju, il-Finlandja, Franza, il-Greċja, il-Latvja, il-Litwanja, il-Portugall u l-Isvezja. Bejn Jannar 2012 u Marzu 2013 il-Monitoraġġ dwar ir-Ristrutturazzjoni Ewropea rrapporta 116-il każ ta' ristrutturazzjoni li fosthom it-tnaqqis fl-impjiegi għeleb b'mod ċar iż-żieda ta' impjiegi ġodda fis-settur.

Ir-Rapport Ewropew dwar il-Pożizzjonijiet Vakanti u r-Reklutaġġ, ippubblikat fl-2012 mill-Kummissjoni, jidentifika l-inġinerija fost l-aktar tliet ħiliet meħtieġa fl-Ewropa. Għalkemm id-disponibbiltà ta' informazzjoni nazzjonali tvarja, dawn il-ħtiġiet kbar ġew identifikati fil-Ġermanja għall-inġinerija awtomobilistika u l-mekkatronika u għall-inġiniera mekkaniċi fl-Awstrija.

It-twaqqif ta' Kunsilli Ewropej dwar il-Ħiliet marbuta mas-Setturi hija waħda mill-inizjattivi tal-Kummissjoni għall-iżvilupp tal-informazzjoni dwar is-suq tax-xogħol speċifika għas-settur, inkluż għall-industrija tal-karozzi. L-għan ta' dawn il-Kunsilli huwa li jtejjeb l-antiċipazzjoni tal-ħtiġiet tas-suq tax-xogħol fil-livell settorjali billi jipproduċu analiżi operattiva biex ikun hemm allinjament aħjar tal-provvista tax-xogħol, partikolarment l-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ vokazzjonali, mal-ħiliet mitluba mis-suq tax-xogħol. Fl-2011 sar studju tal-fattibbiltà mill-imsieħba soċjali fis-settur tal-karozzi. Sejħa ġdida għall-proposti li se tiġi ppubblikata fl-2013 se tiffinanzja t-twaqqif ta' Kunsilli għall-Ħiliet Settorjali ġodda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006355/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Europe's car industry

There have been proposals to increase the competitiveness of the EU's automobile sector based on last year's final report on the Competitiveness and Sustainable Growth of the Automotive Industry in the European Union (CARS 21 High Level Group). One of them is to boost workers' performance by improving skills and training on the basis of the CARS 2020 Action Plan.

What particular skills does the Commission feel the EU workforce is lacking?

What differences exist among EU Member States?

Which Member State is most in need of such training?

If this training will really be profitable for the automobile sector, why is the automobile sector not already providing it?

What unique advantage do the EU or EU Member State governments have in providing training?

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

The EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review published in March 2013 analysed the labour market situation in the automotive sector. The sector was badly hit by the crisis, leading to a collapse in employment in the sector, with losses of around or over 15% between 2008 and 2010 in Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal and Sweden. The European Restructuring Monitor reported between January 2012 and March 2013 116 cases of restructuring, with job cuts clearly outweighing job gains in the sector.

The European Vacancy and Recruitment Report published in 2012 by the Commission identifies engineering among the top 3 skills bottlenecks in Europe. Although the availability of national information varies, skills bottlenecks were identified in Germany for automotive engineering and mechatronics and in Austria for mechanical engineers.

The establishment of European Sector Skills Councils is one of the key Commission initiatives for developing sector specific labour market intelligence, including for the automotive industry. The aim of these Councils is to improve anticipation of labour market needs at sector level, producing operational analysis to better align the labour supply, particularly vocational education and training to the skills in demand on the labour market. A feasibility study was conducted by the social partners in the automotive sector in 2011. A new Call for Proposals to be published in 2013 will finance the establishment of new Sector Skills Councils.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006356/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Protezzjoni tad-depożituri ż-żgħar tal-banek f'każ li bank ikollu bżonn jiġi salvat

Il-Kummissjoni pproponiet li dawk li jagħmlu tajjeb għat-telf tal-banek għandhom ikunu l-azzjonisti u d-detenturi ta' bonds — u mhux id-depożituri b'anqas minn EUR 100 000. Dan huwa msejjes fuq il-proposta għal direttiva tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill li tistabbilixxi qafas għall-irkupru u r-riżoluzzjoni ta' istituzzjonijiet ta' kreditu u ditti ta' investiment u li temenda d-Direttivi tal-Kunsill 77/91/KEE u 82/891/KE, id-Direttivi 2001/24/KE, 2002/47/KE, 2004/25/KE, 2005/56/KE, 2007/36/KE u 2011/35/KE u r-Regolament (UE) Nru 1093/2010.

Il-Kummissjoni kif tista' tiżgura li l-azzjonisti u d-detenturi ta' bonds ikkonċernati jaqblu ma' tali proposta?

Il-Kummissjoni qiegħda tippjana negozjati mal-banek? Fil-każ, il-Kummissjoni kif tista' tiżgura li d-depożituri ż-żgħar mhumiex se jbatu finanzjarjament?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' Lulju 2013)

F'Ġunju 2012, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta għal Direttiva dwar Irkupru u r-Riżoluzzjoni tal-Banek (IRB). Fl-20 ta' Mejju 2013, il-kumitat ECON ivvota fuq ir-rapport tas-Sur Hökmark (EPP/SE) u, fis-26 ta' Ġunju, il-Kunsill adotta l-approċċ ġenerali tiegħu. F'Lulju 2013 se jibdew trijalogi, bil-għan li jintlaħaq ftehim qabel l-aħħar tas-sena.

Id-Direttiva se tagħti lill-awtoritajiet tal-Istati Membri l-għodda meħtieġa, u s-setgħat biex jintervjenu fi kriżijiet bankarji l-aktar kmieni possibbli u tippermetti r-riżoluzzjoni b'mod ordinat tal-istituzzjonijiet f'diffikultajiet finanzjarji. Biex jitnaqqas l-involviment tal-kontribwent fil-kriżijiet bankarji, l-għodda ta' rikapitalizzazzjoni interna se tippermetti li bank jiġi megħjjun billi t-telf jiġi impost fuq l-azzjonisti u l-krediturі.

L-Approċċ Ġenerali jintroduċi l-prinċipju ta' preferenza tad-depożituri għall-SMEs u għall-persuni fiżiċi. Dan jimplika li dawk id-depożiti jista' jkollhom "rikapitalizzazzjoni interna", iżda wara biss li l-istrumenti kapitali kollha, id-dejn subordinat u l-obbligi eliġibbli mhux siguri oħrajn ikollhom rikapitalizzazzjoni interna skont il-ġerarkija proposta. Madankollu, id-depożiti inqas minn EUR 100 000 qatt mhu se jġarrbu telf peress li l-Iskema ta' Garanzija tad-Depożiti tbiddilhom fir-riżoluzzjoni.

Ladarba li d-Direttiva tiġi adottata mill-ko-leġiżlaturi, l-Istati Membri jkollhom jittrasponuha fil-leġiżlazzjoni nazzjonali li din torbot b'mod vinkolanti għall-partijiet kollha kkonċernati, inklużi azzjonisti u detenturi ta' bonds tal-bank.

Il-Kummissjoni kkondkudiet konsultazzjoni pubblika dwar l-għodda ewlenija ta' riżoluzzjoni, rikapitalizzazzjoni interna, u għamlet bosta diskussjonijiet mal-parteċipanti tas-settur privat għat-tħejjija tal-proposta tal-Kummissjoni għal Direttiva. Bosta banek, gruppi bankarji u assoċjazzjonijiet bankarji kienu fost l-entitajiet interessati li wieġbu u li l-opinjonijiet tagħhom tqisu mill-Kummissjoni flimkien ma' kontributuri oħrajn.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006356/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Protection of small bank depositors when a bank needs saving

The Commission has proposed that bank shareholders and bondholders — and not depositors with less than EUR 100 000 — should pay for bank losses. This is based on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the recovery and resolution of credit institutions and investment firms and amending Council Directives 77/91/EEC and 82/891/EC, Directives 2001/24/EC, 2002/47/EC, 2004/25/EC, 2005/56/EC, 2007/36/EC and 2011/35/EC and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010.

How can the Commission ensure that the shareholders and bondholders concerned are going to agree to such a proposal?

Does the Commission envisage negotiations with banks? If so, how can the Commission ensure that small depositors are not going to suffer financially?

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

In June 2012, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on Bank Recovery and Resolution (BRR). On 20 May 2013, the ECON committee voted on the report of Mr Hökmark (EPP/SE) and, on 26 June 2013, the Council adopted its general approach. Trilogues are starting in July 2013, with the objective of reaching an agreement before the end of the year.

The directive will give Member States' authorities the necessary tools, and powers to intervene in banking crises at the earliest possible moment and enable the orderly resolution of institutions in financial difficulty. To minimise taxpayer involvement in bank crises, the bail-in tool will allow a bank to be resolved by imposing losses on shareholders and creditors.

The General Approach introduces the principle of depositor preference for SMEs and natural persons. This would imply that those deposits could be 'bailed in', but only after all capital instruments, subordinated debt and other unsecured eligible liabilities have been bailed in according to the proposed hierarchy. However, deposits below EUR 100 000 would never bear losses since the Deposit Guarantee Scheme will replace them in resolution.

Once the directive is adopted by the co-legislators, Member States will have to transpose it into national legislation that is legally binding for all parties concerned, including bank shareholders and bondholders.

The Commission conducted a public consultation on the key resolution tool, bail-in, and held several discussions with private sector participants in the lead-up to the Commission's proposal for a directive. Several banks, banking groups and banking associations were among the stakeholders that replied and whose views were considered by the Commission alongside other contributions.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006357/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Sistema ta' Sorveljanza Bankarja tal-UE

L-Istati Membri tal-UE qablu li l-Bank Ċentrali Ewropew għandu jissorvelja l-akbar banek taż-żona tal-euro u jkun jista' jaffettwa wkoll banek oħra fl-Istati Membri.

X'se tinvolvi din is-sistema ta' sorveljanza? Kif se tkun tista' taffettwa dan in-numru kbir ta' banek indipendenti?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' Lulju 2013)

Ir-Regolament li jagħti lill-Bank Ċentrali Ewropew (BĊE) kompiti speċifiċi li jikkonċernaw il-politiki li jirrelataw mas-superviżjoni prudenzjali tal-istituzzjonijiet ta' kreditu, maqbula b'mod provviżorju mill-Kunsill fit-12 ta' April 2013, jikkonferixxi fuq il-BĊE kompiti ta' superviżjoni speċifiċi fil-qafas tal-Mekkaniżmu Superviżorju Uniku (MSU) li qed ikopri lill-istituzzjonijiet ta' kreditu kollha fiż-żona Euro u fi Stati Membri oħra parteċipanti. L-eżerċizzju ta' dawn il-kompiti huwa kondiviż mas-superviżuri nazzjonali: rigward il-banek sinifikanti, il-BĊE jieħu huwa stess deċiżjonijiet ta' superviżjoni, mas-supervizuri nazzjonali li jassistu bit-tħejjija u l-implementazzjoni tagħhom. Fir-rigward ta' banek inqas sinifikanti, is-superviżjoni minn jum għal-ieħor titwettaq mis-superviżuri nazzjonali. Il-BĊE huwa responsabbli għat-tħaddim tal-MSU. Huwa jistabbilixxi l-qafas ġenerali għas-superviżjoni tal-banek kollha. Għandu access għall-informazzjoni rilevanti kollha f'kull ħin, jiġi infurmat mis-superviżuri nazzjonali dwar kull proċedura materjali ta' superviżjoni u dwar l-abbozz ta' deċiżjonijiet. Fejn meħtieġ biex tkun żgurata applikazzjoni konsistenti tal-istandards superviżorji, il-BĊE jista' jieħu f'idejh is-superviżjoni diretta ta' banek inqas sinifikanti f'kull ħin. Id-diviżjoni tal-ħidma tiżgura li l-kompetenza li ilha teżisti tas-superviżuri nazzjonali tintuża u l-BĊE jkun jista' jagħmel użu effettiv mir-riżorsi tiegħu filwaqt li jżomm sorveljanza sħiħa fuq ir-riskji li jinqalgħu fi kwalunkwe parti mis-sistema bankarja.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006357/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: EU Banking Supervisory System

The EU Member States have agreed that the European Central Bank should supervise the largest banks of the eurozone as well as be able to affect other banks in the Member States.

What is this supervising system going to entail? How is it going to be able to affect such a large number of independent banks?

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

The regulation conferring on the European Central Bank (ECB) specific tasks concerning policies relating to the prudential supervision of credit institutions, provisionally agreed by the Council on 12 April 2013, confers on the ECB specific supervisory tasks in the framework of a Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) which is covering all credit institutions in the Euro area and in other participating Member States. The exercise of these tasks is shared with national supervisors: for significant banks, the ECB will itself take supervisory decisions, with national supervisors assisting with their preparation and implementation. For less significant banks, day-to-day supervision will be carried out by national supervisors. The ECB maintains the responsibility for the functioning of the SSM. It will set the general framework for supervision of all banks. It has access to all relevant information at any time, will be informed by national supervisors about any material supervisory procedure and about draft decisions. Where necessary to ensure consistent application of supervisory standards, it can take over the direct supervision of less significant banks at any time. This division of work will ensure that the long-standing expertise of national supervisors is used and the ECB can make effective use of its resources while maintaining full oversight over risks arising within any part of the banking system.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-006359/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Plant Reproductive Material Law

La Plant Reproductive Material Law vuole rendere illegale coltivare, riprodurre o commercializzare i semi di ortaggi che non siano stati analizzati, approvati e accettati dalla Agenzia delle varietà vegetali europee. Praticamente, con l'applicazione di questa proposta di legge tutte le piante, i semi, gli ortaggi oltre che i giardinieri dovranno essere registrati. Pur essendo destinata per lo più ai grandi produttori, si sta stabilendo comunque un precedente che, prima o poi, porterà anche i piccoli coltivatori a dover rispettare le stesse regole. Questa legge uccide completamente qualsiasi sviluppo per i piccoli coltivatori diretti in tutta l'Unione europea, avvantaggiando così i grandi monopoli sementieri.

La diversificazione è stata la strategia di innovazione agricola più diffusa e di successo negli ultimi 10.000 anni. Le sementi sono un dono della natura e delle diverse culture, non un'invenzione industriale. In gioco vi è quindi la libertà dei contadini di conservare le sementi, di scambiarle e commercializzarle, di sviluppare nuove varietà e di difendersi dalla privatizzazione. Per questo motivo, in contrasto con l'attuale tendenza verso la monocultura e l'erosione genetica, proprio la diversità deve tornare ad essere la strategia di punta per lo sviluppo futuro delle sementi.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione dire:

— perché mai bisognerebbe regolamentare la produzione di ortaggi e vietare il libero commercio dei semi;

— come è possibile valorizzare la biodiversità laddove vengono discusse misure legislative volte a brevettare e imbrigliare il principio della vita vegetale che è il seme stesso?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(1º luglio 2013)

La Commissione invita gli onorevoli parlamentari a prendere visione delle risposte da essa date alle interrogazioni scritte E-04095/13, E-04501/13, E-04674/13 e E-5016/13. ([1])

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006359/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Plant Reproductive Material Law

Under the proposed Plant Reproductive Material Law it would become illegal to grow, reproduce or sell any vegetable seeds that have not been tested and approved by the new EU Plant Variety Agency. If the proposal becomes law then all plants, seeds and vegetables other than those grown by people in their own gardens will have to be registered. Although the proposal is targeted primarily at major producers, it will nevertheless set a precedent, and, sooner or later, small-scale producers will be forced to comply with the same rules. The law would completely nullify any progress that has been made in improving the situation of small farmers in all parts of the Union, playing into the hands of large seed companies.

Diversification has been the most widely employed and most successful agricultural innovation strategy of the last 10 000 years. Seeds are a gift of nature and the fruit of cultural diversity, not an industrial product. If the law is passed the freedom of small farmers to keep, exchange and sell seeds, to develop new varieties of seed and to protect themselves against privatisation will be in jeopardy. We therefore need to move away from the current trend towards monocultures and genetic erosion and put diversity at the heart of future seed development strategy.

— Can the Commission explain why it is necessary to regulate vegetable production and obstruct free trade in seeds?

— How can the importance of biodiversity be safeguarded when proposals are being discussed which would make it possible for firms to patent and retain a tight grip on the very source of all plant life, namely seeds?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-04095/13, E-04501/13, E-04674/13 and E-5016/13. ([1])

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006361/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – włoski fotograf zastrzelony przez tajską armię

48-letni fotograf z Włoch Fabio Polenghi został zastrzelony w trakcie fotografowania ataku tajskiej armii na uczestników demonstracji antyrządowych. Kula odnaleziona w jego ciele pochodzi najprawdopodobniej z jednej ze strzelb używanych przez tajskich żołnierzy w dniu wypadku. W związku z tym uważa się, że Polenghiego zabił tajski żołnierz. Organizacje obrony praw człowieka wielokrotnie domagały się, by tajski rząd rozliczał armię z jej działań, aby zagwarantować, że takie incydenty nie powtórzą się w przyszłości. W dochodzeniu sądowym wojsko nie zostało otwarcie oskarżone w związku z ww. incydentem. Zarzuty muszą jeszcze zostać zebrane w dochodzeniu prowadzonym przez biuro dochodzeń specjalnych.

W związku z powyższym Komisja zwraca się do Rady o odpowiedź na pytania:

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych zbadała ten incydent?

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych przeprowadził dyskusje z tajskim rządem, aby upewnić się, że żołnierz odpowiedzialny za śmierć dziennikarza zostanie pociągnięty do odpowiedzialności?

Jak Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych może zagwarantować bezpieczeństwo dziennikarzy w krajach spoza UE?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wie o nieodżałowanej śmierci pana Fabia Polenghi w 2010 r. Jeśli chodzi o aspekty konsularne, Włochy uważnie śledzą tę sytuację za pośrednictwem swojej ambasady w Tajlandii, zatem kwestia ta nie należy do kompetencji UE. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca przyjmuje, że sprawą tą zajmuje się tajski wymiar sprawiedliwości.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca bardzo aktywnie angażuje się w promowanie wolności słowa, zarówno na świecie, jak i w Tajlandii, gdzie w styczniu 2013 r. delegatura UE zorganizowała seminarium na temat wolności wypowiedzi.

Co więcej, przy okazji obchodów Światowego Dnia Wolności Prasy w dniu 3 maja Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wydała oświadczenie ([1]), w którym UE apeluje do wszystkich rządów o zapewnienie dziennikarzom bezpiecznych warunków do pracy, aby nie musieli się oni obawiać cenzury czy prześladowania.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/136985.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006361/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Italian photographer shot dead by Thai army

Fabio Polenghi, a 48-year-old journalist from Italy, was shot dead while photographing the Thai army's assault on anti-government protestors. The bullet that was found in his body is most likely that of one of the rifles issued to Thai soldiers on the day of the incident. In this connection, it is believed that a Thai soldier shot Polenghi. Human rights groups have repeatedly requested that the Thai Government hold its army accountable for its actions, so as to ensure that such incidents do not happen in the future. The judicial inquiry did not overtly blame the military for the incident and charges have yet to be brought from the inquiry conducted by the Department of Special Investigation.

In light of the above, could the Commission answer the following:

Has the European External Action Service (EEAS) investigated this incident?

Has the EEAS held discussions with the Thai government to ensure that the soldier responsible for this death is prosecuted?

How could the EEAS guarantee the safety of journalists in countries outside of the EU?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the regrettable death of Mr Fabio Polenghi in 2010. As far as the consular aspects are concerned, Italy follows the issue closely through its Embassy in Thailand and it is, therefore, not a matter for the EU. The HR/VP understands that the matter is following its course through the Thai justice system.

The HR/VP is very active in promoting freedom of expression both globally and in Thailand, where a seminar on freedom of expression was organised by the EU Delegation in January 2013.

Moreover, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, on 3 May; the HR/VP issued a declaration ([1]) in which the EU calls on all governments to allow journalists to work in safety and security, and without the fear of being censored or prosecuted.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/136985.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006362/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – nadużycia policji kenijskiej wobec uchodźców w Nairobi

Według Human Rights Watch są doniesienia o tym, że policja kenijska popełnia nadużycia wobec uchodźców w Nairobi. Policja kenijska stosuje rozporządzenie rządowe o przeniesieniu uchodźców z terenów miejskich do obozów uchodźców jako pretekst do gwałtów, pobić, wymuszeń i arbitralnego zatrzymywania uchodźców. Od połowy listopada 2012 r. do ostatnich tygodni 2013 r. co najmniej 1 000 uchodźców stało się ofiarami tego typu nadużyć. Sądzi się, że policja kenijska wchodziła do domów uchodźców, biła ich i kradła im pieniądze. Kilka kobiet opisywało, jak były gwałcone przez policjantów w swoich domach lub w ich pobliżu, czasem na oczach swoich dzieci. Ponadto obozy uchodźców, do których policja miała polecenie przenosić uchodźców, są przepełnione i w złym stanie. W styczniu 2013 r. sąd najwyższy Kenii wydał polecenie wstrzymania planu przenoszenia, ale nie wydano jeszcze orzeczenia w tej sprawie.

Czy Komisja może w związku z tym odpowiedzieć na następujące pytania:

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych (ESDZ) badała sprawę?

Czy ESDZ zdaje sobie sprawę z tego, że ta sytuacja stanowi bezwzględne naruszenie art. 1 konwencji ONZ o zakazie stosowania tortur, której Kenia jest stroną?

Jakie działania podejmie ESDZ w celu zapewnienia stosowania tej zasady w przyszłości?

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel może skontaktować się z kenijskim sądem najwyższym w celu wpłynięcia na decyzję co do orzeczenia?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest świadoma sytuacji, o której mowa w najnowszym sprawozdaniu organizacji Human Rights Watch noszącym nazwę „Nadużycia policji kenijskiej wobec uchodźców w Nairobi". Wysoka Przedstawiciel otrzymuje ponadto regularne aktualizacje przygotowywane przez delegaturę Unii Europejskiej w Kenii z uwzględnieniem informacji z różnych źródeł, dotyczące sytuacji w zakresie praw człowieka.

UE utrzymuje stały i intensywny dialog polityczny z władzami kenijskimi, społeczeństwem obywatelskim oraz innymi zainteresowanymi stronami w zakresie kwestii dotyczących praw człowieka, a jako wieloletni rzecznik demokracji, praw człowieka oraz reform politycznych posiada w Kenii wpływową pozycję. UE na różnego rodzaju niedawnych spotkaniach wysokiego szczebla z rządem Kenii w sposób szczególny podkreślała potrzebę odpowiedniego traktowania uchodźców i osób ubiegających się o azyl z Somalii.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca uważa za niewłaściwe podejmowanie kontaktu z Sądem Najwyższym Kenii w celu wywarcia wpływu na jego decyzję z pominięciem przestrzegania zasady niezawisłości wymiaru sprawiedliwości, która stanowi ważny element praworządności. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca będzie jednakże nadal uważnie kontrolować sytuację w tym zakresie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006362/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Nairobi's refugees abused by the Kenyan police

According to Human Rights Watch, there have been reports of Kenyan police abuse against refugees in Nairobi. Kenyan police have been using a government order to relocate refugees from urban areas to refugee camps as an excuse to rape, beat, extort money from, and arbitrarily detain them. Between mid-November 2012 and late-January 2013, at least 1 000 refugees were victim to this type of abuse. It is believed that the Kenyan police went into the homes of refugees, beat them and stole their money. Several women described how the police raped them inside or outside their homes and sometimes in front of their children. Furthermore, the refugee camps to which the police were ordered to move the refugees are overcrowded and in poor conditions. In January 2013, Kenya's High Court ordered that the relocation plan be stopped, but a ruling has yet to be made on the matter.

In light of the above, could the Commission answer the following:

Has the European External Action Service (EEAS) investigated this matter?

Does the EEAS realise that this situation is in complete violation of Article 1 of the United Nations Convention against Torture, by which Kenya is bound?

What steps will the EEAS take to ensure that this rule is followed in the future?

Could the Vice-President/High Representative contact Kenya's High Court to influence its decision on the ruling?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the latest report by Human Rights Watch with the title 'Kenyan Police Abuse of Refugees in Nairobi'. The HR also receives regular updates on the human rights situation by the European Union Delegation to Kenya taking into account information from a variety of sources.

The EU maintains a constant and intensive political dialogue with Kenyan authorities, civil society and other relevant stakeholders on human rights issues and has an influential position in Kenya as a longstanding advocate for democracy, human rights and political reforms. At various recent high-level meetings with the Government of Kenya the EU specifically underlined the need for correct treatment of refugees and asylum-seekers from Somalia.

The HR/VP considers it inappropriate to contact Kenya's High Court to influence its decision out of respect for the independence of the judiciary which is an important element of the rule of law. However, the HR/VP will continue to follow this matter closely.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006363/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Uciekinierzy z Korei Północnej schwytani i odesłani do swojego kraju

Dziewięciu obywateli Korei Północnej, którzy usiłowali zbiec z kraju, zostało schwytanych w Laosie i odesłanych do Chin. Stamtąd zostali oni odesłani do Korei Północnej, pomimo że Korea Południowa skierowała do Chin wniosek o to, aby ich nie odsyłała. Korea Północna ma surowe przepisy dotyczące prób ucieczki z kraju. Istnieją obawy, że dziewięciu obywateli Korei Północnej zostanie zaaresztowanych i surowo ukaranych, być może będą nawet torturowani. Zgodnie z prawem międzynarodowym ludzie mają prawo do tego, aby nie odsyłać ich do miejsca, w którym grozi im prześladowanie.

Czy ESDZ zbadała tę sprawę?

Czy ESDZ może zapewnić, obywatele Korei Północnej są chronieni przepisami prawa międzynarodowego i nie zostaną ukarani?

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel poruszyła tę sprawę z Chinami?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zbadała sprawę i podjęła działania. Rzecznik Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej wydał w dniu 5 czerwca oświadczenie, w którym wyraził zaniepokojenie losem dziewięciu uchodźców i wezwał do ich bezpiecznego traktowania. UE wystosowała oficjalne *démarche* wobec Laosu w związku z jego odpowiedzialnością za uchodźców na mocy prawa międzynarodowego. Sprawa była również przedmiotem rozmów z rządem chińskim, m.in. w ramach dorocznego, prowadzonego między UE a Chinami, dialogu dotyczącego praw człowieka, który miał miejsce dnia 25 czerwca.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006363/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — North Korean defectors caught and sent back to their country

In an attempt to defect from their homeland, Nine North Koreans have been captured in Laos and sent back across the border to China. From there they have been returned to North Korea, despite a South Korean request that China refrains from sending them back. North Korea has severe rules against trying to escape from of the country. There is fear that the nine North Koreans will be arrested and severely punished, possibly tortured. According to international law, people have the right not to be sent back to a place where they face persecution.

Has the EEAS investigated this matter?

How can the EEAS ensure that the North Koreans are protected under international law and are not penalised?

Has the Vice-President/High Representative raised this incident with China?

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

The HR/VP has investigated the matter and has taken action. On the 5th of June a statement of the HR/VP's spokesperson was issued expressing concern about the nine refugees and calling for their safe treatment. An official EU demarche took place with Laos over its responsibilities for refugees under international law. The matter has also been taken up with Chinese Government, including within the annual EU-China human rights dialogue on 25 June.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006364/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Działacze polityczni zaaresztowani w Azerbejdżanie na podstawie fałszywych zarzutów

Władze azerbejdżańskie na podstawie fałszywych zarzutów o posiadanie narkotyków zatrzymały działaczy politycznych, którzy są krytyczni wobec rządu. Przypadki takie nasilają się w miarę zbliżania się w kraju wyborów. Działacze mówią, że byli źle traktowani w czasie pobytu w areszcie. Takie przypadki mają miejsce od dwóch lat i wielu działaczy, dziennikarzy i obrońców praw człowieka zostało zaaresztowanych w podobny sposób. Według organizacji „Human Rights Watch" władze powinny przeprowadzić niezależne i skuteczne dochodzenia w sprawie domniemanego złego traktowania i wypuścić działaczy na wolność w oczekiwaniu na niezależne zbadanie zarzutów.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel jest poinformowana o sytuacji w Azerbejdżanie?

Czy ESDZ może podjąć jakiekolwiek działania, aby pomóc w uwolnieniu działaczy, którzy zostali zatrzymani na podstawie fałszywych zarzutów?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest świadoma faktu, że w kilku konkretnych przypadkach wobec czołowych azerbejdżańskich działaczy politycznych, podniesiono zarzuty posiadania lub używania narkotyków. UE ściśle monitoruje wszystkie postępowania sądowe, w które zaangażowani są działacze opozycji oraz społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, jak również warunki pobytu w areszcie i – w stosownych przypadkach – ustalenia związane z pobytem w areszcie. We wcześniejszych oświadczeniach i deklaracjach przedstawiciele UE wzywali Azerbejdżan do zapewnienia szybkich, sprawiedliwych, przejrzystych i niezależnych dochodzeń w przypadku zarzutów podnoszonych wobec działaczy opozycji i społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, przypominając między innymi międzynarodowe zobowiązania Azerbejdżanu w tym obszarze.

W kontaktach z władzami Azerbejdżanu UE poruszyła również konkretne sprawy dotyczące szeregu poszczególnych osób. UE będzie w dalszym ciągu nalegać na pełne poszanowanie praw człowieka i pozostałych praw wszystkich osób oskarżonych lub przetrzymywanych w areszcie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006364/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Political activists arrested on fake charges in Azerbaijan

The Azerbaijani authorities are using fake drug possession charges to detain political activists who are critical of the government. These charges have intensified as the country nears the elections. Activists say that they have been ill-treated while in custody. These incidents have been taking place for over two years and many activists, journalists and human rights activists have been arrested in a similar fashion. According to the Human Rights Watch, 'The authorities should conduct independent and effective inquiries into the ill-treatment allegations and release the activists, pending independent review of the charges.'

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the situation in Azerbaijan?

Are there any actions that the EEAS could take to help release the activists who have been detained on fake charges?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is aware that charges related to drug possession or drug use have been laid against high profile Azerbaijani political activists in certain specific cases. The EU follows closely all judicial processes involving opposition or civil society activists, as well as detention conditions and arrangements where these are applicable. In previous statements and declarations, EU representatives have urged Azerbaijan to ensure speedy, fair, transparent and independent investigation of charges against opposition and civil society activists, recalling also Azerbaijan's international commitments in this area.

The EU has also raised the specific cases of a number of individuals with the Azerbaijani authorities, and will continue to insist on full respect for the human and legal rights of all those charged or detained.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006365/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Wzrost antysemityzmu w Egipcie, Iranie i Wenezueli

Według raportu Departamentu Stanu USA można zaobserwować znaczny wzrost antysemityzmu w Egipcie, Iranie i Wenezueli. W większości przypadków przemoc o wydźwięku antysemickim miała miejsce po wyrażeniu podobnych poglądów przez przedstawicieli rządu i/lub media.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zauważyła podobne nasilające się przejawy antysemityzmu wśród sąsiadów UE?

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych może dostarczyć dane dotyczące coraz częstszych przejawów antysemityzmu wśród południowych i wschodnich sąsiadów UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(10 września 2013 r.)

UE śledzi przypadki wszelkiego rodzaju dyskryminacji w zakresie swobód, przekonania, pochodzenia, rasy itd., z jaką spotykają się poszczególne społeczności.

UE zwalcza groźne zjawisko antysemityzmu w ramach swoich granic. Nie ma jeszcze możliwości systematycznego monitorowania go w krajach trzecich, lecz Unia uczula swoje delegatury, aby zwracały uwagę na tego rodzaju akty. Pozostaje także w kontakcie z niezależnymi instytucjami i organizacjami pozarządowymi.

UE jest coraz bardziej zaniepokojona naruszaniem wolności wyznania i przekonań na całym świecie. Wielokrotnie potępiała wszelkie akty nietolerancji, dyskryminacji i przemocy przeciwko poszczególnym społecznościom religijnym. UE potępia także prześladowania osób prywatnych lub społeczności oraz przemoc wobec nich z powodu religii lub przekonań. We wspólnym oświadczeniu z dnia 20 marca 2012 r. ([1]) przewodniczący Rady Europejskiej i Komisji przypomnieli, że wolność myśli, wyznania i przekonań oraz poszanowanie godności człowieka stanowi część Karty praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej.

UE angażuje się na płaszczyźnie dwustronnej i wielostronnej w upowszechnianie i obronę wolności wyznania i przekonań dla wszystkich, szczególnie zaś w przypadkach przemocy. W czerwcu 2013 r. UE przyjęła wytyczne dotyczące propagowania i ochrony wolności religii lub przekonań, które zwiększą skuteczność jej działań w tym obszarze. będzie ona również kontynuować wysiłki na rzecz zwalczania nietolerancji, dyskryminacji i podżegania do nienawiści w duchu rezolucji Rady Praw Człowieka ONZ nr 16/13 ([2]) i 16/18 ([3]).

Co się tyczy wydarzeń w krajach sąsiadujących, Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca i Komisja będą nadal zwracały szczególną uwagę na te zdarzenia, w tym w ramach przygotowywania rocznego sprawozdania z postępu prac w ramach europejskiej polityki sąsiedztwa.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-198_en.htm
([2]) http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/13session/A.HRC.RES.13.16_AEV.pdf
([3]) http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.RES.16.18_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006365/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Rise in anti-Semitism in Egypt, Iran and Venezuela

According to a report by the US State Department, there has been a very significant rise in anti-Semitism in Egypt, Iran, and Venezuela. In most cases, anti-Semitic violence has followed expressions of a similar tendency made by government officials and/or the media.

Has the Vice-President/High Representative noticed any similar pattern of growing anti-Semitism in the EU's neighbourhood?

Could EEAS provide data on the prevalence of anti-Semitism in the EU's eastern and southern neighbourhood?

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

The EU is following all cases of discrimination against all types of populations concerning their freedoms, beliefs, origin, race, etc.

The EU is fighting against the dangerous phenomenon of anti-Semitism on its territory. It does not have yet the means to systematically monitor it in third countries, but it sensitises the EU Delegations to pay attention to such acts. It is also in touch with independent institutions and NGOs ([1]).

The EU is increasingly concerned about violations of freedom of religion or belief worldwide and has repeatedly condemned all acts of religious intolerance, discrimination and violence against various religious communities. The EU has also denounced persecutions or violence targeting individuals or communities on the basis of their religion or belief. In a joint statement of 20 March 2012 ([2]), the Presidents of the European Council and of the Commission recalled that freedom of thought, religion and belief and the respect for the individual formed part of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

At bilateral and multilateral levels, the EU has been addressing the promotion and defence of freedom of religion or belief for all, especially in cases of violence. The EU adopted Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief in June 2013 that will enable it to step up its actions in this field. It will also continue its efforts in combating intolerance, discrimination, and incitement to hatred, in the spirit of UN Human Rights Council resolutions 16/13 ([3]) and 16/18 ([4]).

Concerning the developments referred to in the EU's neighbourhood, the HR/VP and the Commission will continue paying particular attention to these occurrences, including in the preparation of the annual European Neighbourhood Policy Progress Reports.

([1]) Non-governmental organisations.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-198_en.htm
([3]) http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/13session/A.HRC.RES.13.16_AEV.pdf
([4]) http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.RES.16.18_en.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006366/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – dyskryminacja muzułmanów w części Mjanmy

Władze zachodniej części Mjanmy, Rakhine, ustanowiły limit dwojga dzieci na rodzinę dla muzułmanów Rohingja. Polityka ta będzie narzucona w dwóch miastach Rakhine, które są w 95 % muzułmańskie, i nie będzie mieć zastosowania do żadnych buddystów tam mieszkających. Rzecznik stanu Rakhine, Win Myaing, powiedział, że celem programu jest spowolnienie szybkiego wzrostu liczby ludności społeczności muzułmańskich, ponieważ przeludnienie społeczności muzułmańskich jest jedną z przyczyn napięć w Mjanmie. Jednak muzułmanie stanowią jedynie 4 % ludności Mjanmy liczącej 60 mln osób. W tej kwestii silnie odczuwa się dyskryminację muzułmanów. Sytuacja ta jest następstwem wybuchu około rok temu w stanie Rakhine przemocy na tle religijnym miedzy buddystami regionu Rakhine i muzułmanami Rohingja, podczas której świadkowie widzieli, jak policja stała bezczynnie, gdy tłum atakował muzułmanów i palił ich domy. Władze Rakhine wprowadziły tę politykę w ogniu oskarżeń o zorganizowane czystki etniczne przeciwko Rohingja.

Czy ESDZ badała tę sprawę? Jakich informacji może dostarczyć ESDZ na temat sytuacji populacji muzułmańskiej w Mjanmie?

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

Bezprecedensowe przemiany mające miejsce w Mjanmie/Birmie od marca 2011 r., przyjmowane z zadowoleniem i wspierane przez UE, stały się dla tego kraju początkiem drogi do stabilności, pokoju, demokratyzacji i rozwoju. Otwarciu przestrzeni politycznej przez reformy towarzyszy także ujawnianie się długotrwałych i głęboko zakorzenionych podziałów społecznych. Tak właśnie jest w przypadku sytuacji członków grupy etnicznej Rohingja. Doświadczają oni dyskryminacji oraz odmawia się im prawa do obywatelstwa. W następstwie aktów przemocy z czerwca i października 2012 r. blisko 140 000 członków mniejszości Rohingja wciąż przebywa w tragicznych warunkach w obozach dla uchodźców wewnętrznych. Ogłoszone przez władze stanu Rakhine wzmocnienie lokalnego nakazu obowiązującego w miastach Buthidaung i Maungdaw, który ogranicza liczbę dzieci w rodzinach członków mniejszości Rohingja, oraz oświadczenie wydane przez Wina Myainga są kolejnymi dowodami tej dyskryminacji. Środki te są sprzeczne z międzynarodowymi zobowiązaniami podjętymi przez Mjanmę/Birmę. W kontekście powszechnie występującego negatywnego nastroju wobec muzułmanów i członków mniejszości Rohingja budująca jest publiczna krytyka tego ogłoszenia przez przywódczynię opozycji, Aung San Suu Kyi, która nazwała je pogwałceniem praw człowieka.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest głęboko zaniepokojona rozprzestrzenianiem się przemocy wymierzonej w muzułmanów, a w szczególności sytuacją mniejszości Rohingja, i wyraża swoje obawy przy każdej możliwej okazji, zarówno na szczeblu bilateralnym, jak i międzynarodowym. Odpowiedź na przemoc powinna być natychmiastowa i zdecydowana. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca poruszyła niedawno tę kwestię w oficjalnych kontaktach z władzami, ponownie przypominając o konieczności szybkiej odpowiedzi na potrzeby humanitarne, jak również znalezienia trwałego politycznego rozwiązania uwzględniającego nadanie praw obywatelskich bezpaństwowcom z mniejszości Rohingja. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca podkreśliła także, że ściganie sprawców przemocy – niezależnie, z jakiej wywodzą się społeczności – jest kwestią o kluczowym znaczeniu.

Ponadto UE prowadzi działania w celu zaspokojenia potrzeb związanych z opieką społeczną wśród mniejszości Rohingja oraz zapewnienia, że kontynuowana jest realizacja rozwiązań prowadzących do trwałej reintegracji tej społeczności.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006366/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Muslim discrimination in parts of Myanmar

Authorities in Myanmar's western Rakhine have established a two-child limit for Muslim Rohingya families. This policy will be imposed in two Rakhine townships that are about 95% Muslim, and will not apply to any Buddhists in the area. The Rakhine state spokesman, Win Myaing, said that the programme's objective is to slow down the rapid population growth in the Muslim communities because Muslim overpopulation is one of the causes of tensions in Myanmar. However, Muslims account for only 4% of Myanmar's population of 60 million people. There is a strong feeling of discrimination against Muslims in this matter. This situation follows an outbreak of sectarian violence about a year ago in the Rakhine state between the region's Rakhine Buddhists and Muslim Rohingya, during which witnesses saw police officers stand by as crowds attacked Muslims and burned down their homes. The Rakhine authorities have created this policy amid accusations of organised ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya.

Has the EEAS investigated this matter? What information can the EEAS provide about the case of the Muslim population in Myanmar?

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

The unprecedented changes in Myanmar/Burma since March 2011, welcomed and actively supported by the EU, have put the country on a path towards stability and peace, democratisation and development. While reforms have opened up political space, long-standing and deep-rooted divisions in society are also surfacing. The situation of the Rohingya is a case in point. They face discrimination, are denied citizenship and — following the June and October 2012 violence, up to 140 000 still live in IDP camps in dire conditions. The announcement of Rakhine State authorities of the reinforcement of a local order for Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships that limits the number of children that Rohingya couples can have and the statement by Win Myaing are further indication of this discrimination. Such measures are in contravention of Myanmar/Burma's international commitments. In the context of wide-spread anti-Muslim and anti Ronhgya sentiment among the population it is encouraging that opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi has publicly criticised this announcement as violation of human rights.

The HR/VP is very concerned with the spread of anti-Muslim violence and the situation of Rohingya in particular. It expresses its concerns at every opportunity, both bilaterally and at international level. Reaction to violence must be immediate and decisive. The HR/VP raised the issue in official_contacts with authorities most recently, again reiterating the need to swiftly address humanitarian needs, while also finding a durable political solution that includes the provision of citizenship to the stateless Rohingya. The HR/VP also emphasised that prosecution of perpetrators of violence, from all communities, is of paramount importance.

In addition the EU is working to ensure the welfare needs of the Rohingya minority are met and that solutions for longer-term community reintegration are pursued.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006367/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: 1,1 mld ludzi żyjących poniżej granicy ubóstwa

W latach 1990-2010 liczba osób żyjących poniżej granicy skrajnego ubóstwa wyrażającego się w 1,25 USD dziennie zmalała o prawie 1 mld, z około 2,1 mld do 1,1 mld. Przez około kolejne dwa lata Organizacja Narodów Zjednoczonych będzie obradowała nad stworzeniem nowej listy celów, które zastąpią wygasające w 2015 r. milenijne cele rozwoju. Nowe cele będą obowiązywały do 2030 r. Jednym z nich będzie zmniejszenie ubóstwa o kolejny miliard osób. Początkowy cel został osiągnięty dzięki odpowiednim strategiom politycznym oraz kapitalizmowi. To właśnie kapitalizm jest uznawany za najważniejszy czynnik w zmniejszaniu ubóstwa. Wzrost gospodarczy wpływa na poprawę sfery socjalnej i pomaga wielu osobom przezwyciężyć ubóstwo.

Jakie cele wyznacza sobie Komisja, które pomogą ONZ zrealizować jej przyszłe milenijne cele rozwoju i ograniczyć ubóstwo?

Czy Komisja może przedstawić dane statystyczne dotyczące ograniczania ubóstwa w UE? Jak UE wypada na tle innych krajów?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(25 lipca 2013 r.)

W ramach współpracy na rzecz rozwoju prowadzonej przez Komisję wpisane jest zobowiązanie do podejmowania wszelkich wysiłków przyczyniających się do eliminacji ubóstwa oraz realizacji milenijnych celów rozwoju (MCR).

Aby osiągnąć te cele, Program działań na rzecz zmian UE wyznacza kluczowe założenia polityki w zakresie eliminacji ubóstwa, obejmujące zrównoważony i sprzyjający włączeniu społecznemu wzrost gospodarczy na rzecz rozwoju społecznego, prawa człowieka, demokrację i inne podstawowe elementy dobrego sprawowania rządów. Program ten określa także kluczowe działania mające na celu poprawę skuteczności współpracy na rzecz rozwoju prowadzonej przez UE. Program działań na rzecz rozwoju pozostanie istotnym elementem działań Komisji na rzecz osiągnięcia możliwych celów związanych z eliminacją ubóstwa także po 2015 r.

W celu przyspieszenia postępu w realizacji milenijnych celów rozwoju Komisja podjęła konkretne zobowiązania, takie jak inicjatywa MCR o wartości 1 mld euro, ogłoszona przez Komisję w 2010 r., w ramach której finansowane jest 70 projektów w 46 państwach Afryki, Karaibów i Pacyfiku. Celem tej inicjatywy jest przyspieszenie postępu w zakresie niektórych MCR, których realizacja postępuje najwolniej, takich jak eliminacja głodu, zdrowie matek, umieralność dzieci, woda i infrastruktura sanitarna.

Jeżeli chodzi o samą Unię, ostatnie dane dotyczące ubóstwa z 2011 r. wykazują, że 120 mln Europejczyków jest zagrożonych ubóstwem lub wykluczeniem społecznym, w porównaniu z 114 mln w 2009 r. i 124 mln w 2005 r. Trudno jest porównywać wskaźnik ubóstwa UE z oficjalnymi wskaźnikami innych państw. Przykładowo, w Stanach Zjednoczonych w 2011 r. 15% populacji żyło w ubóstwie biorąc pod uwagę oficjalną granicę ubóstwa, która ma charakter *absolutny*. Definicja ubóstwa w UE ma charakter *względny*, dlatego też nie jest możliwe porównanie tych dwóch wskaźników. W UE 18 państw członkowskich zaobserwowało wzrost liczby osób zagrożonych ubóstwem i wykluczeniem społecznym w latach 2010-2011, a 21 państw zaobserwowało wzrost w tym zakresie w latach 2008-2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006367/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: 1.1 billion people left below the poverty line

Between 1990 and 2010, the number of people living under the extreme-poverty line of USD 1.25 a day has been reduced by almost 1 billion people, from about 2.1 billion to some 1.1 billion. The UN will be meeting over the next year or two to establish a new list of targets to replace the Millennium Development Goals, which expire in 2015. The new goals will be set for 2030. One of these goals is to hopefully reduce poverty by another billion. The initial target was achieved by having the right policies in place and through capitalism. Capitalism has been found to be the biggest factor in the reduction of poverty. Economic growth improves welfare and lifts masses of people out of poverty.

What goals does the Commission have that will help the UN achieve its future Millennium Development Goals and reduce poverty?

Could the Commission provide statistics on the reduction of poverty within the EU? How does this compare with other countries?

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

The Commission's development cooperation is committed to undertaking every effort to contribute to poverty eradication and MDGs achievement.

To achieve that, the EU's Agenda for Change outlines key policies relevant for poverty eradication such as inclusive and sustainable growth for human development, human rights, democracy and other key elements of good governance. It also identifies key actions to improve the effectiveness of the EU's development cooperation. The Agenda for Change will remain relevant for the Commission's action to achieving possible goals related to poverty eradication beyond 2015 also.

In order to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs, the Commission made specific commitments, such as the EUR 1 billion MDG initiative which the Commission announced in 2010 and which funds 70 projects in 46 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The objective of the initiative is to accelerate progress on some of the MDGs most off-track such as those on hunger, maternal health, child mortality and water and sanitation.

Looking at the EU, the latest poverty data from 2011 show that 120 million Europeans are at risk of poverty or social exclusion compared to 114 million in 2009 and 124 million in 2005. Comparing the EU poverty rate with the official rates of other countries is difficult. Looking at the United States for example, in 2011, 15% of the popoulation was poor according to the official poverty line which is of *absolute* nature. Since the EU definition of poverty is defined in *relative* terms, comparing the two poverty rates is not possible. Within the EU, 18 Member States have seen an increase in the number of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion between 2010-2011 and 21 have seen an increase between 2008-2011.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006368/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Przemoc na tle rasowym w Grecji

Według organizacji Human Rights Watch Grecja zmaga się z nasilającym się problemem dotyczącym przestępstw z nienawiści. Udokumentowane przypadki ukazują sytuacje, w których grecka policja i wymiar sprawiedliwości nie były w stanie ukarać ludzi stosujących przemoc wobec migrantów i osób ubiegających się o azyl. Grecki wymiar sprawiedliwości nie jest wystarczająco silny wobec przestępstw z nienawiści, a rząd nie podjął koniecznych działań zmierzających do rozwiązania tego problemu.

Czy Komisja może udzielić informacji odnośnie do wysiłków greckiego rządu mających na celu zażegnanie problemu dotyczącego przestępstw z nienawiści? W jaki sposób problem ten został rozwiązany przez Komisję?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(16 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja nieustannie potępia wszelkie formy i przejawy rasizmu i ksenofobii, jako że są one niezgodne z głównymi wartościami, na których opiera się Unia.

Zgodnie z decyzją ramową Rady 2008/913/WSiSW w sprawie zwalczania rasizmu i ksenofobii wszystkie państwa członkowskie UE zostały zobowiązane między innymi do zastosowania niezbędnych środków do dnia 28 listopada 2010 r., aby pobudki rasistowskie i ksenofobiczne mogły stanowić okoliczność obciążającą lub aby pobudki takie mogły być uwzględniane przez sądy przy wymiarze kary. To organy krajowe są odpowiedzialne za dochodzenie dotyczące wszelkich przypadków nawoływania do nienawiści i przestępstw z nienawiści oraz za ściganie sprawców tych przestępstw.

Komisja monitoruje aktualnie środki wykonawcze w państwach członkowskich i sporządzi do końca 2013 r. sprawozdanie dotyczące tej kwestii, wskazując wszelkie braki w transpozycji i wykonaniu przedmiotowej decyzji ramowej.

Do tego czasu Komisja uważnie śledzi sytuację i wyraża głębokie zaniepokojenie wszelkimi incydentami rasistowskimi i ksenofobicznymi pojawiającymi się w UE, w tym doniesieniami płynącymi z Grecji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006368/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Racist violence in Greece

According to Human Rights Watch, Greece has been facing an increasing problem with hate crimes. There have been documented cases where the Greek police and the judiciary failed to punish people that had started violence against migrants and asylum-seekers. Criminal justice against hate crimes in Greece is just not strong enough, and the government has not taken the necessary measures to deal with the issue.

Could the Commission provide information on the Greek government's efforts to put an end to hate crimes? How has the Commission dealt with the issue?

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

The Commission has repeatedly condemned all forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, as they are incompatible with the principal values the EU is founded on.

According to Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating racism and xenophobia, all EU Member States were, by 28 November 2010, obliged, *inter alia*, to take the necessary measures to ensure that racist and xenophobic motivation is considered an aggravating circumstance, or, alternatively, that such motivation may be taken into consideration by the courts in the determination of the relevant penalties. It is for national authorities to investigate any instances of hate speech or hate crime and to prosecute the perpetrators of such offences.

The Commission is currently monitoring Member States' implementing measures and will draw up a report on this issue by the end of 2013, singling out any gaps in transposition and implementation of the framework Decision.

In the meantime, the Commission is closely following the situation and is deeply concerned about any racist or xenophobic incidents emerging in the EU, including reports from Greece.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006369/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Niedobór wykwalifikowanej siły roboczej w Europie

Według dyrektorów generalnych największych europejskich przedsiębiorstw produkcyjnych znalezienie inżynierów do pracy może być w przyszłości bardzo trudne, a firmy europejskie będą zmuszone przenieść swoją działalność do takich krajów jak Indie czy Chiny, gdzie dostęp do kadry inżynierskiej jest łatwiejszy. Wielu czołowych przedsiębiorców obawia się o umiejętności nowo wykształconych pracowników europejskich w porównaniu z umiejętnościami dużej liczby inżynierów kończących każdego roku studia w Chinach oraz Indiach. Niedobór inżynierów w samych Niemczech wynosi obecnie 70 000. Peter Löscher, dyrektor generalny firmy Siemens, która jest jednym z największych koncernów technologicznych w Europie, potwierdził, że „niedobór wykwalifikowanej siły roboczej w szczególności w Niemczech to wielki problem." Dodał on również, że „musimy dołożyć wszelkich starań, aby nasz system edukacji umożliwiał uzyskiwanie odpowiednich umiejętności w dziedzinie inżynierii oraz by do Europy przyjeżdżała wykwalifikowana kadra pracownicza. Największym problemem, z jakim europejski przemysł musi sobie obecnie poradzić, jest bezrobocie wśród młodzieży kształtujące się na poziomie prawie 24 %."

Jakie stanowisko przyjmuje Komisja w powyższej sprawie?

Jakie działania podjęła Komisja w celu dopilnowania, by pracownicy europejscy otrzymywali wysoki poziom wykształcenia i nabywali cennych umiejętności?

W jaki sposób Komisja podjęła walkę z wysokim bezrobociem wśród młodzieży?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(2 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja uznaje znaczenie zapewnienia wysokich umiejętności kadry inżynierskiej. W komunikacie „Nowe podejście do edukacji" ([1]) podkreślono, jak ważne jest niezwłoczne podjęcie tej kwestii, nie tylko w odniesieniu do inżynierii, lecz w szerszym kontekście dziedziny nauk ścisłych, technologii, inżynierii i matematyki. Unijna panorama umiejętności ([2]), portal dostarczający danych na temat zasobów, popytu i niedostosowania w zakresie umiejętności, przewiduje 8-procentowy wzrost liczby pracowników w grupie „specjaliści nauk fizycznych, matematycznych i technicznych" posiadających wyższe wykształcenie pomiędzy rokiem 2010 a 2020.

Komunikat „Nowe podejście do edukacji" wyznacza unijną strategię dla krajowych reform w zakresie kształcenia i szkolenia, tak aby zapewnić wysoką jakość kształcenia i odpowiednią podaż umiejętności, które są cenione na rynku pracy. W ramach tej strategii Komisja zaangażowała się w szereg działań na poziomie UE mających na rzecz promowania umiejętności przekrojowych, takich jak umiejętności związane z przedsiębiorczością, umiejętności informatyczne i znajomość języków. W 2015 r. Komisja zainauguruje europejski obszar umiejętności i kwalifikacji, inicjatywę mająca na celu wzmocnienie i usprawnienie istniejących instrumentów UE w zakresie przejrzystości i uznawania umiejętności i kwalifikacji.

Komisja przedstawiła niedawno inicjatywę „Pracując wspólnie na rzecz młodych Europejczyków" ([3]), obszerny pakiet środków na rzecz zwalczania bezrobocia wśród młodzieży. W ten sposób Komisja kontynuuje zaangażowanie polityczne podjęte wcześniej w ramach inicjatywy na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych oraz zalecenia w sprawie gwarancji dla młodzieży. Inicjatywa na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych przewiduje 6 mld EUR środków unijnych (na lata 2014-20) przeznaczonych dla konkretnych regionów o dużym bezrobociu wśród młodzieży w celu wdrażania gwarancji dla młodzieży.

([1]) COM(2012) 669.
([2]) http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1036

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006369/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Skills shortage in Europe

According to the chief executives of some of Europe's biggest manufacturers, engineers could be very difficult to find in the future and European companies will be forced to move to countries such as India or China, where there is a greater supply of engineers. Many business leaders are concerned about the skills of newly educated European workers compared with the large estimates of engineers graduating each year from China and India. Germany alone currently lacks 70 000 engineers. Peter Löscher, chief executive of Siemens, Europe's largest engineering group, said 'the skills shortage, particularly in Germany, is a big issue. We have to ensure that our education system is providing the right engineering skills, that we have qualified immigration coming to Europe… And perhaps the biggest issue that European industry has to grapple with is that we have almost 24% youth unemployment.'

What is the Commission's stance on this matter?

What steps has the Commission taken to ensure European workers receive a quality education and acquire valuable skills?

How has the Commission addressed the problem of high youth unemployment?

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

The Commission acknowledges the importance of ensuring high skills in engineering. The communication 'Rethinking Education' ([1]) underlines the importance of addressing this matter with urgency, not only for engineering, but also for the broader area of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). The EU Skills Panorama ([2]), a portal providing intelligence on skills demand, supply and mismatches, shows an anticipated increase of 8% in the numbers of employees within the grouping 'Physical, maths and engineering professionals' with high education level between 2010 and 2020.

The 'Rethinking Education' Communication sets out an EU strategy for national reforms in education and training to ensure quality education and the supply of skills which are valued in the labour market. As part of this strategy, the Commission has committed to a number of EU actions to promote the acquisition of transversal skills, such as entrepreneurial, digital and language skills. In 2015, the Commission will launch the European Area for Skills and Qualifications, an initiative aiming at reinforcing and streamlining existing EU instruments for transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications.

The Commission has recently presented 'Working together for Europe's young people' ([3]), a comprehensive package of measures to combat youth unemployment, thus pursuing the political commitment already established with the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and the recommendation on the Youth Guarantee. The YEI targets EUR 6 billion EU funds (2014-20) to specific regions with high levels of youth unemployment in order to implement the Youth Guarantee.

([1]) COM(2012) 669.
([2]) http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1036.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006370/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Niedobór pielęgniarek i pielęgniarzy w Europie

Pojawiły się ostatnio doniesienia o niedoborze pielęgniarek i pielęgniarzy w Europie. Przykładowo w Polsce godziny pracy są wymagające, a płace – niskie, więc wiele osób porzuca ten zawód. W innych państwach europejskich sytuacja jest bardzo podobna. Zawód pielęgniarki/pielęgniarza traci w Europie na atrakcyjności. Według Instytutu Badań nad Zdrowiem Publicznym i Opieką Pielęgniarską na Uniwersytecie w Bremie do 2030 r. będzie brakować ok. 500 000 pielęgniarek i pielęgniarzy. W związku z tym Węgry i Polska niepokoją się, że bogatsze kraje odbierają im wszystkich pielęgniarzy i pielęgniarki. Majętniejsze kraje płacą swoim pielęgniarkom i pielęgniarzom więcej, przez co wiele osób wykonujących ten zawód opuszcza biedniejsze kraje. Ze względu na i tak już niską atrakcyjność pielęgniarstwa, recesję i rosnącą liczbę obywateli w starszym wieku wymagających długoterminowej opieki w biedniejszych państwach członkowskich UE wzrasta niepokój.

Jakie kroki podjęła Komisja, by zaradzić niedoborowi pielęgniarek i pielęgniarzy w państwach członkowskich?

W jaki sposób Komisja zajęła się kwestią takich krajów jak Polska czy Węgry, którym ubywa pielęgniarek i pielęgniarzy na rzecz bogatszych krajów?

Czy Komisja mogłaby przedstawić w ujęciu statystycznym prognozy dotyczące niedoboru pielęgniarek i pielęgniarzy w państwach członkowskich na nadchodzące lata?

Jak w takich statystykach wypada porównanie krajów o słabszych i silniejszych gospodarkach?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(1 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja odsyła Szanownego Pana Posła do swojej odpowiedzi na pytanie pisemne E-006176/2013 ([1]), w którym przedstawiono działania Komisji mające na celu rozwiązanie problemu niedoboru pielęgniarek i pielęgniarzy oraz innych pracowników służby zdrowia w UE.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006370/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Nursing shortage in Europe

There have been reports of shortages of nurses in Europe. In Poland, for example, the working hours are demanding and the pay is low, which is why people are leaving the profession. In other European countries, the situation is very similar. Nursing is rapidly losing its appeal in Europe. According to the Institute for Public Health and Nursing Research at the University of Bremen, there will be a nursing shortage of about 500 000 nurses by 2030. Consequently, Hungary and Poland are worried that richer countries are taking away all their nurses. Richer countries are paying their nurses more money and many nurses are leaving poorer countries. Given the already low appeal of nursing, the economic recession and a growing number of senior citizens requiring long-term care, poorer Member States of the EU are concerned.

What steps has the Commission taken to resolve the shortage of nurses among Member States?

How has the Commission addressed the issue of countries such as Poland and Hungary losing their nurses to wealthier countries?

Could the Commission provide statistics regarding the nursing shortage prognosis among Member States for the coming years?

How do these statistics compare between countries with poorer and richer economies?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-006176/2013 ([1]) which sets out the Commission's actions to address the shortages of nurses and other health professionals in the EU.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006371/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Erosione coste

Sempre più frequentemente i litorali italiani sono toccati dal fenomeno dell'erosione delle coste. Si tratta di un arretramento progressivo della linea di riva verso terra. È stato calcolato che la perdita dovuta all'erosione di un metro quadrato di spiaggia comporta un costo di mille euro, a causa dei guadagni perduti e per i tentativi di protezione e intervento. Le variazioni morfologiche dei litorali possono avvenire nel corso di ere geologiche, di secoli, anni o stagioni o essere addirittura giornaliere. I cambiamenti a breve tempo di una costa sono imputabili in parte a fattori naturali, in parte a fattori antropici. Le opere ingegneristiche marittime fungono da sbarramenti a ridosso dei quali vanno ad accumularsi sedimenti. Questi ostacoli da un lato producono accrescimento della spiaggia, dall'altro una maggiore erosione con repentino arretramento della linea di riva, sbancamento delle dune e distruzione della vegetazione pioniera. Altri interventi negativi per le spiagge sono prelievi di materiale sabbioso e ghiaioso, dalle dune costiere o dagli alvei fluviali, per scopi edilizi. Un tempo le estrazioni degli inerti erano più limitate, oggi avvengono in maniera sempre più massiccia tanto da assumere proporzioni allarmanti.

Le azioni antropiche che modificano una costa possono anche avvenire nelle aree interne dell'entroterra: opere di regimazione degli alvei fluviali, sistemazioni idraulico-forestali, dighe e sbarramenti hanno quasi sempre conseguenze sulle linee di costa. Tutti questi interventi implicano una diminuzione del trasporto solido dei corsi d'acqua a mare. Il risultato è la riduzione o la scomparsa totale di spiagge già in erosione. Tale fenomeno sta assumendo caratteri particolarmente critici sulle coste della Regione Puglia, nello specifico nell'area del Gargano. L'erosione implica tre tipi di impatto o rischio: perdita di valore economico delle aree, distruzione delle difese naturali (solitamente dune) e distruzione di opere di difesa artificiali con pericolo di inondazione.

Tutto ciò premesso, voglia la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— Reputa la Commissione che sia necessario promuovere uno studio ad hoc sullo stato di salute delle coste dell'Unione prima che si arrivi a un'emergenza ambientale oltre che economica?

— Reputa la Commissione che sia necessario regolamentare con attenzione la possibilità di costruzione di opere antropiche nelle vicinanze delle aree ad alto rischio di erosione, vietando anche l'estrazione di materiale inerte?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(23 agosto 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole delle pressioni ambientali connesse all'erosione delle coste europee, comprese quelle italiane. La Commissione ha finanziato lo studio «Eurosion» ([1]) sulla gestione sostenibile dell'erosione costiera, che ha prodotto una valutazione dell'esposizione delle coste europee all'erosione, un riesame delle pratiche correnti e delle esperienze in materia di gestione di questo problema e infine una serie di linee guida sulle migliori prassi nonché raccomandazioni politiche in materia. I dati alla base della valutazione sono in corso di verifica e aggiornamento tramite l'iniziativa «Conoscenze oceanografiche 2020» nell'ambito della politica marittima integrata e saranno liberamente accessibili, in modo da facilitare efficaci azioni di risanamento da parte delle autorità locali e nazionali.

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-004290/2013, che riferisce di altre azioni in corso per la protezione delle coste dall'erosione.

([1]) http://www.eurosion.org/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006371/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Coastal erosion

The coasts of Italy are being affected by the phenomenon of coastal erosion with increasing regularity. This means that the shoreline gradually retreats towards the land. It has been calculated that losses caused by the erosion of one square metre of beach result in a cost of EUR 1 000 from loss of earnings and protection and intervention attempts. Morphological changes in the coastline can occur over the course of geological eras, centuries, years or seasons, or even daily. Short-term changes to a coastline can be attributed in part to natural factors and partly to human factors. Maritime engineering works act as barriers in whose shelter sediment accumulates. On the one hand, these obstacles cause beaches to grow; on the other, they cause greater erosion with a sudden retreat of the shoreline, the creation of dunes and the destruction of pioneer vegetation. Other negative effects for beaches are the removal of sandy and pebbly material, coastal dunes or river beds, for construction purposes. Once, the extraction of inert substances was more limited, but today, mass extraction is growing all the time and is now conducted on an alarming scale.

Human activities which alter coasts can also occur in the hinterland areas: river process management works, forest water solutions, dikes and barriers almost always have an impact on the coastline. All these measures involve reduced sediment transport to the sea through watercourses. The result is the reduction or total disappearance of beaches already suffering from erosion. This phenomenon has become particularly critical on the coasts of the Apulia Region, specifically in the Gargano area. The erosion concerned involves three types of impacts or risks: the loss of the economic value of the area, the destruction of natural defences (usually dunes) and the destruction of artificial defence works with the risk of flooding.

In light of this, could the Commission answer the following questions:

— Does the Commission believe it necessary to promote an ad hoc study into the condition of the coasts in the European Union before we face an environmental emergency in addition to the economic one?

— Does the Commission believe it necessary to carefully regulate the possibility of building works near areas at risk of erosion and also to forbid the extraction of inert substances?

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

The Commission is aware of environmental pressures related to coastal erosion along the European coastline, including Italy. The Commission funded a study ([1]) on sustainable coastal erosion management called 'Eurosion' that resulted in an assessment of the European coasts' exposure to coastal erosion, a review of existing practices and experiences of coastal erosion management and a set of guidelines on best practices and policy recommendations to improve coastal erosion management. The data that underpin this assessment are being checked and updated through the 'Marine Knowledge 2020' initiative of the integrated maritime policy. These data will be freely accessible; thus facilitating effective remediation actions by local regional and national authorities.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-004290/2013 for other ongoing actions to protect coasts against erosion.

([1]) http://www.eurosion.org/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006372/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Diritti umani alle Maldive

Pare che per i turisti di stomaco buono le Maldive siano considerate un paradiso. Forse lo sono per certi turisti, non lo sono certamente per i cristiani, le donne e i gay. La legge islamica alla quale si rifanno queste isole è applicata radicalmente. I cristiani non possono praticare la loro fede, il primo gay che ha aperto un blog in difesa dei valori laici ha rischiato di essere sgozzato, il 28 febbraio scorso una 15enne è stata condannata a 100 frustate e a otto mesi di arresti domiciliari per «fornicazione» perché, violentata dal patrigno, è colpevole di rapporti sessuali al di fuori del matrimonio. Per lo stesso reato, nel settembre 2012 una sedicenne era stata condannata alla fustigazione in pubblico. Nel 2010 oltre l'80 per cento dei 96 cittadini maldiviani condannati alla fustigazione erano donne. Per la sharia, l'omosessualità è punibile con un anno di galera o 30 frustate. L'anno scorso sono state distrutte 35 statue e manufatti buddisti e indù nel Museo nazionale. Gli islamici moderati sufi sono malmenati in piazza e chi arriva nell'arcipelago con Bibbia o Vangelo viene arrestato ed espulso. Se l'ultima sentenza di fustigazione non sarà cancellata, Avaaz, l'organizzazione per i diritti civili, ha raccolto 2 mila firme per il boicottaggio dell'industria turistica.

Alto Rappresentante:

1. Interprete e guardiana dei diritti umani sanciti dal trattato, ha mai preso iniziative per contrastare la loro palese violazione in questa regione del mondo, a tutela dei cittadini vittime di questa legge inumana?

2. Quali azioni intende intraprendere per fiancheggiare e cooperare con l'Avaaz, al fine di informare i turisti e i viaggiatori europei della reale situazione alle Maldive e tutelare i cittadini europei che vi si trovassero in difficoltà?

3. Intende esercitare una forte pressione sulle autorità locali ed eventualmente minacciare di sospendere provvisoriamente i rapporti di cooperazione con le Maldive, fino al ritorno a una situazione di rispetto dei diritti umani?

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

L'UE ha reso nota la sua posizione su questo caso in una dichiarazione formale del 1° marzo 2013 (http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/spokes/index_en.htm#top).

L'Unione ha esortato a più riprese le autorità maldiviane a respingere questo tipo di sentenze e ad intraprendere una vasta riforma della giustizia. La politica dell'UE consiste nell'utilizzare il dialogo e l'assistenza per favorire il cambiamento.

Sebbene l'Unione sostenga attivamente una società civile dinamica, nelle Maldive come nel resto del mondo, le sue relazioni con le autorità dei paesi terzi non si svolgono tramite intese con organizzazioni civiche. All'occorrenza, gli Stati membri sono pronti a offrire il loro sostegno consolare in questo paese.

Non esiste un accordo di cooperazione con le Maldive. In quanto paese a reddito medio-alto, a partire dall'anno prossimo le Maldive non beneficeranno né di concessioni commerciali né di un programma bilaterale di assistenza. Tuttavia, l'UE continuerà a esortare le Maldive ad adoperarsi perché il loro ordinamento giuridico sia in linea con le convenzioni internazionali sui diritti dell'uomo di cui il paese è firmatario ed è pronta a offrire assistenza in tal senso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006372/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights in the Maldives

It seems that, for tourists with a strong stomach, the Maldives are considered a paradise. Perhaps they are for some tourists, but certainly not for Christians, women and homosexuals. The Islamic law used in these islands is applied radically. Christians cannot practise their faith, the first homosexual who launched a blog in defence of secular values risked having his throat cut, on 28 February, a 15 year old girl was sentenced to 100 strokes of the lash and eight months of house arrest for 'fornication' since, having been raped by her step-father, she is guilty of sexual relations outside marriage. In September 2012, a 16 year old girl was sentenced to a public whipping for the same offence. In 2010, over 80 per cent of the 96 Maldivian citizens sentenced to whipping were women. Under sharia law, homosexuality is punishable by one year in prison or 30 strokes of the lash. Last year, 35 Buddhist and Hindu statues and relics in the national museum were destroyed. Moderate Sufi Muslims are manhandled in the streets and anyone arriving in the archipelago with a Bible or Gospel is arrested and expelled. Avaaz, the civil rights' organisation, has collected 2 000 signatures to boycott the tourism industry, unless the latest whipping sentence is overturned.

High Representative:

1. As an interpreter and guardian of the human rights enshrined in the treaty, have you ever implemented initiatives to combat their flagrant violation in this region of the world, in order to protect citizens who fall victim to this inhumane law?

2. Which measures do you intend to take to bolster and cooperate with Avaaz, in order to inform European tourists and travellers about the actual situation in the Maldives and protect European citizens who have found themselves in difficulties there?

3. Do you intend to bring strong pressure to bear on the local authorities and possibly threaten to provisionally suspend the cooperation agreements with the Maldives, until human rights are once again respected?

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

The EU's view on this case has been the subject of a formal statement on 1 March 2013 (http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/spokes/index_en.htm#top)

The EU has repeatedly urged the Maldivian authorities to reject judgments of this kind handed down by the courts and to institute far-going reform of the justice sector. The EU's policy is to use dialogue and assistance to encourage change.

We strongly support a vibrant civil society in the Maldives, as elsewhere. However, the EU's relations with the authorities of third countries are not implemented through arrangements with civic organisations. The Member States are ready to offer their national consular support in Maldives, would this be necessary.

There is no cooperation agreement negotiated with the Maldives. As an upper middle income country the Maldives will not, as from next year, benefit from trade concessions, nor from a bilateral country assistance programme. However, the EU will continue to urge the Maldives to ensure that its legal system is in line with international conventions on human rights to which the Maldives is party and is ready to offer assistance for this purpose.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-006374/13
à la Commission
Frédéric Daerden (S&D)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Nécessité d'audits sociaux et écologiques des fournisseurs

Un grand groupe de supermarchés belge a effectué en 2012 une série d'audits sociaux auprès de dizaines de fournisseurs asiatiques de produits non alimentaires, en examinant en particulier le niveau des salaires, ainsi que la durée du travail.

À la suite de cet audit, le groupe a rompu sa collaboration avec 34 fournisseurs sur les 117 audits sociaux effectués.

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas qu'elle devrait utiliser tous les moyens de pression dont elle dispose afin d'inciter fortement les entreprises européennes à suivre ces exemples, et même à les étendre à un maximum de secteurs d'activité, en y incluant le respect des normes élémentaires d'hygiène et de sécurité du travail, à la lumière des événements récents tragiques survenus au Bangladesh?

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que de telles investigations devraient même devenir obligatoires ou faire l'objet d'investigations dans le cadre de la politique commerciale européenne?

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que la publication des noms des sociétés européennes qui respectent strictement des codes sociaux et environnementaux serait un moyen d'encourager les sociétés à y recourir, mais aussi d'informer les consommateurs sur les conditions de fabrication des produits qu'ils achètent?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(3 juillet 2013)

La Commission a bien conscience de la gravité des événements tragiques survenus au Bangladesh et fait ce qui est en son pouvoir pour répondre à la situation.

Plusieurs initiatives privées destinées à réaliser des audits sociaux ont été menées, comme celle du groupe de supermarchés belge cité par l'Honorable Parlementaire. Bien que la Commission n'entende pas réglementer cette activité, elle invite instamment les sociétés à faire preuve de la «diligence raisonnable» dans la gestion responsable de la chaîne d'approvisionnement en observant les lignes directrices et les principes convenus à l'échelon international en matière de RSE, dont les principes directeurs des Nations unies relatifs aux entreprises et aux droits de l'Homme, les principes directeurs de l'OCDE à l'intention des entreprises multinationales et la Déclaration tripartite du BIT sur les entreprises multinationales et la politique sociale.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006374/13
to the Commission
Frédéric Daerden (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Importance of carrying out social and environmental audits of suppliers

In 2012 a major Belgian supermarket group conducted a series of social audits of Asian suppliers of non-food products, focusing on wage levels and working hours.

Following the audits, the group stopped working with 34 of the 117 suppliers concerned.

In the light of the recent tragic events in Bangladesh, does the Commission not take the view that it should use all the means at its disposal to put pressure on European firms to follow this example, or even to extend such audits to as many sectors as possible, incorporating checks on compliance with basic hygiene and workplace safety standards?

Does the Commission not take the view that such audits should even be made compulsory or become part of EU commercial policy?

Does the Commission not take the view that publishing the names of European firms which comply strictly with codes of social and environmental good practice would be a way of encouraging firms to conduct such audits and of keeping consumers informed about the conditions under which the products they buy are manufactured?

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

The Commission is conscious of the seriousness of the tragic events in Bangladesh, and is doing what is within its powers to address the situation.

Various private initiatives exist to undertake social audits, as exemplified by the Belgian supermarket group quoted by the Honourable Member. Although the Commission does not intend to regulate this activity, it does persistently advocate that companies undertake 'due diligence' in responsible supply chain management, through adherence to internationally agreed CSR principles and guidelines, including the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights, the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises, and the ILO Tripartite Declaration on Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-006375/13
al Consiglio
Licia Ronzulli (PPE)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Depenalizzazione del reato di diffamazione

Ancora troppi Stati membri dell'Unione europea adottano normative eccessivamente rigide e punitive nei confronti del reato di diffamazione. In Francia, ad esempio, è previsto il carcere nel caso in cui la persona offesa appartenga a una categoria specifica stabilita dalla legge, il che causa discriminazioni pesantissime e crea una tutela «a due velocità» dell'onore dei cittadini. Allo stesso modo la Germania prevede pene detentive che possono elevarsi fino a cinque anni e la Spagna fino a due anni. In Italia negli ultimi mesi due direttori di giornale sono stati condannati a pene detentive poiché dichiarati colpevoli del reato di diffamazione o omesso controllo.

In particolare, il 26 settembre 2012 al direttore Alessandro Sallusti è stata comminata la pena di 14 mesi di reclusione per diffamazione, mentre il 23 maggio 2013 il direttore Giorgio Mulè è stato condannato a 8 mesi di carcere, senza sospensione condizionale della pena, per il reato di omesso controllo, cosi come i giornalisti Andrea Marcenaro e Riccardo Arena condannati a un anno di reclusione.

Lo scorso 29 maggio il rappresentante per i media dell'OSCE, Dunja Mijatovic, ha affermato la necessità anche per l'Italia di intervenire per una rapida riforma della legge, depenalizzando il reato di diffamazione. La stessa rappresentante ha sottolineato che in una moderna democrazia nessuno dovrebbe essere imprigionato per quello che scrive. Sul tema, in più di un'occasione anche la Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo ha sentenziato che la reclusione per il reato di diffamazione è sproporzionata e dannosa per una società democratica, ricordando che i tribunali civili sono del tutto in grado di rendere giustizia a chi si ritiene danneggiato nella propria reputazione. Prevedere la reclusione per il reato di diffamazione impedisce la completa realizzazione del principio di libertà di espressione, con gravi ripercussioni sull'efficacia dei mezzi di comunicazione in tutta Europa.

Alla luce di quanto affermato, intende il Consiglio avviare immediatamente un dibattito sul tema e discuterlo in occasione del prossimo Consiglio dei Ministri della giustizia?

Quali iniziative ha intenzione di portare avanti per invitare gli Stati membri a depenalizzare il reato di diffamazione?

Risposta
(16 settembre 2013)

Il Consiglio non ha discusso nessuna delle questioni sollevate dall'onorevole parlamentare, né ha preso posizione in merito.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006375/13
to the Council
Licia Ronzulli (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Decriminalising defamation

Too many Member States of the European Union still have excessively inflexible and punitive provisions relating to the offence of defamation. In France, for example, a prison sentence may be imposed if the person defamed falls into a category specified by law, a seriously discriminatory provision which creates a 'two-speed' system of protecting citizens' reputations. In Germany and Spain, too, custodial sentences of up to five years and two years respectively may be imposed. In Italy, two newspaper editors have recently received prison sentences after being convicted of the criminal offence of defamation and failure to supervise a publication's content.

On 26 September 2012 the editor Alessandro Sallusti was sentenced to 14 months in prison for defamation, while on 23 May 2013 the editor Giorgio Mulè was sentenced to 8 months in prison, without the possibility of the sentence being suspended, for the offence of failure to exercise supervision, while the journalists Andrea Marcenaro and Riccardo Arena were sentenced to one-year terms of imprisonment.

On 27 May the Representative on Freedom of the Media of OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe), Dunja Mijatović, stressed that Italy needed to act quickly to reform the law by decriminalising defamation. She noted that, in a modern democracy, no one should be imprisoned for what they write. The European Court of Human Rights had also ruled, on more than one occasion, that imposing custodial sentences on people convicted of criminal libel was disproportionate and damaging to a democratic society. Ms Mijatović pointed out that civil courts were fully competent to redress the grievances of people who thought their reputations had been damaged.

The possibility of imprisonment for defamation prevents the principle of freedom of expression from being fully carried into effect, which has serious repercussion for the effectiveness of the media throughout Europe.

In view of the foregoing, does the Council intend to launch a debate on this subject at once, and to discuss it at the next Council of Ministers of Justice?

What steps does the Council intend to take to urge Member states to decriminalise defamation?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

The Council has neither discussed nor taken a position on any of the issues raised by the Honourable Member.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006376/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Derecho a votar, a presentarse a elecciones y a desempeñar un cargo público

El derecho al voto es el componente esencial de las sociedades democráticas. El principio del sufragio universal no se aplica sistemáticamente. A las personas con problemas de salud mental o discapacidad intelectual se les niega el derecho a voto, en la mayoría de los casos, como consecuencia de haber tenido restringida o eliminada su capacidad jurídica.

Considerando que las personas con discapacidad tienen derecho a disfrutar, de manera libre e independiente, del derecho al voto y del derecho a ser elegidos a los cargos públicos, tanto en la Unión Europea como en cualquier Estado miembro;

Considerando que el artículo 29 de la Convención de Naciones Unidas de los derechos de las personas con discapacidad establece el derecho a que las personas con discapacidad puedan participar plena y efectivamente en la vida política y pública en igualdad de condiciones con las demás, directamente o a través de representantes libremente elegidos, incluidos el derecho y la posibilidad de las personas con discapacidad a votar y ser elegidas;

Considerando que el artículo 12 de la Convención de Naciones Unidas dice que las personas con discapacidad tienen derecho en todas partes al reconocimiento de su personalidad jurídica;

Considerando que la accesibilidad al voto para facilitar el ejercicio de los derechos electorales que asisten a los ciudadanos de la UE, es parte del objetivo «Participación» de la Estrategia Europea de Discapacidad 2010-2020;

— ¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión para promover la participación plena y efectiva en la vida política y pública en igualdad de condiciones con las demás personas?

— ¿Tiene prevista la Comisión algún tipo de medidas para el seguimiento de cómo ejercen las personas con discapacidad su derecho al voto o para garantizar que estas puedan ejercerlo de manera completamente independiente, esto es, sin la intermediación de terceras personas, sea cual fuere su discapacidad?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de septiembre de 2013)

Por lo que se refiere al fomento de la participación plena y efectiva de las personas con discapacidad en la vida política y pública, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-001154/2013.

En cuanto al seguimiento de los procedimientos de votación en los países de la UE, la Comisión desea señalar que actúa dentro de los límites de las competencias que le confiere el Tratado de la UE. En efecto, la UE carece de competencia general tanto para regular cuestiones de capacidad legal como para armonizar las normativas electorales de los Estados miembros. Para una información más detallada, la Comisión sugiere a Su Señoría que consulte su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-007921/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006376/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: The right to vote, to stand for election and to hold public office

The right to vote is an essential component of democratic societies. The principle of universal suffrage is not systematically applied. People with mental health problems or learning difficulties are denied the right to vote, as a result, in most cases, of their legal capacity having been limited or removed.

People with disabilities are entitled to exercise, freely and independently, their right to vote and to be elected to public office, both in the European Union and in its Member States.

Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides for the right of persons with disabilities to participate effectively and fully in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and be elected.

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention states that people with disabilities have the right to recognition everywhere as persons before the law.

Accessibility to voting in order to facilitate the exercise of EU citizens' electoral rights is part of the 'Participation' goal of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

— What measures does the Commission intend to adopt to promote full and effective participation in political and public life on an equal basis with other people?

— Does the Commission have any measures planned to monitor how people with disabilities exercise their right to vote or to ensure that they can exercise this right completely independently, i.e. without the intervention of third parties, regardless of their disability?

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

Regarding its actions to promote full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001154/2013.

Regarding monitoring voting procedures in the EU countries, the Commission notes that it acts within the limits of competence conferred to it by the Treaty. The EU has no general competence to regulate the question of legal capacity nor to harmonise Member States' election rules. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007921/2013 for further details.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006377/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(4 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Insostenibilidad de las retribuciones de los ejecutivos de las empresas cotizadas

Según informaciones publicadas recientemente a raíz de la presentación de la Memoria Anual de la Comisión Nacional del Mercado de Valores (CNMV), la retribución media por consejero de las sociedades anónimas cotizadas en el Ibex35 aumentó en 2012 un 4 % respecto del año anterior. Esta situación contrasta especialmente con la moderación salarial experimentada por otros sectores de la economía española, desarrollo que la Comisión saludó positivamente en su documento de trabajo sobre la revisión en profundidad de España conforme al Reglamento sobre prevención y corrección de desequilibrios macroeconómicos del pasado mes de abril.

¿Puede la Comisión confirmar estas informaciones? ¿Tiene alguna opinión al respecto? ¿Considera que estas remuneraciones son acordes con los principios de crecimiento sostenible? ¿Qué medidas va adoptar para evitar que en momentos de crisis y destrucción de empleo las retribuciones de los directivos aumenten de una manera completamente desligada de la evolución de la economía real?

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

La Comisión ha hecho un llamamiento en la Estrategia Europa 2020 en favor de un crecimiento integrador, que reparta ampliamente los beneficios del crecimiento y la creación de empleo. Los aumentos de salarios (para los directivos y la plantilla) en las empresas que puedan permitírselo son compatibles con un crecimiento integrador.

El ejercicio de un control efectivo de la remuneración de los ejecutivos por parte de los accionistas de una empresa puede contribuir a mantener la paga de los directivos ligada a la economía real. Por ejemplo, en el caso de las empresas de propiedad estatal, los Estados miembros fijan a menudo a su discreción los salarios de los ejecutivos.

La Comisión considera que los accionistas deben tener mayor poder de decisión en lo que respecta a la remuneración de los directivos y desea fomentar una mayor transparencia a este respecto. Ahora está preparando documentación sobre las ventajas e inconvenientes de las opciones políticas en este sentido a fin de proponer una iniciativa en 2013, posiblemente mediante la modificación de la Directiva sobre los derechos de los accionistas (2007/36/CE) ([1]). Para un panorama general de las iniciativas en este ámbito, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-2536/2013 y E-2542/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Directiva 2007/36/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 11 de julio de 2007, sobre el ejercicio de determinados derechos de los accionistas de sociedades cotizadas (14.7.2007).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006377/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Unsustainability of executive pay in listed companies

According to information published recently, following presentation of the Annual Report of the Spanish National Securities Market Commission (CNMV), the average remuneration of the directors of public limited companies listed in the Ibex 35 was 4% higher in 2012 than in the previous year. This situation contrasts strongly with the wage moderation experienced in other sectors of the Spanish economy — a development welcomed by the Commission last April in its working document on an in-depth review for Spain, in accordance with the regulation on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances.

Can the Commission confirm the above information? Does it have an opinion on the matter? Does it consider this remuneration to be in line with the principles of sustainable growth? In the current crisis, in which jobs are being destroyed, what measures will it adopt to prevent executive pay increasing in a way that is completely detached from the real economy?

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

The Commission has called in the Europe 2020 strategy for inclusive growth, where the benefits of growth and jobs are widely shared. Wage increases — for management and staff —, in companies that can afford them, can be compatible with inclusive growth.

If the company's shareholders are exercising effective control over the remuneration of executives, this can help keeping manager pay connected to the real economy. For example in the case of state-owned companies, Member States often use their discretion for setting the salaries of executives.

The Commission considers that shareholders should have a greater say on directors' remuneration, and wishes to promote greater transparency in this regard. It is currently preparing evidence on the advantages and disadvantages of policy options in this direction, with the aim of proposing an initiative in 2013, possibly through a modification of the shareholders' rights directive (2007/36/EC). ([1]) For a general overview of the initiatives in this area, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-2536/2013 and E-2542/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2007/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on the exercise of certain rights of shareholders in listed companies (14.7.2007).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006379/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Euro-Einführung in Lettland

Es heißt, Lettland erfülle nun alle Voraussetzungen für die Euro-Einführung.

Allerdings stellen sich angesichts der in diesem Land vorherrschenden Entwicklung — eines der ärmsten Länder in Europa trotz der Schuldenquote von 41 % der Wirtschaftsleistung und eines Wirtschaftswachstums von circa 5 % — folgende Fragen:

1. Wie schätzt die Kommission die Auswirkungen der Euro-Einführung in Lettland auf die restlichen Euro-Länder ein?

2. Bisher war in der Mehrzahl der Euro-Länder nach der Euro-Einführung eine rückläufige wirtschaftliche Entwicklung zu verzeichnen. Wird sich dieser „Euro-Trend" in Lettland nun fortsetzen und die Bevölkerung in noch größere Armut stürzen?

3. Welche Maßnahmen hat die Kommission „in der Schublade", um einer wirtschaftlichen Abwärtsentwicklung Lettlands gegebenenfalls entgegenzuwirken?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(16. Juli 2013)

1. Gemessen am Euroraum hat Lettland ein wirtschaftliches Gewicht von rund 0,2 %, so dass sein Beitritt keine spürbaren Auswirkungen auf die restlichen Länder haben wird.

2. Die Kommission kann die Ansicht der Frau Abgeordneten nicht teilen. Die Mitgliedschaft im Euroraum verbessert schließlich die Voraussetzungen für langfristige Konvergenz und Wirtschaftsleistung. Dieser Prozess muss natürlich durch eine solide innerstaatliche Politik begleitet werden, was in einigen Mitgliedstaaten nicht immer in ausreichendem Maße gegeben war.

Aufgrund seiner langjährigen Erfahrung mit einem System fester Wechselkurse und der in den letzten Jahren deutlich verbesserten politischen Rahmenbedingungen befindet sich Lettland in einer guten Ausgangsposition, um seinen Platz in der Währungsunion einzunehmen und die Vorteile der WWU voll auszuschöpfen. Dennoch bleibt ein festes Engagement für eine solide Politik von zentraler Bedeutung.

3. Die politischen Herausforderungen Lettlands werden im Allgemeinen innerhalb des Entwicklungsrahmens für die integrierte wirtschaftspolitische Überwachung behandelt. In unserer jüngsten Prognose erschien Lettland als eine der am schnellsten wachsenden Volkswirtschaften der EU; auch bei der Anwendung der neuen Instrumente für verantwortungsvolles Regieren gab das Land in den ersten beiden Jahren keinen Anlass zur Besorgnis. Die Kommission hat empfohlen, das Defizitverfahren gegen Lettland einzustellen, da das Haushaltsdefizit deutlich zurückgeführt wurde. Darüber hinaus befindet sich Lettland nach dem erfolgreichen Abschluss der finanziellen Anpassungshilfe durch EU/IWF im Januar 2012 immer noch in der Phase der intensiven Überwachung nach Abschluss des Anpassungsprogramms.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006379/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Adoption of the euro in Latvia

Latvia is now said to fulfil the necessary conditions for the adoption of the euro.

However, given the current situation in this country — one of the poorest countries in Europe, despite the debt ratio of 41% of economic output and economic growth of around 5% — the following questions arise:

1. What impact does the Commission believe the adoption of the euro in Latvia will have on the rest of the euro area countries?

2. In the majority of the euro area countries there has, up to now, been an economic decline following the adoption of the euro. Will this 'euro trend' now continue in Latvia, with its people falling even deeper into poverty?

3. What measures does the Commission have 'up its sleeve' to counter, where possible, any downward economic trend in Latvia?

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

1. With an economic weight of about 0.2%, Latvia's entry will not have a sizeable impact on euro area aggregates.

2. The Commission does not agree with the Honourable Member's assertion. On the contrary, euro area membership enhances the conditions for longer-term convergence and economic performance. However, this needs to be supported by sound domestic policies, which were not always sufficiently in place in some Member States.

Based on its long-standing experience of operating a fixed exchange-rate regime and the significant strengthening of its policy framework over the last years, Latvia is well placed to cope with the requirements of monetary union and fully realise the benefits of EMU. However, a firm commitment to sound policies will remain essential while going forward.

3. Latvia's policy challenges are, in general, addressed within the developing framework of integrated economic surveillance. In this context, it should be noted that our most recent forecast sees Latvia among the fastest growing economies of the EU; Latvia raised no concerns in the first two years of the application of the new governance tools; and the Commission also recommended to end the excessive deficit procedure for Latvia as its budgetary deficit decreased substantially. In addition, Latvia is still under intense post-programme surveillance after the successful closure of its EU/IMF-led financial adjustment assistance in January 2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006380/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(4 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απαγωγή Τούρκου πρόσφυγα στο κέντρο της Αθήνας

Μεγάλη έκταση έχει πάρει στην Ελλάδα γεγονός που έλαβε χώρα στις 30.5.2013, στο κέντρο της Αθήνας, μπροστά στα μάτια πολιτών: πέντε άντρες απήγαγαν Τούρκο πρόσφυγα, τον κ. Bulut Yayla, θύμα βασανιστηρίων στη χώρα του λόγω των πολιτικών του θέσεων και της δράσης του στο φοιτητικό κίνημα. Αυτόπτες μάρτυρες κατέγραψαν τον αριθμό κυκλοφορίας του οχήματος με το οποίο έγινε η απαγωγή, το οποίο επιβεβαιώθηκε ότι ανήκει στην ελληνική αστυνομία.

Παρά το γεγονός ότι το Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες, το οποίο είχε αναλάβει και τη νομική υπεράσπισή του, υπέβαλε και αίτηση ασφαλιστικών μέτρων στο ΕΔΔΑ για την αποτροπή της επαναπροώθησης του πρόσφυγα στην Τουρκία, την 1.6.2013 το μεσημέρι, ανακοινώθηκε από τον δικηγόρο του απαχθέντος ότι ο απαχθείς βρίσκεται κρατούμενος στην αντιτρομοκρατική υπηρεσία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη. Όπως καταγγέλλει ο ίδιος, σε όλη τη διάρκεια της ομηρίας του υπέστη βία και κακομεταχείριση. Η ελληνική αστυνομία αρνείται κάθε ανάμιξη.

Δεδομένου ότι:

— η παραπάνω πράξη, συνιστά κατάφωρη παραβίαση της υποχρέωσης μη επαναπροώθησης, βασικής αρχής της Σύμβασης της Γενεύης για το Καθεστώς των Προσφύγων, και θέτει σε σοβαρό κίνδυνο της ζωή του εν λόγω πρόσφυγα,

— ότι στο παρελθόν, με τις υποθέσεις απαγωγών ατόμων από κράτη της ΕΕ από πράκτορες της CIA, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο με ψήφισμά του (2006/2200(INI)) είχε εκφραστεί έντονα κατά των πρακτικών αυτών και τόνισε ότι «η έκτακτη παράδοση (“extraordinary rendition”) και η μυστική κράτηση συνεπάγονται πολλαπλές παραβιάσεις των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, ιδίως του δικαιώματος στην ελευθερία και την ασφάλεια, της απαγόρευσης των βασανιστηρίων και της σκληρής, απάνθρωπης ή εξευτελιστικής μεταχείρισης, του δικαιώματος πραγματικής προσφυγής.»,

— δεδομένου ότι σε προηγούμενη ερώτησή μου (E-007426/2010) η Επιτροπή μου είχε απαντήσει ότι «Στην Τουρκία, η αντιτρομοκρατική νομοθεσία επιδέχεται πολλές ερμηνείες. Το γεγονός αυτό οδηγεί σε ποινικές διώξεις, καταδικαστικές αποφάσεις και συλλήψεις κατηγορουμένων για ενέργειες που εμπίπτουν στο πλαίσιο της ελευθερίας του εκφράζεσθαι, του συνεταιρίζεσθαι και/ή του συνέρχεσθαι»,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι γνωρίζει για τα ανωτέρω; Προτίθεται να ερευνήσει την υπόθεση, κυρίως όσον αφορά στην ενδεχόμενη συνέργεια οργάνων κράτους μέλους στην παράνομη επαναπροώθηση;

2. Θα επισκεφτεί τον απαχθέντα, η Αντιπροσωπεία της ΕΕ στην Τουρκία προκειμένου να διαπιστώσει την κατάστασή του; Προτίθεται να παρακολουθήσει και να ελέγξει τις όποιες διαδικασίες λάβουν χώρα στην Τουρκία εις βάρος του;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με όλες τις περιστάσεις που περιβάλλουν την ειδική περίπτωση που επεσήμανε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, αλλά θα έρθει σε επαφή με το Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες προκειμένου να ζητήσει περαιτέρω πληροφορίες και στη συνέχεια, εάν το κρίνει σκόπιμο, θα συζητήσει το ζήτημα με τις ελληνικές αρχές. Όλα τα κράτη μέλη υποχρεούνται από το δίκαιο της Ένωσης να σέβονται την αρχή της μη επαναπροώθησης και, εάν παραστεί ανάγκη, η Επιτροπή δεν πρόκειται να διστάσει να λάβει τα κατάλληλα μέτρα, στο πλαίσιο του ρόλου της ως θεματοφύλακα των συνθηκών.

Στο πλαίσιο των διαπραγματεύσεων για την προσχώρηση της Τουρκίας, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (μεταξύ άλλων, μέσω της αντιπροσωπείας της στην Άγκυρα) παρακολουθεί τις δικαστικές διαδικασίες, προκειμένου να αξιολογηθεί η συμμόρφωσή τους με τα πρότυπα της ΕΕ. Υποβάλλει μάλιστα αναφορές σχετικά με την πρόοδο που σημειώνει η Τουρκία όσον αφορά τη συμμόρφωσή της με το κεκτημένο της ΕΕ και τις υπόλοιπες προκλήσεις, μεταξύ άλλων και στο πλαίσιο των ετήσιων εκθέσεων προόδου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006380/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Abduction of a Turkish refugee in the centre of Athens

The event which took place on 30 May 2013 in the centre of Athens in full public view has become serious news in Greece; five men abducted a Turkish refugee, Mr Bulut Yala, a victim of torture in his country due to his political beliefs and actions in the student movement. Eyewitnesses wrote down the vehicle registration number of the car used in the abduction which was confirmed as belonging to the Greek police.

Despite the fact that the Greek Council for Refugees, who also took care of Yayla's legal advocacy, had submitted an application for interim measures to the ECtHR to prevent the return of the refugee to Turkey, it was reported, on 1 June 2013, at midday by his lawyer, that the abducted refugee was being held by the Anti-terrorism Department in Istanbul. As claimed by the refugee himself, while being held as a hostage, he has been subjected to violence and ill treatment. The Greek police are denying any involvement.

Given that:

— the aforementioned act constitutes a blatant disregard for the principle of non-refoulement, a basic principle of the Geneva Convention on Refugee Protection, and puts the life of this refugee in serious danger;

— in the past, in cases concerning the abduction of people from EU Member States by CIA agents, the European Parliament spoke out strongly against these actions, highlighting the fact that 'extraordinary rendition and secret detention involve numerous violations of human rights, in particular, violations of the right to liberty and security, the freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, the right to an effective remedy'.

— the Commission, in response to my previous question (E-007426/2010), stated that 'Anti-terrorist legislation in Turkey is open to many interpretations. This fact leads to the prosecution, conviction and arrest of accused persons for actions which fall within the scope of the freedom of expression, assembly and/or of association'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What does it know about this event? Does it intend to investigate the case, particularly with regard to the possible collaboration of a Member State's authorities in the illegal refoulement?

2. Will the EU Delegation to Turkey visit the abducted refugee in order to determine his situation? Does the Commission intend to monitor and examine the proceedings taking place in Turkey against him?

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

The Commission is not aware of all the circumstances behind the specific case pointed to by the Honourable Member, but will take contact with the Greek Council for Refugees to seek further information and, if appropriate, would then take the matter up with the Greek authorities. All Member States are obliged by Union law to respect the non-refoulement principle and, if need be, the Commission would not hesitate to take the appropriate steps in line with its role as guardian of the Treaties.

In the framework of Turkey's accession negotiations, the European Union (including through its delegation in Ankara) monitors judicial proceedings, in order to assess their compliance with EU standards. It regularly reports on progress by Turkey towards compliance with the EU *acquis* and remaining challenges, including in its annual Progress Reports.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006381/13
à la Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Impact de l'augmentation éventuelle des taxes sur le carburant luxembourgeois sur les émissions européennes

La recommandation du Conseil concernant le programme national de réforme du Luxembourg pour 2013 préparée par la Commission européenne, préconise que le Grand-Duché augmente «les taxes sur l'essence afin de réduire l'écart d'imposition avec les pays voisins». Cela en vue d'une réduction des émissions nationales de gaz à effet de serre.

Le territoire exigu du Luxembourg est effectivement un axe de transit international et les prix des carburants plus raisonnables qui y sont pratiqués incitent un nombre important d'automobilistes en transit, notamment de navetteurs, dont plus de 170 000 travailleurs frontaliers, à faire leur plein au Grand-Duché. Même si plus de la moitié de l'essence et du diesel distribués à Luxembourg est de ce fait réexportée, les émissions liées à ces carburants y sont comptabilisées.

Un renchérissement du prix des carburants au Luxembourg inciterait probablement beaucoup d'automobilistes à s'approvisionner dans celui des territoires de la grande région luxembourgeoise où les prix seraient les plus raisonnables, probablement la Belgique.

En quoi la mesure préconisée par la Commission dans ses recommandations à l'adresse du Grand-Duché pourrait-elle faire baisser les émissions européennes globales, du moins dans la grande région Sarre-Lor-Lux et Province de Luxembourg?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(22 juillet 2013)

La taxation des carburants, et plus particulièrement les droits d'accises sur les carburants, est le principal instrument de promotion de l'efficacité énergétique, car elle induit un changement de comportement des conducteurs, qui cherchent à réduire leur consommation de carburant, et incite les consommateurs à acheter des véhicules consommant moins, ce qui contribue à réduire les émissions de CO_2.

Les droits d'accises sur l'essence et le gazole au Luxembourg sont bien moins élevés que dans les pays voisins ([1]). Ces différences poussent aussi bien les propriétaires de voitures particulières de la région que les chauffeurs de poids lourds en transit à faire un détour par le Luxembourg pour faire le plein («tourisme à la pompe»). Le tourisme à la pompe n'existe qu'en cas d'écart important avec les taux d'imposition pratiqués par les pays voisins. Si l'écart se réduit, le tourisme à la pompe et les émissions de CO_2 diminuent. En outre, le niveau relativement modéré des taxes sur les carburants réduit l'efficacité des incitations à l'utilisation des transports publics.

Une augmentation des droits d'accises sur les carburants aiderait le Luxembourg à atteindre ses objectifs en matière d'émissions de GES, d'autant plus que son secteur des transports est responsable de la plus grande partie de ses émissions non couvertes par le SEQE (68 % en 2011). Le Luxembourg s'est engagé à réduire de 20 % d'ici à 2020 ses émissions de gaz à effet de serre dans les secteurs non couverts par le SEQE, par rapport à 2005. Selon toute vraisemblance, cet objectif sera loin d'être atteint. D'après les dernières projections nationales, si l'on tient compte des mesures existantes, les émissions de gaz à effet de serre du Luxembourg dans les secteurs non couverts par le SEQE devraient augmenter de 3 % par rapport à 2005.

La Commission a donc recommandé le renforcement des mesures visant à atteindre l'objectif de réduction des émissions de gaz à effet de serre, notamment par l'augmentation de la pression fiscale sur les produits énergétiques utilisés dans les transports.

([1]) Données de mai 2013 de la direction générale de l'énergie de la Commission européenne: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/oil/doc/prices/map/2013_05_13_taxation_oil_prices.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006381/13
to the Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Impact of the possible rise in excise duties on Luxembourg fuel on European emissions.

The Council recommendation on Luxembourg's 2013 national reform programme, prepared by the European Commission, recommends that the Grand Duchy increase 'gasoline taxes to reduce tax rate discrepancies with neighbouring countries'. The aim of this would be to reduce national greenhouse gas emissions.

The small territory of Luxembourg is effectively an international transit route, and the more reasonable fuel prices charged there encourage a significant number of motorists in transit — particularly commuters, including more than 170 000 frontier workers — to fill up their tanks in the Grand Duchy. Although over half of the petrol and diesel distributed in Luxembourg is therefore re-exported, the emissions relating to these fuels are recorded there.

An increase in the price of fuels in Luxembourg would probably result in many motorists stocking up in territories in the Greater Region of Luxembourg where prices were more reasonable, most likely Belgium.

How could the measure put forward by the Commission in its recommendations to the Grand Duchy bring down global European emissions, at least in the Greater Saar-Lor-Lux Region and the Province of Luxembourg?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

Fuel taxation, in particular excise duties on transport fuel, is the main policy instrument to induce fuel efficiency as they introduce a change in driving behaviour towards less energy consumption and provide an additional incentive for consumers to buy more fuel-efficient cars, thus helping reducing CO_2 emissions.

Excise duties on petrol and diesel oil in Luxembourg are far below the level in neighbouring countries ([1]). These differences create strong incentives for both private car owners in the region and drivers of heavy vehicles in transit to make a detour to fill up their tanks in Luxembourg (known as 'tank tourism'). Tank tourism only exists when differentials in tax rates with neighbouring countries are high. If differentials in tax rates decrease, tank tourism and CO2 emissions are reduced. In addition, relatively low fuel taxes weaken incentives to use public transport.

Additional efforts to increase excise duties on transport fuel would help Luxembourg to achieve its GHG emission targets. This is particularly the case because its transport sector is responsible for most of its non-ETS emissions (68% in 2011). Luxembourg has committed itself to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions in the non-ETS sectors by 20% in 2020 compared to 2005. Luxembourg will most likely fail to meet its target by a wide margin. According to the latest national projections, when existing measures are taken into account, Luxembourg is expected to increase its non-ETS GHG emissions by 3% compared to 2005.

The Commission has therefore recommended stepping up measures to meet the greenhouse gas emission reduction target, in particular by increasing taxation on energy products for transport.

([1]) European Commission's DG Energy data from May 2013:
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/oil/doc/prices/map/2013_05_13_taxation_oil_prices.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006382/13
à la Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Rapport annuel sur la qualité des eaux de baignade

Selon le récent rapport annuel sur la qualité des eaux de baignade publié par l'Agence européenne pour l'Environnement et la Commission, la qualité des 22 000 zones de baignade serait excellente dans 78 % des sites contrôlés, un chiffre en augmentation par rapport à l'année précédente. Selon ce rapport, Chypre et le Luxembourg se distingueraient par une excellente qualité des eaux de baignade.

Or, dans le cas du Luxembourg, «l'amélioration» semble être le résultat d'une présentation très sélective des sites de baignade. Alors qu'avant 2012 le Luxembourg faisait contrôler 20 sites de baignade différents, dont 9 n'étaient généralement pas conformes aux normes européennes, le récent rapport ne concerne plus que 11 sites, dont 10 sont déclarés de qualité «excellente» et un de «bonne» qualité. Selon l'agence, les 9 autres sites auraient été interdits à la baignade et ne seraient donc plus concernés par la surveillance européenne.

Cette façon de procéder est d'autant plus curieuse que, selon des représentants qualifiés du ministère de l'intérieur, l'administration n'aurait pas l'intention de faire verbaliser d'éventuels contrevenants à l'interdiction de baignade prononcée pour les 9 sites.

1. La Commission porte-t-elle un jugement sur la façon de procéder des autorités luxembourgeoises?

2. D'autres pays membres procèdent-ils d'une manière analogue en retirant de la liste des eaux de baignade des sites ne satisfaisant pas aux normes européennes?

3. Dans l'affirmative, quel est le nombre de ces sites déclassés depuis l'entrée en vigueur de la directive 2006/7/EC?

4. L'amélioration de la qualité des eaux de baignade européennes constatée ces dernières années par l'agence AEE est-elle due à ce genre de «sélectivité»?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(22 juillet 2013)

1. La directive de l'UE concernant la gestion de la qualité des eaux de baignade ([1]) établit que les États membres peuvent introduire une interdiction permanente de baignade s'ils estiment qu'il serait impossible ou exagérément coûteux d'atteindre l'état de qualité «suffisante». Cette décision est obligatoire lorsque la qualité des eaux de baignade d'un site est «insuffisante» pendant cinq années consécutives. En cas d'interdiction permanente, le public doit en être informé et la baignade ne doit pas être possible. Le site en question n'est alors plus régi par les dispositions de la directive.

2-3. La Commission ne pense pas que les États membres utilisent cette disposition dans le but d'améliorer leurs statistiques nationales sur la qualité des eaux de baignade. Le taux des sites fermés ou pour lesquels une interdiction permanente ou temporaire a été introduite, s'élevait à 0,2 % pour la saison balnéaire 2012, à 1 % en 2011, à 0,7 % en 2010 et à 3,1 % en 2009.

4. La Commission estime que l'amélioration de la qualité des eaux de baignade en Europe est le fruit des politiques et de la législation européennes sur l'eau, notamment la directive relative au traitement des eaux urbaines résiduaires ([2]) ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2006/7, JO L 64 du 4.3.2006.
([2]) Directive 91/271/CEE (JO L 135 du 30.5.1991).
([3]) Voir, par exemple, le document de travail des services de la Commission SWD (2012) 393 final, «Bilan de qualité de la politique de l'UE en ce qui concerne l'eau douce».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006382/13
to the Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Annual report on the quality of bathing water

According to the recent annual report on the quality of bathing water published by the European Environment Agency and the Commission, the quality of 22 000 bathing areas is excellent in 78% of the sites monitored, a figure that is higher than the previous year. According to this report, Cyprus and Luxembourg stand out for excellent quality of bathing water.

In the case of Luxembourg, 'the improvement' seems to be the result of a very selective presentation of bathing sites. Before 2012, Luxembourg monitored 20 different bathing sites, 9 of which did not generally comply with European standards, whereas the recent report related to only 11 sites, 10 of which are declared to be of 'excellent' quality and one of 'good' quality. According to the agency, bathing has been banned at the 9 other sites and these are therefore no longer subject to European monitoring.

This approach is particularly peculiar since, according to qualified representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the administration had no intention of reporting any violators of the ban on bathing imposed at the 9 sites.

1. What is the Commission's view on the Luxembourg authorities' approach?

2. Do other Member States proceed in a similar way, removing from the list of bathing waters the sites that do not meet European standards?

3. If so, how many sites have been de-listed since Directive 2006/7/EC came into force?

4. Is the improvement in the quality of European bathing water recorded in recent years by the EEA due to this type of 'selectivity'?

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

1. The EU Directive concerning the management of bathing water quality ([1]) establishes that Member States may introduce a permanent bathing prohibition if they consider that the achievement of a 'sufficient' quality would be infeasible or disproportionally expensive. Such a decision is compulsory if the bathing site concerned is classified as 'poor' for five consecutive years. After the permanent prohibition is introduced, the public has to be informed. Bathing should not be possible and the site is no longer considered covered by the provisions of the directive.

2 and 3. The Commission does not consider that this provision is being used by Member States to improve their national records on bathing water quality. The rate of sites closed or for which a permanent or temporary prohibition has been introduced was 0.2% in the 2012 bathing season, 1% in 2011, 0.7% in 2010 and 3.1% in 2009.

4. The Commission is of the opinion that the improvement of the bathing water quality in Europe is the result of the implementation of EU water policies and legislation, in particular the directive concerning the treatment of urban wastewater ([2]) ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2006/7, OJ L 64/37, 4.3.2006.
([2]) Directive 91/271, OJ L 135, 30.5.1991.
([3]) See, for instance, the Commission Staff Working Paper SWD(2012) 393 final, 'The Fitness Check of EU Freshwater Policy'.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006383/13
à la Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: Mesures anti-dumping relatives à l'importation de panneaux solaires chinois sur le territoire de l'Union européenne

L'industrie chinoise des panneaux solaires est en pleine expansion et le montant des importations de panneaux solaires chinois dans l'Union européenne ne cesse de croître. Suite à de nombreuses plaintes pour concurrence déloyale de la part des industriels européens du secteur, la Commission européenne a ouvert une enquête anti-dumping en septembre 2012 devant se terminer en décembre, afin de juger de la véracité de ces accusations.

Face aux pressions et sans attendre les résultats définitifs de l'enquête, le Commissaire européen Karel de Gucht a présenté le 7 mai dernier une proposition de «taxe anti-dumping». Ainsi, les modules des panneaux solaires importés à un prix inférieur à leur coût de production du fait de prêts ou subventions illégaux de l'État chinois seraient surimposés à l'entrée sur le territoire de l'Union européenne.

Au vu du manque de détails à ce sujet, la Commission pourrait-elle nous éclairer sur la manière dont une telle taxe garantirait une concurrence loyale entre panneaux solaires européens et ceux importés de Chine? Comment s'assurer qu'elle ne contreviendrait pas aux règles de l'OMC et éviter qu'elle ne déclenche des représailles commerciales de la part de la Chine?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(3 juillet 2013)

Le 5 juin 2013, la Commission a pris la décision d'imposer des mesures *antidumping* provisoires sur les importations de panneaux solaires et de leurs composants essentiels, les cellules et les *wafers*. Cette décision fait suite à une enquête approfondie qui a prouvé que les producteurs-exportateurs chinois avaient recours au *dumping*, causant ainsi un grave préjudice aux producteurs de l'Union européenne. L'enquête a également démontré que l'imposition de ces mesures ne nuirait pas à l'intérêt général de l'Union. Les conclusions détaillées de l'enquête peuvent être consultées dans le règlement (UE) n° 513/2013 de la Commission ([1]).

L'ouverture de l'enquête, laquelle se poursuit, et l'imposition de mesures provisoires étaient tout à fait conformes aux obligations de l'UE vis-à-vis de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC), qui autorise expressément les responsables d'une enquête à prendre des mesures *antidumping* (et antisubventions) si les conditions requises sont remplies.

Les textes législatifs fondamentaux de l'Union en matière d'*antidumping* exigent l'application des règles de défense commerciale. Tout membre de l'OMC a le droit d'engager des procédures de défense commerciale, mais il convient de démontrer que les mesures prises sont nécessaires pour éliminer le *dumping* préjudiciable. L'imposition de droits sans justification factuelle ou légale peut être contestée par l'Union européenne auprès de l'OMC. Une telle mesure d'exécution ne peut être assimilée à une «guerre commerciale»: elle vise simplement à garantir la primauté du droit dans les relations internationales.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 513/2013 de la Commission du 4 juin 2013 instituant un droit antidumping provisoire sur les importations de modules photovoltaïques en silicium cristallin et leurs composants essentiels (cellules et wafers) originaires ou en provenance de la République populaire de Chine et modifiant le règlement (UE) n° 182/2013 soumettant à enregistrement ces importations originaires ou en provenance de la République populaire de Chine, JO L 152 du 5.6.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006383/13
to the Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Anti-dumping measures relating to the import of Chinese solar panels into the territory of the European Union

The solar panel industry in China is booming, and the amount of imports of Chinese solar panels into the European Union continues to grow. Following numerous claims of unfair competition by European industrial operators in the sector, the European Commission opened an anti-dumping investigation in September 2012, scheduled for completion in December, to judge the truth of these accusations.

Coming under pressure and without waiting for the final results of the investigation, European Commissioner Karel de Gucht presented an 'anti-dumping tax proposal' on 7 May last year. So, modules of solar panels imported at a price that is lower than their cost of production due to illegal loans or subsidies from the Chinese government would be overtaxed at entry into the European Union.

In view of the lack of detail on this subject, can the Commission clarify the way in which such a tax would guarantee fair competition between European solar panels and those imported from China? How are we to ensure that it will not contravene WTO rules and prevent it triggering trade reprisals by China?

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

On 5 June 2013, the Commission took a decision to impose provisional anti-dumping measures on imports of solar panels and key components, i.e. cells and wafers.This decision follows an in-depth investigation which established dumping practises by the Chinese exporting producers causing material injury to the Union producers. The investigation also established that the imposition of measures would not be against the general Union interest.The detailed findings are available in Commission Regulation (EU) No 513/2013 ([1]).

The intitiation of the current investigation and the imposition of provisional measures were fully in line with the EU's international obligations within the World Trade Organisation (WTO) which specifially allows an investigating authority to take anti-dumping (and anti-subsidy) measures should the conditions be fulfilled.

Enforcing trade defence rules is required under the EU's basic regulation on anti-dumping. Every WTO Member is entitled to initiate trade defence cases, but any findings must demonstrate that measures are necessary to remove injurious dumping. If duties are imposed without a factual or legal basis, they can be challenged by the European Union at the World Trade Organisation. Such enforcment action cannot be qualified as 'trade war', but making sure the the rule of law prevails in international relations.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 513/2013 of 4 June 2013 imposing a provisional anti-dumping duty on imports of crystalline silicon photovoltaic modules and key components (i.e. cells and wafers) originating in or consigned from the People's Republic of China and amending Regulation (EU) No 182/2013 making these imports originating in or consigned from the People's Republic of China subject to registration, OJ L 152, 5.6.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006384/13
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente / Haute Représentante)
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(4 juin 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Protection du personnel civil après le retrait des troupes d'Afghanistan

Le retrait des troupes internationales d'Afghanistan sera effectif en 2014. Cet horizon fait craindre un retour en force des talibans et des représailles mettant en danger la vie des civils — Afghans ou expatriés installés en Afghanistan — qui ont œuvré auprès des troupes de l'OTAN et de certaines ONG.

Il est essentiel pour la reconstruction du pays de prendre en compte le sort de ces civils — surtout et en particulier les femmes — engagés auprès de l'OTAN. Interprètes pour la plupart, tous particulièrement instruits, c'est sur ces hommes et ces femmes que l'Afghanistan doit s'appuyer pour se relever.

Aujourd'hui, la question des personnels civils recrutés par les forces de l'OTAN depuis le début de leur déploiement en Afghanistan a été laissée à l'appréciation des différents pays. Certains, comme les États-Unis, le Royaume-Uni ou la France, ont choisi de mettre en place un système de visas d'immigrant spécial pour accueillir un nombre limité de ces hommes et de ces femmes. D'autres ont choisi de leur offrir des aides à la réinstallation dans d'autres provinces Afghanes.

L'UE a une responsabilité envers ceux qui l'ont aidée au quotidien depuis 2001 et elle doit s'assurer que le travail et les personnels mobilisés en Afghanistan ne soient pas annihilés après le départ des troupes internationales. Le retrait des troupes ne signifie pas le désengagement de la communauté internationale.

Quelle est la position du SEAE sur cette question?

Comment l'UE compte-elle s'assurer que les personnels civils qui ont travaillé pour elle puissent être accueillis et protégés sur le sol européen? Dans le cas où l'UE opterait également pour l'aide à la réinstallation dans d'autres provinces, comment s'assurera-t-elle concrètement de la protection des personnes concernées?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(26 juillet 2013)

Les institutions de l'UE ne sont pas compétentes en matière d'affaires consulaires. Par conséquent, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante n'est pas en mesure de s'engager sur la réinstallation des personnels contractuels locaux. Néanmoins, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a pleinement conscience de ce problème et elle réexaminera la situation de ses agents locaux en tenant compte de l'évolution de la situation en Afghanistan, en consultation avec les États membres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006384/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Protection of civilian staff after the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan.

Withdrawal of international troops from Afghanistan will begin in 2014. This prospect leads to fears of a powerful Taliban resurgence and reprisals endangering the lives of Afghan civilians or expatriates based in Afghanistan who have worked alongside NATO troops and certain NGOs.

It is essential to the rebuilding of the country to take account of the fate of these civilians — especially women — working for NATO. Mostly interpreters, and all specially trained, Afghanistan needs these men and women in order to rebuild itself.

Today, the matter of civilian staff recruited by NATO forces since the beginning of their deployment in Afghanistan is left to the discretion of the different countries. Some, like the United States, the United Kingdom and France, have decided to introduce a special immigrant visa system to accommodate a limited number of these men and women. Others have chosen to offer them assistance with resettlement in other Afghan provinces.

The EU has a responsibility towards those who have assisted it on a daily basis since 2001, and it must ensure that the work and the personnel mobilised in Afghanistan are not wiped out after the departure of international troops. Withdrawal of the troops does not mean disengagement by the international community.

What is the position of the EEAS on this matter?

How does the EU intend to ensure that civilian staff who have worked for it can be accommodated and protected on European soil? If the EU also opts for assistance with resettlement in other provinces, what practical measures will it take to ensure the protection of the people concerned?

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

The EU institutions do not have competence for consular matters. As such, the HR/VP is not in a position to give any commitmnents on resettlement to contractual local staff. Nonetheless, the HR/VP is fully aware of this issue and will review the situation of its local agents in the light of developments in Afghanistan, in consultation with the Member States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006385/13
al Consiglio
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Arresto di un sospetto coinvolto nell'accoltellamento di un soldato francese

Il 29 maggio 2013 le autorità francesi hanno arrestato un ventiduenne sospettato di essere l'autore dell'accoltellamento di un soldato francese a Parigi. L'uomo è stato arrestato a Yvelines, fuori Parigi. Secondo il ministro dell'Interno francese Manuel Valls, il sospetto era noto alle forze dell'ordine, e i servizi di intelligence del paese hanno riferito che tre anni fa l'uomo si è convertito all'Islam, diventando «sempre più radicale».

Secondo il quotidiano britannico *Telegraph*, l'uomo aveva acquistato due coltelli prima dell'attacco del 25 maggio per poi compiere un convulso tentativo di colpire a morte un soldato ventitreenne, che fortunatamente è sopravvissuto alle ferite. Dopo l'arresto dell'uomo, il pubblico ministero di Parigi ha dichiarato che il sospetto aveva confessato l'attacco, sostenendo di aver agito «nel nome della propria ideologia religiosa». Il governo francese ritiene che molti giovani abbraccino una posizione sempre più radicale a seguito dei loro contatti con esponenti religiosi estremisti. Secondo il quotidiano, di recente sono inoltre stati arrestati quattro presunti complici del killer di Tolosa, Mohamed Merah.

1. Quali misure intende il Consiglio adottare per far fronte al nuovo problema rappresentato dagli attacchi jihadisti perpetrati da individui isolati («lupi solitari»), come nei recenti casi di Londra e Parigi? Occorre ad esempio promuovere una cooperazione o una condivisione maggiori in termini di intelligence a livello europeo attraverso Europol?

2. Alla luce delle preoccupazioni sollevate dalla Francia circa il crescente numero di giovani islamisti radicalizzati, quali misure sta eventualmente adottando il Consiglio per valutare l'influenza di esponenti religiosi radicali residenti negli Stati membri dell'UE e sospettati di predicare ideologie estremiste, tra l'altro attraverso presunti appelli alla violenza?

Risposta
(21 ottobre 2013)

Il Consiglio è preoccupato per la continua minaccia terroristica nell'UE e in particolare per i rischi posti dalla radicalizzazione e dal reclutamento di terroristi. Tali questioni sono affrontate nel quadro dell'attuazione della strategia antiterrorismo dell'UE, della strategia dell'UE volta a combattere la radicalizzazione e il reclutamento nelle fila del terrorismo e della rete dell'UE per la sensibilizzazione in materia di radicalizzazione. Il Consiglio ha da ultimo discusso della lotta alla radicalizzazione e al reclutamento nelle fila del terrorismo nella sessione del 6 e 7 giugno 2013. Nelle conclusioni il Consiglio ha definito la questione degli attori solitari come una priorità da considerare nell'aggiornamento della strategia dell'UE volta a combattere la radicalizzazione e il reclutamento nelle fila del terrorismo. È stata altresì discussa l'esigenza di attuare la direttiva PNR UE. I risultati delle discussioni figurano nelle conclusioni del Consiglio disponibili sul sito web del Consiglio stesso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006385/13
to the Council
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Arrest of suspect involved in the stabbing of a French soldier

On 29 May 2013, the French authorities arrested a 22-year-old man on suspicion that he was responsible for stabbing a French soldier in Paris. The man was arrested in Yvelines, outside Paris. According to France's Interior Minister Manuel Valls, the suspect was known to the police, and the country's intelligence services report that three years ago he converted to Islam and became 'increasingly radical'.

According to the UK's *Telegraph*, before the attack on 25 May the man had bought two knives and had made frantic efforts to cause excessive harm to a 23-year-old soldier, who luckily did not succumb to his injuries. After the man's arrest, the Paris prosecutor said that the suspect had owned up to the attack and claimed to have 'acted in the name of his religious ideology'. The French Government estimates that there are many juveniles who have become radicalised through their associations with extremist religious clerics. The newspaper also notes that four suspected accomplices of the Toulouse gunman Mohamed Merah were recently arrested.

1. What measures is the Council prepared to adopt in order to address this new problem of 'lone wolf' jihadi attacks, which have recently occurred in London and Paris? Is there a need for more EU-level intelligence sharing or cooperation through Europol, for instance?

2. In light of French concerns over the increasing number of radicalised young Islamists, what steps, if any, is the Council taking to assess the influence of radical clerics residing in EU Member States who are suspected of preaching extremist ideology, including allegedly inciting violence?

Reply
(21 October 2013)

The Council is concerned at the continuing threat of terrorism within the EU and in particular at the risks posed by radicalisation and terrorist recruitment. These issues are being addressed within the framework of the implementation of the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to terrorism, and the Radicalisation Awareness Network. The issue of combating radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism was discussed most recently by the Council at its meeting of 6-7 June 2013. In its conclusions, the Council defined the issue of lone actors as a priority to be considered in the update of the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to terrorism. The need for the European PNR directive to be put in place was also discussed. The outcome of the discussions is set out in the Council conclusions which are available on the Council website.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006386/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Il presidente della Lega araba chiede a Hezbollah di lasciare la Siria

Il 26 maggio 2013 varie fonti d'informazione hanno riportato che in occasione del Forum economico mondiale il presidente della Lega araba Nabil Elaraby ha chiesto al capo della milizia sciita libanese Hezbollah di porre fine al sostegno militare dato alle forze governative in Siria. In un atto di rappresaglia, dovuto alla decisione di Hezbollah di sostenere Assad, sono stati sparati due razzi contro i quartieri meridionali sciiti di Beirut. Almeno cinque persone sono rimaste ferite. Il capo di Hezbollah Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah ha affermato che i suoi combattenti sono stati impegnati nel conflitto contro quelli che egli definisce ribelli islamisti sunniti radicali. E ha annunciato: «Come vi ho sempre promesso la vittoria, ve la prometto ancora una volta».

Il presidente della Lega araba ha condannato gli attacchi missilistici nonché i continui scontri fra sunniti e alawiti nella città libanese di Tripoli. Nabil Elaraby ha posto l'accento sulla necessità di proteggere l'unità interna del Libano. Il paese non è tuttavia stato in grado di arginare il flusso di uomini armati sunniti in Siria. Nel frattempo l'esercito siriano riceve aiuti da Hezbollah nei combattimenti per riprendere la città di al-Qusayr, vicino al confine libanese.

Stando al quotidiano inglese Times, un funzionario dell'esercito libero siriano, Ammar al Wawi, ha affermato che se il governo libanese non riesce a fermare le attività di Hezbollah in Siria: «Ci saranno ripercussioni su Beirut, Tripoli e l'aeroporto internazionale Rafic Hariri di Beirut». Ammar al Wawi sostiene che l'aeroporto è utilizzato dagli aerei iraniani come corridoio per l'invio di armi in Siria.

È possibile sapere:

1. quali misure intende l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente adottare a sostegno delle richieste del presidente della Lega araba affinché il gruppo di milizia libanese Hezbollah cessi di fornire sostegno militare alle forze governative siriane;

2. visto l'impatto negativo di Hezbollah, che accende le tensioni regionali, compresa la situazione interna libanese, schierando le proprie truppe in Siria, se l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è disposto a tenere conto della qualificazione di Hezbollah come organizzazione terroristica;

3. se l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è disposto a chiedere al governo libanese di effettuare ulteriori sforzi per arginare il flusso di miliziani sciiti di Hezbollah e sunniti verso la Siria per partecipare al conflitto?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(23 luglio 2013)

Nel corso della sua ultima visita in Libano il 17 e 18 giugno, l'AR/VP ha ribadito al governo del paese il sostegno dell'UE alla politica libanese di dissociazione dal conflitto in Siria, politica che deve essere osservata da tutti gli interlocutori libanesi.

Tutte le qualificazioni contenute nella lista dell'UE di persone, gruppi ed enti coinvolti in atti terroristici richiedono una decisione unanime da parte degli Stati membri. Ad oggi non si è ancora giunti ad un accordo sulla qualificazione di Hezbollah e le discussioni continuano.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006386/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Head of Arab League calls for Hezbollah to leave Syria

On 26 May 2013, various news sources reported that the head of the Arab League, Nabil Elaraby, at the World Economic Forum, called for the Lebanese Shia militia group Hezbollah to stop lending its military support to government forces in Syria. In an act of retaliation for Hezbollah's decision to support Assad, two rockets were fired into the Shia neighbourhoods of southern Beirut. At least five people were wounded. The leader of Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, said that his fighters were committed to the conflict against what he calls radical Sunni Islamist rebels. He announced that, 'Just as I always promise you victory, I promise you victory once again.'

The head of the Arab League condemned the rocket attacks and also the continuing clashes between Sunnis and Alawites in the Lebanese town of Tripoli. Elaraby stressed the need to protect Lebanon's internal unity. However, the country has not been able to stem the flow of Sunni gunmen into Syria. Meanwhile, the Syrian army has been receiving aid from Hezbollah as it fights to take back the town of al-Qusayr, near the Lebanese border.

According to the UK's Times newspaper, an official from the Free Syrian Army, Ammar al Wawi, said that if the Lebanese government failed to stop Hezbollah's activities in Syria, 'There will be repercussions against Beirut, Tripoli and Beirut's Rafic Hariri International Airport.' He claims that the airport is being used as a corridor for Iranian planes that are shipping weapons to Syria.

1. What steps is the High Representative/Vice-President prepared to take to support calls by the head of the Arab League for the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah to stop lending its military support to Syrian government forces?

2. Given the detrimental impact of Hezbollah in inflaming regional tensions, including the domestic Lebanese situation by taking sides in Syria, is the HR/VP prepared to take this into consideration regarding designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation?

3. Is the HR/VP prepared to call on the Lebanese government to take further efforts to reign in both Hezbollah and Sunni militants who are streaming into Syria to engage in the conflict?

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

During her last visit to Lebanon on 17-18 June, the HR/VP reiterated to the Lebanese government the EU support to Lebanon's policy of dissociation from the conflict in Syria, which needs to be observed by all Lebanese actors.

All designations under the EU list of persons, groups and entities involved in terrorist acts require a unanimous decision by EU Member States. To this date, while discussions are ongoing there is no consensus on the designation of Hezbollah.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006387/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Presunti attacchi informatici cinesi in Australia

Il 28 maggio 2013 i mezzi di informazione australiani hanno riferito che alcuni hacker cinesi erano riusciti a rubare le piante della nuova sede dell'Organizzazione australiana per le informazioni e la sicurezza. Il quartier generale dell'Organizzazione, un complesso da diversi milioni di dollari, è stato preso di mira nel quadro di una crescente ondata di attacchi informatici provenienti dalla Repubblica popolare cinese.

Gli hacker hanno inoltre rubato informazioni riservate dal dipartimento degli Affari esteri e del commercio, sede dell'agenzia ufficiale dei servizi segreti, il Servizio segreto di intelligence australiano. Secondo il canale australiano ABC, gli hacker cinesi avrebbero attaccato le imprese insediate in Australia in modo più aggressivo di quanto si fosse inizialmente pensato. Tra le vittime degli attacchi figurano importanti imprese manifatturiere, come la Bluescope Steel.

L'attacco ai danni dell'Organizzazione australiana per le informazioni e la sicurezza ha divulgato l'ubicazione delle reti informatiche e di comunicazione, rendendole più vulnerabili a futuri attacchi informatici. L'edificio dovrebbe disporre di difese informatiche contro gli attacchi tra le più sofisticate del paese.

Il governo australiano non ha diffuso informazioni dettagliate circa la portata dei danni subiti; desta tuttavia meraviglia il fatto che questi attacchi informatici non abbiano compromesso le relazioni tra Cina e Australia, che rimangono solide e produttive. Il primo ministro Julia Gillard ha fatto dei contatti regolari con il governo cinese una massima priorità.

1. Come valuta la Commissione la vulnerabilità dei servizi di informazione e sicurezza europei agli attacchi degli hacker cinesi?

2. Nel marzo 2012 la Commissione ha presentato una comunicazione sul Centro europeo per la lotta alla criminalità informatica, che è diventato operativo nel gennaio 2013 e si configura quale «punto focale della lotta contro la cibercriminalità nell'UE». Dal momento della sua istituzione, quali successi ha eventualmente ottenuto il Centro nel far fronte a specifiche minacce provenienti dalla Cina?

3. Qual è il ruolo della Commissione nel fornire consulenza alle società e alle imprese europee su come rispondere al rischio di attacchi informatici cinesi?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2013)

1. La sicurezza nazionale rimane di competenza degli Stati membri e, sebbene intenda continuare ad adoperarsi per intensificare e agevolare la cooperazione fra gli Stati membri volta a rafforzare la sicurezza informatica nel settore pubblico e in quello privato, la Commissione non raccoglie informazioni sulla vulnerabilità dei servizi di sicurezza e di intelligence con sede in Europa.

2. Il Centro europeo per la lotta contro la criminalità informatica (EC3) sostiene diverse operazioni di alto profilo, che possono coinvolgere fino a venti Stati membri, e ha già contribuito allo smantellamento di grandi organizzazioni criminali in Spagna e in Romania. Verso la fine dell'anno saranno disponibili un quadro più completo e dati più dettagliati sulle indagini svolte con il sostegno dell'EC3.

L'individuazione delle fonti e la valutazione del livello di gravità degli attacchi sono operazioni complesse, che devono rimanere prioritarie per tutte le parti interessate; l'EC3 sta preparando una valutazione delle minacce informatiche provenienti dai paesi terzi, ma divulgare pubblicamente dati particolareggiati sugli incidenti potrebbe risultare controproducente, perché darebbe agli hacker informazioni sugli strumenti di difesa utilizzati.

3. La Commissione sta definendo una politica coordinata in stretta collaborazione con gli Stati membri e le altre istituzioni dell'Unione. A febbraio 2013, la Commissione e l'Alta Rappresentante hanno adottato una comunicazione ([1]) che delinea la strategia dell'UE per migliorare la sicurezza nel ciberspazio e definisce le misure necessarie per garantire la resilienza a livello nazionale e di UE. Contemporaneamente la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di direttiva sulla sicurezza delle reti e dell'informazione ([2]), al fine di garantire che i settori pubblico e privato siano adeguatamente protetti contro gli attacchi e gli incidenti.

([1]) JOIN(2013)1 def.
([2]) COM(2013)48 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006387/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Alleged cyber-attacks in Australia from China

On 28 May 2013, the Australian media reported that Chinese hackers had succeeded in stealing the floor plans of the new base for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation. The complex is a multi-million dollar headquarters and has been targeted as part of a growing wave of cyber-attacks from the People's Republic of China (PRC).

The hackers also stole confidential information from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which is where the official espionage agency, the Australian Secret Intelligence Service, is based. The Australian channel ABC reported that Chinese hackers had been targeting Australia-based companies more aggressively than previously thought. Major manufacturing firms such as Bluescope Steel have been targeted.

In the attack against the Intelligence Organisation, they exposed the location of communication and computer networks, thus making them more vulnerable to future cyber-attacks. The building is supposed to have some of the most sophisticated hacking cyber defences in the country.

The Australian government has not been fully open about the damage caused; however, what has been surprising about these cyber-attacks is that Sino-Australian relations are considered to be unaffected and remain productive and strong. Prime Minister Julia Gillard has made regular talks with the Chinese government a top priority.

1. What is the Commission's assessment regarding the vulnerability of European-based intelligence and security services to attacks from hackers based in China?

2. In March 2012, the Commission presented a communication on a European Cybercrime Centre, which started operations in January 2013 and is 'to act as the focal point in the fight against cybercrime in the Union'. Since its establishment, what success, if any, has it enjoyed in tackling specific threats from China?

3. What role is the Commission playing in advising European companies and firms on how to tackle the risk of Chinese cyber-attacks?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

1. Member States remain responsible for national security and, while the Commission intends to continue to play a role in reinforcing and facilitating cooperation across Member States to strengthen cyber security in the public and private sectors, it does not gather information regarding vulnerability of European-based intelligence and security services.

2. EC3 is providing support to a number of high-profile operations, involving up to 20 Member States, and has already contributed to the successful dismantling of major criminal gangs in Spain and in Romania. A more comprehensive picture and more detailed data on the investigations conducted with the support of EC3 will become available towards the end of this year.

Attribution of the sources and level of seriousness of attacks is difficult and should remain a focus for all concerned and EC3 is currently preparing an assessment of cyber threats which originate from third countries; however, public disclosure of details of incidents could be counterproductive, as attackers would get an insight of defenders' capabilities.

3. The Commission is developing a coordinated policy in close cooperation with Member States and other EU institutions. In February 2013, the Commission and the High Representative adopted a communication ([1]) which outlines the EU's vision on how to enhance security in cyberspace and sets out actions required to ensure resilience at national and EU level. The Commission simultaneously adopted a proposal for a directive on network and information security ([2]), aimed at ensuring that the public and the private sector are adequately protected against incidents, be it attacks or accidental events.

([1]) JOIN(2013) 1 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 48 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006388/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Accuse di mancata smobilitazione dei bambini soldato in Birmania

Human Rights Watch riferisce che il governo e l'esercito birmani non stanno adottando misure efficaci per porre fine all'impiego di bambini soldato. Eppure, nel giugno 2012 la Birmania e le Nazioni Unite hanno firmato un Piano d'azione comune che prevede l'impegno a far cessare ogni reclutamento e impiego di minori nelle forze armate entro dicembre 2013.

Il Segretario generale delle Nazioni Unite ha pubblicato a maggio il suo terzo rapporto, da cui risulta che l'Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro (ILO) ha accertato 770 casi di reclutamento di minori in Birmania tra aprile 2009 e dicembre 2012. Alcune delle reclute avevano appena 10 anni. Si stima che in Birmania vi siano circa 5.000 bambini soldato, la maggior parte dei quali proviene da ambienti poveri. Vi è una predilezione per le reclute giovanissime poiché sono considerate più facili da formare e addestrare, e molte sono arruolate mediante pratiche di corruzione.

Solo 66 bambini sono stati congedati dalle forze governative nei primi sei mesi successivi alla firma del Piano d'azione comune. Secondo Human Rights Watch, il problema sta nel fatto che l'esercito birmano nega alle Nazioni Unite l'accesso alle strutture militari in cui si presume siano di stanza i bambini soldato. Ai rappresentanti delle Nazioni Unite è stato impedito l'accesso alle forze della Guardia di frontiera e ad ex gruppi etnici ribelli che si ritiene abbiano bambini soldato. Le Nazioni Unite non sono in grado di svolgere i controlli necessari per verificare i numeri. Il piano prevede che tutti i bambini soldato in Birmania siano identificati e registrati entro il 14 novembre 2013 e, una volta registrati, congedati entro 18 mesi.

1. È disposto l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ad appoggiare la richiesta delle Nazioni Unite al governo birmano di consentire ai funzionari ONU di ispezionare le strutture militari e verificare il numero di bambini soldato presenti?

2. Quali iniziative è disposto ad assumere per fare pressione sul governo birmano affinché agisca rapidamente per porre fine al reclutamento di bambini soldato e congedare tutte le reclute minorenni ancora alle armi?

3. Quali sono le strategie di cui l'UE dispone al momento per affrontare il problema dei bambini soldato, che non riguarda la sola Birmania?

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

L'UE prende molto sul serio la questione dei bambini soldato a Myanmar (Birmania). L'attuazione del piano d'azione comune procede effettivamente a un ritmo più lento del previsto. Si registrano tuttavia innegabili progressi e il 20 maggio l'ONU ha espresso il suo plauso per gli importanti provvedimenti del governo a maggiore tutela dei bambini, segnalando al contempo il persistere di gravi problematiche, in particolare per quanto riguarda il reclutamento di bambini da parte di gruppi armati non governativi. Nell'ambito dei suoi contatti bilaterali e del dialogo con le autorità nazionali l'UE continuerà a spronare il governo a proseguire la rapida e integrale attuazione del piano d'azione. A tal fine è essenziale e fondamentale che la task force dell'ONU svolga un idoneo monitoraggio, per il quale è necessario il pieno accesso alle unità militari. L'UE è stata uno dei principali promotori delle risoluzioni ONU su Myanmar (Birmania) presso il Consiglio di sicurezza, quali la risoluzione del 15 marzo sui diritti umani, nella quale — sulla questione specifica — si invita il governo a prestare piena collaborazione a tutti i partecipanti alla task force dell'ONU e a garantire accesso illimitato a tutte le zone in cui potrebbero essere reclutati bambini. L'Unione continuerà a incoraggiare le autorità a dar seguito a questa raccomandazione.

Nel 2010 l'UE ha riesaminato la sua strategia di attuazione degli Orientamenti dell'UE sui bambini e i conflitti armati, privilegiando un approccio globale rivolto a tutti i bambini vittime dei conflitti armati (non solo i bambini soldato ma anche le vittime di violenza sessuale e/o altrimenti coinvolti in modo diretto nel conflitto) in tutte le fasi del conflitto. Informazioni più aggiornate su specifici progetti e iniziative politiche dell'UE sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo internet: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2013/120213_children-and-armed-conflict_en.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006388/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Alleged failure of demobilisation of Burmese child soldiers

Human Rights Watch reports that the Burmese government and military is not taking effective measures to end the use of child soldiers. However in June 2012, Burma and the UN signed a Joint Action Plan, which is committed to ending all recruitment and use of children in the armed forces by December 2013.

The UN Secretary General released his third report in May and it shows that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has verified 770 cases in Burma of underage recruitment from April 2009 to December 2012. Some of the recruits were as young as 10. There are estimated to be 5 000 child soldiers in Burma and most come from poor backgrounds. Young recruits are favoured as they are considered easier to shape and train, and many are enlisted using corrupt practices.

Only 66 children were released from government forces in the first six months after the Joint Action Plan was signed. HRW reports that the problem lies in the Burmese military's refusal to grant the UN access to military facilities where child soldiers are believed to be stationed. They have been prevented from accessing the Border Guard Forces and former ethnic insurgent groups who are reputed to have child soldiers. The UN is unable to make the necessary checks to verify the numbers. All of Burma's child soldiers were meant to be identified and registered by 14 November 2013 and, once registered, they are supposed to be discharged within 18 months.

1. Is the High Representative/Vice-President prepared to lend her support to the UN in calling for the Burmese government to allow UN officials to inspect military facilities and verify the numbers of child soldiers?

2. What steps is the HR/VP prepared to take to push for the Burmese government to take swift action to end the recruitment of child soldiers and release all remaining underage recruits?

3. At present what strategies has the EU devised to tackle the problem of child soldiers, which is a problem not limited to Burma?

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

The EU takes the issue of child soldiers in Myanmar/Burma very seriously. The pace of implementation of the joint action plan is indeed slower than expected. There is, however, undeniably a positive trend and the UN on 20 May commended the government on the important steps taken to better protect children, while also signalling important remaining challenges, namely regarding child recruitment by non-state armed groups. The EU in its bilateral contacts and dialogue with authorities will continue to strongly encourage the Government to continue full and swift implementation of the action plan. Proper monitoring of the implementation by the UN Task Force is essential and an important prerequisite, In this regard, full access to military units is necessary. The EU has been a lead sponsor for UN resolutions on Myanmar/Burma at the UNHRC, such as the resolution on human rights in Myanmar of 15 March, where — on this specific issue — the Government is called upon 'to collaborate fully with all parties to the UN country task force, and to grant unhindered access to all areas where children may be recruited' and will continue to encourage authorities to act on this recommendation.

In 2010, the EU reviewed its Implementation Strategy for the EU Guidelines on children and armed conflict in favour of a comprehensive approach to all children affected by armed conflict (not only child combatants but also victims of sexual violence and/ or other direct involvement in conflict) and in all phases of the conflict. A more updated information on specific EU projects and policy initiatives is available at the following website: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2013/120213_children-and-armed-conflict_en.htm.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006389/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: «Binge drinking» e tossicodipendenza fra i giovani francesi

Il 29 maggio 2013 il quotidiano francese *Le Monde* ha riferito che metà dei diciassettenni francesi ammette di aver bevuto almeno una volta durante il mese precedente cinque o più bevande alcoliche una dopo l'altra. Secondo il giornale il fenomeno del «binge drinking» («abbuffata alcolica») è emerso in Francia dal 2005, mentre in precedenza di trattava di un problema presente solo nel Regno Unito e in altri paesi del Nord Europa. In altre parole, i francesi si stanno allontanando dal tradizionale modello latino di un consumo di alcol più moderato o scaglionato.

Anche l'abuso di droghe sta diventando un problema grave fra i giovani francesi. Le droghe sintetiche, che non sempre sono classificate come illegali, vengono vendute via Internet. Dal 2007 sono state scoperte in territorio francese 60 nuove sostanze «psicoattive». Nel 2012 sono stati individuati almeno 73 nuovi prodotti, e nel 2013 il problema non mostra alcun segno di attenuazione, secondo l'Osservatorio europeo delle droghe e delle tossicodipendenze.

Anche l'abuso di cocaina e di resina di cannabis (hashish) è un problema di crescente gravità. Sono stati scoperti molti casi di persone che coltivavano la cannabis in quelle che sembrano essere vere e proprie «fabbriche di cannabis». In conclusione, la Francia spicca fra le altre nazioni europee per il consumo di droga da parte dei giovani. Circa il 5 % dei diciassettenni sono a rischio di abuso problematico o di dipendenza.

1. Quali iniziative sta assumendo la Commissione per affrontare il problema dell'identificazione delle droghe sintetiche o «psicoattive», che compaiono in sempre maggiori quantità in tutta l'UE, e del coordinamento della lotta contro l'abuso di tali sostanze?

2. In che modo si sta adoperando per affrontare il crescente problema del «binge drinking» tra i giovani, che in passato era considerato un problema unicamente nordeuropeo?

3. Potrebbe indicare alcune delle sue strategie per affrontare il problema della tossicodipendenza e dell'abuso di sostanze fra i giovani?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2013)

In materia di *binge drinking* tra i giovani, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte date alle interrogazioni e-7287/2012, E-9022/2012 ed E-4832/2013 ([1]).

La Commissione prevede di presentare proposte legislative relative alle nuove sostanze psicoattive nel 2013. Tali proposte mirano a rafforzare la risposta dell'UE, attraverso un potenziamento del monitoraggio e della valutazione dei rischi presentati dalle sostanze, nonché mediante risposte più rapide, efficaci e proporzionate al fine di ridurre la disponibilità delle sostanze che presentano un rischio per la salute e la sicurezza.

Il Piano d'azione UE contro la droga (2013-2016) ([2]) esorta gli Stati membri, primi responsabili dell'attuazione di provvedimenti atti a diminuire la domanda di stupefacenti, a migliorare la disponibilità e l'efficacia di programmi destinati a prevenire o posticipare il primo consumo di stupefacenti. Esso inoltre pone fortemente l'accento sulla sensibilizzazione ai rischi e alle conseguenze associati all'uso di sostanze psicoattive.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st09/st09963.en13.pdf — adottato dal Consiglio GAI il 6-7 giugno 2013, non ancora pubblicato nella GU.

La Commissione sostiene e integra l'azione degli Stati membri promuovendo lo sviluppo di approcci innovativi e la condivisione delle migliori pratiche e finanziando la ricerca attraverso programmi finanziari dell'UE. Il programma Prevenzione e informazione in materia di droga ([3]) e il programma in materia di salute ([4]), in particolare, hanno finanziato numerosi progetti incentrati sui rischi delle nuove sostanze psicoattive, sull'attività di sensibilizzazione e su metodi di prevenzione innovativi destinati ai giovani.

([3]) Decisione n. 1150/2007/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 settembre 2007 , che istituisce per il periodo 2007-2013 il programma specifico Prevenzione e informazione in materia di droga nell'ambito del programma generale Diritti fondamentali e giustizia. GU L 257 del 3.10.2007, pag. 23-29.

([4]) Decisione n. 1350/2007/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 ottobre 2007, che istituisce un secondo programma d'azione comunitaria in materia di salute (2008-2013), GU L 301 del 20.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006389/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Binge drinking and drug addiction among French youth

On 29 May 2013, the French newspaper *Le Monde* reported that half of French 17-year-olds admitted to drinking five or more alcoholic drinks on at least one occasion during the previous month. It cites that since 2005, the phenomenon of 'binge drinking' has emerged in France, which was previously only a problem found in the UK and other northern European countries. In other words, the French are moving away from the traditional Latin model of more moderate or staggered alcohol consumption.

Drug abuse is also becoming a serious problem among French youth. Synthetic drugs, which are not always classed as illicit drugs, are being sold over the Internet. Since 2007, 60 new 'psychoactive' substances were detected on French territory. In 2012, at least 73 new products were detected and for 2013 the problem shows no signs of abating, according to the European Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction.

Cocaine and cannabis resin abuse is also a growing problem. There have been many cases of people cultivating cannabis, in what are ostensibly 'cannabis factories'. In conclusion, France stands out among other European nations for youth drug consumption. Approximately 5% of 17-year-olds are at risk of problematic abuse or dependency.

1. What steps is the Commission taking to address the problem of identifying and coordinating the fight against abuse of synthetic or 'psychoactive' drugs, which are appearing in greater quantities across the EU?

2. What efforts is the Commission taking to address the growing issue of youth binge drinking, which was previously solely considered a northern European problem?

3. What are some of the Commission's strategies for addressing youth drug addiction and substance abuse?

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

On youth binge drinking, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to questions E-7287/2012, E-9022/2012 and E-4832/2013 ([1]).

The Commission is planning to present legislative proposals on new psychoactive substances in 2013. Those proposals aim at strengthening the EU response, through enhanced monitoring and risk assessment of substances, and swifter, more effective and more proportionate answers to reduce the availability of substances posing health and security risks.

The EU Action Plan on Drugs (2013-2016) ([2]) calls on Member States -who are primarily responsible for implementing drug-demand reduction measures — to improve the availability and effectiveness of programmes that prevent or delay the first use of drugs. It also places strong emphasis on raising awareness of risks and of consequences associated with the use of psychoactive substances.

The Commission supports and complements Member States' action by promoting the development of innovative approaches and the sharing of best practices, and by funding research, through EU financial programmes. The Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([3]) and the Health Programme ([4]), in particular, have funded several projects on the risks of new psychoactive substances, on awareness raising and innovative prevention methods aimed at young people.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st09/st09963.en13.pdf — adopted by the JHA Council on 6-7 June 2013, not published in the OJ yet.
([3]) Decision No 1150/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 September 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the Specific Programme Drug prevention and information as part of the General Programme Fundamental Rights and Justice. OJ L 257, 3.10.2007, p. 23-29.
([4]) Decision No 1350/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 establishing a second programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-2013), OJ L 301, 20.11.2007.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006391/13
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(4 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Eficiența combaterii traficului de ființe umane în UE

Directiva 2011/36/EU a PE și a Consiliului din 5 04 2011 privind prevenirea și combaterea traficului de persoane și protejarea victimelor acestuia a fost transpusă integral de 9 state: Cehia, Suedia, Estonia, Letonia, Lituania, Ungaria, Polonia, România și Finlanda și parțial de alte 4 state membre: Belgia, Bulgaria, Slovenia și Marea Britanie.

Din statisticile europene rezultă însă extrem de clar că o mare parte a statelor membre care nu au transpus deloc directiva sunt printre acelea în care traficul de persoane are o pondere însemnată.

Comisia a lansat recent Platforma europeană a societății civile împotriva traficului de persoane, fiind subliniat cu acest prilej rolul societății civile în combaterea traficului de persoane.

Salut această întreprindere a Comisiei, prin care organizațiile neguvernamentale sunt considerate parteneri ai instituțiilor europene în procesul combaterii acestui tip de trafic.

1. Poate Comisia să ofere un răspuns concret în legătură cu măsurile pe care aceasta înțelege să le ia pentru ca statele membre care nu au transpus Directiva 2011/36 să procedeze la acest demers?

Este evident că printre statele care au transpus directiva sunt multe state de proveniență a victimelor traficului, în timp ce printre cele care nu transpus-o sunt multe state în care se produce fenomenul traficului de persoane.

2. Consideră Comisia că, în această situație, strategia de combatere la nivel european a traficului, protejarea victimelor și, nu în ultimul rând, prevenirea acestui flagel european, sunt obiective mult mai greu de atins?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(11 iulie 2013)

Comisia Europeană acordă o atenție deosebită transpunerii Directivei 2011/36/UE privind prevenirea și combaterea traficului de persoane și protejarea victimelor acestuia. Dacă este transpusă integral, directiva poate avea un impact real și concret asupra vieții victimelor.

Până în prezent, nouă state membre (Republica Cehă, Estonia, Letonia, Lituania, Ungaria, Polonia, România, Finlanda, Suedia) au notificat transpunerea integrală a directivei, iar alte patru (Belgia, Bulgaria, Slovenia și Regatul Unit) au transpus-o parțial. Comisia va lua toate măsurile necesare pentru a se asigura că legislația UE este pusă corect în aplicare, inclusiv prin lansarea unei proceduri de încălcare, dacă se constată că este necesar.

La 29 mai 2013, s-au trimis scrisori de somație (articolul 258) către treisprezece state membre. Lista acestora este disponibilă la adresa: http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/eulaw/decisions/dec_20130603.htm

După cum prevede strategia UE pentru eradicarea traficului de ființe umane (2012-2016), responsabilitatea principală în abordarea problemei privind traficul de ființe umane revine statelor membre. Strategia UE este conformă cu abordarea globală a directivei, concentrându-se atât asupra prevenției, protecției, urmăririi penale și a parteneriatelor, cât și asupra modalităților de dezvoltare a cunoștințelor legate de preocupările care apar în domeniul traficului de ființe umane. Transpunerea Directivei 2014/36/UE și punerea în aplicare a strategiei UE reprezintă elemente deosebit de importante în procesul de eradicare a traficului de ființe umane.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006391/13
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Effectiveness of combat against human-trafficking in the EU

Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims has been fully transposed by nine Member States: the Czech Republic, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Finland, and partly by four other Member States: Belgium, Bulgaria, Slovenia and the UK.

However, European statistics very clearly highlight that a large number of the Member States which have not transposed the directive at all are among those where there is a significant incidence of human-trafficking.

The Commission recently launched the EU Civil Society Platform against trafficking in human beings, taking this opportunity to emphasise the role played by civil society in combating human-trafficking.

I welcome this undertaking by the Commission, which views NGOs as partners of the EU institutions in the process of tackling this kind of trafficking.

1. Can the Commission provide a specific reply in terms of the measures which it intends to take so that Member States which have not transposed Directive 2011/36/EU will go ahead and do so?

It goes without saying that the Member States which have transposed the directive include numerous countries where trafficking victims originate from, while those which have not transposed it feature many countries where human-trafficking is a problem.

2. In light of this, does the Commission think that devising an EU-level anti-trafficking strategy, protecting victims and, last but not least, preventing this scourge in Europe are objectives which are far more difficult to achieve?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

The European Commission is paying particular attention to the transposition of the directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. If fully transposed, the directive has the potential to have a real and concrete impact on the lives of the victims.

To date nine Member States (Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Finland, Sweden) have notified full transposition and four (Belgium, Bulgaria, Slovenia, UK) partial transposition. The Commission will take all necessary measures to ensure the correct application of EC law, including the launching of an infringement procedure if it appears to be necessary.

Letters of formal notice (Article 258) were sent to thirteen Member States on 29 May 2013. The list is available online: http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/eulaw/decisions/dec_20130603.htm

As stated in the EU Strategy for the eradication of trafficking in human beings (2012-2106), the main responsibility for addressing trafficking in human beings lies with the Member States. The EU Strategy is consistent with the holistic approach of the directive focusing on prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships and also on ways to increase knowledge on emerging concerns related to trafficking in human beings. The transposition of the directive 2014/36/EU and the implementation of the EU Strategy are crucial elements in moving towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-006392/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(4 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποζημίωση για μηδενική καρπόδεση ελαιοδέντρων εξαιτίας ακραίων καιρικών φαινομένων

Σύμφωνα με ενημέρωση από αγρότες πληγεισών περιοχών, σε πολλές περιοχές της Περιφέρειας της Κρήτης παρουσιάστηκε για πρώτη φορά το φαινόμενο της μηδενικής ή εξαιρετικά χαμηλής καρπόδεσης των ελαιοδέντρων. Αιτία φέρεται να είναι οι ακραίες και ασυνήθιστα υψηλές για την περιοχή και την εποχή θερμοκρασίες που επικράτησαν το διάστημα Μαρτίου-Απριλίου σε συνδυασμό με τους ισχυρούς νοτιάδες που επικράτησαν κατά την περίοδο της άνθησης των ελαιοδέντρων και την αφρικανική σκόνη. Η πρώιμη χρονιά είχε ως αποτέλεσμα η καρπόδεση να έχει ολοκληρωθεί στις περισσότερες περιοχές από το Μάιο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή

Υπάρχει η δυνατότητα καταβολής ειδικής ενίσχυσης στους ελαιοπαραγωγούς γι' αυτήν την καταστροφή, που συνδέεται με ακραία καιρικά φαινόμενα, και, εάν ναι, ποια είναι η διαδικασία που θα έπρεπε να ακολουθηθεί;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Ελλάδα μπορεί να χορηγεί εθνικές ενισχύσεις για την αντιστάθμιση των ζημιών από δυσμενείς καιρικές συνθήκες οι οποίες καταστρέφουν άνω του 30% της μέσης ετήσιας παραγωγής των γεωργικών εκμεταλλεύσεων, η οποία υπολογίζεται με βάση την παραγωγή των τριών προηγουμένων ετών ή τριών ετών κατά μέσον όρο με βάση τα πέντε προηγούμενα έτη, με εξαίρεση τα περισσότερο και λιγότερο παραγωγικά χρόνια. Οι ενισχύσεις αυτές μπορούν να φθάσουν το 80% των απωλειών (90% στις μειονεκτικές περιοχές) και θα πρέπει να μειωθούν κατά τα ποσά που εισπράχθηκαν στο πλαίσιο καθεστώτων ασφάλισης και δαπάνες που δεν πραγματοποιήθηκαν λόγω των δυσμενών καιρικών συνθηκών. Οι ενισχύσεις αυτές πρέπει, κατ' αρχήν, να κοινοποιούνται στην Επιτροπή βάσει του άρθρου 108 παράγραφος 3 της ΣΛΕΕ πριν από τη χορήγηση. Η Επιτροπή θα αξιολογήσει τα μέτρα υπό το πρίσμα των κοινοτικών κατευθυντήριων γραμμών για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις στον τομέα της γεωργίας και της δασοκομίας 2007-2013 ([1]). Εναλλακτικά, εάν η ενίσχυση χορηγείται σε ΜΜΕ, είναι δυνατή η εξαίρεσή της από την υποχρέωση κοινοποίησης βάσει του άρθρου 108 παράγραφος 3 της ΣΛΕΕ, εφόσον πληροί τις προϋποθέσεις του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1857/2006 ([2]).

Τέλος, η Ελλάδα μπορεί επίσης να χορηγήσει ενίσχυση ήσσονος σημασίας, υπό τους όρους του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1535/2007 ([3]). Οι ενισχύσεις αυτές θα πρέπει να περιορίζονται σε 7 500 ευρώ ανά δικαιούχο σε οποιαδήποτε περίοδο τριών οικονομικών ετών, εντός των ορίων του εθνικού ανώτατου ορίου που καθορίζεται για την ίδια περίοδο στο παράρτημα του κανονισμού (75 382 500 ευρώ) για την Ελλάδα).

([1]) ΕΕ C 319 της 27.12.2006.
([2]) ΕΕ L 358 της 16.12.2006.
([3]) ΕΕ L 337 της 21.12.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006392/13
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(4 June 2013)

Subject: Compensation for failure of olive harvest as a result of extreme weather conditions

In many areas of Crete, olive growers have been reporting unprecedentedly low or even zero crop yields as a result of extreme weather conditions characterised by unusually high temperatures in March and April, compounded by strong prevailing south winds over the ripening period carrying dust clouds from Africa. The early ripening of the crop has resulted in harvesting being completed by the end of May. In view of this:

Can emergency aid can be accorded to olive growers affected by disastrous crop yields as a result of extreme weather conditions and if so, what procedures must be followed to obtain it?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

Greece may grant national aid to compensate for losses brought about by adverse weather conditions which destroy more than 30% of the average annual production of farms, calculated on the basis of the production in the three preceding years or a three-year average based on the five preceding years, excluding the most and the less productive years. Such aids may reach 80% of the loss (90% in less-favoured areas) and must be reduced by any amounts received under insurance schemes and costs not incurred because of the adverse weather conditions. Such aid must, in principle, be notified to the Commission under Article 108(3) TFEU before granting. The Commission will assess the measures under the conditions of the Community guidelines for state aid in the agriculture and forestry sector 2007 to 2013 ([1]).Alternatively, if the aid is granted to SMEs, it may be exempted from the notification requirement under Article 108(3) TFEU if it complies with the conditions of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1857/2006 ([2]).

Finally, Greece may also grant *de minimis* aid under the conditions of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1535/2007 ([3]). Such aid must be limited to EUR 7 500 per beneficiary over any period of three fiscal years, within the limits of a national ceiling laid down for the same period in the annex to the regulation (EUR 75 382 500 for Greece).

([1]) OJ C 319, 27.12.2006.
([2]) OJ L 358, 16.12, 2006.
([3]) OJ L 337, 21.12.2007.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-006393/13
à la Commission
Corinne Lepage (ALDE)
(5 juin 2013)

Objet: Plantes génétiquement modifiées avec gènes empilés

Les experts des États membres de l'Union européenne ont adopté, le 25 février, en procédure de comitologie, le règlement proposé par la Commission sur l'évaluation des risques sanitaires liés aux OGM. Dans ce règlement, il est indiqué que les plantes génétiquement modifiées ayant plusieurs évènements de transformation ne seraient pas évaluées, sauf exception, si les traits individuels ont été préalablement autorisés par la Commission. Cela implique donc de considérer que les gènes des plantes fonctionnent indépendamment les uns des autres.

1. La Commission considère-t-elle que les gènes des plantes fonctionnent indépendamment les uns des autres?

2. Sur quelles bases scientifiques la Commission s'appuie-t-elle pour justifier l'absence d'évaluation spécifique des plantes transgéniques contenant plusieurs évènements de transformation?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(27 juin 2013)

1. La Commission considère que les gènes des plantes peuvent interagir entre eux.

2. Les plantes génétiquement modifiées contenant plusieurs événements de transformation (appelées «OGM empilés») sont considérées comme des OGM conformément au règlement (CE) n° 1829/2003 ([1]). Par conséquent, elles ne peuvent être autorisées qu'après avoir été soumises à une évaluation des risques approfondie montrant qu'elles sont sûres pour la santé humaine et animale et pour l'environnement. Comme requis à l'annexe II, partie I, paragraphe 2, point 2 du règlement d'application (EC) n° 503/2013 ([2]), l'évaluation des risques des OGM empilés comprend l'évaluation des risques de chaque événement de transformation simple présent dans l'OGM, complétée par l'évaluation des risques des effets potentiels (synergies ou antagonismes) entre les événements, leur expression et leur stabilité. En d'autres termes, l'évaluation des OGM empilés comporte des étapes supplémentaires par rapport à l'évaluation des événements de transformation simples.

([1]) JO L 268 du 18.10.2003.
([2]) JO L 157 du 8.6.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006393/13
to the Commission
Corinne Lepage (ALDE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Genetically modified plants with stacked genes

Experts from EU Member States adopted the regulation proposed by the Commission on assessing health risks linked to GMOs on 25 February 2013, under the comitology system. While allowing for exceptions, this regulation indicates that genetically modified plants with several transformation events will not be assessed if their individual traits have previously been authorised by the Commission. The implication here is that plant genes are considered to function independently of one another.

1. Does the Commission consider that plant genes function independently of each other?

2. What scientific bases is the Commission relying on to justify transgenic plants containing several transformation events not being subjected to specific assessment?

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

1. The Commission considers that plant genes might interact with each other.

2. GM plants containing several transformation events (so-called 'GM stacks') are considered as being GMOs under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 ([1]). Consequently they can be authorised only after having been subject to a thorough risk assessment demonstrating that they are safe for human and animal health, and for the environment. As required in Annex II, I, 2.2 of Implementing Regulation (EC) No 503/2013 ([2]), the risk assessment of stacked GMOs comprises the risk assessment of all single events present in the GMO, complemented by the risk assessment of potential synergistic or antagonist effects between the events, their expression and stability. In other words, the assessment of stacks includes additional steps compared to the assessment of the single events.

([1]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.
([2]) OJ L 157, 8.06.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-006394/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(5 juin 2013)

Objet: Concurrence déloyale chinoise concernant les avions régionaux à hélices

En raison de l'augmentation du coût du carburant, les compagnies aériennes paraissent aujourd'hui de plus en plus intéressées par l'achat d'avions à hélices consommant moins de kérosène qu'un jet. Certains constructeurs européens présents sur ce segment des avions régionaux de 50 à 70 places voient alors une hausse de la demande à l'international, mais sont confrontés à une difficile pénétration de certains marchés pourtant prometteurs en raison de l'instauration de pratiques déloyales par le gouvernement chinois.

Les ventes des différents modèles des avionneurs européens concernés se trouvent aujourd'hui bloquées par des taxes à l'importation chinoises très élevées (22,85 %) et visant à garantir les intérêts d'un avionneur chinois.

De plus, le gouvernement chinois s'est octroyé un droit de veto sur les acquisitions d'avions pour les compagnies nationales et a d'ailleurs déjà fait usage de ce droit en 2006 lors de l'offre de l'entreprise européenne pour l'acquisition d'aéronefs par une compagnie chinoise.

Enfin, le constructeur chinois, bénéficiant du soutien de l'État au travers des conditions de financement avantageuses, se place ainsi en infraction avec les règles édictées par l'OCDE en termes de financement à l'exportation des avions.

Malgré les différentes actions menées par la Commission européenne et certains gouvernements, il semblerait que l'avionneur européen soit toujours confronté à ces mêmes pratiques de concurrence déloyale l'empêchant de pénétrer le marché d'un pays pourtant membre de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce.

Au cours d'une réunion bilatérale UE-Chine au cours de laquelle ce dossier a été évoqué, le gouvernement chinois aurait indiqué vouloir mettre fin à cette distorsion, mais opter pour inclure une révision de ces règles dans le cadre d'une réforme plus globale du régime de fiscalité chinoise. Les intentions sembleraient donc aller dans le bon sens, mais l'option de suppression retenue risquerait de reporter de nouveau le retrait de ces mesures.

1. La Commission envisage-t-elle alors de renforcer les négociations avec le gouvernement chinois pour mettre fin à ces barrières non conformes aux accords internationaux et mettant en difficulté des acteurs européens?

2. D'autre part, la Commission se satisfait-elle de la proposition du gouvernement chinois d'attendre une réforme globale de son régime de fiscalité pour supprimer ces mesures déloyales spécifiques et prolonger de fait temporairement la distorsion pourtant reconnue par l'ensemble des parties concernées?

3. La Commission pourrait-elle préciser si elle dispose d'un engagement et d'un calendrier précis convenu avec les autorités chinoises? Pourrait-elle l'indiquer le cas échéant?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(12 juillet 2013)

L'exonération de la taxe sur la valeur ajoutée dont ne bénéficient que les constructeurs chinois est clairement un sujet de préoccupation pour la Commission, d'un point de vue tant juridique qu'économique. Combinée aux droits de douanes et aux taxes appliqués par la Chine sur ce type de produits, cette exonération crée une entrave au commerce qui a des répercussions sur l'industrie de l'Union européenne. La Commission a déjà signalé aux autorités chinoises son intention de recourir à tous les instruments dont elle dispose pour mettre fin à cette pratique discriminatoire.

Les autorités chinoises ont reconnu que cette mesure créait une discrimination et se sont engagées à y mettre fin. Toutefois, la possibilité de régler ce problème dans le cadre d'une réforme plus globale de la fiscalité est inacceptable, non seulement parce que cela entraînerait des retards, mais aussi parce que, à ce stade, il n'existe pas de calendrier précis. Du point de vue de la Commission, cette proposition n'est donc pas satisfaisante et une solution accompagnée d'échéances plus claires doit être trouvée.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006394/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Unfair Chinese competition practices concerning turboprop short-haul aircraft

In response to rising fuel costs, airlines are increasingly opting to purchase turboprop aircraft, which consume less fuel than jets. Some European manufacturers of 50- to 70-seat turboprop short-haul aircraft are thus seeing a rise in international demand for their products. They are, however, experiencing difficulties in penetrating what would otherwise be a promising market on account of the Chinese Government's use of unfair trade practices.

Sales of the models produced by European aircraft manufacturers are currently being blocked by punitive Chinese import duties (22.85%) intended to protect the interests of a Chinese aircraft manufacturer.

What is more, the Chinese Government has reserved the right to veto Chinese airlines' purchases of new aircraft, and did so in 2006 when a European company submitted a bid to fulfil one such contract.

The contract was ultimately awarded to a Chinese manufacturer which was in receipt of state aid in the form of favourable funding conditions, in contravention of OECD rules on export financing for aircraft.

Despite the measures taken by the Commission and by some governments, it seems likely that European manufacturers will continue to face such practices, which amount to unfair competition and which will prevent them from gaining a foothold in the market of a country which is, after all, a member of the World Trade Organisation.

During a bilateral EU-China meeting at which this issue was discussed, the Chinese Government hinted that it would be prepared to put an end to these market distortions, but that it planned to revise the relevant rules as part of a more comprehensive reform of China's tax system. While the intentions seem to be good, the approach chosen is likely to delay the process even further.

1. Does the Commission plan to step up negotiations with the Chinese Government with a view to eliminating these barriers to trade, which are inconsistent with international agreements and which pose a threat to European companies?

2. Is it satisfied with the Chinese Government's proposal to tackle these unfair practices only as part of a comprehensive reform of the country's tax system, thereby allowing what all parties acknowledge to be a market distortion to remain in place for the time being?

3. Could the Commission say whether it has received assurances from the Chinese authorities or reached agreement on a timetable? If so, could it please give details?

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

The Value Added Tax exemption which benefits Chinese manufacturers only is clearly a concern to the Commission, both from a legal and economic point of view. Combined with tariffs and duties applied by China on this kind of products, it creates a barrier to trade which affects the EU industry. The Commission has already indicated to the Chinese authorities its willingness to use all the instruments available to end this discriminatory practice.

The Chinese authorities have acknowledged the discrimination created by the measure, and have committed to put an end to it. However, the possibility of addressing this issue as part of a broader tax reform is not acceptable, not only because this would entail delays but also because, at this stage, there is no precise view on the timing. This is therefore not satisfactory from the Commission's point of view and a solution should be found in a more predictable time frame.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-006395/13
do Komisji
Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D)
(5 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Polska droga ekspresowa S6 Goleniów-Koszalin-Gdańsk

Polska droga ekspresowa S6 łącząca Goleniów z Gdańskiem przez Koszalin jest jedną z dróg włączonych do TEN-T jako połączenie kompleksowe. Jest to jedyna trasa łącząca port Szczecin wraz z portami Trójmiasta, oraz jedyna przebiegająca wzdłuż nadmorskich miejscowości turystycznych. Realizacja inwestycji planowana jest na lata po 2013 r. Przeglądając plany budowy trasy udostępnione przez GDDKiA oraz mapę połączeń bazowych i kompleksowych TEN-T można zauważyć pewne różnice w przebiegu trasy.

Według Komisji Europejskiej trasa S6 będzie przebiegać wzdłuż aktualnej drogi krajowej 6, według GDDKiA trasa będzie przebiegać przez Kołobrzeg, odbiegając od aktualnej drogi krajowej.

W związku z tym proszę o odpowiedź na poniższe pytania:

1. Czy Komisja wie o tym, iż planowany przebieg trasy został zmieniony na odcinku Modlimowo-Koszalin i aktualnie przebiega z Modlimowa do Kołobrzegu a następnie do Koszalina?

2. Czy pomimo zmiany trasy, całość inwestycji będzie dofinansowana? Jeżeli nie, to jaki procent i jakie odcinki będą mogły być dofinansowane?

3. Z jakiego instrumentu inwestycja będzie dofinansowana?

4. Od kiedy fundusze na realizację tej inwestycji będą dostępne?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(1 lipca 2013 r.)

Pkt 1 i 2: Komisja nie posiada informacji dotyczących zmiany planowanej trasy, dlatego też nie jest w stanie wyrazić swojej opinii w tej kwestii. Zgodnie z rozporządzeniami dotyczącymi funduszy strukturalnych realizacja współfinansowanych działań należy do obowiązków państw członkowskich na najbardziej właściwym szczeblu terytorialnym (zarządzanie dzielone). Komisja nie ingeruje w proces doboru projektów, z wyjątkiem dużych projektów oraz projektów współfinansowanych w ramach Funduszu Spójności na lata 2000-2006.

Pkt 3 i 4: Droga szybkiego ruchu S6 nie jest częścią istniejącej sieci TEN-T, a zatem obecnie nie jest dostępne żadne finansowanie z funduszy przeznaczonych na TEN-T. Zgodnie z obecnym wnioskiem legislacyjnym droga S6 będzie w przyszłości stanowić część kompleksowej sieci TEN-T ([1]). Kwalifikowalność projektów drogowych w ramach instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" ([2]) jest bardzo ograniczona. W załączniku do wniosku dotyczącego instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" nie uwzględniono żadnego projektu wzdłuż drogi S6 na odnośnym odcinku, ponieważ zostały w nim uwzględnione tylko projekty transgraniczne.

Jeżeli chodzi o ewentualne finansowanie z Funduszu Spójności w perspektywie 2014-2020, Komisja nie może jeszcze udostępnić informacji na temat projektów, które władze polskie zamierzają włączyć do programowania. Więcej informacji na temat projektów będzie dostępne po przyjęciu programów operacyjnych na poziomie krajowym i regionalnym. Ogromne potrzeby infrastrukturalne w Polsce i ograniczone zasoby publiczne będą jednak wymagać ustalenia odpowiedniej listy priorytetów w odniesieniu do inwestycji transportowych, z należytym uwzględnieniem przejścia na rodzaje transportu bardziej przyjazne dla środowiska. Niezbędne skupienie się na sieci TEN-T będzie musiało iść w parze z poprawą dostępności wszystkich polskich regionów.

([1]) COM(2011) 650 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 665 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006395/13
to the Commission
Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: S6 express road in Poland linking Goleniów with Gdańsk via Koszalin

The S6 express road in Poland linking Goleniów with Gdańsk via Koszalin is one of the roads included in the TEN-T as a complex connection. It is the only route linking the port of Szczecin with the Tricity (Gdańsk-Sopot-Gdynia) and the only road running through the seaside resorts. Implementation of the project is scheduled to begin after 2013. However, a comparison of the plans for the construction of the route provided by Poland's General-Directorate for National Roads and Motorways (GDDKiA) and the map of basic and complex TEN-T connections, reveals certain differences in the route.

According to the Commission, the S6 express road is to run along the route of the current national road 6, whereas according to the GDDKiA the route will run via Kołobrzeg, deviating from the route of the current national road.

In this regard, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware that the Modlimowo-Koszalin section of the planned route has been altered, and now runs from Modlimowo to Kołobrzeg, and then on to Koszalin?

2. Will the whole investment be co-financed despite the changed route? If not, what percentage and which sections will be eligible for co-financing?

3. From which instrument will the investment be co-financed?

4. When will the funds for the implementation of this investment become available?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission has no information concerning the alteration of the planned route. Therefore, the Commission cannot express an opinion on that. According to the Structural Funds Regulations the implementation of co-financed actions lies within the responsibility of the Member States, at the most appropriate territorial level (shared management). The Commission does not intervene in the selection of the projects — except for major projects and projects co-financed under the Cohesion Funds 2000-2006.

3 and 4. The S6 express road is not part of the existing TEN-T network, thus no funding is currently available from TEN-T funds. Based on the current legislative proposal, S6 will be part of the future TEN-T comprehensive network ([1]). The eligibility of road projects in the Connecting Europe Facility ([2]) is very limited. In the annex of the CEF proposal no road project along S6 on the respective section was pre-identified because only cross-border projects have been included.

As concerns possible financing from Cohesion Funds in the perspective 2014-2020, the Commission cannot yet provide information on the projects which the Polish authorities intend to include in the programming. Once the operational programmes at national and regional level are adopted, more information on projects will be available. However, vast infrastructure needs in Poland and limited public resources will require an appropriate prioritisation of transport investments, with due regard to modal shift towards more environmentally-friendly modes of transport. The necessary focus on TEN-T network will need to be combined with improving accessibility of all Polish regions.

([1]) COM(2011) 650 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 665 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006396/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Detenciones de sindicalistas de Astracatol en Colombia

El pasado 9 de mayo el Ejército de Colombia llevó a cabo un proceso de detención masiva de dirigentes campesinos del sindicato Astracatol, afiliado a Fensuagro-CUT, en el departamento de Tolima, en un claro montaje para la criminalización de la protesta contra la industria minera e hidroeléctrica que pretende desarrollarse a costa de los agricultores de la zona.

Considerando que Colombia es el país del mundo con mayor número de asesinatos de representantes sindicales, las redadas como éstas sacan a la luz la colaboración de las fuerzas militares colombianas con la criminalización y el señalamiento de la actividad sindical, contra la que después actúan diversas fuerzas criminales. La Organización Internacional del Trabajo viene denunciando insistentemente al Gobierno de Colombia por el elevado número de muertes de sindicalistas que se producen en este país desde hace años.

Más allá del conflicto que se desarrolla en el país, existe una importante política de incriminación y hostigamiento públicos de la figura de los representantes sindicales. Estas cifras se pretenden camuflar dentro del elevado número de muertes violentas que se producen en el país, pero tienen unas consecuencias políticas de intimidación de la sociedad que convierten a Colombia en un verdadero Estado gobernado por el terror. Con la movilización del ejército para la detención de los sindicalistas de Astracatol, el Gobierno vuelve a criminalizar a estos representantes legítimos y a ponerlos en una situación de riesgo, considerando el contexto del país. Dicho sindicato ha denunciado el intento de criminalización por parte de las empresas que están impulsando numerosos megaproyectos en la región. Estos hechos han desencadenado una campaña de solidaridad internacional con los detenidos.

¿Está la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante al tanto de las detenciones de estos representantes sindicales del sindicato Astracatol?

¿Considera que esta actuación del ejército está justificada en el contexto expuesto de extrema violencia contra dirigentes sindicales?

¿Piensa presionar al Gobierno colombiano para que los libere inmediatamente? ¿De qué forma?

Ante la clara inacción y la falta de colaboración internacional en el cumplimiento de los convenios 87 y 98 de la OIT, ¿piensa congelar el Acuerdo Comercial Multipartes hasta que el Gobierno colombiano colabore?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

El SEAE ha recibido información sobre los ocho líderes campesinos detenidos al sur de Tolima a principios de mayo, algunos de los cuales son miembros de Astracatol. De hecho, algunos de ellos participan en un programa de cooperación de la UE destinado a reforzar la participación local y la paz a través de Reiniciar, la ONG colombiana que nos ha planteado el asunto.

Se acusa a los dirigentes detenidos del delito de rebelión y se encuentran actualmente bajo arresto domiciliario. Sostienen que esto forma parte de una estrategia de estigmatización dirigida a obstaculizar sus actividades. La delegación de la UE en Bogotá someterá el asunto a la atención del Programa Nacional de Derechos Humanos para conseguir más información.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006396/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — ASTRACATOL trade unionists detained in Colombia

On 9 May 2013 the Colombian Army carried out the mass arrest of peasant leaders from the ASTRACATOL (Association of Peasant Farm Workers of Tolima) trade union, affiliated with FENSUAGRO-CUT (National Federation of Agricultural Farming Unions), in the department of Tolima. This was clearly a set-up to criminalise protest against the mining and hydroelectric industry which is looking to expand operations at the expense of farmers in the area.

Given that more trade union representatives are murdered in Colombia than anywhere else in the world, raids like these expose the Colombian armed forces' involvement in criminalising and singling out union activity, which several illegal forces then take action against. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has repeatedly denounced the Colombian Government for the high number of trade unionist deaths in the country over the years.

In addition to the ongoing conflict in the country, a major policy to incriminate and publicly harass trade union representatives is in force. The Government aims to disguise these figures within the high number of violent deaths in the country; however, the political implications — namely the intimidation of society — make Colombia a genuine state governed by terror. By mobilising the army to detain the ASTRACATOL trade unionists, the Government has criminalised these legitimate representatives and put them at risk, given the situation in the country. The trade union has denounced the attempted criminalisation of their actions by companies promoting numerous mega-projects in the region. These events have triggered an international solidarity campaign with the detainees.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the arrest of these ASTRACATOL trade union representatives?

Does she believe that the army's actions are justified in this context of extreme violence against trade union leaders?

Will she put pressure on the Colombian Government to release the detainees immediately? How?

Given the clear inaction and lack of international collaboration in honouring Conventions 87 and 98 of the ILO, will the EU freeze the Multiparty Trade Agreement until the Colombian Government cooperates?

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

The EEAS has received information about the 8 peasant leaders detained in South Tolima in early May, some of them members of ASTRACATOL. Indeed, some of these leaders participate in an EU cooperation programme aimed at strengthening local participation and peace construction through REINICIAR, a Colombian NGO, which has submitted the case to us.

The leaders detained are being charged for the crime of rebellion, and are currently under house arrest. They claim that this is part of a stigmatisation strategy to hinder their activities. The EU Delegation in Bogotá is bringing the case to the attention of the National Programme for Human Rights to seek more information.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006397/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Estrategia de 21 acciones para la reactivación del turismo

En el punto 1 del «Informe sobre Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo: un nuevo marco político para el turismo europeo» del Parlamento Europeo se hizo hincapié en que la Comisión Europea fijara plazos concretos para la ejecución de las acciones y el alcance de sus objetivos. Todo ello se basó en la estrategia política presentada por la Comisión Europea, en la cual se definieron 21 acciones para llevar a cabo la reactivación del sector turístico.

¿Tiene ya la Comisión fijados los plazos para llevar a cabo los objetivos que alienten la cooperación de los Estados miembros para la presentación de programas para cada una de las acciones determinadas en dicho informe?

¿Ha establecido ya cuáles considera que serán las acciones prioritarias?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

En su Comunicación de 2010 sobre el turismo ([1]), la Comisión propuso un marco de acción renovado en favor de una política consolidada de turismo a escala de la UE y definió una serie de acciones con el objetivo de obtener el máximo partido del potencial del sector turístico para estimular el crecimiento económico y el empleo en la EU. A fecha de hoy, la Comisión está llevando a cabo esas acciones velando por tener en cuenta las recomendaciones que el Parlamento Europeo formuló en su informe de 2011 ([2]).

Ya en noviembre de 2010, en el contexto del Foro Europeo de Turismo celebrado en Malta ([3]), la Comisión presentó un plan progresivo de actuación en el que se indicaban calendarios y acciones prioritarias. La Comisión ha actualizado regularmente dicho plan de actuación y ha mantenido debidamente informados a los representantes de los Estados miembros, así como a los agentes interesados públicos y privados de la industria turística. Los diputados al Parlamento Europeo también han sido periódicamente informados sobre la aplicación de las principales acciones ([4]), como, por ejemplo, en el contexto del intercambio de puntos de vista con la Comisión de Transportes y Turismo, el 26 de marzo de 2013.

Además, está previsto realizar una presentación sobre la situación de la aplicación de la Comunicación en el contexto del Foro Europeo de Turismo de este año, que organizará la Presidencia lituana del Consejo en cooperación con la Comisión y que tendrá lugar en Vilna los días 17 y 18 de octubre de 2013.

([1]) COM(2010)352 final de 30.6.2010.
([2]) 2010/2206(INI).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/conferences/previous-etf/index_en.htm
([4]) Como Comisario responsable de industria, emprendimiento y turismo, también me he dirigido con carácter periódico a los diputados al Parlamento Europeo con una carta y un resumen anual sobre los logros del año precedente en las áreas políticas de las que soy responsable.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006397/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Twenty-one-action strategy to reinvigorate the tourism sector

Paragraph 1 of Parliament's 'Report on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe' emphasises that the Commission will set specific timetables for implementing actions and achieving targets. This is based on the policy strategy presented by the Commission which sets out 21 actions to reinvigorate the tourism sector.

Has the Commission already set timetables for achieving the targets which encourage Member States to cooperate by submitting programmes for each action set out in the report?

Has it already established what it considers to be the priority actions?

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

With its 2010 Communication on tourism ([1]), the Commission proposed a renewed action framework for a consolidated EU tourism policy and outlined actions aiming at making the utmost of the tourism sector's potential to stimulate economic growth and jobs in the EU. By today, the Commission is successfully implementing these actions, paying attention to take into account the recommendations of the European Parliament in its 2011 Report ([2]).

Already in November 2010, in the context of the European Tourism Forum ([3]) in Malta, the Commission presented a detailed rolling implementation plan outlining indicative timetables and priority actions. The Commission has regularly updated this implementation plan and kept the representatives of the Member States, as well as the public and private tourism industry stakeholders duly informed. The members of the European Parliament have also been regularly updated on the implementation of the main actions ([4]), as for example, in the context of the exchange of views with the Committee on Transport and Tourism on 26 March 2013.

Moreover, a presentation on the state of play of the communication's implementation will be provided in the context of this year's European Tourism Forum, which is organised by the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council in cooperation with the Commission and which will take place in Vilnius on 17-18 October 2013.

([1]) COM(2010)352 final of 30.06.2010.
([2]) 2010/2206(INI.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/conferences/previous-etf/index_en.htm
([4]) As Commissioner responsible for industry, entrepreneurship and tourism, I have also regularly addressed the members of the European Parliament with an annual letter and overview on the previous year's achievements in the policy areas under my responsibility.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006398/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, reforma laboral

El pasado 29 de mayo, el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un importante ataque a los derechos de los trabajadores españoles y a los derechos conquistados en las luchas sociales y políticas del país.

La Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) ha afirmado recientemente que, de seguir con este proceso de devaluación salarial, España quedará atrapada en una caída del consumo que impedirá su recuperación económica y que ahondará la crisis en la caída de la capacidad de consumo en el país. La voz de esta institución es una más que se suma a la práctica totalidad de los expertos académicos, que alertan de que la caída del consumo es el principal problema de la economía española. La UE, sin embargo, continúa poniendo su punto de mira sobre los trabajadores españoles, tratando de hacer descender su calidad de vida a través de la extorsión realizada por el miedo al desempleo. Mientras que no se hace ninguna referencia a un tejido empresarial corrupto, incapaz de generar empleo ni innovación con la generación más preparada de la historia del país, se continúa culpabilizando a los trabajadores de la pérdida de competitividad.

La última reforma laboral ha producido más de seis millones de desempleados a lo largo de todo el país y una considerable caída de los salarios y de la capacidad de consumo de los trabajadores españoles. Sin embargo, en las recomendaciones de la Unión Europea a España se recomienda dar seguimiento a los objetivos fijados en la reforma laboral de 2012 y garantizar que se cumplan. El cumplimiento de los objetivos de la reforma laboral parece ser el único punto de todas las recomendaciones incluido en la agenda con un calendario estricto.

¿Cuál es el motivo por el que el Consejo tan solo fija un calendario estricto para el cumplimiento de la reforma laboral del año pasado?

Ante los desastrosos resultados que dicha reforma produjo, con un incremento de más de un millón de desempleados ¿cuáles son las estimaciones que maneja sobre el efecto en el desempleo? ¿Qué efecto considera que tendrá el cumplimiento de dicha reforma sobre el consumo de las familias españolas? ¿De qué datos dispone sobre la estimación del número de personas que se situarán bajo el umbral de la pobreza como consecuencia de dicha reforma?

A la luz de sus datos ¿considera que la clase empresarial española no tiene responsabilidad alguna en el catastrófico desempleo del país? ¿Considera a la clase empresarial española capaz de innovar y de generar empleo?

Respuesta
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

El 29 de mayo de 2013, la Comisión sometió al Consejo una Recomendación de Recomendación del Consejo relativa al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España y por la que se emite un dictamen del Consejo sobre el Programa de Estabilidad de España para 2012-2016 ([1]).

En su sesión de los días 27 y 28 de junio de 2013, el Consejo Europeo refrendó las recomendaciones específicas por país destinadas a los Estados miembros, dando así por concluido el Semestre Europeo ([2]). Dichas recomendaciones fueron adoptadas por el Consejo el 9 de julio de 2013.

Cabe recordar, asimismo, que en sus conclusiones del 28 de febrero de 2013, el Consejo, pese a reconocer que las ambiciosas reformas emprendidas en muchos Estados miembros tardarían en dar sus frutos, afirmó que debía insistirse en un mayor compromiso con la reforma y con una mejor aplicación de ella ([3]). La aplicación de la reforma sigue siendo la clave. Es precisa una actuación determinada que respalde los firmes compromisos políticos de fomentar el crecimiento y el empleo, y de responder a los desafíos presupuestarios, macroeconómicos y estructurales ([4]).

([1]) Documento 10025/13.
([2]) Documento EUCO104/2/13 REV 2.
([3]) Documento 6936/13.
([4]) Documento EUCO 23/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006398/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain, labour market reform

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's national reform programme for 2013. These recommendations are a serious attack on the rights of Spanish workers and the rights obtained through the social and political struggles in the country.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) recently stated that if we continue to reduce wages in this way, Spain will remain trapped in a spiral of falling consumption, which will hinder its economic recovery and aggravate the crisis through diminishing purchasing power. The ILO's voice is just one more to add to those of almost all academic experts, who warn that decreasing consumption is the Spanish economy's main problem. In spite of this, the EU continues to focus its aim on Spanish workers, trying to reduce their quality of life through extortion by instilling a fear of unemployment. Ignoring completely the corrupt corporate fabric, which is incapable of creating jobs or innovation with the best prepared generation in Spain's history, we continue to blame workers for the loss of competitiveness.

The most recent labour market reform has resulted in the loss of six million jobs across the country, and a considerable reduction in the wages and purchasing power of Spanish workers. Nevertheless, the European Union's recommendations to Spain include a recommendation to evaluate the objectives of the 2012 labour market reform and ensure that they are met. Fulfilling these labour market objectives seems to be the only aspect of the recommendations that has been given a strict timetable.

Why has the Council only set a strict timetable for compliance with last year's labour market reform?

Given the disastrous results of that reform, with an additional one million people now out of work, what is the likely impact on unemployment? How will completion of this reform affect the consumption of Spanish families? What figures do you have to indicate the number of people who could end up below the poverty line as a result of this reform?

In light of the information you have available, do you believe that Spain's corporate sector has absolutely no responsibility for the terrible unemployment situation in the country? Do you believe that Spain's corporate sector is capable of innovating and creating jobs?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

On 29 May 2013, the Commission submitted to the Council a recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Spain's 2013 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Spain's stability programme for 2012-2016 ([1]).

At its meeting of 27-28 June 2013, the European Council endorsed the country-specific recommendations to the Member States, thus concluding the European Semester ([2]). These recommendations were adopted by the Council on 9 July 2013.

It could be also recalled that, in its conclusions adopted on 28 February 2013, whilst recognising that the ambitious reforms undertaken in many Member States will take time to bear fruit, the Council stated that attention must be placed on increased commitment to reform and improved implementation ([3]). Implementation continues to be the key. Determined action is required to underpin the strong political commitment to promote growth and jobs and to respond to fiscal, macroeconomic and structural challenges ([4]).

([1]) 10025/13.
([2]) EUCO 104/2/13, p. 4.
([3]) 6936/13.
([4]) EUCO 23/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006399/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España. Reforma laboral

El pasado 29 de mayo el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un importante ataque a los derechos de los trabajadores españoles y a los derechos conquistados en las luchas sociales y políticas del país.

La Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) ha afirmado recientemente que, de seguir con este proceso de devaluación salarial, España quedará atrapada en una caída del consumo que impedirá su recuperación económica y ahondará la crisis con la caída de la capacidad de consumo en el país. Esta institución tan solo supone la suma de una voz más a la práctica totalidad de los expertos académicos, que alertan de que la caída del consumo es el principal problema de la economía española. La UE, sin embargo, continúa poniendo su punto de mira en los trabajadores españoles, tratando de hacer descender su calidad de vida a través de la extorsión realizada por el miedo al desempleo. Mientras que no se hace ninguna referencia a un tejido empresarial corrupto, incapaz de generar empleo ni innovación con la generación más preparada de la historia del país, continúa culpabilizando a los trabajadores de la pérdida de competitividad.

La última reforma laboral ha producido más de 6 millones de desempleados a lo largo de todo el país y una considerable caída de los salarios y de la capacidad de consumo de los trabajadores españoles. Sin embargo, en las recomendaciones de la Unión Europea a España se recomienda dar seguimiento y garantizar que se cumplan los objetivos fijados en dicha reforma laboral de 2012. El cumplimiento de los objetivos de la reforma laboral parece ser el único punto de todas las recomendaciones incluido en la agenda con un estricto calendario.

¿Cuál es el motivo por el que la Comisión tan solo fija un estricto calendario para el cumplimiento de la reforma laboral del año anterior?

A la luz de los desastrosos resultados que dicha reforma produjo, con un incremento de más de un millón de desempleados, ¿cuáles son las estimaciones que maneja sobre el efecto en el desempleo?

¿Qué efecto considera que el cumplimiento de dicha reforma tendrá sobre el consumo de las familias españolas?

¿De qué datos dispone sobre la estimación de personas que se situarán bajo el umbral de la pobreza como consecuencia de dicha reforma?

A la luz de sus datos, ¿considera que la clase empresarial española no tiene responsabilidad alguna en el catastrófico desempleo del país? ¿Considera a la clase empresarial española capaz de innovar y generar empleo?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión ve con preocupación la persistentemente elevada tasa de desempleo en España. En la Recomendación n° 4 del Consejo, adoptada el 9 de julio de 2013, se invita a España, no solo a concluir, a más tardar en septiembre de 2013, la evaluación de la reforma del mercado laboral de 2012, sino también a:

— adoptar, a más tardar en julio de 2013, el Plan Nacional de Empleo, y a introducir paulatinamente una reforma de las políticas activas del mercado de trabajo orientadas a los resultados, incluido el refuerzo de la focalización y eficiencia de las orientaciones;

— reforzar y modernizar los servicios públicos de empleo a fin de garantizar una asistencia efectiva individualizada a los desempleados en función de sus perfiles y necesidades de formación;

— aumentar la efectividad de los programas de reciclaje para los trabajadores de más edad y los trabajadores poco cualificados;

— garantizar la plena operatividad del Portal Único de Empleo, y acelerar la aplicación de la cooperación público-privada en los servicios de colocación a fin de lograr su aplicación efectiva ya en 2013.

La Comisión reconoce que se prevé una contracción del consumo privado en el próximo periodo como resultado del continuo desapalancamiento de los hogares, el elevado desempleo y la caída de los ingresos reales disponibles ([1]). Esta difícil situación solo podrá superarse realmente con la recuperación del crecimiento económico, lo que a su vez dependerá de los progresos en el cumplimiento de la UEM, incluida la unión bancaria, así como de la reforma del sector financiero y la mejora del contexto empresarial y los mercados de productos, como señala la Recomendación n° 7, y una redistribución con éxito de la mano de obra en actividades productivas y sostenibles.

La Comisión también ha solicitado a España que adopte las medidas necesarias para reducir el número de personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social, tal como se indica en la Recomendación n° 6.

([1]) Previsiones de primavera 2013 de la Comisión: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2013_spring/es_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006399/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain — Labour market reform

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's national reform programme for 2013. These recommendations are a serious attack on the rights of Spanish workers and the rights obtained through the social and political struggles in the country.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) recently stated that if we continue to reduce wages in this way, Spain will remain trapped in a spiral of falling consumption, which will hinder its economic recovery and aggravate the crisis through diminishing purchasing power. The ILO's voice is just one more to add to those of almost all academic experts, who warn that decreasing consumption is the Spanish economy's main problem. In spite of this, the EU continues to focus its aim on Spanish workers, trying to reduce their quality of life through extortion by instilling a fear of unemployment. Ignoring completely the corrupt corporate fabric, which is incapable of creating jobs or innovation with the best prepared generation in Spain's history, we continue to blame workers for the loss of competitiveness.

The most recent labour market reform has resulted in the loss of six million jobs across the country, and a considerable reduction in the wages and purchasing power of Spanish workers. Nevertheless, the European Union's recommendations to Spain include a recommendation to evaluate the objectives of the 2012 labour market reform and ensure that they are met. Fulfilling these labour market objectives seems to be the only aspect of the recommendations that has been given a strict timetable.

Why has the Commission only set a strict timetable for compliance with last year's labour market reform?

Given the disastrous results of that reform, with an additional one million people now out of work, what is the likely impact on unemployment?

How will completion of this reform affect the consumption of Spanish families?

What figures do you have to indicate the number of people who could end up below the poverty line as a result of this reform?

In light of the information you have available, do you believe that Spain's corporate sector has absolutely no responsibility for the terrible unemployment situation in the country? Do you believe that Spain's corporate sector is capable of innovating and creating jobs?

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

The Commission follows with concern the persistently high unemployment rate in Spain. The Council Recommendation 4, adopted on 9 July 2013, invites Spain not only to finalise the evaluation of the 2012 labour market reform by July 2013, and present amendments, if necessary, by September 2013, but also to:

— Adopt the 2013 national Employment Plan by July 2013 and enact swiftly a result-oriented reform of active labour market policies, including by strengthening the targeting and efficiency of guidance;

— Reinforce and modernise public employment services to ensure effective individualised assistance to the unemployed according to their profiles and training needs;

— Reinforce the effectiveness of re-skilling training programmes for older and low-skilled workers;

— Fully operationalize the Single Job Portal and speed up the implementation of public-private cooperation in placement services to ensure its effective application already in 2013.

The Commission acknowledges that private consumption is expected to contract in the next period as a result of continued household deleveraging, high unemployment and falling real disposable income ([1]). This painful situation can only be really overcome through return to economic growth. This, in turn, will depend on further progress in completing the EMU, including through banking union, as well as financial sector reform, improvements in the business environment and product markets as highlighted in Recommendation 7, and successful re-allocation of labour into productive and sustainable activities.

The Commission also requested Spain to take the necessary measures to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion as indicated in Recommendation 6.

([1]) Commission's Spring Forecast 2013: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2013_spring/es_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006400/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Enfermedades raras

Las enfermedades raras son aquellas que potencialmente se consideran mortales o crónicamente debilitantes, cuya prevalencia es tan baja que se requieren esfuerzos combinados para reducir el número de afectados, prevenir fallecimientos perinatales e infantiles por su causa y mantener la calidad de vida y el potencial socioeconómico de los enfermos. Se calcula que actualmente, en la EU, existen entre 5 000 y 8 000 enfermedades raras diferenciadas que afectan a entre un 6 % y un 8 % de la población, es decir, entre 27 y 36 millones de personas.

Considerando que las enfermedades raras son una amenaza para la salud de los ciudadanos de la UE, ya que son enfermedades con peligro de muerte o de invalidez crónica, de baja prevalencia y alto nivel de complejidad;

Considerando que la cooperación europea puede ayudar a compartir los escasos conocimientos disponibles y a combinar los recursos de la manera más eficiente posible, a fin de abordar con eficacia las enfermedades raras en toda la UE;

Considerando la Resolución del Parlamento Europeo, de 25 de octubre de 2011, sobre la movilidad y la inclusión de las personas con discapacidad y la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020;

Considerando la Comunicación de la Comisión al Parlamento, al Consejo, al Comité de las Regiones y al Comité Económico y Social Europeo, «Las enfermedades raras: un reto para Europa», de 11 de noviembre de 2008;

Considerando la Recomendación del Consejo de 8 de junio de 2009 relativa a una acción en el ámbito de las enfermedades raras;

¿Qué acciones ha desarrollado la Comisión respecto al tratamiento de las enfermedades raras?

¿Considera la Comisión, como ya le ha pedido el Parlamento en anteriores ocasiones, establecer una red europea de centros acreditados de diagnóstico y tratamiento de formas específicas de enfermedades raras, a fin de coordinar y seguir su actividad y los beneficios que aportan a los pacientes?

Aparte de la creación de centros acreditados de diagnóstico y tratamiento de formas específicas de enfermedades raras, ¿tiene previsto la Comisión la creación de algún mecanismo para favorecer la investigación o la cooperación en la investigación de dichas enfermedades que debido a su baja prevalencia no suelen gozar de la atención de los centros de investigación a pesar de ser mortales o crónicamente debilitantes?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

El enfoque de la UE para el tratamiento de las enfermedades de baja prevalencia ha evolucionado de forma notable en el ámbito de los productos farmacéuticos. El Reglamento de la UE sobre medicamentos huérfanos pretende fomentar el desarrollo galénico de estos incentivando a las empresas que producen tales tratamientos. Hasta ahora, estas medidas han hecho posible designar 1 166 medicamentos huérfanos y autorizar la comercialización de 82 medicamentos en el mercado de la UE.

Además, la Directiva 2011/24/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 9 de marzo de 2011, relativa a la aplicación de los derechos de los pacientes en la asistencia sanitaria transfronteriza, establece que la Comisión apoyará el desarrollo de redes europeas de referencia, concretamente para facilitar el acceso a una asistencia de calidad de los pacientes con afecciones que requieran una particular concentración de experiencia en campos en los que el conocimiento sea escaso. La Comisión está trabajando en las medidas de aplicación de estas redes europeas de referencia. Una vez se hayan adoptado los actos jurídicos, la Comisión preparará la creación de redes, y sin duda alguna recibirá propuestas de redes en el ámbito de las enfermedades raras.

El VII Programa Marco de la UE de Investigación y Desarrollo Tecnológico ha ofrecido apoyo a cerca de 100 proyectos colaborativos de investigación sobre enfermedades raras, con una contribución total de la UE de casi 500 millones de euros. La Comisión participa activamente en el *International Rare Diseases Research Consortium* (IRDiRC), consorcio internacional que fomenta la colaboración en investigación sobre enfermedades raras a nivel mundial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006400/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Rare diseases

Rare diseases are potentially life-threatening or chronically debilitating diseases that affect so few people that combined efforts are needed to reduce the number of people contracting them, to prevent newborns and young children dying from them and to preserve sufferers' quality of life and socioeconomic potential. It is estimated that between 5 000 and 8 000 distinct rare diseases exist today in the EU, affecting 6-8% of the population, which is between 27 and 36 million people.

Given that rare diseases are a threat to the health of EU citizens insofar as they are life-threatening or chronically debilitating diseases with a low prevalence and a high level of complexity;

Given that European cooperation can help to ensure that the scarce knowledge available is shared and that resources are combined as efficiently as possible, in order to tackle rare diseases effectively across the EU as a whole;

Given the European Parliament resolution of 25 October 2011 on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020;

Given the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, 'Rare Diseases — Europe's challenges' of 11 November 2008;

Given the Council Recommendation of 8 June 2009 on an action in the field of rare diseases;

What steps has the Commission taken regarding the treatment of rare diseases?

Does the Commission plan to establish a European network of accredited centres for the diagnosis and treatment of specific forms of rare diseases in order to coordinate and monitor their activities and the benefits they offer patients, as Parliament has previously requested?

Besides establishing accredited centres for the diagnosis and treatment of specific forms of rare diseases, does the Commission intend to establish a mechanism to support research and cooperation in the investigation of these diseases which, due to their low prevalence, do not tend to attract the attention of research centres despite being life-threatening or chronically debilitating?

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

The EU approach on the treatment of rare diseases has notably been developed in the area of pharmaceuticals. The EU Regulation on Orphan Medicinal Products aims to support the development of medicinal products to meet medical needs in the area of rare diseases by offering incentives for companies developing such treatments. So far, these measures allowed 1 166 products to be designated as orphan medicines and 82 products authorised to be placed on the EU market.

In addition, in the area of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, Directive 2011/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 requires the Commission to support the development of European Reference Networks in particular to facilitate access to high quality care for patients with conditions requiring a particular concentration of expertise in domains where expertise is rare. The Commission is currently working on implementing measures for such European Reference Networks. Once legal acts are adopted, the Commission will prepare the establishment of Networks, which would most likely receive proposals of Networks focusing on Rare Diseases.

The EU's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development has supported close to 100 collaborative research projects on rare diseases with the overall EU contribution of almost EUR 500 million. The Commission is actively involved in the International Rare Diseases Research Consortium which fosters collaboration in rare diseases research on the global level.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006401/13
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(5. juni 2013)

Om: Krydsoverensstemmelsesregler

Den danske Natur- og Erhvervsstyrelse konstaterer i et brev til Guldborgsund Kommune den 31. maj 2012, at kommunen i 2009, 2010 og 2011 lå under det kommunale landsgennemsnit for indberetninger af overtrædelser af krydsoverensstemmelsesreglerne i forhold til antallet af tilsynsbesøg på landbrug. Antallet af indberetninger i 2008 lå i Guldborgsund Kommune over landsgennemsnittet ([1]).

Den danske fødevareminister Mette Gjerskov har i svar til Folketinget forklaret, hvorfor Natur- og Erhvervsstyrelsen sendte brevet til Guldborgsund Kommune: »Statsrevisorerne har anmodet mig om at redegøre for, hvilke tiltag Fødevareministeriet vil iværksætte på baggrund af, at Rigsrevisionen ifølge sin beretning fra november 2012 har konstateret, at der i en række kommuner er et urealistisk forhold mellem antallet af udførte krydsoverensstemmelseskontroller og antallet af fundne krydsoverensstemmelsesovertrædelser« ([2]).

Kommissionen bedes oplyse, om den har opfordret de danske myndigheder til at undersøge, hvorvidt kontrollen i danske kommuner er korrekt udført?

Kommissionen bedes oplyse, om den mener, at det er rimeligt, at den danske Natur- og Erhvervsstyrelse opfordrer kommuner til at indrapportere flere landmænd for overtrædelse af krydsoverensstemmelsesreglerne, selvom der er et stort antal kontrolbesøg, og selvom der ikke er noget tegn på, at der er tale om dårlig kvalitet i kontrollen?

Deler Kommissionen den danske Natur- og Erhvervsstyrelses opfattelse af, at færre krydsoverensstemmelsesindberetninger skyldes dårligere kontrol, og ikke at landmænd er bedre til at overholde reglerne?

Endvidere bedes Kommissionen oplyse, hvilke procedurer den har for at sikre en ensartet udførelse af krydsoverensstemmelseskontrollen i medlemsstaterne, således at krydsoverensstemmelsesreglerne ikke medfører konkurrenceforvridning?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Dacian Cioloș
(25. juli 2013)

Den fælles landbrugspolitik er under delt forvaltning, og det er medlemsstatens ansvar at gennemføre et kontrolsystem for krydsoverensstemmelse i overensstemmelse med EU's lovgivning. Generelt skal dette system opfylde bestemmelserne i artikel 8 i forordning 1122/2009 ([3]), ifølge hvilken *»medlemsstaterne indfører et system, der sikrer en effektiv kontrol med, at der er krydsoverensstemmelse«*. Særligt skal administrativ kontrol og kontrol på stedet opfylde bestemmelserne i artikel 26 i forordning 1122/2009, ifølge hvilken *»administrativ kontrol og kontrol på stedet … foretages på en sådan måde, at der sikres en effektiv efterprøvning af, om de krav og normer, der er relevante for krydsoverensstemmelse, er overholdt«*.

Intern revision er et af de mulige værktøjer, som medlemsstaterne kan anvende for at sikre, at implementeringen af deres system er overensstemmende på alle niveauer.

Kommissionen sigter ved hjælp af sin overensstemmelseskontrol mod at kontrollere, at alle medlemsstater implementerer et krydsoverensstemmelsessystem, der opfylder lovgivningen. Hvis der konstateres en svaghed i et krydsoverensstemmelsessystem, der er implementeret i en medlemsstat, kan der foretages en finansiel korrektion på baggrund af forordningerne om afslutning af regnskaber.

Der blev gennemført krydsoverensstemmelseskontrol i Danmark i september 2010, og der blev konstateret adskillige mangler. Regnskabsafslutningsprocessen er stadig i gang.

([1]) http://www.ft.dk/samling/20121/almdel/flf/spm/133/svar/1025499/1211592/index.htm
([2]) http://www.ft.dk/samling/20121/almdel/flf/spm/133/svar/1025499/1211592/index.htm
([3]) EUT L 316 af 2.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006401/13
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Cross-compliance rules

In a letter dated 31 May 2012 to the municipality of Guldborgsund, the Danish AgriFish Agency noted that in 2009, 2010 and 2011, compared with the number of inspections within agriculture, the municipality had been below the national average for local-authority reports of breaches of cross-compliance rules. In 2008, the number of Guldborgsund municipality reports had been above the national average ([1]).

In an answer to the Danish Parliament, Denmark's Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Mette Gjerskov, explained why the Danish AgriFish Agency had written to the municipality of Guldborgsund. Government auditors had asked her to say what action the Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries proposed to take in the light of the finding in the National Audit Office report in November 2012 that, in some municipalities, the number of cross-compliance breaches established, as a proportion of the cross-compliance checks carried out, was unrealistic ([2]).

Has the Commission requested the Danish authorities to look into whether inspections are being properly carried out in Danish municipalities?

Does the Commission consider it reasonable for the Danish AgriFish Agency to call on municipalities to report more farmers for breaches of cross-compliance rules despite the many inspections carried out and the fact that there is no indication that the inspections are being inadequately carried out?

Does the Commission agree with the Danish AgriFish Agency that the lower volume of cross-compliance reporting is the result of inadequate inspections, and does not stem from the fact that farmers are complying better with the rules?

What procedures are available to the Commission, furthermore, to ensure that cross-compliance inspections are carried out in a consistent fashion in the Member States, thus preventing cross-compliance rules from distorting competition?

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

The Common Agricultural Policy is under shared management and it is the Member State's responsibility to implement a cross-compliance system in conformity with European legislation. Overall this system must be in line with Article 8 of Regulation 1122/2009 ([3]) according to which 'Member States shall establish a system guaranteeing an effective control of the respect of cross-compliance.' In particular, administrative and on-the spot controls must be in conformity with Article 26 of Regulation 1122/2009 which states that 'Administrative controls and on-the-spot checks provided … shall be made in such a way as to ensure effective verification of compliance of the requirements and standards relevant for cross-compliance.'

Internal audit is one of the possible tools available to Member States in order to provide assurance that implementation of their system is compliant at all levels.

The Commission, through its conformity audits, aims at verifying that all Member States implement a cross-compliance system which is in conformity with the regulations. Should any weakness in the cross-compliance system implemented in a Member State be identified, a financial correction may be applied on the basis of the clearance of accounts regulations.

A cross-compliance conformity audit was carried out in Denmark in September 2010 and several deficiencies were identified. The clearance of accounts procedure is still ongoing.

([1]) http://www.ft.dk/samling/20121/almdel/flf/spm/133/svar/1025499/1211592/index.htm
([2]) http://www.ft.dk/samling/20121/almdel/flf/spm/133/svar/1025499/1211592/index.htm
([3]) OJ L 316, 2.12.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006404/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(5 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έρευνα για τη χαρτογράφηση της φτώχειας στην ΕΕ

Στις αρχές του 2012 η Επιτροπή ανακοίνωσε τη διεξαγωγή έρευνας διάρκειας περίπου ενός έτους για τη χαρτογράφηση της φτώχειας στην ΕΕ με στόχο την παροχή χρήσιμων στοιχείων σχετικά με τον αριθμό και τη διαβίωση των αστέγων στην ΕΕ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια τα βασικά ευρήματα της έρευνας; Είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει συγκριτικά στοιχεία της έκτασης του προβλήματος στα κράτη μέλη;

2. Καθώς οι άστεγοι θα μπορούσαν να επωφεληθούν από τα μέτρα για την ένταξη των μειονεκτούντων ομάδων στην κοινωνία και στην αγορά εργασίας στο πλαίσιο του τρέχοντος προγράμματος για την ανάπτυξη του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού, είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για τις επιδόσεις των κρατών μελών στον τομέα αυτό; Υπάρχουν παραδείγματα καλών πρακτικών τα οποία θα μπορούσαν να εφαρμοστούν και σε άλλα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή διερεύνησε την δυνατότητα χρήσης της εκτίμησης για μικρές περιοχές για τη δημιουργία χαρτών υψηλής πιθανότητας συγκέντρωσης πληθυσμού που διατρέχει κίνδυνο φτώχειας, δηλαδή με εισόδημα χαμηλότερο του 60% του εθνικού διάμεσου εισοδήματος. Ένα έργο που ξεκίνησε από κοινού με την Παγκόσμια Τράπεζα, αναμένεται να παραδώσει χάρτες φτώχειας για 8 κράτη μέλη το φθινόπωρο του 2013.

Η Επιτροπή παρέχει καθοδήγηση για την αντιμετώπιση του προβλήματος των αστέγων στο πλαίσιο της δέσμης κοινωνικών επενδύσεων σε ειδικό έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της ([1]). Εξετάζει τις τρέχουσες τάσεις του αριθμού των αστέγων στην ΕΕ, τις ορθές πρακτικές των κρατών μελών και τα βασικά στοιχεία των ολοκληρωμένων στρατηγικών για τους άστεγους, υπογραμμίζοντας τον ρόλο της ΕΕ, μεταξύ άλλων, μέσω της χρήσης των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων της. Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται με τα κράτη μέλη στο πλαίσιο της επιτροπής κοινωνικής προστασίας για τις ανταλλαγές κοινωνικής πολιτικής και την ανάπτυξη δεδομένων και παρέχει φόρουμ συζητήσεων στο πλαίσιο εκδηλώσεων, όπως η ετήσια διάσκεψη της πλατφόρμας για την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού. Για τη μέτρηση της προόδου, η δέσμη κοινωνικών επενδύσεων ενισχύει τη δέσμευση της Επιτροπής για την περαιτέρω ενσωμάτωση των θεμάτων κοινωνικής πολιτικής στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Εξαμήνου και την έκδοση ειδικών συστάσεων κατά χώρα. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή χρηματοδοτεί και διαδίδει τα αποτελέσματα των θεματικών μελετών και έργων κοινωνικού πειραματισμού, όπως τα έργα *Housing First Europe* και *Work in Stations*, τα οποία θα προσφέρουν καινοτόμες, νέες προσεγγίσεις πολιτικής για την αντιμετώπιση του προβλήματος της έλλειψης στέγης.

([1]) Έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής για την αντιμετώπιση του προβλήματος των αστέγων στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση SWD (2013)42 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006404/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Research on poverty mapping in the EU

At the beginning of 2012, the Commission announced that research would be carried out for approximately one year on poverty mapping in the EU with a view to providing useful statistics on the number and welfare of homeless people in the EU.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What were the main findings of the research? Is it in a position to provide comparative data on the scale of the problem in the Member States?

2. As the homeless could benefit from measures on the integration of minorities into society and the labour market as part of the current programme for human resource development, is the Commission in a position to report on the progress made by Member States in this area? Are there any examples of good practices which could be implemented in other Member States?

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

The Commission has been exploring the possibility of using small area estimation to create maps of high probability of concentration of people at-risk-poverty, i.e. having income below 60% of the national median. A joint project launched with the World Bank is expected to deliver poverty maps for 8 Member States in autumn 2013.

The Commission provides guidance on confronting homelessness within the Social Investment Package in a specific Staff Working Document ([1]). It explores current trends in homelessness in the EU, good practices by Member States and core elements of integrated homelessness strategies, highlighting the support role of the EU, including through the use of EU Structural Funds. The Commission works together with Member States in the Social Protection Committee on social policy exchanges and data development and it provides fora for discussion through events, such as the Annual Convention of the Platform Against Poverty and Social Exclusion. To measure progress, the Social Investment Package reinforces the commitment of the Commission to further integrate social policy issues in the European semester exercise and launch country-specific recommendations as appropriate. Further, the Commission finances and disseminates results of thematic studies and social experimentation projects, like the Housing First Europe or the Work in Stations projects, which are offering innovative, new policy approaches to homelessness.

([1]) Commission Staff Working Document on Confronting Homelessness in the European Union SWD (2013)42 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006405/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(5 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επίπεδο πληρωμών στις 31 Μαΐου 2013

Μετά την έγκριση του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 6/2012, η Επιτροπή, κατόπιν αιτήματος της αρμόδιας για τον προϋπολογισμό αρχής, υπέβαλε σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 2/2013 ύψους 11,2 δισ. ευρώ, που θα επιτρέπει την κάλυψη όλων των νομίμων υποχρεώσεων πληρωμών οι οποίες εκκρεμούσαν στα τέλη του 2012, καθώς και εκείνες που προκύπτουν πριν από το τέλος του 2013, με τον προϋπολογισμό του τρέχοντος έτους.

Κατά τη συνεδρίαση του Συμβουλίου Ecofin της 14ης Μαΐου 2013, επιτεύχθηκε πολιτική συμφωνία για την παροχή της επιπλέον χρηματοδότησης για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 σε δύο δόσεις, με την πρώτη ύψους 7,3 δισ. ευρώ, ενώ οι υπουργοί δεσμεύτηκαν να επανέλθουν στο θέμα αργότερα εντός του έτους. Ωστόσο, δεν υπήρξε καμία επίσημη δέσμευση για το υπόλοιπο ποσό των 3,9 δισεκατομμύρια του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού 2/2013.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη το σύνολο των ανωτέρω και δεδομένου ότι το επίπεδο των πληρωμών για τον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ του 2013 είναι κατά 5 δισ. κατώτερο σε σχέση με τις εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής στο σχέδιο προϋπολογισμού της 2013 για τις ανάγκες πληρωμών, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει λεπτομερή στοιχεία για το επίπεδο των πληρωμών που παρελήφθησαν έως την 31η Μαρτίου 2013;

Θα μπορούσε συγκεκριμένα η Επιτροπή να παράσχει πληροφορίες για τις πληρωμές που ελήφθησαν κατά τους μήνες Ιανουάριο, Φεβρουάριο, Μάρτιο, Απρίλιο και Μάιο του 2013, κατανεμημένες κατά κράτος μέλος και τομέα πολιτικής ή πρόγραμμα;

Απάντηση του κ. Lewandowski εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η αναλυτική κατανομή των έγκυρων αιτήσεων πληρωμών ([1]) που παραλήφθηκαν το Μάιο για τα χρηματοδοτούμενα από το ΕΚΤ, το ΕΤΠΑ και το ΤΣ επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα για την περίοδο 2007-2013 παρατίθεται στο παράρτημα Ι της παρούσας απάντησης, ενώ τα στοιχεία σχετικά με το ΕΤΑ και το ΕΓΤΑΑ παρατίθενται στο παράρτημα ΙΙ. Τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία του πίνακα προκύπτουν από τη σύγκριση των έγκυρων αιτήσεων πληρωμών που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Μαΐου 2013, με εκείνες που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Απριλίου 2013. Η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αποφασίσει την αλλαγή χαρακτηρισμού μιας αίτησης πληρωμής από «Αποδεκτή» σε «Πλήρως απορριφθείσα» ή «Επιστραφείσα προς διόρθωση» και, συνεπώς, τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία των παραρτημάτων της παρούσας απάντησης ενδέχεται να αποτελέσουν αντικείμενο περαιτέρω προσαρμογών. Τα αρνητικά υπόλοιπα του ΕΚΤ για την Σλοβακία, για παράδειγμα, είναι αποτέλεσμα τέτοιων αλλαγών στον χαρακτηρισμό.

Ανάλογα δεδομένα για τους μήνες Ιανουάριο, Φεβρουάριο, Μάρτιο και Απρίλιο δόθηκαν από την Επιτροπή στις ερωτήσεις E-1090/2013, E-3237/2013, E-3928/2013 και E-4903/2013 ([2]), αντίστοιχα.

([1]) Με εξαίρεση τα ποσά που έχουν απορριφθεί πλήρως.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006405/13
to the Commission
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Level of payments as of 31 May 2013

After the approval of Draft Amending Budget No 6/2012, the Commission, at the request of the Budgetary Authority, came forward with a Draft Amending Budget No 2/2013 amounting to EUR 11.2 billion, which will allow all the legal payment obligations left pending at the end of 2012, as well as those arising before the end of 2013, to be covered in this year's budget.

At the Ecofin meeting of 14 May 2013, a political agreement was reached to provide the extra funding for the 2013 Budget in two tranches, with the first one amounting to EUR 7.3 billion while the ministers committed to come back on the issue later in the year. However, there has been no formal commitment on the remaining EUR 3.9 billion of Draft Amending Budget 2/2013.

Taking all the above into consideration and given the fact that the level of payments for the 2013 EU Budget is EUR 5 billion lower than the Commission's estimates for payment needs in its 2013 Draft Budget, could the Commission provide us with detailed information on the level of payments received by 31 May 2013?

Specifically, could the Commission detail the payments received in the months of January, February, March, April and May 2013, broken down by Member State and policy area/programme?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2013)

A detailed breakdown of the valid payment claims ([1]) received in May for the 2007-2013 ESF, ERDF and CF-funded operational programmes is provided in Annex I to this reply while for EFF and EAFRD the data is included in Annex II. The figures in the table result from comparing valid payment claims submitted until the end of May 2013 with those submitted until the end of April 2013. The Commission may decide to change the status of a payment claim from 'Accepted' to 'Fully rejected' or 'Returned for corrections' and therefore the figures presented in the annexes to this reply could still undergo further adjustments. A negative ESF balance for Slovakia, for instance, is the result of such changes in status.

Similar data for the months of January, February, March and April were provided by the Commission to Questions E-1090/2013, E-3237/2013 and E-3928/2013 and E-4903/2013 ([2]), respectively.

([1]) Excluding fully rejected amounts.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006406/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D)
(5 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Ostrzelanie tajwańskiej łodzi przez filipiński statek

W dniu 9 maja 2013 r. tajwański kuter rybacki Guan Da Xing nr 28 został ostrzelany przez filipiński statek straży przybrzeżnej na spornych wodach między tymi krajami, czego skutkiem była śmierć 65-letniego rybaka Hunga Shih-chenga. Według rzecznika filipińskiej straży przybrzeżnej Armanda Balilo do incydentu doszło na filipińskich wodach terytorialnych i załoga statku po prostu wykonywała swoje obowiązki. Jednak według relacji opublikowanych przez tajwańskie media kapitan łodzi twierdzi, że nie wpłynął na wody filipińskie.

Tajwan od dawna stara się rozwiązywać spory terytorialne w odpowiedzialny i rozsądny sposób. Ten akt przemocy ze strony wojska filipińskiego przeciwko nieuzbrojonemu statkowi spowodował nie tylko ludzką tragedię, lecz przyczynił się też do wzrostu napięcia w regionie.

1. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zbadała tę sprawę?

2. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel mogłaby przedstawić informacje dotyczące terytorium, na którym doszło do wyżej opisanego incydentu?

3. Jaka jest opinia Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel w sprawie tego incydentu?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wie o incydencie na morzu, do jakiego doszło dnia 9 maja 2013 r. między Filipinami a Tajwanem, i bardzo ubolewa nad śmiercią, jaką w wyniku tego incydentu poniósł tajwański rybak Hung Shih-cheng.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca bacznie monitoruje rozwój wynikłego sporu między Filipinami a Tajwanem. Państwa te prowadzą równoległe dochodzenia i wydaje się, że nawiązały skuteczną współpracę. Dnia 13 czerwca br. w sprawozdaniu z dochodzenia filipińskich władz zalecono pociągnięcie do odpowiedzialności karnej i administracyjnej członka filipińskiej straży nadbrzeżnej, którego tożsamość została ustalona i który rzekomo oddał śmiertelny strzał. Dochodzenie władz tajwańskich jest nadal w toku.

UE z zadowoleniem przyjmuje niedawną zapowiedź władz filipińskich i tajwańskich o tym, że pragną unikać użycia siły lub przemocy przy wdrażaniu swoich przepisów z dziedziny rybołówstwa. Z tego co rozumiemy, państwa te będą posiadały te same procedury egzekwowania prawa morskiego i ustanowią środki w zakresie wzajemnego powiadamiania się w trybie bezzwłocznym za każdym razem, gdy dojdzie do działań wymierzonych przeciwko statkom lub załodze Tajwanu lub Filipin. Wierzymy, że państwa te doszły również do porozumienia w sprawie opracowania mechanizmu szybkiego uwalniania zatrzymanych statków rybackich i ich załóg zgodnie z międzynarodową praktyką.

Opisany incydent potwierdza moje stanowisko, jakie od dawna utrzymuję na temat Morza Południowochińskiego i które przedstawiłam przede wszystkim w moim oświadczeniu z dnia 25 września 2012 r., a mianowicie, że wszystkie zainteresowane strony należy zachęcać do dążenia do pokoju i szukania wspólnych rozwiązań zgodnie z międzynarodowym prawem, w tym Konwencją Narodów Zjednoczonych o prawie morza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006406/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Shots fired by a Philippine vessel at a Taiwanese boat

On 9 May 2013, the Taiwanese fishing boat Guan Da Xing No 28 was shot at by a Philippine coastguard vessel in disputed waters between the Philippines and Taiwan, causing the death of a 65-year-old fisherman, Hung Shih-cheng. The Philippine coastguard spokesman, Armand Balilo, said that the incident had taken place in Philippine waters and that the personnel involved had just been doing their job. However, Taiwanese media carried reports from the boat's captain claiming that he had not crossed over into Philippine waters.

Taiwan's approach to territorial disputes has long proven to be responsible and moderate. This act of violence by the Philippine military against an unarmed vessel not only resulted in a human tragedy, but also raised tensions in the region.

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative investigated this matter?

2. Could the Vice-President/High Representative provide information on the territory in which this incident occurred?

3. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's view on the incident?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the maritime incident of 9th May 2013 between the Philippines and Taiwan, and very much regret the resulting loss of life of Mr Hung Shih-cheng, a Taiwanese fisherman.

The HR/VP has been monitoring closely the development of the ensuing dispute between the Philippines and Taiwan. Taiwan and the Philippines have conducted parallel investigations and there seems to have been a useful level of cooperation between the two sides. On June 13th the report of the Philippine investigation recommended that criminal and administrative charges should be filed against an identified Philippine Coast Guard official who allegedly fired the fatal shot. The Taiwanese investigation is still ongoing.

The EU welcomes the recent announcement by the Philippines and Taiwan of their intention to avoid the use of force or violence in the implementation of their fisheries laws. We understand they will share their maritime law enforcement procedures and establish means for notifying each other without delay whenever actions are taken against vessels and crews of the other party. We believe that they have also agreed to develop a mechanism for the prompt release of detained fishing vessels and their crews, in line with international practice.

This incident confirms my long-held view on the South China Sea, expressed notably in my statement of 25 September 2012, that all parties concerned should be encouraged to seek peaceful and cooperative solutions in accordance with international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006407/13
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to Parliamentary Question E-002579/2013: enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 — number of monetary sanctions handed down and number of monetary sanctions effectively paid

Referring to my Parliamentary Question E-002579/2013, I would be grateful to know how the Commission feels it can evaluate the effectiveness of the enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 in the Member States, given the fact that it does not have information on whether monetary penalties have been issued in relation to the infringements reported?

Please can you let me know why the requirement to report the number of monetary fines in relation to the number of infringements found has not been included in the recent Commission Implementing Decision of 18 April 2013? ([1])

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

The main objective of the decision referred to in the question ([2]) is to harmonise the structure of Member States' annual reports on controls of animal transports carried out in accordance with Article 27 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([3]), and provide better and more comparable data at EU level ([4]).

According to Article 2(1)(d) of the decision, information on the category and number of actions taken by the competent authority following the detection of non-compliances shall be included in the annual report. This includes the number of penalties imposed in accordance with national legislation.

Whether a specific monetary or administrative penalty is effective, proportionate and dissuasive can only be evaluated if linked to a precise infringement or offence and contrasted against the gravity of the specific infringement or offence. The Commission therefore does not see that information on the number of monetary penalties issued is necessary to achieve the main objective of the decision.

The Commission continues to audit Member State's compliance with the requirements of EU animal welfare legislation through the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO). When deemed necessary, the number of monetary fines will be evaluated during these audits.

([1]) Commission Implementing Decision of 18.4.2013 on annual reports on non-discriminatory inspections carried out pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97.

([2]) Commission Implementing Decision of 18 April 2013 on annual reports on non-discriminatory inspections carried out pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, 2013/188/EU. OJ L 111, 23.4.2013, p. 107.

([3]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations. OJ L 3, 5.1.2005.

([4]) Recitals (4) and (5) of Decision 2013/188/EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006408/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 juin 2013)

Objet: Prise en compte de la chaleur dans le Livre vert climat-énergie à l'horizon 2030

La Commission a publié le 27 mars dernier son Livre vert intitulé «Un cadre pour les politiques en matière de climat et d'énergie à l'horizon 2030». Y sont abordés les points clés de la politique énergétique pour les deux décennies à venir, cruciaux pour des raisons autant stratégiques qu'économiques et environnementales.

Pourtant, le texte ne fait pas suffisamment mention du potentiel du rendement thermique dans la réduction des émissions de carbone et de l'importance des réseaux de chaleur. Or la chaleur représente 45 % de la consommation énergétique de l'Union et des pertes immenses sont constatées alors que la chaleur pourrait être récupérée et utilisée pour produire de l'électricité et alimenter des réseaux de chauffage urbains. En outre, les réseaux de chaleur constituent un vecteur important pour l'intégration des énergies renouvelables thermiques et la décarbonisation de l'économie.

Dans le rapport Tzavela sur la feuille de route pour l'énergie à l'horizon 2050, voté le 13 mars 2013 en session plénière, le Parlement européen a demandé «qu'une plus grande attention soit accordée aux secteurs du chauffage et du refroidissement (…) (et que) l'Union envisage l'intégration complète du secteur du chauffage et du refroidissement dans la transformation du système énergétique».

1. La Commission a-t-elle réalisé une étude sur la déperdition de chaleur au sein de l'Union européenne et sur le raccordement des logements aux réseaux de chaleur?

2. A-t-elle évalué les pertes de chaleur de l'industrie?

3. Une meilleure prise en compte de la problématique du chauffage et du refroidissement n'est-elle pas indispensable à la satisfaction des objectifs de la directive sur la performance énergétique des bâtiments et de la directive efficacité énergétique?

4. Quels financements européens pourraient être proposés pour développer les réseaux de chaleur d'ici à 2030?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(19 juillet 2013)

1.-2. La Commission n'a pas entrepris d'études spécifiques sur la déperdition de chaleur au sein de l'Union européenne, ni sur celle provenant de l'industrie, ni non plus sur le raccordement des logements aux réseaux de chaleur. Néanmoins, le rendement thermique du système énergétique de l'Union, y compris l'industrie, a été analysé dans le cadre d'études sur le potentiel d'économies d'énergie de l'Union en vue de l'élaboration de propositions législatives et d'initiatives politiques de la Commission.

3. Les directives de l'Union sur l'efficacité énergétique ([1]), sur la performance énergétique des bâtiments ([2]), sur l'écoconception ([3]) et sur l'étiquetage énergétique ([4]) traitent déjà du chauffage et du refroidissement dans différents secteurs. Il pourrait être envisagé d'accorder une attention particulière au chauffage et au refroidissement afin de cibler spécifiquement les déperditions de chaleur et d'étudier les avantages potentiels des réseaux de chaleur dans les principaux secteurs consommateurs de chaleur dans le cadre pour l'énergie et le climat à l'horizon 2030.

([1]) Directive 2012/27/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 25 octobre 2012 relative à l'efficacité énergétique, modifiant les directives 2009/125/CE et 2010/30/UE et abrogeant les directives 2004/8/CE et 2006/32/CE, JO L n° 315, p. 1.

([2]) Directive 2010/31/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 19 mai 2010 sur la performance énergétique des bâtiments (refonte), JO L 153 du 18.6.2010, p. 13.

([3]) Directive 2010/30/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 19 mai 2010 concernant l'indication, par voie d'étiquetage et d'informations uniformes relatives aux produits, de la consommation en énergie et en autres ressources des produits liés à l'énergie (refonte), JO L 153 du 18.6.2010, p. 1.

([4]) Directive 2010/30/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 19 mai 2010 concernant l'indication, par voie d'étiquetage et d'informations uniformes relatives aux produits, de la consommation en énergie et en autres ressources des produits liés à l'énergie (refonte), JO L 153 du 18.6.2010, p. 1.

4. Les fonds déjà existants alloués à la recherche et aux applications en matière de chauffage et de refroidissement seront sensiblement augmentés dans le cadre financier pluriannuel 2014-2020 de l'Union, comprenant l'initiative «Horizon 2020». S'ils sont mis en œuvre de manière efficace, ces instruments de l'Union permettront d'accroître le rendement thermique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006408/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Taking heating into consideration in the 2030 climate and energy green paper

On 27 March 2013, the Commission published its green paper entitled 'A 2030 framework for climate and energy policies'. This paper tackles the key aspects of energy policy for the next two decades, as crucial for strategic reasons as for economic and environmental ones.

However, the document does not make sufficient reference to the potential of thermal efficiency in reducing carbon emissions nor to the importance of heating networks. Heating currently accounts for 45% of energy consumption in the EU and huge losses are seen where heat could be recovered and used to generate electricity and supply district heating networks. Furthermore, heating networks are an important vector for the integration of renewable thermal energy and the decarbonisation of the economy.

In the Tzavela report on the Energy roadmap 2050, adopted in plenary on 13 March 2013, Parliament called for 'greater attention to be paid to the heat and cooling sectors […]' and for 'the EU to consider the full integration of the heating and cooling sector into the transformation of the energy system'.

1. Has the Commission conducted a study on heat loss within the European Union and on connecting housing to heating networks?

2. Has it assessed heat loss from industry?

3. Is it not essential to give more consideration to the issue of heating and cooling in order to meet the objectives of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and the Energy Efficiency Directive?

4. What kind of EU financing could be proposed to develop the heating networks from now until 2030?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission has not undertaken specific studies on heat loss within the European Union and from industry, nor on connecting housing to heating networks. Nevertheless, thermal efficiency in the EU energy system, including industry, has been analysed in studies on the EU energy savings potentials in preparation for the Commission's legislative proposals and policy initiatives.

3. The EU Energy Efficiency Directive ([1]), the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive ([2]) and the Ecodesign ([3]) and Energy Labelling Directives ([4]) already address heating and cooling in various sectors. A specific focus on heating and cooling to specifically target thermal losses and explore the potential benefits of heat networks in the main heat consuming sectors may be considered for the 2030 energy and climate framework.

4. The EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, including Horizon 2020, will significantly expand the already existing funds for heating and cooling research and applications. If effectively implemented, these EU instruments will increase thermal efficiency.

([1]) Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency, amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC — OJ L 351, p. 1.

([2]) Directive 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 on the energy performance of buildings (recast) — OJ L 153, 18.6.2010 , p. 13.

([3]) Directive 2010/30/EU of the European 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 products (recast) — OJ L 153, 18.6.2010, p. 1.

([4]) Directive 2010/30/EU of the European 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 products (recast) — OJ L 153, 18.6.2010, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006409/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Reiterati atti di terrorismo in Indonesia e Afghanistan

Non si fermano gli attentati terroristici in Afghanistan e in Indonesia. In quest'ultimo paese, in particolare, il loro aumento si è registrato a partire dal 2005, quando l'intensificarsi degli scontri tra cristiani e musulmani ha portato alla decapitazione di tre giovani studentesse cattoliche mentre si recavano a scuola. In Afghanistan, invece, i kamikaze seminano il terrore dall'inizio della missione statunitense. Oggi, in entrambi questi paesi, si sono verificati attentati simili: in Afghanistan un kamikaze si è fatto esplodere dirigendosi, in moto, verso dei soldati americani. Con la deflagrazione ha però ucciso anche 9 bambini di una scolaresca, ferendone altri 16. Missione fortunatamente non riuscita all'altro terrorista che, sempre guidando una moto, ha provocato un'esplosione anche a Poso, nelle isole Sulawesi centrali, durante la cerimonia dell'alzabandiera. L'obiettivo era anche in questo caso rappresentato dai militari presenti, ma non vi sono stati né morti né feriti.

Si tenga presente la comunicazione della Commissione al Parlamento e al Consiglio COM(2007)0649 dal titolo Intensificazione della lotta contro il terrorismo, in particolare la parte in cui afferma: «Poiché il terrorismo è un fenomeno di portata globale, l'UE coopera intensamente anche con paesi partner e organizzazioni internazionali in materia di legislazione antiterrorismo, azioni di polizia e cooperazione giudiziaria».

Si osservi inoltre la risoluzione del Parlamento europeo P6_TA(2007)0612 del 12 dicembre 2007 sulla lotta al terrorismo, in particolare l'art. 30 per il quale l'Unione «ribadisce l'importanza della cooperazione con i paesi terzi nella prevenzione e nella lotta contro il terrorismo».

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— È a conoscenza degli ultimi episodi di attacchi terroristici extra-UE?

— Quali azioni intende intraprendere per rafforzare lo scambio di informazioni riguardanti il terrorismo, con i paesi terzi che ne sono colpiti?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e la Commissione sono costantemente informate dei principali attentati terroristici che avvengono nei paesi terzi, grazie alle segnalazioni della *situation room* del Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna e alle comunicazioni della rete diplomatica.

I servizi di sicurezza e di *intelligence* degli Stati membri nonché i loro contatti con i servizi in paesi terzi sono di competenza esclusiva degli Stati membri. La Commissione è convinta che questi servizi, in stretta collaborazione con i loro partner nei paesi terzi, facciano quanto è in loro potere per proteggere in modo efficace i cittadini e gli interessi dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006409/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Repeated acts of terrorism in Indonesia and Afghanistan

Terrorist attacks in Afghanistan and Indonesia are continuing. In Indonesia in particular, they began to increase in 2005 when intensifying clashes between Christians and Muslims led to the beheading of three Catholic schoolgirls as they were on their way to school. In Afghanistan, however, suicide bombers have been spreading terror since the start of the US mission there. Today, in both countries, similar attacks have taken place: in Afghanistan, a suicide bomber blew himself up while riding a motorcycle towards US soldiers. The explosion, however, also killed 9 schoolchildren and injured another 16. Fortunately, the other terrorist failed in his mission when, again while riding a motorbike, he caused an explosion during a flag-raising ceremony in Poso, in the Central Sulawesi Islands. Again the targets were the soldiers present, but there were no casualties.

I would remind you of the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2007)0649) entitled Stepping up the fight against terrorism, in particular the part which states: 'since terrorism is a global phenomenon, the EU also cooperates closely with partner countries and international organisations regarding counter-terrorism legislation, law enforcement and judicial cooperation'.

I would also refer you to the European Parliament resolution of 12 December 2007 on the fight against terrorism (P6_TA(2007)0612), in particular Article 30 which states that the Union 'reaffirms the importance of cooperation with third countries in the prevention of and the fight against terrorism'.

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

— Is it aware of the latest terrorist attacks outside Europe?

— What action does it intend to take to strengthen the exchange of information on terrorism with the third countries concerned?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President and the Commission are constantly kept informed of all major terrorist attacks in third states both through alerts issued by the Situation Room of the European External Action Service as well as through diplomatic reporting.

The security and intelligence services of the Member States and their contacts with services in third states are an exclusive competence of the Member States. The Commission is fully confident that these services do their utmost, in close cooperation with their partners in third states, to effectively protect EU citizens and interests.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006410/13
alla Commissione
Tiziano Motti (PPE)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Classificazione della sigaretta elettronica

Il boom delle sigarette elettroniche è ormai di dominio pubblico. Un fornitore di sigarette elettroniche ha stimato che il valore corrente del mercato tedesco si aggira attorno ai 100 milioni di euro e quello totale del mercato delle sigarette elettroniche nell'UE27 (inclusi dispositivi e ricariche) sia compreso tra i 400 e i 500 milioni di euro. La Elettronic Cigarette Industry Trade Association (ECITA), ovvero l'associazione per il commercio e l'industria della sigaretta elettronica, rappresenta il 60-70 % del volume complessivo nel relativo mercato del Regno Unito e riferisce che la crescita del mercato si aggira intorno al 20-30 % al mese.

Il mercato europeo è principalmente composto da distributori più che da produttori e dominato dalle piccole imprese, anche se sta crescendo l'interesse per la produzione delle sigarette elettroniche anche da parte di produttori di più grandi dimensioni (incluse le quattro più grandi industrie di produzione di sigarette tradizionali). La maggior parte delle sigarette elettroniche è prodotta in Cina. Da quando è iniziato il processo di importazione in UE, esse sono diventate oggetto di considerevoli scambi internazionali.

Per esempio, in Olanda i venditori di sigarette elettroniche fungono da centri di rivendita delle sigarette elettroniche importate dalla Cina verso tutta l'Europa. Circa il 20 % delle loro vendite è interna al mercato olandese, mentre il 60 % è diretto al mercato tedesco e il restante 20 % ai venditori in Danimarca, Spagna, Francia, Austria e Svizzera. In Regno Unito l'aumento del numero di possessori di sigarette elettroniche è passato da una quantità minima del 2006 a quella di 1 milione nel 2013. Secondo un recente sondaggio tra i consumatori di sigarette elettroniche in Polonia, la maggior parte fa uso del prodotto soprattutto per smettere di fumare o per ridurre i danni derivanti dal fumo (92 %) e una grande percentuale sostiene che questi prodotti siano meno tossici dei tradizionali prodotti a base di tabacco (84 %). La regolamentazione delle sigarette elettroniche è complessa e varia da paese a paese. In alcuni casi una regolamentazione non esiste per la difficoltà di interpretare cosa effettivamente sia la sigaretta elettronica e quale ne sia effettivamente lo scopo.

Quali sono gli orientamenti della Commissione in merito alla classificazione della e-cigarette?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(16 luglio 2013)

L'analisi delle tendenze del mercato effettuata dalla Commissione per quanto riguarda le sigarette elettroniche è presentata nella valutazione dell'impatto della Commissione che accompagna la proposta di revisione della direttiva sui prodotti del tabacco. ([1]) Nella valutazione dell'impatto sono menzionate anche le prove scientifiche disponibili in merito agli effetti sanitari e sociali delle sigarette elettroniche. Allo stesso tempo, taluni studi sottolineano la possibilità di utilizzare le sigarette elettroniche come ausili per mettere di fumare.

Nella sua proposta di revisione della direttiva sui prodotti del tabacco, la Commissione prevede di assoggettare alla legislazione sui medicinali le sigarette elettroniche il cui contenuto di nicotina eccede un determinato livello. Uno degli effetti di tale proposta consisterebbe nel promuovere il potenziale uso delle sigarette elettroniche come ausili per smettere di fumare. Si garantirebbe inoltre che, prima dell'immissione sul mercato, debbano essere valutati adeguatamente i rischi e i vantaggi connessi alle sigarette elettroniche il cui contenuto di nicotina ecceda il suddetto livello. La proposta della Commissione si basa sull'osservazione che, pur essendovi differenze tra gli Stati membri, in molti di essi le sigarette elettroniche, in quanto medicinali «per funzione», sono considerate soggette alla legislazione sui prodotti farmaceutici.

Per quanto riguarda le sigarette il cui contenuto di nicotina non supera il suddetto livello, la proposta della Commissione prevede che debbano recare avvertenze sanitarie. Esse devono inoltre continuare a rispettare la direttiva sulla sicurezza generale dei prodotti.

([1]) SWD(2012)452 def., pagg. 15-17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006410/13
to the Commission
Tiziano Motti (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Classification of electronic cigarettes

Everyone is now aware of the boom in the popularity of electronic cigarettes. One electronic cigarette supplier has estimated that the German market is currently worth around EUR 100 million and the electronic cigarette market in the EU-27 (including devices and refills) in total is worth between EUR 400 million and EUR 500 million. The Electronic Cigarette Industry Trade Association (ECITA) represents 60-70% of the total market in the United Kingdom and reports that the market is growing by around 20-30% per month.

The European market is mainly made up of distributors rather than producers and is dominated by small businesses, although larger-scale producers (including the four largest manufacturers of traditional cigarettes) are also showing increasing interest in producing electronic cigarettes. Most electronic cigarettes are produced in China. Since imports into the EU began, these cigarettes have become the subject of considerable international trade.

For example, electronic cigarette sellers in the Netherlands act as resellers to the whole of Europe of electronic cigarettes imported from China. Around 20% of their sales are to the domestic Dutch market, while 60% are to the German market and the remaining 20% to sellers in Denmark, Spain, France, Austria and Switzerland. In the United Kingdom, the number of electronic cigarette users has grown from barely any in 2006 to 1 million in 2013. According to a recent survey conducted among electronic cigarette users in Poland, the majority use the product mainly to stop smoking or to reduce the damage caused by smoke (92%) and a large percentage believe that these products are less toxic than traditional tobacco-based products (84%). The regulations governing electronic cigarettes are complex and vary from country to country. In some cases there are no regulations because of the difficulty in defining exactly what electronic cigarettes are and what their actual purpose is.

What are the Commission's views on the classification of e-cigarettes?

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

The Commission's assessment of the market trends with regard to electronic cigarettes is set out in the Commission's Impact Assessment accompanying its proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive. ([1]) The Impact Assessment also refers to the existing scientific evidence on the health and societal effects of electronic cigarettes. At the same time, some studies highlight electronic cigarettes' potential as smoking cessation aid.

The Commission, in its proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive, foresees that electronic cigarettes exceeding a certain threshold of nicotine should be subjected to the medicinal products legislation. One effect of the Commission's proposal would be to encourage the potential of electronic cigarettes as a smoking cessation aid. This would ensure that a proper assessment of the risks and benefits of electronic cigarettes above this threshold would have to be made before placing them on the market. The Commission proposal starts from the observation that, while there are differences between the Member States, in many Member States electronic cigarettes are considered to fall under the pharmaceutical legislation as medicinal products by function.

For electronic cigarettes below the thresholds, the Commission proposal foresees that they should carry health warnings. They would also have to comply with the General Product Safety Directive as it is already the case at the moment.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final, pp. 15-17.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006411/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Inaccettabile discriminazione sul lavoro nei confronti delle donne ad opera dell'industria balneare di Jesolo

In data 29 maggio fonti giornalistiche segnalano che l'associazione FEDERCONSORZI di Jesolo (Provincia di Venezia), ente che raggruppa i gestori delle spiagge della località balneare veneta, ha preso la decisione di assumere per la stagione 2013 solo uomini come «Beach Steward» per non offendere i musulmani presenti, poiché, stando alle spiegazioni fornite dal presidente di FEDERCONSORZI Renato Cattai, «Il musulmano non tollera di essere rimproverato da una donna. La considera un'offesa, si agita, risponde in malo modo, creando situazioni di tensione».

Si tratta di affermazioni gravissime, che ledono in maniera evidente e sostanziale il principio dell'uguaglianza tra uomo e donna, sancito tra l'altro:

— dalla Dichiarazione Universale dei Diritti dell'Uomo, adottata dall'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite il 10 dicembre 1948;

— dalla Carta dei Diritti Fondamentali dell'Unione europea solennemente proclamata il 12 dicembre 2007 a Strasburgo (in particolare gli artt. 20-26);

— dalla Costituzione Italiana entrata in vigore il 1° gennaio 1948, (artt. 2/3).

Può pertanto la Commissione dire se, e in quali termini, essa intende prendere una posizione nei confronti di una decisione che appare gravemente lesiva di un principio fondamentale riconosciuto e tutelato sia dall'Unione europea sia dai singoli Stati membri?

Può inoltre il Commissario all'Occupazione, Affari Sociali e Integrazione Andor László esprimere una sua valutazione su questa scelta di FEDERCONSORZI, che pregiudica la libertà delle donne di poter accedere ad una posizione lavorativa col pretesto di «non voler offendere qualcuno», discriminazione resa ancor più intollerabile dalla difficile congiuntura economica in cui versa l'Italia?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(29 luglio 2013)

La parità tra donne e uomini è uno dei principi fondanti dell'Unione europea. L'articolo 21 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione vieta qualsiasi discriminazione basata sul sesso. L'articolo 23 stabilisce che «la parità tra donne e uomini deve essere assicurata in tutti i campi, compreso in materia di occupazione, di lavoro e di retribuzione».

L'articolo 14, paragrafo 1, lettera a), della direttiva 2006/54/CE ([1]) proibisce la discriminazione diretta e indiretta basata sul sesso in relazione alle condizioni di accesso all'occupazione e al lavoro, sia autonomo che dipendente, compresi i criteri di selezione e le condizioni di assunzione, indipendentemente dal ramo di attività e a tutti i livelli della gerarchia professionale, nonché alla promozione. L'articolo 14, paragrafo 2, prevede una deroga al principio della parità di trattamento laddove, per la natura dell'attività lavorativa in questione o per il contesto in cui essa viene espletata, la differenza di trattamento si basi su un requisito essenziale e determinante per lo svolgimento dell'attività lavorativa.

Poiché l'Italia ha correttamente recepito nella sua legislazione ([2]) il divieto di discriminazione diretta fondata sul sesso, spetta ai giudici nazionali decidere se in casi particolari ha effettivamente avuto luogo una discriminazione vietata. A tal fine, i cittadini dovrebbero avviare un procedimento giudiziario per poter invocare una possibile violazione della normativa UE in materia di parità di genere.

([1]) Direttiva 2006/54/CE del 5 luglio 2006 riguardante l'attuazione del principio delle pari opportunità e della parità di trattamento fra uomini e donne in materia di occupazione e impiego (rifusione) (GU L 204 del 26 luglio 2006, pag. 23).

([2]) Articolo 27, in combinato disposto con l'articolo 25 del codice italiano sulla parità di trattamento (decreto legislativo n. 198 dell'11 aprile 2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006411/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Unacceptable discrimination against women in the workplace by the Jesolo seaside tourist industry

On 29 May 2013, the press reported that the Jesolo (province of Venice) branch of the Federconsorzi association, a body which represents the beach managers of the Veneto seaside resort, has decided to only employ men as beach stewards during the 2013 season. This is to avoid offending Muslims since according to the explanation offered by the President of Federconsorzi, Renato Cattai, 'Muslims do not tolerate being told off by a woman. They consider it offensive, get worked up, are rude and create tense situations.'

These are very serious statements, which clearly and significantly undermine the principle of gender equality, enshrined, *inter alia*, by:

— the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948;

— the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union which was solemnly proclaimed at Strasbourg on 12 December 2007 (in particular Articles 20-26);

— the Italian Constitution which entered into force on 1 January 1948 (Articles 2 and 3).

Can the Commission therefore state whether, and on what terms, it intends to take a position over a decision which appears to seriously prejudice a fundamental principle recognised and protected by both the EU and the individual Member States?

Furthermore, can the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor, give his opinion on Federconsorzi's decision which affects women's freedom to take up a job on the pretext of 'not wishing to offend anyone', with this discrimination being even more unacceptable given the difficult economic situation in Italy?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 2013)

Equality between women and men is one of the EU's founding principles. Article 21 of the Charter of fundamental rights of the EU prohibits any discrimination based on sex. Article 23 of the Charter establishes that '*equality between women and men must be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay*'.

Article 14(1)(a) of Directive 2006/54/EC ([1]) prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of sex in relation to conditions for access to employment, to self-employment or to occupation, including selection criteria and recruitment conditions, whatever the branch of activity and at all levels of the professional hierarchy, including promotion. Article 14(2) allows for an exception to the principle of equal treatment where, by reason of the nature of the particular occupational activities concerned or of the context in which they are carried out, the difference in treatment is based on a genuine and determining occupational requirement.

Since Italy has correctly transposed the prohibition of direct discrimination on grounds of sex in its legislation ([2]), it is up to the national courts to decide whether in a particular case prohibited discrimination has taken place. To this end, individuals should initiate judicial proceedings in order to claim a possible breach of EU gender equality law.

([1]) Directive 2006/54/EC of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast) (OJ L 204 of 26 July 2006, p. 23).
([2]) Article 27 in conjunction with Article 25 of the Italian Equal treatment code (Legislative Decree of 11 April 2006 n.198).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006412/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la Guardia rurale ausiliaria

La Guardia rurale ausiliaria è un'associazione senza scopo di lucro che svolge la sua attività nel territorio di Roma per fini di pubblica utilità nella salvaguardia e tutela dell'ambiente.

In particolare, l'associazione, con l'ausilio dei propri associati, opera per:

— concorrere alla prevenzione dei danni ecologici, degli incendi, dell'inquinamento delle acque e dell'aria nel rispetto delle leggi sull'ambiente e sull'attività venatoria, ittica, zoofila, agricola e industriale;

— prevenire e denunciare le violazioni delle norme che disciplinano l'attività venatoria e la pesca, nonché la tutela degli animali e la difesa del patrimonio forestale;

— svolgere opera di soccorso pubblico in caso di infortuni a persone o calamità naturali, costituendo un apposito gruppo operante nel campo della Protezione civile;

— organizzare corsi per sensibilizzare i cittadini a rispettare l'ambiente; formare i giovani fin dalla scuola mediante corsi e visite guidate nelle aree di interesse naturalistico, grazie anche all'aiuto degli istituti scolastici;

— effettuare studi, ricerche e organizzare mostre e conferenze per la valorizzazione del patrimonio rurale e ambientale e svolgere ogni attività e iniziativa volta a sensibilizzare tutte le attività rurali.

Premesso che l'Europa è impegnata da sempre nella salvaguardia dell'ambiente, nella conservazione delle risorse e della biodiversità e che il volontariato è uno degli elementi centrali della cittadinanza attiva e delle politiche sociali, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se esistono possibili finanziamenti per la realizzazione delle attività sopra descritte;

2. se è a conoscenza di altre associazioni o reti simili a quella descritta che operano all'interno dell'UE;

3. se vi sono finanziamenti nell'ambito dell'Anno europeo della cittadinanza attiva 2013;

4. se esistono finanziamenti per l'ammodernamento e la informatizzazione della sede operativa dell'associazione;

5. se è in grado di fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(29 agosto 2013)

È possibile ottenere sovvenzioni da parte della Commissione europea nell'ambito di vari programmi ([1]), alcuni dei quali potrebbero interessare la Guardia rurale ausiliaria. Fra l'altro esistono alcune misure fra quelle finanziate a titolo del Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR): ad esempio, formazione, conservazione e riqualificazione del patrimonio rurale.

Nel settore dell'ambiente, tramite il programma LIFE+ si possono sollecitare finanziamenti per progetti riguardanti la tutela della natura, le tecnologie ambientali, la comunicazione e l'informazione ([2]).

Nell'ambito di LIFE+ esiste anche un programma inteso a finanziare i costi di funzionamento per le ONG europee che operano nel settore ambientale ([3]). Tali costi potrebbero comprendere l'ammodernamento e l'informatizzazione degli uffici. Va osservato tuttavia che il programma in questione contempla solo le ONG a livello dell'UE, ossia le organizzazioni il cui lavoro e la cui struttura riguardano almeno tre Stati membri dell'Unione europea.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_it.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ngos/index_en.htm

Esistono probabilmente parecchie associazioni che operano in ambiti simili a quello della Guardia rurale ausiliaria, ma la Commissione non dispone di informazioni atte a individuare tali associazioni e a fornirne l'elenco.

A partire dal 1º gennaio 2014, il programma Erasmus+ sosterrà la cooperazione europea nell'ambito dell'istruzione e della formazione, tra l'altro con progetti volti ad aggiornare i programmi di studio e i metodi di insegnamento o di formazione e a finanziare corsi all'estero, sia per gli studenti che per gli insegnanti. L'insegnamento e la formazione in materia di protezione dell'ambiente possono essere fra le materie scelte dai soggetti interessati a questo genere di cooperazione. Nella guida dell'utilizzatore del programma, in autunno, saranno pubblicate maggiori informazioni.

La dotazione assegnata all'Anno europeo dei cittadini 2013 è limitata e non sono concessi finanziamenti diretti a progetti nell'ambito della linea di bilancio corrispondente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006412/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the Guardia rurale ausiliaria

The Guardia rurale ausiliaria (Rural Auxiliary Guard) is a non-profit association which operates in Rome for purposes of public benefit with regard to environmental conservation and protection.

In particular, with the support of its members, the association works to:

— help prevent ecological damage, fires and water and air pollution in accordance with the laws on the environment and hunting, fishing, animal-protection, farming and industrial activities;

— prevent and report breaches of legislation on hunting, fishing and the protection of animals and forests;

— undertake public rescue operations in the event of accidents or natural disasters, by establishing a dedicated group operating in the field of civil protection;

— organise courses to encourage the public to respect the environment; train young people, starting when they are at school, by means of courses and guided tours in areas of natural interest, thanks also to the assistance of schools;

— carry out studies and research and organise exhibitions and conferences to promote the rural and environmental heritage and undertake activities or initiatives aimed at raising awareness of all rural activities.

Given that Europe has always been committed to the protection of the environment and the conservation of resources and biodiversity, and that volunteering is one of the cornerstones of active citizenship and social policy, can the Commission state:

1. whether any funding is available to carry out the activities described above;

2. whether it is aware of other associations or networks similar to the one described which operate in the EU;

3. whether there is any funding available in the context of the European Year of Active Citizenship (2013);

4. whether there is any funding available for the modernisation and the computerisation of the association's operational headquarters;

5. whether it is able to provide an overview of the situation?

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

European Commission grants can be sought under a number of programmes ([1]), some of which might be of relevance for the Guarida rurale ausiliaria. These include some of the measures financed under European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (e.g. training, conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage).

In the area of the environment, funding for projects on nature conservation, environmental technologies and information and communication is available through the LIFE+ programme ([2]).

A programme for funding for European environmental NGOs to cover their operating costs also exists under LIFE+ ([3]). Such operating costs could include modernisation and computerisation of offices. It should however be noted that only EU level NGOs are targeted by this programme, i.e. organisations whose work and structure cover at minimum of three EU Member States.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ngos/index_en.htm

There is likely to be a number of associations working in similar areas as Guardia rurale ausiliaria, but the Commission does not have any information to be able to identify and list such associations.

As of 1st January 2014, the Erasmus+ Programme will support European cooperation in education and training, including projects which update curricula and teaching or training methods and which support the learning abroad of both students and staff. Teaching and training on environmental protection may be one of the topics chosen by the stakeholders for this type of cooperation. Further details will be published in the programme user's guide this autumn.

The budget allocated to the European Year of Citizens 2013 is limited and no direct funding is granted to projects under the European Year of Citizens' budget line.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006413/13
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Adoção da proposta que altera o regulamento relativo à remoção das barbatanas de tubarões a bordo dos navios [Regulamento (CE) n.° 1185/2003]

A adoção do regulamento sobre a remoção das barbatanas de tubarões nos navios é fortemente prejudicial para a frota de palangre de superfície da UE, comprometendo a sua viabilidade futura ao reduzir a autonomia da embarcação e ao impor custos acrescidos, ou seja, em síntese, ao ditar a diminuição da rentabilidade de cada embarcação. Por isso, dezenas de embarcações abandonarão a atividade provocando perda de postos de trabalho, num setor já muito fragilizado pelas dificuldades que a indústria pesqueira enfrenta atualmente na Europa. O setor envolvido nesta atividade estima um decréscimo dos lucros dos armadores de 50,2 %, correspondendo a um prejuízo anual de 14,24 milhões de euros para a frota ibérica.

Neste contexto dramático, Portugal e Espanha emitiram uma declaração conjunta em que, lamentando a adoção do regulamento, relembram que ele não impede a prática de «finning» pela frota de países terceiros, responsável por 93 % das capturas de tubarões. Sublinha-se que a proibição de remoção das barbatanas a bordo da frota de países terceiros se aplica quase em absoluto à frota de fresco e não à frota congeladora, orientação que também a frota da UE subscreveria. A frota da UE é responsável por apenas 7 % das capturas de tubarões, transforma integralmente as capturas e não pratica «finning», factos que nunca foram desmentidos pela CE, que fundamentou as suas propostas em meras suspeitas.

Perante o exposto pergunto:

— A Comissão está consciente de que a imposição de medidas mais restritivas à frota da UE do que as seguidas a nível mundial afeta inexoravelmente a competitividade do setor europeu? Que medidas extra prevê para apoiar a sustentabilidade da frota de palangre da UE?

— A Comissão está consciente da ineficácia global desta medida de proibição da remoção das barbatanas de tubarões a bordo restrita a apenas 7 % da frota mundial? Como vai promover uma efetiva proibição do «finning» a nível global?

— Justificando a sua proposta com a necessidade de proteção dos tubarões, a Comissão optou pela solução simplicista da proibição da remoção das barbatanas a bordo. Quando vai optar pela solução mais eficaz, e cientificamente exigida, de implementação de um Plano de Ação para os tubarões, que permita a recolha de dados sobre todas as espécies de tubarões capturadas?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(4 de setembro de 2013)

A regra das barbatanas unidas ao corpo, introduzida pelo Parlamento Europeu e pelo Conselho no Regulamento (UE) n.° 605/2013 ([1]), levanta certos desafios a uma parte das frotas, que podem ser superados cortando parcialmente as barbatanas e dobrando-as contra a carcaça, conforme permitido pelo regulamento alterado.

Embora vários países que capturam tubarões não apliquem ainda a regra das barbatanas unidas ao corpo, esta encontra-se em vigor num número significativo e cada vez maior de países. A UE já propôs a adoção desta regra em várias organizações regionais de gestão das pescas (ORGP) responsáveis por pescarias em que pode ocorrer a remoção das barbatanas de tubarões. A Comissão tenciona manter esta orientação nas próximas reuniões das ORGP.

O plano de ação da UE para os tubarões (PAUE tubarões), aplicado desde 2011, conta, entre os seus objetivos, a recolha de dados essenciais para a gestão das unidades populacionais de tubarões. A alteração da proibição da remoção das barbatanas de tubarão, que se inscreve no âmbito do PAUE, permitirá melhorar significativamente a recolha desses dados.

([1]) Regulamento (EU) n.° 605/2013 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 12 de junho de 2013 , que altera o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1185/2003 do Conselho relativo à remoção das barbatanas de tubarões a bordo dos navios (JO L 181 de 29.6.2013, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006413/13
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Adoption of the proposal to amend Council Regulation (EC) No 1185/2003 on the removal of the fins of sharks on board vessels

The adoption of the regulation on removing shark fins on board vessels is highly detrimental to the EU's surface longline fleet. It compromises future viability by reducing vessels' autonomy and imposing higher costs, and thereby reducing vessels' profits. As a result of the regulation, dozens of vessels will abandon the activity, resulting in job losses in a sector already weakened by the difficulties the fishing industry is facing in Europe. The sector estimates that vessel owners' profits have fallen by 50.2%, which corresponds to an annual loss of EUR 14.24 million for the Iberian fleet.

In this dramatic context, Portugal and Spain have issued a joint declaration in which they criticise the adoption of the regulation and warn that it does not prevent 'finning' from being practised by third-country fleets, which are responsible for 93% of shark catches. It is important to note that the ban on removing fins on board third-country fleets applies almost exclusively to the wet-fish fleet and not to the freezer fleet, which the EU fleet would also support. The EU fleet is responsible for only 7% of shark catches, all of which are processed in their entirety, without practising 'finning'. These facts have never been denied by the EC, which has based its proposals on mere suspicion.

— Is the Commission aware that the competitiveness of the European sector will inevitably be affected by the imposition of measures on the EU fleet that are more restrictive than those in force around the world? What extra steps will it take to uphold the sustainability of the EU's longline fleet?

— Is the Commission aware of the global inefficacy of this ban on the removal of shark fins on board, which applies to only 7% of the global fleet? How will it promote an effective ban on 'finning' around the world?

— Citing the need to protect sharks as justification for its proposal, the Commission has opted for the simplistic solution of banning the removal of fins on board. When will it opt for the more effective and scientifically rigorous solution of implementing a shark action plan that will allow data to be gathered on all species of sharks caught?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The fins-naturally-attached rule introduced by the Parliament and the Council via regulation (EU) No 605/2013 ([1]) poses certain challenges to a part of the fleets. These challenges can be addressed by the partial cutting and folding of fins against the carcass, as permitted by the amended Regulation.

Several countries which catch sharks do not yet enforce fins-attached rules, but there are a significant and growing number of countries which have such rules in place. The EU has already proposed the adoption of fins-attached rules in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) which manage fisheries where shark finning could occur. The Commission intends to maintain this course in upcoming RFMO meetings.

The EU Plan of Action for Sharks (EUPOA Sharks) which is implemented since 2011, has among its aims the collection of data which are essential to management of shark stocks. The amendment of the shark finning ban, which falls within the framework of the EUPOA, will significantly enhance the collection of such data.

([1]) OJ 29.6.2013 L181/1 REGULATION (EU) No 605/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 12 June 2013 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1185/2003 on the removal of fins of sharks on board vessels.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006414/13
komissiolle
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE)
(5. kesäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Laivojen ja pienveneiden jätevesien vastaanotto Itämeren satamissa

EU:n Itämeri-strategian päätavoitteita on meren ekologisen tilan parantaminen. Strategiassa tunnustetaan rehevöityminen meren pahimmaksi ympäristöongelmaksi. Itämeri on yksi maailman saastuneimmista meristä.

Rehevöittävien ravinteiden yksi lähde ovat laivojen ja veneiden käymäläjätteet. Joissakin Itämeren satamissa on valmius ottaa ne vastaan, monissa satamissa ei. Tämä koskee sekä suuria risteilyaluksia että pienempiä huviveneitä. Mahdollisuus tyhjentää laivojen ja pienveneiden jätevedet satamissa vastaanottoon, josta ne johdetaan asianmukaiseen jäteveden puhdistukseen, on tärkeää sekä meren ravinne- että mikrobikuormituksen vähentämiseksi.

Mitä komissio aikoo tehdä laivojen ja veneiden jätevesien vastaanoton kehittämiseksi Itämeren satamissa?

Siim Kallasin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(25. heinäkuuta 2013)

Kansainvälisellä tasolla alusten jätteen ja rahtijätteen huoltoa säännellään MARPOL-yleissopimuksella, jossa määrätään, millaisia jätteitä voidaan laillisesti mereen laskea ja millaisin edellytyksin. Sopimuksessa edellytetään niin ikään, että osapuolilla on satamissa asianmukaiset jätteen vastaanottolaitokset sellaisille jätteille ja jäännöksille, joita ei saa laskea mereen. Nämä vaatimukset on saatettu osaksi EU:n lainsäädäntöä aluksella syntyvän jätteen ja lastijäämien vastaanottolaitteista satamissa annetulla direktiivillä 2000/59/EY ([1]).

EU:n satamien on pantava täytäntöön jätteen vastaanotto- ja käsittelysuunnitelmat, joilla varmistetaan, että satamien vastaanottolaitosten tekniset ja operatiiviset ominaisuudet ovat asianmukaiset. Komissio tutkii tapaukset, joissa niiden epäillään olevan puutteellisia, ja käynnistää tarvittaessa rikkomista koskevan menettelyn. Se, että satamissa on jätteiden vastaanottolaitokset, kannustaa aluksia toimittamaan satamaan myös sellaiset jätteet, esimerkiksi jätevedet, jotka ne voivat laillisesti päästää mereen.

Itämerellä näiden järjestelyjen katsottiin olevan riittämättömiä. Itämeren rantavaltiot toimivat (Helsingin komission "HELCOM" välityksellä) kansainvälisellä tasolla tavoitteena Itämeren nimeäminen vuonna 2011 jätevesien päästöjen suhteen erityisalueeksi, jossa matkustaja-alusten edellytetään joko käsittelevän jätevetensä ravinteiden poistamiseksi tai toimittavan jätevedet sataman vastaanottolaitoksiin. Komissio osallistui omasta aloitteestaan sataman vastaanottolaitoksia Itämerellä käsittelevään HELCOMin yhteistyöfoorumiin muiden keskeisten sidosryhmien (satamat, laivaliikenteen harjoittajat, viranomaiset, kunnalliset jäteveden käsittelylaitokset) ohella. Vuonna 2013 komissio osallistui Euroopan meriturvallisuusviraston edustamana tilapäisten suuntaviivojen laatimiseen teknisistä ja operatiivisista näkökohdista, jotka koskevat jätevesien toimittamista satamien vastaanottolaitoksiin. Komissio aikoo jatkaa tämän prosessin seuraamista.

([1]) EYVL L 332, 28.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006414/13
to the Commission
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Reception of sewage from ships and small boats at Baltic seaports

One of the main aims of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is to improve the ecological status of the sea. Eutrophication is, according to the strategy, recognised to be one of the sea's worst environmental problems. The Baltic is one of the world's most polluted seas.

One source of the nutrients which cause eutrophication is the waste water from ships' and boats' toilets. Some Baltic seaports are equipped to receive this sewage, but many others are not. The problem is caused by both large cruise liners and smaller pleasure craft. It is important that ships and small boats should be able to empty their waste water into port receiving tanks, from where it can be piped to a proper sewage treatment plant; in this way the seawater nutrient and microbial load can be reduced.

What action will the Commission take with a view to developing reception facilities for ship and boat sewage at Baltic seaports?

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

At international level the management of ships' waste and cargo residues is regulated by the MARPOL convention that sets out what type of waste and residues can be legally discharged at sea and under what conditions. It also requires Parties to provide adequate Port Reception Facilities (PRF) for waste and residues not allowed to be discharged at sea. Directive 2000/59/EC on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste and cargo residues ([1]) brings these latter requirements into EC law.

EU ports must implement Waste Reception and Handling plans to ensure that the technical and operational features of PRF are adequate. The Commission analyses cases of alleged inadequacies and launches infringment procedures if necessary. PRF create an incentive on ships to also deliver the waste they are allowed to discharge legally at sea, such as sewage.

In the Baltic Sea this regime was not deemed sufficient. The riparian States (through the Helsinki Commission 'Helcom') acted at international level to obtain in 2011 the designation of the Baltic Sea as a special area for sewage discharges: passenger ships will be required either to treat sewage to remove nutrients prior to discharge or to deliver it to PRF. In this context the Commission volunteered to participate in the Helcom Cooperation Platform on PRF in the Baltic Sea, along with other key stakeholders (ports, ship operators, administrations, municipal wastewater treatment plants). In 2013, the Commission, represented by the European Maritime Safety Agency, contributed to drafting ad hoc guidelines on technical and operational aspects of sewage delivery in PRF. The Commission will continue to follow this process.

([1]) OJ L 332, 28.12.2000.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-006415/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(5 juni 2013)

Betreft: Vervolgvragen benoeming tabakslobbyist in Ethisch Comité Commissie

De heer Barroso schrijft in zijn antwoord op mijn eerdere vragen (E-000016/2013) dat „bij de door het geachte parlementslid aangehaalde zaak (lees: „Dalligate") geen leden van de AHEC betrokken zijn". Dit is pertinent onjuist. De heer Petite is op dit moment AHEC-lid en in diverse mediaberichten is overduidelijk aangetoond dat hij betrokken was c.q. is bij Dalligate ([1]). Artikel 4 van de „Commission decision on establishing the Ad Hoc Ethical Committee" (AHEC) stelt dat het aanstellen van een lid vereist dat hij of zij onafhankelijk en van onbesproken professioneel gedrag is, en uiteraard over de nodige professionele bagage voor het werk beschikt. Met name aan die eerste twee vereisten voldoet de heer Petite, gezien de publiciteit van de afgelopen maanden en het recente OLAF-rapport (OF/2012/0617), niet.

In dat kader de volgende vervolgvragen:

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven of zij nog steeds volhardt in haar standpunt dat de heer Petite op geen enkele wijze betrokken was c.q. is bij Dalligate?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven of zij volhardt in haar mening dat de heer Petite „van onbesproken professioneel gedrag en volstrekt onafhankelijk" was c.q. is inzake Dalligate en zijn huidige AHEC-lidmaatschap?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe zij het lid zijn van AHEC en tegelijkertijd advocaat zijn bij Clifford Chance van de heer Petite als goed verenigbaar kan beschouwen en als „volledig onafhankelijk handelen" kan betitelen?

4. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat het zo langzamerhand de hoogste tijd is om de heer Petite te verzoeken per direct te bedanken als lid van AHEC?

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(31 juli 2013)

1. De heer Petite was niet betrokken bij het besluit van OLAF om een onderzoek te starten, noch bij de uitvoering van het onderzoek of bij de beslissing van de heer Dalli om ontslag te nemen. Als voormalig directeur-generaal van de Commissie heeft hij in maart 2012 de secretaris-generaal van de Commissie opgebeld om haar in kennis te stellen van de beschuldigingen die Swedish Match hem had meegedeeld. Swedish Match had hem gevraagd hoe deze informatie onder de aandacht van de Commissie kon worden gebracht. Deze aanpak was correct en is niet in strijd met zijn rol als lid van de ethische commissie ad hoc (AHEC).

2. Ja.

3. De leden van de ethische commissie ad hoc handelen volledig onafhankelijk en dragen bij tot de analyses en adviezen van de commissie. Er bestaat geen verband of overlapping tussen de werkzaamheden van de commissie en het beroep van advocaat.

4. Neen.

([1]) http://corporateeurope.org/news/olafs-leaked-dalligate-report-underlines-need-end-tobacco-lobbyist-role-eu-ethics-adviser
Citaat: „Mr. Petite is the former head of the Commission's Legal Service who went through the revolving door to work for Clifford Chance, a lobbying-law-firm with corporate clients such as tobacco giant Phillip Morris. OLAF's investigation report on the case around ex-Commissioner Dalli, leaked last week, has provided further evidence on Petite's work for the tobacco industry. The report shows that Petite had a central role in the events that led to Dalli's forced resignation (under yet to be clarified circumstances, following bribery accusations) in mid-October 2012. Petite assisted tobacco company Swedish Match in submitting the complaint that triggered the OLAF investigation into the Dalli case, using his access to the Commission's Secretary-General Catherine Day, a former colleague at the European Commission. It had previously been revealed that Mr Petite held meetings with his former colleagues in the Legal Service to advise on the EU's Tobacco Products Directive, whilst having tobacco company Phillip Morris International as a client. Petite's work for Swedish Match (and Phillip Morris) creates serious conflicts of interest that make his membership of the ad hoc ethical committee politically untenable.".

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006415/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Follow-up questions concerning the appointment of a tobacco lobbyist to the European's Ethical Committee (AHEC)

Mr Barroso writes in his answer to my previous question (E-000016/2013) that 'No member of this Committee is concerned by the case mentioned by the honourable member (i.e. by "Dalligate").' This is quite clearly wrong. Mr Petite is currently a member of AHEC and various reports in the media have made it perfectly clear that he was or is involved in Dalligate ([1]). Article 4 of the Commission decision establishing the Ad Hoc Ethical Committee (AHEC) stipulates that a member may only be appointed if he is completely independent, has an impeccable record of professional behaviour and of course has a sound and appropriate professional background. The publicity in recent months and the recent OLAF report (OF/2012/0617) make it clear that Mr Petite does not comply with the first two requirements in particular.

1. Can the Commission indicate whether it still stands by its position that Mr Petite has not been involved in Dalligate in any way?

2. Can the Commission indicate whether it still stands by its position that Mr Petite had/has 'an impeccable record of professional behaviour and was/is completely independent' with regard to Dalligate and his current membership of AHEC?

3. Can the Commission indicate how it can regard Mr Petite's membership of AHEC and simultaneous holding of the post of a lawyer at Clifford Chance as being compatible with each other and can describe him as acting completely independently?

4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it is high time to ask Mr Petite to resign from AHEC immediately?

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

1. Mr Petite played no role in the decision of OLAF to launch an investigation, the conduct of the investigation, or Mr Dalli's decision to resign. As a former Director-General of the Commission, he phoned the Secretary-General of the Commission in May 2012 to inform her about allegations which Swedish Match communicated to him. Swedish Match had asked him how to bring the information to the attention of the Commission. This approach was correct and does not conflict with his role as a member of the Ad hoc Ethical Committee.

2. Yes.

3. Members of the Ad hoc Ethical Committee act with full independence and contribute to the Committee's analysis and opinions. There is no connection, nor interference between the Committee's proceedings and the professional activity as a lawyer.

4. No.

([1]) http://corporateeurope.org/news/olafs-leaked-dalligate-report-underlines-need-end-tobacco-lobbyist-role-eu-ethics-adviser
Quote: 'Mr Petite is the former head of the Commission's Legal Service who went through the revolving door to work for Clifford Chance, a lobbying-law-firm with corporate clients such as tobacco giant Phillip Morris. OLAF's investigation report on the case around ex-Commissioner Dalli, leaked last week, has provided further evidence on Petite's work for the tobacco industry. The report shows that Petite had a central role in the events that led to Dalli's forced resignation (under yet to be clarified circumstances, following bribery accusations) in mid-October 2012. Petite assisted tobacco company Swedish Match in submitting the complaint that triggered the OLAF investigation into the Dalli case, using his access to the Commission's Secretary-General Catherine Day, a former colleague at the European Commission. It had previously been revealed that Mr Petite held meetings with his former colleagues in the Legal Service to advise on the EU's Tobacco Products Directive, whilst having tobacco company Phillip Morris International as a client. Petite's work for Swedish Match (and Phillip Morris) creates serious conflicts of interest that make his membership of the ad hoc ethical committee politically untenable.'.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006416/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Establecimiento de un organismo presupuestario independiente en España

En el marco del Semestre Europeo, la Comisión Europea presentó la semana pasada una Recomendación para que el Consejo adopte una «Recomendación relativa al Programa Nacional de Reforma 2013 de España y por la que se emite un dictamen del Consejo sobre el Programa de Estabilidad de España para 2012-2016».

En la Recomendación Específica número 1, entre otros aspectos, se pide a España «establecer un organismo (autoridad, en su versión inglesa) presupuestario independiente antes del final de 2013 que proporcione análisis y asesoramiento y supervise la conformidad de la política presupuestaria con las normas presupuestarias nacionales y de la UE».

El establecimiento de una autoridad independiente reitera casi literalmente el contenido de las Recomendaciones Específicas aprobadas por el Consejo en 2012 que, en aquel momento, el Consejo no incorporó como una de las tareas del nuevo organismo la estimación «de los efectos de la legislación propuesta sobre el presupuesto» tal y como recomendaba la Comisión.

¿Puede la Comisión detallar qué criterios y requisitos (establecimiento, adscripción, nombramientos y composición, organización, funcionamiento, financiación, código de conducta, etc.) considera esenciales para asegurar la «independencia» de la autoridad recomendada?

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

Se remite a Su Señoría a las disposiciones del paquete de dos instrumentos legislativos relativos a la reforma (*Two-Pack*), y en concreto al Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 2013, sobre disposiciones comunes para el seguimiento y la evaluación de los proyectos de planes presupuestarios y para la corrección del déficit excesivo de los Estados miembros de la zona del euro ([1]). Este Reglamento, que entró en vigor el 30 de mayo de 2013, requiere que los Estados miembros basen sus proyectos de presupuesto en previsiones macroeconómicas independientes y cuenten con organismos independientes de las autoridades presupuestarias que hayan sido creados con la misión de supervisar el cumplimiento de la normativa fiscal nacional.

El artículo 2, apartado 1, letra a), del Reglamento 473/2013 define los organismos independientes como organismos estructuralmente independientes u organismos dotados de autonomía funcional con respecto a las autoridades presupuestarias del Estado miembro, que estén basados en disposiciones normativas nacionales que garanticen un nivel elevado de autonomía funcional y responsabilidad, en particular: i) un régimen jurídico basado en disposiciones legales, reglamentarias o administrativas nacionales de carácter vinculante, ii) prohibición de aceptar instrucciones de las autoridades presupuestarias del Estado miembro o de cualquier otro organismo público o privado, iii) capacidad para comunicar información públicamente y a su debido tiempo, iv) procedimientos de nombramiento de sus miembros sobre la base de su experiencia y competencia, v) recursos suficientes y acceso adecuado a la información para llevar a cabo el mandato conferido.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:140:0011:0023:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006416/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Establishment of an independent fiscal authority in Spain

Within the framework of the European Semester, last week the European Commission presented a recommendation for a Council 'Recommendation on Spain's 2013 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Spain's stability programme for 2012-2016'.

The first specific recommendation calls on Spain, *inter alia*, to 'establish an independent fiscal authority before the end of 2013 to provide analysis, advice and monitor compliance of fiscal policy with national and EU fiscal rules'.

The call for an independent authority repeats almost word-for-word the content of the specific recommendations approved by the Council in 2012. At that time, the Council did not incorporate the Commission's recommendation that one of the new body's tasks be 'to estimate the budgetary impact of proposed legislation'.

In the Commission's view, what criteria and requirements (establishment, assignment, appointment and composition, organisation, functioning, financing, code of conduct, etc.) are essential to ensure the 'independence' of the recommended authority?

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

The Honourable Member is referred to the provisions of the so-called Two-Pack reform package, more specifically to Regulation (EU) No 473/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on common provisions for monitoring and assessing draft budgetary plans and ensuring the correction of excessive deficit of the Member States in the euro area ([1]). The regulation, which entered into force on 30 May 2013, requires Member States to base their draft budgets on independent macroeconomic forecasts and to have in place bodies that are independent from the budgetary authorities to monitor compliance with national fiscal rules.

Article 2(1)(a) of Regulation 473/2013 defines independent bodies as bodies that are structurally independent or endowed with functional autonomy vis-à-vis the budgetary authorities of the Member State, and which are underpinned by national legal provisions ensuring a high degree of functional autonomy and accountability, including:(i) a statutory regime grounded in national laws, regulations or binding administrative provisions; (ii) not taking instructions from the budgetary authorities of the Member State concerned or from any other public or private body; (iii) the capacity to communicate publicly in a timely manner; (iv) procedures for nominating members on the basis of their experience and competence; (v) adequate resources and appropriate access to information to carry out their mandate.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:140:0011:0023:EN:PDF

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006417/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Beneficios de las compañías eléctricas y precio de la electricidad

El margen de beneficio de las compañías eléctricas españolas es del doble del de las compañías europeas. En 2010, el margen de beneficio de las eléctricas españolas fue del 10,11 %, mientras que para las europeas fue del 5,13 %. En 2011, el margen de beneficio de las eléctricas españolas fue del 7,44 %, mientras que para las europeas fue del 2,98 %. En 2012, el margen de beneficio de las eléctricas españolas fue del 6,78 %, mientras que para las europeas fue del 2,62 %. Las previsiones de los analistas para 2013 sitúan los márgenes de beneficio en el 6,23 % para las españolas y en el 3,49 % para las europeas.

De hecho, desde el estallido de la crisis, los márgenes del sector en las grandes empresas europeas han ido retrocediendo con fuerza a ritmos de doble dígito anual, mientras que en España estos márgenes aumentaron en 2008 y apenas cayeron en los ejercicios de 2010 y 2012.

El precio de la electricidad en España para el sector doméstico es el tercero más caro de la Unión Europea antes de impuestos, de 0,179 €/KWh.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de las diferencias existentes entre el margen de beneficios de las eléctricas españolas y las europeas?

¿Ha analizado la Comisión a qué se debe esta diferencia? ¿Qué opinión tiene al respecto?

¿Cree la Comisión que hay alguna relación entre el hecho de que el precio de la electricidad en España sea el tercero más caro de la UE y los beneficios de las eléctricas españolas sean el doble de las de la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de julio de 2013)

Las diferencias existentes entre los márgenes de beneficios de las compañías eléctricas españolas y los de las compañías europeas parecen deberse sobre todo a la política de diversificación de actividades y de internacionalización desarrollada por las compañías españolas.

Desde la liberalización del sector eléctrico español en 1998, las compañías eléctricas españolas han diversificado su actividad comercial tradicional invirtiendo en actividades no relacionadas con la electricidad en España (por ejemplo, telecomunicaciones, consultoría, ingeniería, construcción, etc.) y en el extranjero, principalmente en los Estados Unidos y América Latina. Los beneficios antes de intereses e impuestos (EBIT) de las cinco mayores compañías españolas de electricidad representan, en el segmento eléctrico, el 41 % (16 % generación y suministro, y 25 % distribución). El resto procede de actividades comerciales no relacionadas con la electricidad y actividades internacionales ([1]). Los márgenes de beneficios registrados en las actividades tradicionales parecen haber disminuido en España un 37 % en 2011 respecto a 2010 (de 4 855 millones de euros a 3 063 millones de euros) ([2]).

La rentabilidad de las compañías eléctricas españolas se ve influida también por diferentes intervenciones estatales a nivel minorista (precios regulados) y de generación de energía. La Comisión colabora con las autoridades españolas a fin de mejorar el funcionamiento del mercado eléctrico español, garantizando que el apoyo estatal a la generación de energía, que afecta a la factura energética final, se conceda únicamente cuando sea necesario, proporcionado y rentable.

([1]) Fuente UNESA «Informe Eléctrico y Memoria Eléctrica 2011». UNESA es la asociación de las mayores compañías eléctricas españolas: Endesa, Iberdrola, Gas Natural-Fenosa, HC Energía y E.On España.
([2]) Fuente UNESA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006417/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Profits of electricity companies and price of electricity

The profit margin of Spanish electricity companies is twice that of European companies. In 2010, it totalled 10.11%, while the European average was 5.13%. In 2011, it amounted to 7.44%, compared with a European average of 2.98%. In 2012, it was 6.78%, but only 2.62% for Europe as a whole. Analysts predict that for 2013 the profit margin will be approximately 6.23% for Spanish companies and 3.49% for European companies.

In fact, since the start of the crisis the margins of large European companies in this sector have seen dramatic double-digit decreases year on year, while in Spain the same margins rose in 2008 and barely dipped in 2010 and 2012.

The price of electricity in Spain for the domestic sector is the third highest in the European Union before tax, at EUR 0.179/kWh.

Is the Commission aware of the difference between the profit margins of Spanish and European electricity companies?

Has the Commission analysed the reasons for this difference? What is its opinion on this matter?

Does the Commission believe that there is any connection between the fact that the price of electricity in Spain is the third highest in the EU and the fact that the profits of Spanish electricity companies are double those of the EU average?

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

The different profit margins of Spanish and other European electricity companies appear to be mainly due to the policy of diversification of activities and internationalization that the Spanish companies have developed.

Since the liberalisation of the Spanish electricity sector in 1998 the Spanish electricity companies have diversified their traditional business investing in non-electricity activities in Spain (e.g. gas, telecommunication, consultancy, engineering, construction) and abroad mainly in the EU and Latin America. Of Spain's five largest electricity companies the EBIT (earnings before interest and taxes) in the electricity segment represent 41% (16% generation and supply and 25% distribution). The remainder stems from the non-electricity and international business streams ([1]). Profits in the traditional activities in Spain seem to have decreased by 37% in 2011 compared to 2010 (from EUR 4.855 million to EUR 3.063 million) ([2]).

The profitability of electricity companies in Spain is also influenced by various state interventions at retail (regulated prices) and power generation level. The Commission is working together with the Spanish authorities in order to enhance the functioning of the Spanish electricity market by ensuring that government support for power generation, which affects the final energy bill, is only granted where it is necessary, proportionate and cost efficient.

([1]) Source UNESA 'Informe Eléctrico y Memoria Eléctrica 2011'. UNESA is the association of the largest electricity companies in Spain: Endesa, Iberdrola, Gas Natural-Fenosa, HC Energia, E.On Espana.

([2]) Source UNESA.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006418/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Turismo para grupos desfavorecidos

En el informe del Parlamento Europeo «Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo: un nuevo marco político para el turismo europeo», en su disposición sexagésimo tercera, se habla de la promoción del acceso al turismo vacacional para los grupos desfavorecidos, como las personas de más edad, las personas con discapacidad, los jóvenes y las familias con bajos ingresos, especialmente durante la temporada baja y en los viajes a través de las fronteras nacionales.

¿Qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión a este respecto?

¿Se incluye en este concepto de accesibilidad la prestación de servicios de información *online* totalmente adaptados a aquellos colectivos, tales como los de discapacidad, tercera edad y demás, que requieran un cambio o adaptación en la disposición habitual de los contenidos?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión ya ha realizado grandes esfuerzos por facilitar y fomentar los intercambios turísticos transnacionales para las personas desfavorecidas, en particular en temporada baja. La iniciativa «Calypso» ([1]), que se puso en marcha en 2009, tiene por objeto permitir viajar a destinos europeos a las personas que normalmente no pueden hacerlo, con lo que también se ayuda a las economías locales a luchar contra la estacionalidad. La iniciativa se centra en cuatro grupos destinatarios: jóvenes desfavorecidos; familias que se enfrentan a dificultades económicas o de otro tipo; personas con discapacidad; personas mayores de 65 años y pensionistas que no pueden permitirse viajar. En este contexto, se han cofinanciado hasta ahora varios proyectos para facilitar la creación de redes Calypso entre las autoridades públicas, así como para facilitar los intercambios transnacionales de temporada baja en Europa a través del desarrollo del turismo social. En 2013, se publicó una convocatoria de propuestas ([2]) que se centraba fundamentalmente en facilitar los viajes de personas mayores fuera de temporada mediante paquetes turísticos transnacionales específicos y asociaciones entre el sector público y el privado.

Con el fin de facilitar el acceso a la información en línea, la «iniciativa Calypso» también ha apoyado la creación de una plataforma web Calypso para promover el turismo social en toda la UE, para facilitar la conexión entre la oferta y la demanda turísticas fuera de temporada y para aumentar los flujos turísticos en temporada baja ([3]).

La Comisión también está apoyando medidas específicas de accesibilidad turística en el marco de la acción preparatoria «Turismo accesible para todos» ([4]), que aspira a reforzar la concienciación sobre la cuestión de la accesibilidad en el ámbito del turismo. Esta iniciativa integrará la accesibilidad en la cadena de suministro del turismo, en beneficio de las personas con discapacidad, de los viajeros de edad avanzada y de las personas con discapacidades temporales.

([1]) «Calypso» se puso en marcha como una acción preparatoria de tres años en 2009. Desde 2012, las acciones relativas a Calypso se cofinancian con recursos adecuados en el contexto del Programa para la Iniciativa Empresarial y la Innovación. Puede obtenerse más información sobre la iniciativa Calypso en: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/calypso/index_es.htm

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index_es.htm

([3]) Puede obtenerse más información sobre la plataforma e-Calypso en: http://www.ecalypso.eu/steep/public/index.jsf

([4]) Para más información: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/accessibility/index_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006418/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Tourism for disadvantaged people

In the European Parliament's report entitled 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe', paragraph 63 calls for disadvantaged people, such as the elderly, people with disabilities, young people and low-income families, to have easier access to holidays, particularly during the low season and when travelling across national borders.

What measures is the Commission planning in this regard?

Does this concept of accessibility include the provision of online information services that are fully tailored to those groups, including people with disabilities, the elderly and others, who require the usual content layout to be modified or adapted?

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

The Commission has already deployed extensive efforts to facilitate and encourage transnational tourism exchanges for disadvantaged people, particularly in the low season. The 'Calypso' initiative ([1]), launched in 2009, aims to allow people who cannot usually do so to travel to European destinations, while at the same time helping local economies combat seasonality. The initiative focuses on four target groups: underprivileged young adults, families facing financial or other pressures, people with disabilities, over-65s and pensioners who cannot afford travel. In this context, several projects have been co-financed so far to facilitate the setting up of Calypso networks between public authorities, as well as to facilitate transnational low season exchanges in Europe through the development of social tourism. In 2013, a call for proposals ([2]) was published focusing primarily on the facilitation of off-season senior travel through dedicated transnational tourism packages and targeted public-private partnerships.

In order to facilitate online information access, the 'Calypso' initiative also supported the setup of a Calypso web platform to promote social tourism across the EU, to facilitate the connection between the off-season tourism demand and offer and to increase cross boarder tourism flows in the low season ([3]).

The Commission is also supporting dedicated tourism accessibility measures in the context of the preparatory action 'Tourism Accessibility for All' ([4]) which aims to develop a better awareness of accessibility in tourism. The initiative will mainstream accessibility in the tourism supply chain for the benefit of people with disability, for elderly travellers, and people with temporary impairments.

([1]) 'Calypso' was launched as a three-year preparatory action in 2009. Since 2012, Calypso-related actions are co-financed with appropriate resources under the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP). For more information on the CALYPSO initiative: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/calypso/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index_en.htm
([3]) For more information on the e-Calypso platform: http://www.ecalypso.eu/steep/public/index.jsf
([4]) For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/accessibility/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006419/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Suspensión de las prestaciones de desempleo por viajar al extranjero

El Tribunal Supremo español ha avalado, en una sentencia que unifica doctrina, que los beneficiarios de prestaciones por desempleo puedan viajar al extranjero hasta 90 días sin perder el derecho a cobrar el paro, aunque el pago quedará suspendido hasta su regreso al país. El Supremo considera que la normativa es compleja y ha dado lugar a diversidad de supuestos litigiosos, ante lo que ha decidido unificar las distintas soluciones que corresponde aplicar en cada caso, para lo que se basa en una sentencia propia del 22 de noviembre de 2011 que distingue entre prestación mantenida, suspendida y extinguida. La novedad respecto a lo establecido en la ley está en el supuesto de la suspensión, que se podrá aplicar cuando se produzca un desplazamiento al extranjero de menos de 90 días, plazo que el Supremo justifica en que se trata del periodo establecido en la legislación de extranjería para determinar el paso de la estancia a la residencia temporal. Ni la sentencia ni la actual ley española diferencian entre viajar a países de la UE o países del resto del mundo.

¿Considera la Comisión que la actual legislación española respeta la libre circulación de personas y trabajadores contemplada en los artículo 21 y 45 del TFUE?

¿Considera la Comisión que, ante la actual situación de éxodo de trabajadores y trabajadores en busca de trabajo en el extranjero, la suspensión de las prestaciones se ajusta a la nueva realidad social?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de julio de 2013)

La sentencia del Tribunal Supremo español de 13 de diciembre de 2012 y la legislación española sobre la suspensión de las prestaciones por desempleo a las que se refiere Su Señoría no contemplan el supuesto de las personas desempleadas que salen de España para buscar trabajo en otro Estado miembro, sino el de las personas desempleadas que salen de España por otros motivos. La legislación nacional sobre las prestaciones por desempleo normalmente exige a las personas desempleadas que estén disponibles para trabajar y que busquen trabajo de manera activa. Esta condición, que no es contraria al Derecho de la Unión, deja de cumplirse si alguien sale del país, por ejemplo, para cuidar a un pariente enfermo.

Con arreglo al artículo 64 del Reglamento (CE) n° 883/2004, sobre la coordinación de los sistemas de seguridad social, la persona desempleada en un Estado miembro que se desplace a otro Estado miembro para buscar trabajo conservará su derecho a percibir las prestaciones por desempleo en determinadas condiciones y durante un período de, al menos, tres meses, y la posibilidad de prorrogarlo hasta un máximo de seis. Este derecho prevalece sobre la legislación nacional y también pueden acogerse a él las personas desempleadas españolas que busquen trabajo en otro Estado miembro de la UE. En esos casos, no se suspende su derecho a percibir las prestaciones por desempleo.

Por el motivo expuesto, la Comisión no considera que la legislación española sobre la suspensión de las prestaciones y la sentencia en cuestión sean contrarias al Derecho de la UE, sino que reflejan la obligación de los beneficiarios de las prestaciones por desempleo de buscar trabajo de manera activa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006419/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Suspending unemployment benefits for foreign travel

In a judgment that unifies previous doctrine, Spain's Supreme Court has ruled that people who receive unemployment benefit can travel abroad for up to 90 days without losing their right to that benefit, although payment will be suspended until they return to the country. The Court felt that the rules were complex and had resulted in a host of lawsuits, so it decided to unify the various solutions applied in each case, on the basis of a ruling of 22 November 2011 in which it distinguishes between benefits that are maintained, suspended or expired. The new element in relation to existing legislation is the suspension that can be applied when a person travels abroad for up to 90 days, which, according to the Court, is the period laid down in the legislation on aliens after which one is considered to be a temporary resident rather than a visitor. Neither the ruling nor current Spanish law differentiates between travel to EU countries or countries in the rest of the world.

Does the Commission believe that Spain's current legislation respects the free movement of persons and workers, enshrined in Articles 21 and 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?

Does the Commission believe that, in light of the current exodus of workers seeking jobs abroad, the suspension of benefits is in line with the new social reality?

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

The judgment of the Spanish Supreme Court of 13/12/2012 and the Spanish legislation on the suspension of unemployment benefits the Honourable Member refers to does not deal with an unemployed person who is leaving Spain in order to look for work in another Member State, but with an unemployed person who is leaving Spain for other reasons. The national legislation on unemployment benefits normally requires that an unemployed person must be available for work and actively seeking work. This condition, which is not contrary to Union law, is no longer fulfilled if someone leaves the country, for example, for the purpose of looking after a sick relative.

Article 64 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems provides a right to any unemployed person in a Member State to seek employment in another Member State and to retain, under certain conditions, his or her right to unemployment benefit for a period of at least three and possibly up to six months. This right takes precedence over national law and can also be used by Spanish unemployed persons who are looking for a job in another EU Member State. In such a case, their entitlement to unemployment benefit is not suspended.

For these reasons, the Commission does not think that the Spanish legislation on suspension of benefits and the judgment in question are at variance with Union law. They reflect the requirement that recipients of unemployment benefits be actively seeking work.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006420/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, igualdad de género

El pasado 29 de mayo, el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un importante ataque a los derechos sociales que tendrán un especial efecto sobre la igualdad de género en España, suponiendo una violación del Tratado de la Unión Europea.

Muchas autoridades académicas han expresado su preocupación por el impacto que las recomendaciones que formula la Unión Europea sobre los Estados miembros tendrían en la igualdad de género. Las recomendaciones, que elabora la Comisión Europea y aprueba el Consejo, incorporan objetivos de política económica que producen unos efectos de precarización de la mano de obra femenina, así como la feminización de la pobreza, que son prácticamente innegables. Sin embargo, las recomendaciones de este año continúan impulsando la reforma del mercado laboral que, desde el pasado año, ha producido un millón más de desempleados y un fuerte impacto económico en las mujeres.

El impacto en la población femenina es doble: por una parte, existe un impacto directo a través de la pérdida de empleos y salarios en el sector público, donde una amplia mayoría de los trabajadores son mujeres. El otro impacto es de carácter indirecto y supone el retorno de la mujer a la esfera privada de los cuidados, una esfera en que la mujer vuelve a encontrarse sin remuneración alguna, y que encierra a muchas mujeres en una situación de discriminación. La pérdida de prestaciones de los servicios públicos supone que alguien se debe hacer cargo en la esfera privada. Esta carga de trabajo recae mayoritariamente en las mujeres, suponiendo una carga de trabajo adicional. Estos dos innegables efectos sobre las mujeres desequilibran los tenues avances que se habían dado en el país en materia de igualdad de género, pero lo más grave es que se hacen bajo la recomendación de unas instituciones en virtud de cuyo tratado fundacional se debe proteger la igualdad de género.

¿Cuáles son las estimaciones que maneja el Consejo sobre el efecto que sus recomendaciones surten para la igualdad entre hombres y mujeres?

A la luz de la evidencia existente sobre la feminización de la pobreza y la discriminación laboral de la mujer, ¿considera que las recomendaciones a España cambiarán las tendencias en dichos fenómenos?

¿Considera que está incumpliendo los artículos 2, 3, apartado 3, 6, 8 y 10 del TUE cuando recomienda medidas que incrementarán la brecha social entre hombres y mujeres?

Respuesta
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

El 29 de mayo de 2013, la Comisión presentó al Consejo una Recomendación de Recomendación del Consejo relativa al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España y por la que se emite un dictamen del Consejo sobre el Programa de Estabilidad de España para 2012-2016 ([1]).

El Consejo Europeo refrendó en líneas generales las recomendaciones específicas por país dirigidas a los Estados miembros en su sesión de 27 y 28 de junio de 2013, dando así por concluido el Semestre Europeo ([2]). El Consejo adoptó estas recomendaciones el 9 de julio de 2013.

En sus conclusiones sobre «Igualdad de los sexos: potenciar el crecimiento y el empleo — Contribución a la Estrategia de Lisboa post 2010», adoptadas en la sesión de 30 de noviembre y 1 de diciembre de 2009, el Consejo destacó la importancia de la integración del factor de igualdad de los sexos en el conjunto de las políticas, así como la importancia de todo ello dentro del contexto de la Estrategia Europa 2020 ([3]).

En sus conclusiones de 7 de marzo de 2011 sobre el Pacto Europeo por la Igualdad de Género (2011-2020) ([4]), el Consejo recalcó su compromiso de cumplir las ambiciones de la UE en materia de igualdad de género que figuran en el Tratado.

([1]) 10025/13.
([2]) EUCO 104/2/13, p. 4.
([3]) 15488/09.
([4]) DO C 155 de 25.5.2011, p. 10.

Asimismo, en sus conclusiones sobre el Examen de la aplicación de la Plataforma de Acción de Pekín — Mujer y economía: conciliación de la vida familiar y laboral como condición para la participación igualitaria en el mercado laboral, adoptadas el 1 de diciembre de 2011, el Consejo también puso de relieve la importancia de la conciliación de la vida familiar y laboral, recalcando que *«la participación igualitaria de mujeres y hombres en la vida familiar y laboral es condición previa para la realización en la práctica de la igualdad entre hombres y mujeres, para movilizar todo el potencial de la población activa de la UE, para hacer frente a la escasez prevista de trabajadores cualificados y para cumplir dos de los objetivos principales establecidos en el marco de la Estrategia Europa 2020, a saber, el de incrementar hasta el 75 % la tasa de empleo de las mujeres y los hombres de entre 20 y 64 años, y el de liberar del riesgo de pobreza y de exclusión social a 20 millones de personas como mínimo, así como para enfrentarse a los retos demográficos»*. El Consejo ha reconocido también que *«las mujeres siguen asumiendo una parte desproporcionada de la carga en lo que respecta al cuidado de los hijos y la atención a otras personas dependientes»* ([5]).

Recuérdese que la propia Estrategia Europa 2020 contiene un objetivo de empleo que se aplica específicamente a ambos sexos, a saber, *«procurar llegar a un índice de ocupación del 75 % de los hombres y mujeres con edades comprendidas entre los 20 y los 64 años, incrementando la participación de los jóvenes, los trabajadores de mayor edad y los trabajadores con bajas cualificaciones, e integrando mejor a los inmigrantes en situación regular»* ([6]).

Recuerden Sus Señorías que la aplicación de las recomendaciones específicas por país adoptadas por el Consejo entran dentro de las competencia de los propios Estados miembros. A la vista del explícito reconocimiento por parte del Consejo de la importancia de la igualdad de género dentro de un marco de actuación más amplio, habrá de parecer importante tener en cuenta la dimensión de género en este contexto.

La evaluación de los efectos de las recomendaciones específicas por país es asunto de la Comisión y de los correspondientes Comités del Consejo.

([5]) 17816/11, apartados 22 y 25.
([6]) EUCO 13/1/10 REV 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006420/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain, gender equality

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's national reform programme for 2013. These recommendations are a serious attack on social rights, which will have a particular impact on gender equality in Spain, thereby infringing the Treaty on European Union.

Many academic experts have expressed their concern about the impact the European Union's recommendations to the Member States could have on gender equality. These recommendations, which are drawn up by the European Commission and approved by the Council, contain economic policy objectives that would almost undeniably put the female workforce in a precarious position and increase the feminisation of poverty. However, this year's recommendations continue to encourage the labour market reform that, since last year, has resulted in a loss of another million jobs and had a serious economic impact on women.

The impact on the female population is two-fold: on the one hand, there is a direct impact through the loss of jobs and wages in the public sector, in which a significant majority of the jobs are held by women. The other impact is indirect and involves women once again having to look after others privately, putting them in a situation where they do not receive any income whatsoever and where many experience discrimination. The loss of public services means that someone has to take responsibility for those roles on a private level. This burden falls primarily on women, giving them additional work. These two irrefutable effects on women destabilise the minimal progress that had been made in Spain in the area of gender equality. However, the most serious aspect is that these measures are implemented on the recommendation of institutions whose founding Treaty requires them to protect gender equality.

In the Council's view, what effect are its recommendations likely to have on gender equality?

Given the existing evidence on the feminisation of poverty and discrimination against women in the labour market, does it believe that the recommendations to Spain will change the trends in these areas?

Does it believe that by recommending measures that will increase the social gap between men and women, it is infringing Articles 2, 3(3), 6, 8 and 10 of the Treaty on European Union?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

On 29 May 2013, the Commission submitted to the Council a recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Spain's 2013 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Spain's stability programme for 2012-2016 ([1]).

The European Council generally endorsed the Country-Specific Recommendations to the Member States at its meeting of 27-28 June 2013, thus concluding the European Semester ([2]). These recommendations were adopted by the Council on 9 July 2013.

In its Conclusions on 'Gender equality: strengthening growth and employment — input to the post-2010 Lisbon strategy', adopted on 30 November — 1 December 2009, the Council underlined the importance of gender mainstreaming in policy-making, including the importance of this within the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. ([3])

In its Conclusions of 7 March 2011 on European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020) ([4]), the Council reaffirmed its commitment to fulfilling EU ambitions on gender equality as mentioned in the Treaty.

([1]) 10025/13.
([2]) EUCO 104/2/13, p. 4.
([3]) 15488/09.
([4]) OJ C 155 , 25.5.2011, p. 10.

Furthermore, in its Conclusions on the Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action — Women and the Economy: Reconciliation of work and family life as a precondition for equal participation in the labour market, adopted on 1 December 2011, the Council has also highlighted the importance of reconciliation of work and family life, stressing that 'the equal participation of women and men in work and family life is a precondition for the practical realisation of equality between men and women, for mobilising the full labour force potential of the EU, for addressing expected shortages of skilled workers and for meeting two of the headline targets set within the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy, namely, aiming to raise to 75% the employment rate for women and men aged 20-64, and aiming to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion, as well as for tackling the demographic challenges.' The Council has also acknowledged that 'women continue to shoulder a disproportionate share of the burden when it comes to raising children and taking care of other dependants.' ([5])

It is recalled that the Europe 2020 strategy itself contains an employment target that applies specifically to both sexes, namely, 'aiming to raise to 75% the employment rate for women and men aged 20-64, including through the greater participation of young people, older workers and low-skilled workers and the better integration of legal migrants'. ([6])

The Honourable Member's attention is drawn to the fact that the implementation of the Country-Specific Recommendations, adopted by the Council, falls within the competence of the Member States themselves. In the light of the Council's explicit recognition of the importance of gender equality within the broader policy framework, it would appear important to take into account the gender dimensions in this context.

Assessing the effect of the Country-Specific Recommendations is a matter for the Commission and the relevant Council Committees.

([5]) 17816/11, paragraphs 22 and 25.
([6]) EUCO 13/1/10 REV 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006421/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Recomendaciones a España, igualdad de género

El pasado 29 de mayo el Consejo de la Unión Europea aprobó las recomendaciones propuestas por la Comisión relativas al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España. Estas recomendaciones suponen un importante ataque a los derechos sociales y tendrán un especial efecto sobre la igualdad de género en España, suponiendo una violación del Tratado de la Unión Europea.

Muchas autoridades académicas han expresado su preocupación por el impacto que las recomendaciones que realiza la Unión Europea sobre los Estados miembros tendrían en la igualdad de género. Las recomendaciones, que elabora la Comisión Europea y aprueba el Consejo, incorporan objetivos de política económica que producen unos efectos de precarización de la mano de obra femenina así como de feminización de la pobreza que son prácticamente innegables. Sin embargo, las recomendaciones de este año continúan impulsando la reforma del mercado laboral, que, desde el pasado año, ha producido un millón más de desempleados y un fuerte impacto económico sobre las mujeres.

El impacto sobre la población femenina es doble. Por una parte, existe un impacto directo por la pérdida de empleos y salarios en el sector público, en el que una amplia mayoría de los trabajadores son mujeres. El otro impacto es de carácter indirecto y supone el retorno de la mujer a la esfera privada de los cuidados, una esfera que vuelve a encontrarse sin remuneración alguna y que encierra a muchas mujeres en una situación de discriminación. La pérdida de prestaciones de servicios públicos supone que alguien se debe hacer cargo en la esfera privada. Esta carga de trabajo recae mayoritariamente en las mujeres, suponiendo una carga de trabajo adicional. Estos dos innegables efectos sobre las mujeres desequilibran los tenues avances que se habían dado en el país en materia de igualdad de género, pero lo más grave es que se hacen bajo la recomendación de unas instituciones en cuyo tratado fundacional se debe proteger la igualdad de género.

¿Cuáles son las estimaciones que maneja la Comisión sobre el efecto que sus recomendaciones tienen en la igualdad entre hombres y mujeres?

A la luz de la evidencia existente sobre la feminización de la pobreza y la discriminación laboral de la mujer, ¿considera que las recomendaciones a España cambiarán las tendencias en dichos fenómenos?

¿Considera que está incumpliendo los artículos 2, 3.3, 6, 8 y 10 del TUE cuando recomienda medidas que incrementarán la brecha social entre hombres y mujeres?

¿Considera que las recomendaciones mejorarán la situación económica de las mujeres en España?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de que existe una brecha entre hombres y mujeres en el mercado de trabajo en España. En efecto, las tasas de empleo femenino son muy bajas, lo que incide negativamente en la oferta de mano de obra y en el crecimiento potencial a largo plazo, y aumenta el riesgo de pobreza y de exclusión entre las mujeres ([1]). Las bajas tasas de empleo femenino se ven afectadas por la asequibilidad de los servicios de guardería y los cuidados de larga duración, así como por las consideraciones fiscales para la segunda fuente de ingresos familiares ([2]). El elevado desempleo, la transición a la inactividad y la prevalencia del trabajo a tiempo parcial involuntario impide a muchos trabajadores, en particular a las mujeres, adquirir derechos de pensión adecuados en el futuro.

([1]) En 2011, la tasa de pobreza era del 27,3 % para las mujeres, frente al 26,6 % para los hombres, aunque la diferencia se va reduciendo debido al aumento de las tasas de pobreza de estos últimos.

([2]) El tipo impositivo efectivo medio aplicado a las personas que constituyen la segunda fuente de ingresos familiares es elevado cuando se incorporan al mercado laboral con el mismo nivel de ingresos: sus ingresos se gravan con la misma tasa marginal que la que se aplica a la primera fuente de ingresos cuando los cónyuges declaran conjuntamente, mientras que la persona que declara los ingresos principales pierde las deducciones por cónyuge dependiente cuando la declaración es individual.

En consecuencia, en su propuesta de Recomendación del Consejo relativa al Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 de España ([3]), la Comisión invitó al Gobierno español a reforzar y modernizar sus servicios públicos de empleo a fin de garantizar una asistencia individualizada efectiva a los parados en función de sus perfiles y necesidades de formación. La Comisión recomienda asimismo reducir el elevado número de personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social, aumentando la eficacia y la efectividad de las medidas de apoyo. La implementación de la propuesta de la Comisión debería ofrecer más oportunidades a las mujeres y garantizar el acceso a unos servicios de calidad.

Además, en el marco del Paquete de Inversión Social ([4]), la Comisión pide a los Estados miembros que presten especial atención a la dimensión de género, eliminando las diferencias salariales entre hombres y mujeres y otros obstáculos a la participación de las mujeres y otros trabajadores infrarepresentados en el mercado laboral, combatiendo la discriminación en el lugar de trabajo y proponiendo, entre otras, medidas de conciliación (como servicios de guardería).

Por todo ello, la Comisión no cree que la Recomendación propuesta aumente la brecha social entre hombres y mujeres.

([3]) COM(2013) 359 final de 29.5.2013.

([4]) Paquete de Inversión Social http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006421/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Recommendations to Spain, gender equality

On 29 May, the Council of the European Union approved the Commission's proposed recommendations on Spain's national reform programme for 2013. These recommendations are a serious attack on social rights and will have a particular impact on gender equality in Spain, *thereby infringing the Treaty on European Union*.

Many academic experts have expressed their concern about the impact the European Union's recommendations to the Member States could have on gender equality. These recommendations, which are drawn up by the European Commission and approved by the Council, contain economic policy objectives that would almost undeniably put the female workforce in a precarious position and increase the feminisation of poverty. However, this year's recommendations continue to encourage the labour market reform that, since last year, has resulted in a loss of another million jobs and had a serious economic impact on women.

The impact on the female population is two-fold. On the one hand, there is a direct impact through the loss of jobs and wages in the public sector, in which a significant majority of the jobs are held by women. The other impact is indirect and involves women once again having to look after others privately, putting them in a situation where they do not receive any income whatsoever and where many experience discrimination. The loss of public services means that someone has to take responsibility for those roles on a private level. This burden falls primarily on women, giving them additional work. These two irrefutable effects on women destabilise the minimal progress that had been made in Spain in the area of gender equality. However, the most serious aspect is that these measures are implemented on the recommendation of institutions whose founding Treaty requires them to protect gender equality.

In the Commission's view, what effect are its recommendations likely to have on gender equality?

Given the existing evidence on the feminisation of poverty and discrimination against women in the labour market, does it believe that the recommendations to Spain will change the trends in these areas?

Does it believe that by recommending measures that will increase the social gap between men and women, it is infringing Articles 2, 3(3), 6, 8 and 10 of the Treaty on European Union?

Does it believe that the recommendations will improve the economic situation of women in Spain?

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

The Commission is aware of the existing gender gap in the Spanish labour market. Indeed women show very low employment rates, challenging long-run labour supply and potential growth and increasing female risk of poverty and exclusion ([1]). Women's lower employment rates are affected by the affordability of childcare and long-term care services, and tax considerations for second earners ([2]). High unemployment, the transition to inactivity, and the prevalence of involuntary part-time work prevent many workers, particularly women, from building adequate future pension rights.

Consequently, the Commission proposed in its Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Spain ([3]) that the Spanish government reinforces and modernises public employment services to ensure effective individualised assistance to the unemployed according to their profiles and training needs. The Commission also recommends decreasing the large number of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion and increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of support measures. The implementation of the Commission proposal should allow for providing better opportunities for women, while ensuring access to quality services.

([1]) Poverty rates for women stood at 27.3% in 2011, as compared to the 26.6% for men, although the gap is reducing due to the higher increases in poverty rates for men.

([2]) The average effective tax rate for second earners is high when entering the labour market at the same income level: the second earner's income is taxed at the same marginal rate as that of the main earner when partners file jointly, whereas the main earner loses the deduction for dependent spouse if partners file individually.

([3]) COM(2013) 359 final, from 29.5.2013.

Also through the SIP ([4]), the Commission asks Member States to pay particular attention to the gender dimension by closing the gender pay gap and address other barriers to women's and other underrepresented workers' participation in the labour market, including by tackling workplace discrimination and offer reconciliation measures (such as childcare services), amongst other.

Therefore the Commission does not believe that the proposed recommendations will increase the social gap between women and men.

([4]) Social Investment Package http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006422/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Situación en las cárceles colombianas

Según los datos oficiales del Estado colombiano, este país está sufriendo el periodo de su historia con mayor población hacinada en cárceles. Los datos oficiales muestran la existencia de alrededor de 117 000 reclusos por todo el país, cuando la capacidad de sus cárceles es de 75 000, lo que representa una sobrepoblación del 54 %, que es un indicador de la dura situación que están sufriendo los reclusos.

Aparte de que estos datos pueden ser incluso de mayor magnitud, la situación es crítica, puesto que todos estos presos se encuentran repartidos en 29 cárceles, algunas de ellas como «La Modelo» de Bogotá, con más de un 400 % de sobrepoblación carcelaria. Además, el número de reclusos en el país aumenta a un ritmo de 1 600 nuevos presos al mes, lo que pone de manifiesto una situación crítica con respecto a la sostenibilidad de dicho modelo carcelario.

La población reclusa del país, pese a ser un país con un importante y longevo conflicto armado que ha provocado miles de muertes y millones de desplazamientos, se compone principalmente de reclusos que han cometido delitos menores, aproximadamente unos 60 000. Mientras que el Gobierno colombiano se asegura de la protección, a través del fuero militar, respecto de los crímenes cometidos por su ejército durante el conflicto armado.

El Estado Colombiano no ofrece otra respuesta a la insostenibilidad de su modelo que la construcción de cárceles de gestión privada. El Gobierno de Santos se ha mostrado muy opaco con respecto a la comunidad internacional en este tema, puesto que ha decidido no colaborar con los 11 países que habían solicitado información durante la revisión anual del protocolo sobre la tortura. Esta muestra de opacidad a la comunidad internacional sobre su política carcelaria es una prueba de la escasa voluntad de colaboración del Gobierno colombiano.

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que Colombia debe dar un giro a su política carcelaria para evitar el hacinamiento masivo, así como la tortura?

¿Considera que el Gobierno colombiano debe colaborar a nivel internacional en la revisión del protocolo contra la tortura?

¿Presionará al Gobierno de Santos para que colabore en la revisión del protocolo sobre la tortura? ¿De qué forma?

¿Considera que debe congelar el Acuerdo Comercial Multipartes hasta que Colombia decida colaborar en éste ámbito?

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

La crisis del sistema penitenciario ha sido un problema durante algún tiempo en Colombia, al menos desde 1998, cuando el Tribunal Constitucional ordenó al Gobierno tomar las medidas oportunas para solucionarlo. El problema tiene muchas causas y, en especial, las deficiencias de las infraestructuras y el planteamiento adoptado por el Parlamento colombiano al abordar el problema de la delincuencia mediante el aumento de las penas de reclusión, lo que ha llevado con el tiempo a unas condiciones insostenibles en el sistema penitenciario.

El Congreso está debatiendo un proyecto de ley para reformar el Código Penitenciario, el cual contempla la reducción de las penas de cárcel para una serie de delitos. Junto con otras medidas sobre sanciones alternativas, se espera que este proyecto de ley mejore algo la situación del sistema penitenciario. El Gobierno también ha anunciado un nuevo programa de emergencia por el que el ejército creará nuevas estructuras a principios de 2014 para poder acoger a unos 10 000 presos.

La UE es consciente de que, durante los preparativos este año de cara al examen periódico universal (EPU) de Colombia por el Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas, las ONG colombianas han expresado su preocupación acerca de este asunto y han señalado diversos problemas ([1]). La UE sigue instando a Colombia a modernizar su sistema penitenciario para mejorar las condiciones de vida de los presos y facilitar su reinserción social.

([1]) Entre los problemas se cuentan los siguientes: superpoblación carcelaria crítica; falta de acceso a servicios básicos, como la asistencia sanitaria; administración deficiente de las cárceles y corrupción en las mismas; uso y abuso del aislamiento y la tortura y otras formas de malos tratos; falta de programas de rehabilitación y reinserción social.

Por lo que se refiere al Protocolo facultativo de la Convención contra la tortura (OPCAT), el Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos y varios países ([2]) recomendaron que Colombia ratificara ese instrumento. Por desgracia, Colombia no ha aceptado esta recomendación, argumentando que las disposiciones y los mecanismos de control nacionales eran suficientes. La UE reiteró su petición de una ratificación del OPCAT por Colombia en la última reunión del diálogo bilateral sobre derechos humanos ([3]).

([2]) En particular, en lo que respecta a la UE, Eslovenia.
([3]) Celebrada en Bruselas el 17 de junio de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006422/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Colombian prisons

According to official data from the Colombian State, the country's prisons are more crowded than ever before. Official data show that around 117 000 inmates across the country occupy prisons with a total capacity of 75 000, which represents an overpopulation of 54%. This is an indicator of the harsh situation suffered by prisoners.

Although these figures could be greater still, the situation is critical, since all these prisoners are spread across 29 prisons, some of which, such as 'La Modelo' [The Model] in Bogotá, have more than 400% prison overcrowding. Furthermore, the number of inmates in the country is increasing at a rate of 1 600 per month, which highlights a critical situation in terms of this prison model's sustainability.

Despite Colombia's major and long-lasting armed conflict which has caused thousands of deaths and millions of displacements, the country's prison population mainly comprises some 60 000 inmates who have committed minor offences. In the meantime, the Colombian Government uses military jurisdiction to guarantee protection for crimes committed by its army during the armed conflict.

The Colombian State offers no other solution to its unsustainable model than the construction of privately managed prisons. The Santos government has provided little information to the international community on this issue, since it has decided not to work with the 11 countries that have requested information during the annual review of the protocol on torture. This lack of transparency towards the international community regarding its prison policy is proof of the Colombian Government's unwillingness to cooperate.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that Colombia must overhaul its prison policy to prevent massive overcrowding and torture?

Does she believe that the Colombian Government must work with the international community to review the protocol against torture?

Will she put pressure on the Santos government to collaborate in the review of the protocol on torture? How?

Does she believe that the EU should freeze the Multiparty Trade Agreement until Colombia decides to cooperate in this area?

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

The crisis of the prison system has been an issue for some time in Colombia, dating back to at least 1998 when the Constitutional Court ordered the Government to take appropriate measures to tackle this problem. The problem has many causes, including poor infrastructure and the approach followed by the Colombian parliament in addressing the issue of criminality by increasing prison penalties. This, over time, has led to unsustainable conditions in the prison system.

A bill to reform the Penitentiary Code is currently in the Congress. It provides for the reduction of the prison terms for a number of felonies. Together with other measures on alternative penalties, this bill is expected to provide some improvement in the situation of the prison system. The Government has also announced a new emergency programme whereby the Army will build new structures by early 2014 hope to receive approximately 10 000 inmates.

The EU is aware that, during this year's preparations for Colombia's Universal Periodic review at the UN Human Rights Council (UPR), Colombian NGOs have expressed their concern over this issue, pointing out various problems ([1]). The EU continues to encourage Colombia to upgrade its prison system to improve living conditions for the inmates and allow their social rehabilitation.

([1]) Problems include: critical overcrowding; lack of access to basic services, such as healthcare; poor administration of the jails and corruption within them; use and abuse of isolation and other torture and cruel treatment modalities; lack of rehabilitation and re-socialisation programmes.

As regards the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT), the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and several countries ([2]) recommended that Colombia ratify the instrument. Colombia unfortunately did not accept this recommendation, arguing that national provisions and monitoring mechanisms were sufficient. The EU reiterated the call for a Colombian OPCAT ratification at the last meeting of the bilateral dialogue on human rights ([3]).

([2]) Including, from the EU side, Slovenia.
([3]) Held in Brussels on 17 June 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006423/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Stupri in Turchia

Stando alla stampa di Ankara, il ministro della Giustizia Sadullah Ergin ha riferito al parlamento che Istanbul detiene in Turchia il poco invidiabile titolo di «capitale degli stupri».

Infatti, nel 2012 nella metropoli del Bosforo sono stati denunciati 1 480 casi di stupro. Smirne arriva al secondo posto con 568 casi, mentre nel «paradiso» turistico di Antalia le denunce sono state 432. Istanbul ha anche il primato per i casi denunciati di abusi sessuali (2 223 nel 2012) e di abusi contro i minori (2 488). Secondo diverse ONG i casi, in realtà, sarebbero molti di più, ma spesso le violenze non vengono denunciate, anche perché perpetrate in seno alla famiglia. In Turchia negli ultimi anni i casi denunciati di violenze sessuali sono aumentati del 400 %.

Nella comunicazione COM(2012)0600 del 10 ottobre 2012, la Commissione indica che «A livello giuridico, sono stati compiuti progressi per quanto riguarda il rispetto dei diritti delle donne […]. Il governo ha elaborato un piano d'azione per affrontare le questioni sollevate nella relazione del Parlamento europeo dal titolo "Prospettiva 2020 per le donne in Turchia"».

La Commissione non ritiene che i dati illustrati dal ministro della Giustizia turco siano in netto contrasto con quanto esposto nella citata comunicazione?

È a conoscenza di effettivi sviluppi relativi all'elaborazione del piano d'azione a seguito della relazione del Parlamento europeo?

In quale modo intende monitorare questa situazione? Non ritiene forse che quanto sopra descritto debba essere tenuto in debito conto nel processo di adesione della Turchia all'UE?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(26 luglio 2013)

La Commissione è fermamente decisa a dare una forte risposta politica a qualsiasi forma di violenza contro le donne all'interno e all'esterno dei confini dell'UE. Questo impegno è sancito, in particolare, dal piano d'azione per l'attuazione del programma di Stoccolma, dalla Carta per le donne e dalla strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini (2010-2015).

La legge sulla protezione della famiglia e sulla prevenzione della violenza nei confronti delle donne del marzo 2012 e il piano d'azione nazionale di lotta alla violenza contro le donne (2012-2015), adottato nel 2012, continuano ad essere applicati in Turchia. È in preparazione una banca dati sulla violenza contro le donne. Il ministro competente ha partecipato agli sforzi prodigati per combattere la violenza domestica e in più occasioni si è espresso pubblicamente sulla questione.

Occorre però mantenere un impegno costante per tradurre la legislazione in una realtà politica e socioeconomica. La parità tra i sessi, la lotta contro la violenza nei confronti delle donne, compresi i delitti d'onore, e i matrimoni precoci e forzati costituiscono tuttora notevoli sfide per la Turchia.

Su queste basi, la Commissione continua a lavorare con le autorità turche per affrontare tali questioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006423/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Rapes in Turkey

According to the press in Ankara, the Minister for Justice, Sadullah Ergin, has told the Turkish Parliament that Istanbul holds the unenviable title of 'rape capital' of Turkey.

In fact, 1 480 cases of rape were reported in Istanbul in 2012. Izmir came second with 568 cases, while 432 cases were reported in the tourist 'paradise' of Antalya. Istanbul is also the leader when it comes to cases of sexual abuse (2 223 in 2012) and child abuse (2 488). According to several non-governmental organisations the actual number is much higher, but often cases of sexual violence are not reported, also because they take place within the family. Over the last few years in Turkey, the number of reported cases of sexual violence has gone up by 400%.

In Communication COM(2012)0600 of 10 October 2012, the Commission states that 'In legal terms, there has been progress regarding the respect for women's rights […]. The government established an action plan to address issues raised in the European Parliament report "A 2020 perspective for women in Turkey".'

Does the Commission not believe that the figures highlighted by the Turkish Minister for Justice stand completely at odds with what is stated in the aforementioned communication?

Is it aware of any actual developments concerning the drawing up of the action plan following Parliament's report?

How will it monitor this situation? Does it not believe that what has been described above should be taken into account during the process of Turkey's accession to the EU?

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

The Commission is committed to a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women inside and outside the EU borders. This commitment is shown, in particular, in the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015).

The Law on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women of March 2012 and the National Action Plan to combat Violence against Women (2012-2015) were adopted in 2012 and continued to be implemented in Turkey. A database on violence against women is under preparation. The Minister responsible was engaged in efforts to address domestic violence issues and spoke frequently on this matter publicly.

Further sustained efforts are however needed to turn legislation into political, social and economic reality. Gender equality, combatting violence against women, including honour killings, and early and forced marriages remain major challenges for Turkey.

It is on this basis that the Commission continues to work with the Turkish authorities to address these issues.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006424/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(5 juni 2013)

Betreft: Staatssteun aan voetbalclubs — onderzoek naar klacht m.b.t. Real Madrid

In antwoord op parlementaire vraag E-002897/2013 laat de Commissie weten een klacht te onderzoeken over een recente en mogelijk bevoordelende ruil van onroerend goed tussen Real Madrid en de stad Madrid.

Kan de Commissie toelichten of dit onderzoek zowel betrekking heeft op de overeenkomst tussen de stad en de club daterend van juli 2011 waarbij is overeengekomen dat Real Madrid 22 785 092,03 euro compensatie krijgt voor een stuk grond in „Las Tablas" (pagina 19), als op de ruil van verschillende gronden die in november 2011 werd voltrokken (operatie Bernabéu-Opañel)?

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat, aangezien één van de percelen uit het akkoord van juli (stukken in de straat „Mercedes Arteaga") ook in de ruil van november betrokken is, er een verband bestaat tussen de twee operaties en dat de beide operaties samen moeten bekeken worden?

Kan de Commissie — zonder uitspraak te doen over het eindresultaat van haar onderzoek — alvast meedelen of er in de operaties van 2011 wel sprake is van een enige directe of indirecte overdracht van middelen door de stad aan de club?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(5 augustus 2013)

De Commissie kan bevestigen dat het onderzoek naar Real Madrid betrekking heeft op de overeenkomst tussen de stad en de club van juli 2011 en op de eventuele gevolgen ervan voor latere overeenkomsten.

De Commissie heeft haar beoordeling van de feiten nog niet afgerond en kan dus nog geen commentaar geven.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006424/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: State aid to football clubs — investigation into complaint regarding Real Madrid

In its answer to parliamentary Question E-002897/2013 the Commission reports that it is looking into a complaint regarding a recent and possibly preferential real estate swap between Real Madrid and the City of Madrid.

Can the Commission clarify whether this investigation concerns both the agreement between the city and the club dated July 2011 in which it was agreed that Real Madrid would receive compensation of EUR 22 785 092.03 in exchange for a piece of land in 'Las Tablas' (page 19), and the exchange of various plots which was executed in November 2011 (Operation Bernabéu-Opañel)?

Does the Commission agree that, since one of the plots of land mentioned in the July agreement (plots in Mercedes Arteaga Street) is also involved in the November swap, there is a link between the two transactions and that the two transactions should be studied together?

Can the Commission say at the outset — without commenting on the outcome of its investigation — whether the 2011 transactions do involve any direct or indirect transfer of funds from the city to the club?

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

The Commission can confirm that the investigation regarding Real Madrid concerns the agreement between the city and the club dated July 2011, and any consequences it may have for subsequent agreements.

The Commission has not come to a conclusion regarding the assessment of the facts and so cannot yet comment.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006425/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Sustentabilidade do modelo social europeu

O modelo social europeu tem vindo a ser ameaçado nos últimos anos pelo aumento crescente do desemprego em vários Estados-Membros da União Europeia, pelo envelhecimento da população, que agrava o volume de despesas estatais de caráter social, pela quebra de crescimento económico de vários países, que resulta numa diminuição das receitas arrecadadas para os cofres do Estado, e pelos níveis de pobreza que não cessam de aumentar.

Em alguns Estados-Membros da União Europeia, nomeadamente da zona euro, várias medidas de austeridade têm vindo a ser implementadas, de forma a fazer face à crise económica e financeira que se instalou nos últimos anos e que, nos países da zona euro, se traduzem atualmente em 19,2 milhões de desempregados, existindo, todavia, sérias desigualdades que não cessam de se acentuar desde 2007.

A esta situação, juntam-se os desafios da globalização e das alterações demográficas, em particular os efeitos da imigração na União Europeia, o que também traz novas e desconhecidas dificuldades para os Estados-Membros da UE, sendo necessário e urgente definir uma estratégia para o futuro, que tenha em conta as ameaças ao modelo do Estado-Providência.

1. Como vê a Comissão a sustentabilidade de um Estado-Providência nos países da zona euro mais afetados pela crise económica e financeira e, consequentemente, pelas medidas de austeridade implementadas?

2. Sabendo que, embora as políticas do modelo social europeu sejam da competência partilhada ou exclusiva dos Estados-Membros, estas estão fortemente ligadas à sustentabilidade económica e financeira que depende das políticas económicas e monetárias europeias, como vê a Comissão o futuro e a sustentabilidade do modelo social europeu nos vários Estados da UE?

3. Que recomendações apresenta a Comissão para manter a sustentabilidade do sistema?

4. Como considera a possibilidade de apresentar um documento de caráter geral, que possa orientar os vários Estados-Membros quando ao futuro do Estado-Providência na UE, tendo em conta eventuais adaptações tornadas necessárias em resultado do atual contexto de vários dos seus Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(18 de julho de 2013)

O sucesso económico não é sustentável sem uma forte dimensão social constante dos modelos sociais desenvolvidos ao longo do tempo nos Estados-Membros da UE. Tendo em conta a crise que se faz sentir nalguns dos Estados-Membros da zona euro, a necessidade mais urgente é a estabilização da situação. Isto implica a concessão de um apoio financeiro considerável aos Estados-Membros com problemas a nível da balança de pagamentos e do orçamento e reformas profundas para que estes países possam voltar a registar níveis de finanças públicas sustentáveis. Sem este apoio financeiro, a fratura social seria ainda mais grave. Os modelos sociais europeus não seriam sustentáveis sem o restabelecimento rápido e duradouro da solidez das finanças públicas e do crescimento económico.

Independentemente da atual crise económica e financeira, a UE tem de realizar reformas para fazer face à mundialização, à rápida evolução tecnológica e ao impacto a longo prazo do envelhecimento da população. A reforma dos modelos sociais europeus, necessária para garantir a sustentabilidade orçamental, inclui não só medidas a nível do mercado laboral, da educação, da formação e da inclusão social, mas também no domínio das pensões e dos cuidados de saúde. A Comissão acompanha de perto os desenvolvimentos e dá especial importância às medidas adotadas nestes domínios no quadro do Semestre Europeu. Ao implementar com rigor a estratégia Europa 2020 e ao proceder à reforma dos modelos sociais europeus com o fim de assegurar uma evolução sustentável, os Estados-Membros da UE poderão continuar a cumprir os seus objetivos fundamentais de acesso a serviços públicos abordáveis e de elevada qualidade e a determinadas fórmulas de seguro. Em termos mais gerais, a Comissão tem contribuído para o debate atual sobre como melhorar a governação da UEM.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006425/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Sustainability of the European social model

The European social model has been threatened in recent years due to factors such as rising unemployment in several Member States; the ageing population, which leads to increased state welfare costs; the fall in economic growth in several countries, which results in lower tax revenues; and still rising poverty levels.

In some Member States, particularly in the euro area, several austerity measures have been introduced to tackle the economic and financial crisis of recent years. As a result, there are now 19.2 million unemployed in the euro area and there are serious inequalities that have continued to grow since 2007.

This situation is compounded by the challenges of globalisation and by demographic changes, particularly the effects of immigration in the EU, which also create new and unknown difficulties for Member States, and mean it is urgent and vital to define a strategy for the future that takes these threats to the welfare-state model into account.

1. What is the Commission's view of the sustainability of the welfare state in those euro area countries that are most affected by the economic and financial crisis, and therefore by the austerity measures introduced?

2. Although European social-model policies are the exclusive or shared competence of Member States, these policies are closely linked to economic and financial sustainability, which is dependent on European economic and monetary policy. Given this situation, what is the Commission's view of the future sustainability of the European social model in the various EU states?

3. What are the Commission's recommendations for upholding the system?

4. How would it view the possibility of issuing a general document on the future of the welfare state in the EU to the various Member States, bearing in mind any changes that might be necessary as a result of the current situation of several Member States?

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

Economic success cannot be sustained without a strong social dimension, as embodied in the social models developed over time in EU Member States. Against the background of the crisis in some euro area Member States, the most urgent need is for stabilisation. This involves considerable financial support to Member States with fiscal or balance of payments problems and strong reforms to ensure that they will return to sustainable public finances. Without the financial support, the social hardship would be much greater. The European Social models would not be sustainable without a rapid and durable restoration of sound public finances and economic growth.

Independently from the current economic and financial crisis, the EU also needs to pursue reforms to cope with globalisation, technological change and the long-term economic and fiscal impact of population ageing. Apart from labour market, education and training and social inclusion policies that are conducive to jobs and inclusive growth, key areas for reforms of the European social models are in the fields of pension and healthcare so as to ensure progress towards fiscal sustainability. The Commission monitors closely developments and puts great emphasis on these policies in the European semester. By rigorously implementing the Europe 2020 strategy and by reforming the European social models and putting them on a sustainable path, EU Member States will be able to continue to fulfil the key objectives of access to affordable and high quality public services and insurance arrangements also in the future. More broadly, the Commission is also contributing to the current debate on further improving the governance of the EMU.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006426/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Futuro das relações comerciais entre a UE e a China

A União Europeia e a China têm vindo a assumir o seu papel na cena internacional, sendo as relações entre ambas as partes particularmente importantes no plano bilateral, sobretudo no setor do comércio.

As relações comerciais entre a UE e a China encontram-se, no momento presente, num estado de grande tensão em torno de dois dossiês: a taxa a aplicar na UE à importação de painéis solares oriundos da China, em razão do facto de a respetiva produção beneficiar de subvenções e, consequentemente, ter impacto negativo na produção e no mercado europeus; e os alegados *dumpings* na produção de equipamentos de telecomunicações.

Na sua recente visita à Europa, o novo primeiro-ministro chinês, Li Keqiang, demonstrou o seu interesse em, ao estreitar as relações com a Alemanha, acalmar as tensões existentes, argumentando que as medidas apresentadas por Bruxelas seriam negativas para a indústria, as empresas e o emprego na China.

Nesta perspetiva, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como vê as declarações do primeiro-ministro chinês, Li Keqiang, no contexto da sua visita à Europa?

2. Sabendo-se que a Comissão tem em curso um inquérito anti-*dumping* quanto às produções da China, dispõe já de alguma informação conclusiva? Em caso de resposta negativa, para quando prevê dispor de tal informação?

3. Qual a perspetiva da Comissão quanto ao futuro das relações comerciais entre a União Europeia e a China? E qual a perspetiva da Comissão no que respeita às negociações e à conclusão de um eventual Acordo de Livre Comércio, em particular?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(30 de julho de 2013)

A UE e a China são parceiros estratégicos e, como tal, atribuímos grande importância às nossas relações bilaterais. Dada a dimensão e o rápido desenvolvimento desta relação económica bilateral, é natural que se levantem questões e possam ocorrer diferendos comerciais. No entanto, os conflitos comerciais não deverão obstar a que ambas as partes desenvolvam uma perspetiva a longo prazo nem a um compromisso para proceder a uma agenda comercial positiva.

O atual objetivo é avançar com o lançamento das negociações de um acordo de investimento bilateral. Estas negociações constituem a primeira prioridade e apenas após a conclusão e aplicação com êxito de um acordo de investimento ambicioso e alargado, estará a Comissão em condições de examinar ambições comerciais mais alargadas.

No Regulamento (UE) n.° 513/2013 da Comissão, que institui um direito *anti-dumping* provisório sobre as importações de painéis solares e de componentes-chave [ou seja, células e bolachas (*wafers*)] da República Popular da China (publicado no Jornal Oficial em 5 de junho de 2013), a Comissão estabeleceu provisoriamente que estes produtos foram objeto de *dumping* significativo, o que causou um importante prejuízo à indústria da União. As margens de *dumping* foram estabelecidas entre 48 % e 112 %. As medidas provisórias, correspondentes às margens de prejuízo, que são inferiores às margens de *dumping*, permanecerão em vigor por um período de seis meses. As partes terão a oportunidade de apresentar as suas observações sobre as conclusões provisórias da Comissão. As medidas definitivas, a existirem, serão adotadas pelo Conselho em 4 de dezembro de 2013, o mais tardar. Além disso, a Comissão está atualmente a discutir com os representantes do Governo chinês uma possível solução alternativa de substituição do direito *anti-dumping* por um compromisso de preços.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006426/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: The future of EU-China trade relations

The EU and China have been playing their respective roles on the global stage, and at the bilateral level, relations between the two parties are particularly important, especially in the area of trade.

EU-China trade relations are currently very tense as a result of two issues: the EU's provisional tariffs on solar panels imported from China, which are subsidised and threaten the European market and manufacturing; and the alleged dumping of telecommunications equipment.

On his recent visit to Europe, the new Chinese Prime Minister, Li Keqiang, expressed his interest in soothing current tensions by establishing closer relations with Germany, and argued that the measures put forward by Brussels would be harmful to industry, companies and employment in China.

1. What is the Commission's view of the statements made by the Chinese Prime Minister on his visit to Europe?

2. Has the Commission's inquiry into dumping practices in Chinese manufacturing revealed any conclusive information? If not, when might this information be available?

3. How does the Commission view the future of EU-China trade relations? In particular, what is its view of negotiations over a possible free trade agreement, and its potential conclusion?

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

The EU and China are strategic partners and as such we attach great importance to our bilateral relations. Given the size and rapid development of the bilateral economic relationship, it is natural that issues arise and trade irritants occur. However, trade frictions should not stand in the way of both sides developing a long-term perspective and a commitment to a positive trade agenda.

The EU's current focus is to make progress towards the launch of negotiations for a bilateral investment agreement. These negotiations are the first priority and only after successful conclusion and implementation of an ambitious and broad-based investment agreement would the Commission be in a position to examine broader trade ambitions.

In the Commission Regulation (EU) No 513/2013 imposing provisional anti-dumping measures on imports of solar panels and key components (cells and wafers) from the People's Republic of China (published in the Official Journal on 5 June 2013), the Commission has provisionally established that significant dumping of these products have occurred causing material injury to the Union industry. The dumping margins established range from 48% to 112%. The provisional measures, corresponding to the injury margins, which are lower than the dumping margins, will remain in force for six months. Parties will have an opportunity to comment on the provisional findings of the Commission. Definitive measures, if any, are to be adopted by the Council on 4 December 2013 at the latest. The Commission is also currently discussing with representatives of the Chinese government for a possible alternative remedy replacing the anti-dumping duty by a price undertaking.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006427/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(5 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Condiții restrictive la cumpărarea terenurilor agricole din România

Guvernul României a elaborat recent un proiect de lege prin care persoanele fizice care doresc să cumpere un teren agricol în România trebuie să îndeplinească anumite condiții restrictive.

Astfel, pentru a putea achiziționa un teren agricol, cumpărătorul, persoană fizică, trebuie:

1. să facă dovada că are studii în domeniul agricol și a desfășurat activități agricole pentru o perioadă de cel puțin 5 ani;

2. să fie înregistrat la organele fiscale ca persoană juridică sau ca persoană fizică care desfășoară activități agricole, cu excepția celor care se înregistrează potrivit legii speciale la registrul comerțului.

Totodată, proiectul de lege precizează existența unei suprafețe maxime a terenului cumpărat ce nu poate fi depășită de persoanele fizice sau arendași la cumpărare, limita fiind ulterior stabilită. Referitor la persoanele fizice vecine cu drept de preemțiune la cumpărare, acestea nu pot încheia un act de vânzare — cumpărare dacă dețin o suprafață mai mare decât limita ce urmează a fi stabilită.

În contextul unor condiții din ce în ce mai restrictive la cumpărarea terenurilor agricole din România, Comisia este rugată să își exprime punctul de vedere privind această situație și să precizeze dacă consideră aceste condiții întemeiate.

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(25 iulie 2013)

Achiziționarea terenurilor agricole reprezintă o mișcare de capital căreia, conform articolului 63 din Tratatul privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene (TFUE), nu i se aplică restricții decât dacă ele sunt justificate de excepțiile prevăzute de tratat, în special la articolul 65 din TFUE, și de jurisprudența relevantă a Curții de Justiție a UE. Orice măsuri restrictive naționale, pentru a fi aprobate, trebuie să fie adecvate pentru a garanta îndeplinirea obiectivului urmărit și să nu depășească ceea ce este necesar pentru atingerea acestui obiectiv. Mai mult, obiectivul legislației naționale referitoare la terenurile agricole trebuie să fie în conformitate cu politica agricolă comună. În elaborarea acesteia, în concordanță cu articolul 39 din TFUE, trebuie să se țină seama „de caracterul special al activităților agricole care decurge din structura socială a agriculturii și din discrepanțele structurale și naturale existente între diferitele regiuni agricole”.

În calitatea sa de gardian al tratatului, Comisia monitorizează punerea în aplicare, în statele membre, a principiului liberei circulații a capitalurilor. Comisia nu este în măsură să facă observații asupra unui proiect legislativ. Cu toate acestea, Comisia, în colaborare cu statul membru respectiv, este dispusă să acționeze pentru a se asigura că măsurile naționale în vigoare sunt conforme cu legislația UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006427/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Restrictions on the purchase of farmland in Romania

The Romanian Government has recently drawn up a bill imposing a number of restrictions on the purchase of farmland by individuals in Romania.

Under the terms of the proposed legislation, prospective individual purchasers must:

1. furnish proof of training and at least five years' employment in agriculture;

2. be registered with the tax authorities as legal or natural persons in the agricultural sector except for those entered in the commercial register under the relevant legislation.

The bill also specifies that the maximum area of land which may be purchased by natural persons, including leaseholders, will be subject to limits to be established subsequently. Owners of neighbouring plots with the right of pre-emption will not be authorised to complete a sale-purchase transaction if they own an area of land exceeding the limit to be set

Can the Commission make known its position regarding the imposition of ever-tighter restrictions on the purchase of farmland in Romania? Does it consider them justified?

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

The acquisition of agricultural real estate represents a capital movement to which, under Article 63 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), no restrictions shall apply unless justified by the Treaty exceptions, notably Article 65 TFEU and the relevant jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the EU. For any restrictive national measures to be allowed, they must be suitable for securing the pursed objective and must not go beyond what is necessary in order to attain it. Moreover, the objective of national legislation relating to agricultural land has to be consistent with the common agricultural policy in the elaboration of which, according to Article 39 TFEU, account must be taken 'of the particular nature of agricultural activity, which results from the social structure of agriculture and from structural and natural disparities between the various agricultural regions'.

As guardian of the Treaty, the Commission is monitoring the application of the free movement of capital principle in Member States. The Commission is not in the position to comment on a draft piece of legislation. Nevertheless, the Commission, in cooperation with the Member State concerned, is ready to act to ensure that the national measures in force are in compliance with EC law.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-006429/13
an die Kommission
Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(5. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Zusammenarbeit zwischen Europol und Israel

Im Jahr 2005 erging der Beschluss des Rates, ein „Abkommen zur operationellen Zusammenarbeit zwischen Europol und Israel" zu erarbeiten. Dadurch würde der Datenaustausch zwischen beiden Partnern erleichtert. Europol könnte polizeiliche Maßnahmen koordinieren, sofern sie zwei oder mehr Länder betreffen. Auch der Austausch von Verbindungsbeamten würde im Abkommen geregelt: Mitarbeiter von Europol würden nach Israel oder in besetzte Gebiete entsandt, während israelische Beamte in Den Haag Dienst tun würden.

1. Wie weit sind die Verhandlungen über das Kooperationsabkommen zwischen Europol und Israel gediehen, und welche Institutionen oder Arbeitsgruppen sind mit Verhandlungen darüber betraut?

2. Welche Informationen sollen im Rahmen des Abkommens ausgetauscht werden, und auf welche Daten hätten israelische Behörden Zugriff?

3. Welche Aussagen enthält das Abkommen zur Datenweitergabe an Drittstaaten durch Israel oder Europol und zu Informations- und Löschungsansprüchen im Zusammenhang mit den Daten, und welche Haltung vertritt Israel dazu?

4. Welchen Mehrwert erwartet sich Europol durch den Abschluss des Abkommens?

5. Inwiefern würde der Datenaustausch nach Ansicht der Kommission der Europol-Konvention zuwiderlaufen, wonach ein „ausuferndes" Sammeln von Daten untersagt ist?

6. Welche Haltung vertreten Kommission, der Direktor von Europol und die Gemeinsame Kontrollinstanz von Europol zu der Auffassung, dass ein etwaiges Abkommen die Unterstützung der israelischen Siedlungspolitik in Ost-Jerusalem signalisieren würde, da Israel dort ein Hauptquartier der Polizei betreibt?

7. Inwiefern wollen Kommission, der Direktor von Europol und die Gemeinsame Kontrollinstanz von Europol sowie Israel sicherstellen, dass im Rahmen eines Abkommens keine Informationen verwertet werden, die unter Verletzung von Menschenrechten erlangt wurden?

8. Wie könnte nach Ansicht der Kommission, des Direktors von Europol und der Gemeinsamen Kontrollinstanz von Europol sowie Israels der Ursprung verarbeiteter Informationen festgestellt werden, um sicherzustellen dass durch Europol keine Daten aus den besetzten Gebieten verarbeitet werden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(24. Juli 2013)

1. Über den Entwurf eines Abkommens über die operative Zusammenarbeit wird derzeit zwischen Europol und Israel verhandelt.

2. Im Rahmen dieses Abkommens würden Informationen über in das Mandat von Europol fallende schwere und organisierte Kriminalität ausgetauscht. Europol würde Israel lediglich die Informationen zur Verfügung stellen, die entsprechend dem Europol-Beschluss des Rates und den zugehörigen Durchführungsbeschlüssen erhoben, gespeichert und übermittelt wurden.

3. Nach dem Entwurf des Abkommens ist die Weitergabe von Informationen an Drittstaaten oder dritte Einrichtungen durch Israel unzulässig, es sei denn, die Parteien stimmen dem zuvor ausdrücklich zu.

4. Der Informationsaustausch mit israelischen Strafverfolgungsbehörden würde die von Europol unterstützten Ermittlungen der Mitgliedstaaten ([1]) unterstützen.

5. Der Datenaustausch würde ausschließlich im Einklang mit dem für Europol geltenden Rechtsrahmen — einschließlich Artikel 23 des Ratsbeschlusses zur Errichtung von Europol — erfolgen.

([1]) Vor allem im Bereich der schweren Wirtschaftskriminalität, Korruption, Erpressung und Schutzgelderpressung insbesondere durch eurasische kriminelle Organisationen.

6. Der Entwurf des Abkommens zwischen Europol und Israel dient technischen Zwecken und stellt die Zusammenarbeit bei der Bekämpfung schwerer und organisierter internationaler Kriminalität in den Mittelpunkt. Europol ist bemüht sicherzustellen, dass der Inhalt des Abkommens mit dem Standpunkt der EU zum Friedensprozess im Nahen Osten und den Schlussfolgerungen des Rates vom 10. Dezember 2012 ([2]) im Einklang steht.

7. Europol darf lediglich Informationen zur Verfügung stellen, die gemäß Artikel 20 Absatz 4 des Ratsbeschlusses zur Festlegung der Durchführungsbestimmungen zur Regelung der Beziehungen von Europol zu anderen Stellen erhoben, gespeichert und übermittelt wurden, wonach Informationen, die von einem Drittstaat eindeutig unter offenkundiger Verletzung der Menschenrechte erhoben wurden, nicht verarbeitet werden.

([2]) Schlussfolgerungen des Rates „Auswärtige Angelegenheiten": Die Europäische Union bekundet ihre Entschlossenheit, dafür zu sorgen, dass im Einklang mit dem Völkerrecht in allen Abkommen zwischen dem Staat Israel und der Europäischen Union unmissverständlich und ausdrücklich erklärt wird, dass sie nicht für die von Israel 1967 besetzten Gebiete, namentlich die Golanhöhen, das Westjordanland einschließlich Ostjerusalems und den Gazastreifen, gelten.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006429/13
to the Commission
Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Cooperation between Europol and Israel

In 2005 the Council adopted a decision to draw up an operational cooperation agreement between Europol and Israel. The agreement was intended to facilitate the exchange of data between the two partners. Europol would be able to coordinate police activities if they involved two or more countries. The agreement would also cover the exchange of liaison officers: Europol officials would be sent to Israel or Occupied Territory, while Israeli officials would be posted to The Hague.

1. What progress has been made in negotiations on the cooperation agreement between Europol and Israel, and which institutions or working parties are involved in the negotiation process?

2. What information would be exchanged under the agreement, and what would be the data to which the Israeli authorities would have access?

3. What reference does the agreement make to the transfer of data to third countries by Israel or Europol and to data subjects' entitlement to receive information and to have data deleted, and what is Israel's position in that regard?

4. What does Europol expect to gain from the conclusion of the agreement?

5. Does the Commission consider that the exchange of data would be contrary to the Europol Convention, which places strict limits on the collection of data?

6. What do the Commission, the Director of Europol and the Joint Supervisory Body of Europol think of the argument that any such agreement would signal support for Israeli policy on settlements in East Jerusalem, where Israel has set up a police headquarters?

7. How do the Commission, the Director of Europol, the Joint Supervisory Body of Europol and Israel intend to ensure that no information obtained by disregarding human rights is used under the agreement?

8. In the opinion of the Commission, the Director of Europol, the Joint Supervisory Body of Europol and Israel, how would it be possible to ascertain the origin of the data concerned with a view to ensuring that Europol does not process any data originating from Occupied Territory?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2013)

1. The draft operational cooperation agreement is currently being negotiated between Europol and Israel.

2. Information exchanged under the agreement would be related to serious and organised crime within Europol's mandate. Europol would only supply information to Israel which is collected, stored and transmitted in accordance with the Europol Council Decision and its implementing decisions.

3. According to the draft agreement, onward transmission of information to third States or bodies by Israel is not allowed, except with the prior explicit consent of the parties.

4. Information exchange with Israeli law enforcement would help investigative efforts of Member States, supported by Europol ([1]).

5. Exchange of data would occur only in compliance with the legal framework governing Europol, including Art. 23 of the Council decision establishing Europol.

([1]) Especially in the area of serious economic crime, corruption, racketeering and extortion, in particular from Eurasian organised crime groups.

6. The draft agreement between Europol and Israel has a technical purpose and focuses on cooperation in the fight against serious and organised international crime. Europol seeks to ensure that the content of the draft agreement is consistent with the EU position on the Middle East Peace Process, including the Council Conclusions of 10 December 2012 ([2]).

7. Europol should only supply information which was collected, stored and transmitted in accordance Article 20 (4) of the Council Decision adopting the implementing rules governing Europol's relations with partners, according to which information obtained in obvious violation of human rights shall not be processed.

([2]) Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) conclusions: The European Union expresses its commitment to ensure that — in line with international law — all agreements between the State of Israel and the European Union must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, namely the Golan Heights, the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006430/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Hezbollah

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is the latest organisation to label Hezbollah a terrorist group. This has followed a series of allegations from member states of the GCC, particularly Bahrain.

Members of a terror cell caught in Bahrain have allegedly admitted to being trained by Hezbollah in Lebanon. Other reports accuse Hezbollah of training nationals of Bahrain and other Gulf states to undertake hostile military tasks and spy for the Iranian government. Hezbollah's active military role in supporting the Assad regime in Syria is further evidence of the group's increasingly dissident nature.

The US declared Hezbollah a terrorist organisation in 1997, and there are a growing number of voices, including the governments of France and the UK, calling for the EU to do likewise for its military wing, which has allegedly been linked with atrocities, including the 2012 bomb attack in Bulgaria and a bomb plot in Cyprus, within the EU itself.

Will the High Representative, in light of these recent developments, reconsider the case for designating Hezbollah, or, at least its military wing, a terrorist organisation? Will the High Representative publicly condemn Hezbollah's military support of the Assad regime in Syria?

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

On 22 July the Council agreed to adopt restrictive measures in respect of the Hizballah Military Wing including it in the list of persons, groups and entities to which Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP apply. The measures taken in the framework of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP are part of the EU's strategies to combat terrorism and in particular the fight against the financing of terrorism.

The EU has furthermore repeatedly stated its full support for the policy of dissociation from the Syrian conflict, as agreed by Lebanese leaders across the political spectrum as early as 2011. The High Representative has received with great concern the reports of increasing involvement of the Lebanese Hizbullah in the fighting in Syria. It is essential that all actors in Lebanon abide by the dissociation policy in practice.

The Foreign Affairs Council of May 2013, chaired by the HR/VP, adopted conclusions stating that 'the EU is seriously concerned with the involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria, which is further fuelling the conflict and posing a threat to regional stability.'

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006431/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Derechos de las personas con movilidad reducida en el transporte aéreo

La Comisión Europea publicó en abril de 2011 un informe sobre los efectos que ha surtido el Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006 en cuanto a la situación de los pasajeros con movilidad reducida en las líneas aéreas. Entre las oportunidades de mejora, se animaba a las compañías aéreas a evitar las interpretaciones estrictas que aplican en ocasiones de lo dispuesto sobre motivos de seguridad que pueden alegar para restringir el derecho a viajar a esta categoría de clientes y toda una serie de deficiencias relacionadas con la comunicación de estas restricciones.

Para solventar estos problemas, la Comisión recordaba que la denegación de embarque por motivos de seguridad debe estar estrictamente ligada a la seguridad del vuelo. Las restricciones que se apliquen deben apoyarse en una o varias normas jurídicas obligatorias de seguridad aérea; las denegaciones deben comunicarse al pasajero citando la norma jurídica obligatoria en la que se basan. Las autoridades nacionales deben definir y publicar los requisitos de seguridad que pueden alegarse.

La ciudadana española Mara Zabala, ejecutiva de una multinacional, viajera habitual con compañías aéreas y con movilidad reducida, ha podido comprobar la exactitud de las deficiencias observadas al ver que «Air Europa» le denegaba el acceso a uno de sus aviones alegando razones de seguridad de vuelo que no afectan a los aviones de otras compañías. La justificación esgrimida cita «normativa y manuales operativos aprobados por las autoridades aeronáuticas» una expresión que no incluye las concretas normas jurídicas obligatorias en que se basa la exclusión. A la vista de estas circunstancias:

1. ¿Dispone la Comisión de datos sobre los expedientes informativos o sancionadores a que han dado lugar las vulneraciones de este Reglamento, citadas en el informe de 2011?

2. ¿A qué compañías y Estados miembros afectan estos expedientes?

3. ¿En qué medida cree la Comisión que su nueva propuesta pueda solventar esta problemática?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de julio de 2013)

1. El Reglamento no impone a los organismos nacionales de ejecución ninguna obligación de información que ataña al número de casos que estén instruyendo ni al número de sanciones que impongan por el incumplimiento del Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006. La Comisión, por lo tanto, no dispone de datos sobre las sanciones que imponen esos organismos en los casos de infracción del Reglamento. Su propósito ahora, sin embargo, es solicitar a aquellos la información necesaria para poder publicar un documento estadístico antes de que finalice 2013. La Comisión tenía ya conocimiento del caso que plantea Su Señoría, y se ha puesto así en contacto con el organismo de ejecución español competente para proceder al análisis del asunto y para que aquel le informe de las medidas que adopta cuando detecta casos de infracción del Reglamento. Tan pronto como se halle disponible, se facilitará la información pertinente.

2. La Comisión solo recibe un número muy limitado de denuncias en relación con el Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006 y no tiene información de líneas de conducta infractoras que afecten a compañías o Estados miembros concretos.

3. La propuesta de revisión del Reglamento (CE) n° 261/2004 sobre los derechos de los pasajeros aéreos ([1]), presentada recientemente por la Comisión, no tiene por objeto modificar el Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006. Cabe señalar, no obstante, que, además del informe de 2011 sobre el Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006 mencionado por Su Señoría, la Comisión publicó en junio de 2012 unas directrices interpretativas para mejorar la aplicación de ese Reglamento ([2]). Las directrices indican expresamente que, en caso de denegar el acceso a sus aviones, las compañías aéreas deben facilitar al pasajero una explicación clara por escrito que recoja una referencia específica a la ley que se aplique a su caso concreto ([3]). Ateniéndonos a la información disponible, no parece que una referencia general a «normativa y manuales operativos aprobados por las autoridades aeronáuticas» responda a la recomendación de esas directrices.

([1]) Propuesta de Reglamento del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo que modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 261/2004, por el que se establecen normas comunes sobre compensación y asistencia a los pasajeros aéreos en caso de denegación de embarque y de cancelación o gran retraso de los vuelos, y el Reglamento (CE) n° 2027/97, relativo a la responsabilidad de las compañías aéreas respecto al transporte aéreo de los pasajeros y su equipaje [COM/2013/0130 final — 2013/0072(COD)].

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/prm/2012-06-11-swd-2012-171_en.pdf

([3]) Véase también en el mismo contexto la respuesta contenida en la Pregunta 5, letra a), último párrafo, de las directrices.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006431/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Rights of people with reduced mobility in air transport

In April 2011 the European Commission published a report on the effects of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 on the situation of passengers with reduced mobility when travelling by air. Among the proposed improvements, it encouraged air carriers to avoid the strict interpretations that are sometimes applied to the provisions on supposed safety grounds, which restrict the right to travel of this category of customers, and a whole range of shortcomings concerning the communication of these restrictions.

In order to resolve these problems, the Commission stated that if boarding is denied for safety reasons, this must be done solely for flight safety reasons. The restrictions that apply should be based on one or more legally binding flight safety standards; the detailed reasons for this and a mention of the relevant binding safety standard should be notified to the passenger. The national authorities should define and publish any safety requirements that can serve as a basis for denying transport.

Mara Zabala, a Spanish citizen and executive in a multinational, travels regularly with air carriers and, as a person with reduced mobility, has witnessed first-hand these precise problems after Air Europa refused to allow her to board one of its aircraft for flight safety reasons that do not apply to other companies' aircraft. The argument it put forward referred to 'rules and operating manuals approved by the aviation authorities', an expression that does not include the specific legally binding standards on which the exclusion was based. Given these circumstances:

1. Does the Commission have any information about the cases concerning information or penalties that have arisen as a result of infringements of this regulation, referred to in the 2011 report?

2. Which companies and Member States are involved in those cases?

3. To what extent does the Commission believe that its new proposal will be able to resolve this problem?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

1. Under the regulation, there are no reporting requirements for National Enforcement Bodies (NEB) on the number of cases they are handling or the number of sanctions that are imposed for infringements of Regulation No 1107/2006. The Commission has therefore no overview on the penalties imposed by NEBs for infringements of this regulation. The Commission services however intend to request relevant information from NEBs with the aim of publishing a statistical document by end 2013. The Commission is aware of the case raised by the Honourable Member and has therefore contacted the competent Spanish NEB to look into the matter and to inform the Commission on its actions in case an infringement of the regulation has been detected. Relevant information will be delivered in due form when available.

2. The Commission receives only very few complaints in relation to Regulation No 1107/2006 and does not have information on patterns of non-compliance by specific companies or Member States.

3. The recent Commission proposal to revise Regulation 261/2004 on air passenger rights ([1]) does not aim at modifying Regulation No 1107/2006. However in addition to the report on Regulation 1107/2006 of 2011 referred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission has published in June 2012 interpretative guidelines to improve the application of the regulation ([2]). The guidelines explicitly state that when refusing transportation air carriers must provide the passenger with a clear written explanation with specific reference to the law applicable to the individual case upon request ([3]). From the information available, it would seem that a generic reference to the 'rules and operating manuals approved by the air authorities' would not meet this recommendation.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights and Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 on air carrier liability in respect of the carriage of passengers and their baggage by air; COM/2013/0130 final — 2013/0072 (COD).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/prm/2012-06-11-swd-2012-171_en.pdf
([3]) See also in the same context the answer under Q5(a) last subparagraph of the Guidelines.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006433/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(5 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Restrizzjonijiet tal-UE fuq il-pestiċidi

Reċentement, il-Kummissjoni ħabbret li l-użu ta' tliet tipi ta' pestiċidi madwar l-UE għandu jiġi ristrett mill-1 ta' Diċembru 2013, billi dawn ġew identifikati li jagħmlu ħsara lill-popolazzjoni tan-naħal tal-għasel fi studji mwettqa mill-EFSA.

Il-Kummissjoni tipprevedi t-twaqqif ta' awtorità agrikola sabiex tissorvelja l-implimentazzjoni ta' dawn ir-restrizzjonijiet? Jekk le, x'inhuma l-pjanijiet tagħha għas-superviżjoni tal-implimentazzjoni tagħhom?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(16 ta' Lulju 2013)

Fl-24 ta' Mejju 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat regolament ta' implimentazzjoni li jirrestrinġi b'mod sostanzjali l-kundizzjonijiet tal-approvazzjoni tat-tliet neonikotinojdi, il-klotijanidin, it-tijametossam u l-imidakloprid, u li jipprojbixxi l-użu u l-bejgħ ta' żrieragħ li jkunu ġew ittrattati bi prodotti tal-protezzjoni tal-pjanti li jkun fihom dawn is-sustanzi attivi ([1]). Qabel ma ttieħdet id-deċiżjoni, il-Kummissjoni kienet talbet l-għajnuna xjentifika u teknika mingħand l-Awtorità Ewropea għas-Sikurezza fl-Ikel, biex tkun tista' tivvaluta l-informazzjoni disponibbli.

Madankollu, l-implimentazzjoni u l-infurzar ta' dawn il-miżuri huma r-responsabbiltà tal-Istati Membri. L-Uffiċċju Alimentari u Veterinarju (FVO) jivverifika bis-saħħa ta' awditi u spezzjonijiet il-konformità mar-rekwiżiti tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE dwar is-sikurezza u l-kwalità tal-ikel, is-saħħa u t-trattament xieraq tal-annimali, u s-saħħa tal-pjanti fl-Unjoni Ewropea. Dawn l-attivitajiet jkopru wkoll il-leġiżlazzjoni fil-qasam tal-pestiċidi. L-FVO ipoġġi r-riżultati ta' dawn l-ispezzjonijiet u l-awditi għad-dispożizzjoni tal-pubbliku fuq is-sit:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:139:0012:0026:MT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006433/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: EU restrictions on pesticides

The Commission recently announced that the use of three types of pesticides across the EU is to be restricted from 1 December 2013, as they have been identified as being harmful to the honeybee population in studies conducted by the EFSA.

Does the Commission foresee the establishment of an agricultural authority to supervise the implementation of these restrictions? If not, what are its plans for supervising their implementation?

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

The Commission adopted on 24 May 2013 an implementing regulation restricting substantially the conditions of the approval of the three neonicotinoids clothianidin, thiamethoxam and imidacloprid, and prohibiting the use and sale of seeds treated with plant protection products containing those active substances ([1]). Prior to this decision the Commission had asked the European Food Safety Authority for scientific and technical assistance to assess the available information.

However, the implementation and the enforcement of these measures is the responsibility of Member States. The Commission's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) checks through audits and inspections the compliance with the requirements of EU food safety and quality, animal health and welfare and plant health legislation within the European Union. These activities cover also the legislation in the field of pesticides. The FVO makes the results of these inspections and audits publicly available on the website: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:139:0012:0026:EN:PDF.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006434/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(5 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Gvern elettroniku

Il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni dwar il-Gvern elettroniku (IP/10/1718) fih 40 miżura li jipprovdu liċ-ċittadini tal-UE aċċess aktar faċli għall-faċilitajiet online. Bħalissa l-Kummissjoni qed tevalwa l-progress tal-Gvern elettroniku.

Il-Kummissjoni tħoss li l-Istati Membri tal-UE għandhom jinkoraġixxu liċ-ċittadini tagħhom biex jużaw is-sistema tal-Gvern elettroniku billi jadottaw ċerti miżuri u programmi?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(11 ta' Lulju 2013)

L-Istati Membri kollha għandhom l-Istrateġiji għall-Gvern Elettroniku u l-Pjanijiet ta' Azzjoni. Sa April 2013, l-Istati Membri kollha minbarra tnejn kienu mmodifikawhom biex dawn jiġu konformi mal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni għall-Gvern Elettroniku tal-UE. Għandhom stabbiliti wkoll programmi/miżuri ta' finanzjament tal-ICT li l-għan tagħhom huwa li jistimulaw il-provvediment ta' servizzi elettroniċi tal-gvern u l-użu ta' dawn miċ-ċittadini. Il-Kummissjoni tilqa' u tappoġġja dan l-approċċ mill-Istati Membri. L-iżvilupp tal-Gvern Elettroniku huwa wieħed mill-elementi ewlenin biex tintrebaħ il-kriżi finanzjarja kurrenti, kif inhu rikonoxxut mill-Istħarriġ Annwali kurrenti dwar it-Tkabbir.

Il-Gvern Elettroniku ilu wieħed mis-suġġetti ewlenin fl-aġenda tal-UE sa mis-sena 2000: bħala parti mill-inizjattivi eEurope u i2010, u issa qiegħed imdaħħal sew fl-Aġenda Diġitali għall-Ewropa inizjali, u aktar u aktar fil-verżjoni riveduta tagħha. L-appoġġ għall-iżvilupp tal-Gvern Elettroniku madwar l-UE qed isir minn żewġ naħat: miżuri ta' politika, bħalma huma d-djalogu mal-Istati Membri, il-valutazzjoni komparattiva, l-iskambju tal-aħjar prattika u tagħlim reċiproku minn naħa. Programmi ta' finanzjament fil-passat, bħalma huma l-eTen, l-FP6 u l-Programm ta' Appoġġ għall-Politika tat-Teknoloġiji tal-Informazzjoni u l-Komunikazzjoni kurrenti tas-CIP u l-FP7 jipprovdu l-finanzi għal proġetti li jkopru bosta dimensjonijiet tal-Gvern Elettroniku. Għall-Qafas Finanzjarju Pluriennali li ġej, il-Kummissjoni biħsiebha tkompli dan l-appoġġ permezz tal-Faċilità Nikkollegaw l-Ewropa (CEF) u l-H2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006434/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: eGovernment

The eGovernment Action Plan (IP/10/1718) contains 40 measures that would provide EU citizens with easier access to online facilities. The Commission is currently assessing the progress of eGovernment.

Does the Commission feel that EU Member States should encourage their citizens to use the eGovernment system by adopting certain measures and programmes?

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

All Member States have eGovernment Strategies and Action Plans. As of April 2013, all except two had modified them in order to align them to the EU eGovernment Action Plan. They also have in place ICT funding programmes/measures which aim at stimulating the provision of eGovernment services as well as the take up by citizens. The Commission welcomes and supports this approach by Member States. Developing eGovernment is one of the key elements to overcome the current financial crisis, as recognised by the current Annual Growth Survey.

eGovernment has featured high in the EU agenda since the year 2000: as part of the eEurope and i2010 initiatives, and now it is also firmly embedded in the initial Digital Agenda for Europe and even more so in its reviewed version. The support to the development of EU-wide eGovernment is two-fold: policy measures such as dialogue with Member States, benchmarking, exchange of best practice and mutual learning on the one hand. Past funding programmes such as eTen, FP6 and the current CIP ICT Policy Support Programme and FP7 provide finance to projects covering several dimensions of eGovernment. For the next Multiannual Financial Framework, the Commission proposes to continue this support through the CEF and H2020.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006435/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(5 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Għajnuna lill-banek Ewropej f'diffikultà finanzjarja

Fis-27 ta' Mejju 2013, il-Kummissarju Barnier iddikjara li l-Kummissjoni se tressaq proposta biex tgħin lill-banek Ewropej li jinsabu f'diffikultà finanzjarja.

Il-Kummissjoni meta qed tipprevedi li din il-proposta tiġi ppreżentata?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Lulju 2013)

Wara l-bidu tal-kriżi finanzjarja fl-2008 u skont l-impenji mifthiema fil-kuntest tal-G20, l-istabbilizzazzjoni tas-swieq finanzjarji saret prijorità u r-riforma tas-settur finanzjarju għodda kruċjali biex din tinkiseb. Ta' importanza għas-settur bankarju, ġew miftiehma regoli ġodda li jirrikjedu aktar kapital u kapital aħjar (CRD IV/CRR) u se jiġu applikati lill-banek kollha fl-Ewropa mill-1 ta' Jannar 2015. Ir-regoli dwar l-irkupru u r-riżoluzzjoni tal-bank bħalissa qed jiġu nnegozjati mill-Parlament Ewropew u mill-Kunsill. Waħda mir-raġunijiet ewlenin ta' dawn ir-regoli hija li jiġi żgurat li jkun hemm pjan ta' tħejjija fil-każ ta' kriżijiet bankarji u jekk huwa possibbli jiġu evitati. Fil-każ li bank xorta waħda jispiċċa f'diffikultajiet, għandu jiġi evitat li jintużaw il-flus tal-kontribwenti.

Fil-kuntest tal-isfidi ppreżentati mill-frammentazzjoni finanzjarja u t-traduzzjoni tagħha fi pressjonijiet ta' finanzjament mhux indaqs u mhux simetriċi, il-ħtiġijiet ta' diżingranġġ u s-sinjali ta' rabtiet interni li jissoktaw bejn il-banek sovrani fiż-żona tal-Euro, il-Kummissjoni Ewropea stabbiliet ideat konkreti għal Unjoni Bankarja fil-Pjan ta' Azzjoni tagħha ppubblikat f'Diċembru 2012, kif mitlub mill-Kunsill Ewropew.

Diġà f'Settembru 2012, il-Kummissjoni ppreżentat element essenżjali tal-Unjoni Bankarja, proposta għal Mekkaniżmu Superviżorju Uniku (MSU). Is-Supervisur Uniku se japplika il-ġabra unika tar-regoli (CRD IV/CRR) rigward banek fiż-żona tal-Euro u banek f'pajjiżi li jiddeċiedu li jidħlu fl-Unjoni Bankarja. Il-proposta kienet reazzjoni diretta għall-konklużjonijiet tal-Kunsill Ewropew f'Ġunju 2012. Is-Superviur Uniku se jibda jopera fl-2014.

Fl-10 ta' Lulju 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta li tkopri żewġ elementi deċiżivi oħrajn tal-Unjoni Bankarja, l-Mekkaniżmu Uniku ta' Riżoluzzjoni u l-Fond ta' Riżoluzzjoni Uniku.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006435/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Assisting European banks in financial difficulty

On 27 May 2013, Commissioner Barnier stated that the Commission would put forward a proposal for assisting European banks in financial difficulty.

When does the Commission expect such a proposal to be presented?

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

Following the outbreak of the financial crisis in 2008 and in line with the commitments agreed within the context of the G20, the stabilisation of financial markets became a priority and financial sector reform a crucial instrument to achieve it. Importantly for the banking sector, new rules requiring more and better capital for banks (CRD IV/CRR) have been agreed and will be applied to all banks in Europe as of 1 January 2015. Rules on bank recovery and resolution are currently being negotiated by the European Parliament and the Council. One of the main purposes of these rules is to ensure that bank crises are planned for and to the largest extent possible, avoided. In case a bank would nevertheless get into difficulties, the recourse to taxpayers' money should be avoided.

In the context of the challenges represented by financial fragmentation and its translation into uneven and asymmetric funding pressures, deleveraging needs, and signs of continued sovereign bank inter-linkages across the Euro area, the European Commission set out concrete ideas for a Banking Union in its Blueprint published in December 2012, as called for by the European Council.

Already in September 2012, the Commission presented one essential element of the Banking Union, a proposal for a Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM). The Single Supervisor will apply the single rulebook (CRD IV/CRR) as regards banks in the Euro area and banks in countries deciding to join the Banking Union. This proposal was a direct response to the conclusions of the European Council in June 2012. The Single Supervisor will become operational in 2014.

On 10 July 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal covering two other decisive elements of the Banking Union, the Single Resolution Mechanism and the Single Resolution Fund.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006437/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(5 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Progress fl-innovazzjoni

Skont it-Tabella ta' Valutazzjoni tal-Unjoni tal-Innovazzjoni tal-2013, 13-il Stat Membru għamlu progress fil-promozzjoni tal-innovazzjoni billi ħadu rwol ta' mexxejja jew segwaċi tal-innovazzjoni. Madankollu, it-13 l-oħra qed jaqgħu lura billi ħadu rwol ta' innovaturi modesti jew moderati.

Il-Kummissjoni kif qed tippjana li tindirizza dan l-iżbilanċ fil-qasam tal-innovazzjoni? Qiegħda tipprevedi l-introduzzjoni ta' programm imfassal biex inaqqas id-distakk bejn Stati Membri innovattivi u dawk li qed jaqgħu lura fil-promozzjoni tal-innovazzjoni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Lulju 2013)

Minn mindu ġiet mnedija l-Inizjattiva ewlenija għal Unjoni tal-Innovazzjoni fl-2010, il-biċċa l-kbira tal-Istati Membri tejbu l-prestazzjoni tagħhom fl-innovazzjoni. Barra minn hekk, it-Tabella ta' Valutazzjoni tal-Unjoni tal-Innovazzjoni għall-2013 uriet li ċerti innovaturi modesti u moderati għamlu progress sinifikanti: il-Litwanja u l-Latvja tejbu l-prestazzjoni innovattiva tagħhom b'rati annwali medji ta' 5.0 % u 4.4 % rispettivament.

Madankollu, il-kwistjoni tal-firda fl-innovazzjoni bejn Stati Membri differenti tibqa' waħda rilevanti. Għalhekk il-Kummissjoni indirizzat din il-problema fir-Rakkomandazzjonijiet speċifiċi għal kull pajjiż tal-2013. Bosta innovaturi modesti jew moderati ([1]) ġew imħeġġa sabiex jaċċelleraw u jimplimentaw ir-riformi fil-qasam tal-innovazzjoni. Barra minn hekk, l-introduzzjoni ta' kondizzjonalità ta' speċjalizzazzjoni intelliġenti fil-qafas tal-politika Ewropea ta' koeżjoni (il-leġiżlazzjoni korrispondenti għadha qed tiġi nnegozjata) tobbliga lill-Istati Membri u lir-reġjuni jivvalutaw il-potenzjal tagħhom fl-innovazzjoni u fl-investiment dirett immirati lejn sett limitat ta' prijoritajiet ta' riċerka u ta' innovazzjoni. Dan għandu jitqies flimkien mal-konċentrazzjoni tematika proposta tal-fondi strutturali futuri ([2]). Barra minn hekk, għadd ta' azzjonijiet ġodda huma previsti fil-qafas ta' Orizzont 2020. L-azzjonijiet Naħdmu Flimkien, Ġemellaġġ u Presidenti taż-ŻER, f'dan ir-rigward se jipprovdu appoġġ għal Stati Membri u reġjuni bi prestazzjoni baxxa.

Il-Kummissjoni se tkompli wkoll bl-appoġġ tagħha sabiex l-Istati Membri u r-reġjuni jsaħħu l-kapaċitajiet innovattivi speċifiċi tagħhom ([3]) bis-saħħa ta' politika ta' innovazzjoni miftuħa u effettiva, inkluża l-promozzjoni ta' innovazzjonijiet mhux teknoloġiċi u ta' għodod ta' politika tal-innovazzjoni min-naħa tad-domanda.

([1]) Pereżempju, l-Ungerija, l-Italja, il-Litwanja, il-Polonja, ir-Rumanija u s-Slovakkja.

([2]) 80 % għar-reġjuni aktar żviluppati, 50 % għal reġjuni anqas żviluppati għal dawn it-temi ta' prijorità: ir-riċerka u l-innovazzjoni, l-ICT, il-kompetittività tal-SMEs u l-effiċjenza enerġetika.

([3]) Ara l-istudju "Lessons from a Decade of Innovation Policy, What can be learnt from the INNO Policy TrendChart and the Innovation Union Scoreboard", ikkummissjonat mill-Kummissjoni. Dan l-istudju huwa disponibbli fuq is-sit elettroniku: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/facts-figures-analysis/trendchart/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006437/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Innovation progress

According to the Innovation Union Scoreboard 2013, 13 Member States have made progress in promoting innovation by being innovation leaders or followers. However, 13 others have been falling behind by being modest or moderate innovators.

How is the Commission planning to deal with this imbalance in the field of innovation? Does it foresee the introduction of a programme designed to close the gap between innovative Member States and those which are falling behind in promoting innovation?

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

Since the launch of the Innovation Union flagship initiative in 2010, most of the Member States improved their innovation performance. In addition, the Innovation Union Scoreboard 2013 showed that some modest and moderate innovators have significantly progressed: Lithuania and Latvia have improved their innovative performance at average annual rates of 5.0% and 4.4% respectively.

However the issue of innovation divide between different Member States remains relevant. Therefore the Commission has tackled this problem in the 2013 country-specific recommendations. Several modest or moderate innovators ([1]) have been urged to accelerate and implement reforms in the field of innovation. Furthermore, introduction of the smart specialization conditionality in European cohesion policy (corresponding legislation is still being negotiated) obliges Member States and regions to assess their innovation potential and direct investment towards a limited set of research and innovation priorities. This has to be seen in conjunction with the proposed thematic concentration of future structural funds ([2]). In addition, a number of new actions are foreseen under Horizon 2020. The Teaming, Twinning and ERA Chairs actions will in this regard provide support to low performing Member States and regions.

The Commission will also continue its support so that Member States and regions enhance their specific innovative capacities ([3]) by responsive innovation policy, including promotion of non-technological innovations and demand-side innovation policy tools.

([1]) Eg. Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.
([2]) 80% for more developed regions, 50% for less developed regions for the following priority themes: research and innovation, ICT, SME competitiveness and energy efficiency.
([3]) See the study Lessons from a Decade of Innovation Policy, What can be learnt from the INNO Policy TrendChart and The Innovation Union Scoreboard ordered by the Commission. It is available under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/facts-figures-analysis/trendchart/index_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006438/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(5 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Alleanza tal-Oċean Atlantiku għar-riċerka

Fit-13 ta' Mejju 2013, l-alleanza tal-Oċean Atlantiku għar-riċerka tnediet mill-UE, il-Kanada u l-Istati Uniti. Il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni għall-Atlantiku (IP/13/420), adottat mill-Kummissjoni, għandu l-għan li jippromwovi s-sostenibbiltà tal-ġestjoni tar-riżorsi tal-oċean. L-UE u l-Istati Membri investew madwar EUR 2 biljun sa mill-2002 bl-iskop ta' riċerka marittima u tal-baħar.

Fil-fehma tal-Kummissjoni, il-ħolqien ta' din l-alleanza se jwassal għal tnaqqis fl-ammont investit kull sena mill-Istati Membri tal-UE? Jekk dan huwa l-każ, il-Kummissjoni kemm qed tipprevedi li jkun kbir dan it-tnaqqis?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Damanaki f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(25 ta' Lulju 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni temmen li l-alleanza għar-riċerka fl-Atlantiku sejra, fi żmien medju sa twil, tikkontribwixxi biex iżżid l-effiċjenza tal-proċess tar-riċerka marittima fl-UE. Il-vapuri u l-pjattaformi għall-istħarriġ u l-kampjunar tal-oċean huma parti sinifikanti tal-ispiża, allura il-kondiviżjoni ta' din l-infrastruttura għandha tirriżulta fi tfaddil. Madankollu, minħabba l-funzjoni tal-oċean bħala sistema ta' appoġġ għall-ħajja fuq il-pjaneta u minħabba l-benefiċċju potenzjali li din ir-riċerka tista' ġġib lill-ekonomija blu, il-Kummissjoni mhix qed tistenna li l-Istati Membri jnaqqsu sostanzjalment l-investiment fir-riċerka tal-baħar u r-riċerka marittima.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006438/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Atlantic Ocean research alliance

On 13 May 2013, the Atlantic Ocean research alliance was launched by the EU, Canada, and the US. The Atlantic Action Plan (IP/13/420), adopted by the Commission, aims at promoting sustainability of the management of the ocean's resources. The EU and Member States have invested around EUR 2 billion since 2002 for the purpose of maritime and marine research.

In the Commission's opinion, will the creation of this alliance lead to a reduction in the amount invested annually by EU Member States? If so, how much of a reduction does the Commission envisage?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission believes that the Atlantic research alliance will, in the medium to long term, contribute to a more efficient maritime research process in the EU. Ships and platforms for surveying and sampling the ocean make up a significant part of the cost so sharing such infrastructure should result in savings. However, given the ocean's function as a life support system for the planet and given the potential benefit to the blue economy that this research can bring, the Commission does not expect that the Member States would substantially scale down investment in marine and maritime research.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006440/13
alla Commissione
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Turbamento in Turchia e prospettiva di adesione all'UE

Il premier Erdogan è sempre più fortemente criticato per l'autoritarismo del suo governo ed è accusato di gestire una politica che tende troppo a islamizzare la società (imprigionamento di più di 70 giornalisti turchi accusati di terrorismo e non meglio precisati attentati alla Costituzione, eliminazione del divieto «ataturkiano» di indossare il velo nelle università e nei luoghi pubblici, bando della vendita di alcool dalle 22 alle 6 di mattina, a cento metri da una moschea o da una scuola, limitazione del trucco per le donne, imposizione di un abbigliamento più consono alle hostess della Turkish Airlines, divieto morale di effusioni in pubblico tra fidanzati).

Persino la protesta ecologista dell'1, 2, 3 e 4 giugno nel quartiere di Taksim (Istanbul) da parte dei giovani che si opponevano alla distruzione di un parco adiacente alla piazza che il governo vuol trasformare in un centro commerciale è diventata un generale atto di accusa alla politica del governo, degenerando in scontri violenti con la polizia e portando a decine di arresti, molti feriti e persino 3 morti.

I fautori dell'ingresso della Turchia nell'UE affermano che potrebbe aumentare l'influenza dell'Unione nel Medio Oriente e migliorare la sicurezza energetica attraverso il collegamento dell'Europa al gas del Mar Caspio. Ma gli scettici ribadiscono che la Turchia ha ancora molta strada da fare in materia di diritti umani e che le regioni più povere potrebbero chiedere miliardi di fondi europei di coesione.

A tal proposito, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se, alla luce dei recenti sviluppi e delle misure d'islamizzazione adottate della Turchia, vi potranno essere conseguenze sul processo di adesione della Turchia all'UE;

2. se, stante che il sostegno popolare turco all'adesione all'UE è sceso da oltre il 70 % nel 2005 all'attuale 33 %, quali misure l'UE intende adottare per informare i cittadini turchi dei vantaggi derivanti dall'adesione e rendere l'UE attraente?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 agosto 2013)

La Commissione segue attentamente le vicende e gli eventi citati dall'onorevole deputata.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e il commissario per l'allargamento e la politica europea di vicinato hanno ripetutamente condannato, anche nel dibattito tenutosi durante la seduta plenaria del Parlamento il 12 giugno 2013, l'uso eccessivo della forza per mettere fine a proteste pacifiche. La democrazia richiede il dialogo con tutti i settori della società, compresi quelli non rappresentati dalla maggioranza parlamentare. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e il commissario per l'allargamento e la politica europea di vicinato hanno ribadito alle autorità turche che occorre svolgere un'indagine, in tempi brevi e secondo criteri trasparenti, sulla violenza della polizia e che i responsabili devono essere consegnati alla giustizia.

I paesi che intendono negoziare l'adesione all'UE devono mettere in atto sistemi che garantiscano il rispetto dei diritti umani, comprese le libertà di espressione, di riunione e di associazione, conformemente agli articoli 10 e 11 della Convenzione europea sui diritti umani e alla giurisprudenza della Corte europea dei diritti umani.

Gli eventi di attualità sottolineano l'importanza di un ulteriore impegno con la Turchia nel processo di adesione all'UE, anche sui capitoli di negoziato più fondamentali per le riforme: capitolo 23 — diritti giudiziari e fondamentali e capitolo 24 — giustizia, libertà e sicurezza. Lavorare per promuovere l'adesione della Turchia, rispettando i criteri di adesione e attuando le riforme necessarie, è il modo migliore di convincere l'opinione pubblica dei vantaggi derivanti dall'adesione all'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006440/13
to the Commission
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Unrest in Turkey and prospects of accession to the EU

Prime Minister Erdoğan is coming under increasing criticism for the authoritarianism of his government and stands accused of implementing policies which tend towards excessive Islamification of Turkish society (imprisoning over 70 Turkish journalists accused of terrorism and unspecified infringements of the constitution, overturning the 'Ataturk' ban on wearing the veil in universities and public places, banning the sale of alcohol between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. within 100 metres of a mosque or school, restricting how much make-up women can wear, forcing female cabin crew on Turkish Airlines to wear a more proper uniform, banning public displays of affection between couples, on moral grounds).

Even the environmental protest of 1, 2, 3 and 4 June in the Taksim district (Istanbul) by young people opposed to the destruction of a park next to the square, which the Government wants to turn into a shopping centre, has become a general protest against the Government's policies, degenerating into violent clashes with the police and resulting in dozens of arrests and even three deaths.

Supporters of Turkey's accession to the EU claim that it could increase the European Union's influence in the Middle East and improve energy security by connecting Europe to the gas in the Caspian Sea. Sceptics, however, point out that Turkey still has a long way to go as far as human rights are concerned and that the poorer regions could ask for billions from the EU cohesion funds.

1. In view of recent developments and the Islamification measures taken by the Turkish Government, could there be consequences for the process of Turkey's accession to the EU?

2. Considering that popular support in Turkey for accession to the EU has fallen from over 70% in 2005 to 33% at present, what measures will the EU take to inform Turkish citizens of the benefits of accession and to make the EU attractive?

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

The Commission has followed the issues and events mentioned by the Honourable Member closely.

The HR/VP and Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy have repeatedly condemned, including during the plenary debate in Parliament on 12 June 2013, the excessive use of force to silence peaceful protests. Democracy requires dialogue with all segments of society, including those not represented by the parliamentary majority. The HR/VP and Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy have stressed to the Turkish authorities that a swift and transparent investigation into police violence needs to be followed through and those responsible need to be brought to account.

Any country negotiating its EU accession needs to put in place systems guaranteeing human rights, including freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly and association, in line with Article 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

Current events underline the importance of further engagement with Turkey within the framework of the EU accession process, including on those negotiating chapters most fundamental to its reform efforts: Chapter 23 — Judiciary and Fundamental Rights and Chapter 24 — Justice, Freedom and Security. Working towards Turkey's accession, by meeting accession criteria and making necessary reforms, is the best way to convince the public of the benefits of EU membership.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006441/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Società S.I.T.T. di Ancona: mancato sostegno alle attività industriali da parte della Regione Marche

La società S.I.T.T. (Società installazioni telefoniche e telematiche), costituita nel 1984, operava nel territorio della Regione Marche nei settori relativi alla progettazione, realizzazione, fornitura di sistemi telematici e di sicurezza, impiantistica e reti dati, oltre che all'installazione di ripetitori sia per la telefonia pubblica che privata, offrendo prodotti rispondenti agli standard nazionali, europei ed internazionali.

Tuttavia, nel 2001 la Regione Marche ha varato una legge regionale sulle modalità di installazione degli impianti (Legge n. 25/2001 in materia di impianti fissi di radiocomunicazione) che ha fissato una limitazione del campo magnetico a 3 volt per metro rispetto i 6 volt per metro previsti dalla normativa nazionale.

Tutto ciò ha procurato forti ripercussioni economiche sulle aziende operanti nel settore, oltre a creare ulteriori disfunzioni derivanti dai problemi di copertura del sistema della telefonia mobile.

Tale situazione ha di fatto portato la società S.I.T.T. nel 2006 al fallimento non potendo assicurare la continuità aziendale e procedendo così al licenziamento di circa 200 dipendenti.

Precedentemente, la Corte Costituzionale, chiamata nel 2003 ad esprimersi sulla vicenda, aveva bocciato alcuni commi della legge regionale delle Marche (tra cui quelli riferiti ai limiti del campo magnetico) per violazione dell'articolo 117 della Costituzione italiana.

Per tali motivi, nel gennaio 2012 il Tribunale di Ancona ha condannato la Regione Marche a risarcire l'azienda per i danni subiti.

Premesso che la tutela della salute pubblica è uno degli obiettivi della normativa comunitaria in materia di campi elettromagnetici, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali azioni o misure potrebbero essere messe in campo per sostenere l'azienda a rientrare nel mercato e favorire il reintegro dei lavoratori;

2. quali provvedimenti intende assumere a favore dell'azienda, dato che la normativa comunitaria di settore mira, tra le altre cose, a garantire la continuità e lo sviluppo delle attività industriali che prevedono l'utilizzo dei campi elettromagnetici;

3. se è in grado di fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2013)

Gli articoli 168 e 169 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea non conferiscono all'UE la competenza a legiferare riguardo alla protezione della popolazione dagli effetti potenzialmente nocivi dei campi elettromagnetici e ne lasciano la responsabilità principale agli Stati membri.

Per sostenere le iniziative degli Stati membri nel settore in questione e proteggere la popolazione il Consiglio ha adottato la raccomandazione 1999/519/CE ([1]) relativa alla limitazione dell'esposizione della popolazione ai campi elettromagnetici. Le norme tecniche armonizzate che forniscono una presunzione di conformità con la pertinente legislazione UE sono volte a garantire che l'esposizione della popolazione ai campi elettromagnetici non superi i limiti stabiliti da tale raccomandazione del Consiglio.

Il comitato scientifico dei rischi sanitari emergenti e recentemente identificati ([2]) dispone di un mandato permanente per valutare i rischi derivanti dall'esposizione ai campi elettromagnetici. Tale comitato comunicherà un nuovo parere in merito entro l'autunno 2013.

([1]) GU L 199 del 30.7.1999, pag. 59.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006441/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: The S.I.T.T. company in Ancona: lack of support for industrial activities from the Marche Regional Government

The S.I.T.T. company (Società installazioni telefoniche e telematiche) [Telephone and Telematics Installation Company] was established in 1984 and used to operate in the Marche region in sectors ranging from the planning, implementation and supply of telematics and safety systems, plant design and data networks, to the installation of masts for public and private telephone networks, offering products that met national, European and international standards.

However, the Marche Regional Government enacted a regional law in 2001 on the methods for installing equipment (Law No 25/2001 on fixed radiocommunication installations) which set a magnetic field limit of three volts per metre compared with the six volts per metre stipulated by national legislation.

This had serious financial repercussions for businesses operating in the sector, as well as creating further operational issues resulting from the coverage problems of the mobile telephone system.

This situation resulted in the S.I.T.T. company going bust in 2006, since it was unable to continue as a going concern, forcing it to make some 200 employees redundant.

The Constitutional Court, which had previously been called on in 2003 to make a ruling on these events, had rejected certain paragraphs in the Marche regional law (including those referring to the magnetic field limits) since they infringed Article 117 of the Italian Constitution.

On those grounds, in January 2012 the Court of Ancona ordered the Marche Regional Government to compensate the company for the losses it incurred.

Protecting public health is one of the goals of EU legislation on electromagnetic fields.

1. What steps or measures could be taken to help the company re-enter the market and promote the reinstatement of the workers?

2. What measures does the Commission plan to take to support the company, considering that EU legislation in the sector seeks, among other things, to guarantee the continuity and development of industrial activities which require the use of electromagnetic fields?

3. Can it provide an overview of the situation?

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

Articles 168 and 169 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union do not confer the EU competence to legislate in the area of protection of the general public from the potential effects of electromagnetic fields and leaves the primary responsibility with the Member States.

In order to support Member States' action on this area and with the objective of protecting the public, the Council adopted Recommendation 1999/519/EC ([1]) setting limits for the exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields. The harmonised technical standards which provide a presumption of conformity with relevant EU legislation are designed to ensure that the exposure of the public to electromagnetic fields does not exceed the limits established by this Council Recommendation.

The independent Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks ([2]) has a standing mandate to evaluate electromagnetic fields risks. The Scientific Committee is due to release a new opinion on this by the autumn 2013.

([1]) OJ L 199/59, 30 July 1999.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006442/13
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Insidie e pericoli del cibo low-cost

A causa della crisi, in Italia metà delle famiglie ha tagliato sulla quantità e la qualità degli alimenti puntando sul cosiddetto cibo low cost che dietro un prezzo basso — a volte troppo basso per i reali valori del mercato — nasconde insidie e pericoli per i consumatori e la loro salute.

Il fenomeno non è solo italiano, ma diffuso in tutta l'Unione.

Considerato che l'80 % delle segnalazioni per rischi alimentari in Europa è stato provocato da cibo a basso costo proveniente da paesi extra-EU, in particolare Cina, India e Turchia, che tale problematica si aggiunge a quella già grave e pericolosa della contraffazione alimentare e che proprio in questi giorni sono in corso i Triloghi per definire la nuova Politica agricola comune (PAC) 2014-2020,

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza della situazione illustrata;

2. se intende prendere azioni concrete con l'obiettivo, da un lato, di salvaguardare la salute dei consumatori europei e la sicurezza alimentare e ambientale dell'Unione e, dall'altro, di tutelare da questa sorta di dumping gli agricoltori e tutta la filiera ad essi collegata;

3. se intende rivedere a breve gli accordi bilaterali vigenti con alcuni paesi terzi, principali fonti di tali prodotti?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(15 luglio 2013)

1. Sul mercato vengono immessi prodotti alimentari di varia qualità. Potrebbe quindi accadere che, in determinate circostanze, i prezzi costituiscano per i consumatori l'elemento chiave per operare una scelta degli alimenti. Tutti i prodotti disponibili sul mercato, a prescindere dalla loro qualità, devono in ogni caso ottemperare alle richieste norme di sicurezza alimentare.

2.-3. Occorre pertanto che i prodotti alimentari importati da paesi terzi siano conformi alle prescrizioni UE o ad altre prescrizioni che offrono lo stesso livello di tutela della salute. La normativa dell'Unione protegge i consumatori contro gli eventuali rischi connessi con alimenti provenienti da paesi terzi che non si conformano ai requisiti formulati dall'UE. Va ricordato a tale proposito che gli alimenti di origine animale vengono importati solo da paesi terzi e stabilimenti espressamente autorizzati all'esportazione nell'UE e sono soggetti a controlli sistematici ai punti di ingresso nell'Unione. L'elenco dei paesi autorizzati e dei beni viene aggiornato ogniqualvolta il livello di rischio lo giustifichi. Per quanto attiene ai prodotti alimentari di origine non animale, l'allegato I del regolamento (CE) n. 669/2009 ([1]) dispone che i prodotti inseriti nell'elenco (aggiornato con cadenza trimestrale) siano soggetti all'obbligo di effettuare maggiori controlli alle frontiere, a causa dei rischi specifici che essi potrebbero comportare. L'attuale elenco comprende controlli particolari su prodotti provenienti da alcuni dei paesi menzionati dall'onorevole parlamentare ed è aggiornato — anche in questo caso — ogni volta che il livello di rischio lo giustifichi.

Per ulteriori informazioni si rinvia al sito web della Direzione generale Salute e tutela dei consumatori ai seguenti link ([2]).

([1]) GU L 194 del 25.7.2009.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/animalproducts/index_it.htm (commercio e importazione di prodotti animali)
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/controls/increased_checks/index_en.htm (maggiori controlli sulle importazioni di alimenti di origine non animale)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006442/13
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: The hidden dangers of low-cost food

As a result of the crisis, half of all Italian families have made cuts in the quantity and quality of the food they buy, relying on so-called 'low-cost food', behind whose low price — sometimes too low for real market values — lurk hidden dangers for consumers and their health.

This phenomenon is occurring not only in Italy, but across the European Union.

In Europe, 80% of food risk alerts stem from low-cost food from countries outside the EU, particularly China, India and Turkey. In addition to this problem, there is the more serious and dangerous issue of food counterfeiting. Furthermore, trialogues are under way at this very moment to establish the new common agricultural policy (CAP) 2014-2020.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation?

2. Does it plan to take concrete steps to safeguard the health of European consumers and food and environmental safety within the Union, and to offer protection to farmers and the industry as a whole against this kind of dumping?

3. Does it plan shortly to review the bilateral agreements in force with certain third countries, which are the main sources of such products?

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

1. Different quality of food are put on the market. It might happen that, under certain circumstances, prices become the key element for consumer choice. However, all available commodities shall meet the required food safety standards, whatever the level of quality of these products.

2 and 3. Therefore, foodstuffs imported from third countries must comply with EU requirements or with requirements which offer the same level of protection to health. Union legislation is in place to protect consumers against the risks that might be posed by foodstuffs from third countries which do not conform with EU requirements. In particular, food of animal origin is only imported from third countries and establishments specifically authorised to export to the EU, and subject to systematic controls at the point of entry into the Union. The list of authorised countries and commodities is updated whenever the level of risk so warrants. As regards food of non-animal origin, Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 669/2009 ([1]) provides for a list (updated quarterly) of products which, because of specific risks they might present, are subject to mandatory increased controls at the border. The current list of such products includes specific controls on commodities from some of the countries referred to by the Honourable Member, and is updated — also in this case — every time the level of risk so warrants.

More information can be found on the website of the Health and Consumers Directorate-General at the following links ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 194, 25.7.2009.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/animalproducts/index_en.htm (trade and imports of products of animal origin).
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/controls/increased_checks/index_en.htm (increased controls on import of food of non-animal origin).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006443/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(5 juni 2013)

Betreft: Subsidieverlening Universiteit van Tilburg

Op de website van de Universiteit van Tilburg valt te lezen dat er van 15 t/m 28 juli aanstaande een cursus wordt gegeven over „Democratie en Cosmopolitisme" ([1]). Deze cursus behandelt de vraagstelling of nog wel invulling aan de democratie gegeven kan worden zonder cosmopolitisme. „In the past it may have seemed that democracy could be fully defined at the level of the singular state, but nowadays the political system of any state is more clearly influenced by the rest of the world", aldus de Universiteit van Tilburg. Dit omdat „… the new media, migration, tourism, the rise of hybrid forms of culture etc. have made daily life itself cosmopolitan". Kant en Marx worden van stal gehaald ter onderbouwing van één en ander. De cursus wordt gesponsord door de Europese Unie, zo blijkt. In dit kader de volgende vragen:

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven vanuit welke begrotingspost deze subsidie wordt verstrekt en wat de exacte hoogte van de subsidie bedraagt?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven wat de bijzondere reden was dat de Universiteit van Tilburg deze subsidie toegekend krijgt, de specifieke doelstelling, wat de voorwaarden zijn en of evaluatie achteraf plaatsvindt?

3. Is de Commissie al dermate van het educatieve pad af dat zij pure D66-propaganda via universitaire cursussen subsidieert?

4. Ziet de Commissie uberhaupt nog een rol weggelegd voor de soevereine natiestaat of is de dwingende wens tot het komen tot een supranationale monsterstaat nu echt volledig leidend geworden?

Antwoord van mevrouw Vassiliou namens de Commissie
(17 juli 2013)

Het project waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, is een Erasmus intensief programma (IP), dat wordt gefinancierd in het kader van het programma Een leven lang leren. Intensieve programma's zijn korte studieprogramma's waaraan studenten en docenten van hogeronderwijsinstellingen uit minstens drie Europese landen deelnemen. Deze programma's bevorderen het internationale onderwijs in specialistische onderwerpen en geven de studenten toegang tot de wetenschappelijke kennis van meerdere universiteiten. In 2012 werd 22 172,50 EUR aan het betreffende IP toegekend. In 2013 is na een aanvraag om verlenging 23 845,43 EUR toegewezen.

Het door Universiteit van Tilburg aangeboden project is volledig in overeenstemming met de voorwaarden die voor de financiering van een IP zijn vastgesteld. Het project is erop gericht een gezamenlijke opleidingsmodule in de praktische filosofie te ontwikkelen en gemeenschappelijke normen voor toezicht, waardering en docentbeoordelingen vast te stellen. Nadat een IP heeft plaatsgevonden, dient de coördinerende instelling een eindverslag in bij het nationale agentschap dat zowel de inhoud van het IP als het financiële beheer beoordeelt.

Hogeronderwijsinstellingen genieten volledige wetenschappelijke vrijheid bij het opstellen van hun programma's, ook bij IP's. In dit geval is de inhoud van het IP samengesteld door de projectpartners: de filosofieafdelingen van de universiteiten van Tilburg, Essex (VK), Antwerpen (België), Cluj (Roemenië), Ankara (Turkije) en Krakau (Polen). Het IP leert de studenten om filosofische zienswijzen en academische vaardigheden toe te passen bij een diepteanalyse van opkomende Europese sociaal-politieke kwesties en om te kijken naar het verband tussen nationale en internationale perspectieven op democratie.

([1]) http://www.tilburguniversity.edu/education/summerschool/courses/democracy-cosmopolitanism/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006443/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Subsidies to Tilburg University

According to Tilburg University's website, a course on Democracy and Cosmopolitanism will be held there on 15-28 July of this year ([1]). This course will address the question as to whether democracy can be maintained without a cosmopolitan perspective. 'In the past, it may have seemed that democracy could be fully defined at the level of the singular state, but nowadays, the political system of any state is more clearly influenced by the rest of the world', according to Tilburg University. This is because '… the new media, migration, tourism, the rise of hybrid forms of culture, etc. have made daily life itself cosmopolitan'. Kant and Marx have been dug up to support these statements. Apparently, the course is being sponsored by the European Union. In this context, I would like to put the following questions:

1. Can the Commission specify the budget item from which this subsidy comes and the exact amount of the subsidy?

2. Can the Commission indicate the special reason why Tilburg University has been awarded this subsidy, its specific objective, the conditions attached thereto, and whether there will be an *ex post* evaluation?

3. Has the Commission strayed so far from the educational path that it now subsidies pure D66 propaganda through university courses?

4. Does the Commission still see any role for the sovereign nation state, or has the overriding desire to create a supranational monster really become the driving force?

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

The project the Honourable Member is referring to is an Erasmus Intensive Programme (IP), funded under the Lifelong Learning Programme. Intensive Programmes are short subject-related programmes of study, bringing together students and teaching staff from Higher Education Institutions from at least three European countries. These programmes encourage the multinational learning of specialist topics and provide students with access to academic knowledge that is not available in one university alone. In 2012 the IP in question was granted EUR 22 172.50. In 2013 an application for a renewal was awarded EUR 23 845.43.

The project presented by Tilburg University fully meets the criteria set for funding an IP. It aims to develop a joint module of training in practical philosophy and to benchmark common criteria of supervision, grading and teaching evaluation. After an IP has taken place the coordinating institution submits a final report to the National Agency which evaluates both the IP's content and financial management.

Higher Education Institutions benefit from full academic freedom in designing their programmes, including in the case of IPs. In this case, the content of the IP is the common product of the project partners, the philosophy departments of the Universities of Tilburg, Essex (UK), Antwerp (Belgium), Cluj (Romania), Ankara (Turkey) and Krakow (Poland). The IP educates students to bring philosophical views and academic skills to bear on in-depth analysis of emergent European socio-political issues and to look at the relation between national and international perspectives on democracy.

([1]) http://www.tilburguniversity.edu/education/summerschool/courses/democracy-cosmopolitanism/.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006444/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 juni 2013)

Betreft: Vervoer naar top in Rabat op 1 en 2 maart 2013

Op 1 en 2 maart jongstleden bracht Commissievoorzitter Barroso een officieel bezoek aan Rabat. De Commissievoorzitter hield er besprekingen over binnenlandse zaken, bilaterale relaties en de geopolitieke toestand in de regio. Ook werd het opstarten van onderhandelingen over een vrijhandelsakkoord vermeld.

Hoe verplaatste de heer Barroso zich?

Indien dit gebeurde met een privé-vliegtuig, wat was daarvan de kostprijs?

Hoeveel zitplaatsen had dit toestel?

Hoeveel personen waren naast de heer Barroso aan boord? In welke functie?

Waren ook medewerkers van commissaris De Gucht aan boord? Zo ja, hoeveel?

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(1 augustus 2013)

Voor de heenreis naar Rabat heeft de heer Barroso gebruikgemaakt van een gecharterd vliegtuig. Hij is met een commerciële vlucht naar Brussel teruggekeerd.

De totale kosten voor het gecharterde vliegtuig bedroegen 46 150 euro.

Op het vliegtuig waren 16 zitplaatsen beschikbaar.

Er waren 15 personen aan boord, onder wie voorzitter Barroso, commissaris Malmström, medewerkers van hun respectieve kabinetten, en andere medewerkers van de Commissie en van de EDEO.

Er waren geen medewerkers van commissaris De Gucht aan boord.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006444/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Travel to summit in Rabat on 1-2 March 2013

On 1-2 March 2013, President Barroso paid an official visit to Rabat. The President held discussions there on domestic affairs, bilateral relations and the geopolitical situation in the region. The launch of negotiations on a new Free Trade Agreement was also announced.

How did Mr Barroso travel there?

If this was in a private plane, how much did it cost?

How many seats were there on the plane?

How many people were on board in addition to Mr Barroso? In what capacity were they there?

Were Commissioner De Gucht's employees also on board? If so, how many?

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

Mr Barroso took a chartered air transport for the outgoing trip to Rabat and returned to Brussels using a commercial flight.

The total cost of the chartered aircraft was EUR 46.150.

The total number of seats available on the aircraft was 16.

There were 15 people on board, including President Barroso, Commissioner Malmström, members of their respective Cabinet as well as other members of Commission/EEAS staff.

No staff of Commissioner De Gucht was on board.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006445/13
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(5 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Strategie de abordare globală a problematicii fumatului în rândul tinerilor

Apreciez răspunsul oferit de Comisie la întrebarea mea anterioară privind o „Strategie de abordare globală a problematicii fumatului în rândul tinerilor", răspuns care sintetizează direcțiile de acțiune în cadrul unei politici de prevenire și reducere a fumatului: măsuri legislative, măsuri suplimentare de control al produselor din tutun, precum și campanii educaționale și de sensibilizare a opinie publice.

Cu toate acestea, un aspect al întrebării nu a fost acoperit de Comisie și anume cel care se referă la necesitatea înțelegerii, precizării și abordării cauzelor pentru care tinerii încep și continuă să fumeze, aspect pe care îl consider esențial pentru a potența și maximiza impactul măsurilor și acțiunilor enumerate de Comisie.

De aceea, solicit Comisiei să-și precizeze poziția cu privire la necesitatea promovării la nivelul Uniunii Europene a unei strategii de abordare multifactorială a acestor cauze, pentru a obține schimbări durabile în mentalitatea și comportamentul tinerilor în ceea ce privește fumatul și pentru a combate mai eficient proliferarea consumului de tutun la tineri, știut fiind faptul că prevenția este o parte esențială a combaterii acestui fenomen.

Răspuns dat de dl. Borg în numele Comisiei
(22 iulie 2013)

Comisia colectează periodic informații privind consumul și atitudinile cetățenilor europeni față de consumul de tutun, prin intermediul sondajelor Eurobarometru ([1]). Potrivit ultimului sondaj realizat, procentul de fumători este ușor mai ridicat în rândul tinerilor cu vârste între 15 și 24 de ani. Acesta este de 29 %, față de procentul de 28 %, înregistrat în cazul întregii populații analizate (cetățeni cu vârsta de peste 15 ani). În același timp, sondajul arată că presiunea anturajului este cel mai important motiv pentru care tinerii încep să fumeze ([2]), urmat de exemplul părinților fumători.

Rezultatele sondajelor Eurobarometru și ale altor studii indică, de asemenea, că diferitele măsuri aplicate contribuie la reducerea fumatului. Este vorba despre măsuri legislative, măsuri fiscale și măsuri referitoare la prețul produselor din tutun, despre interzicerea publicității și restricțiile privind accesul la produsele din tutun, precum și despre campaniile educaționale și de sensibilizare a opiniei publice.

Comisia este de acord cu distinsa membră a Parlamentului European în ceea ce privește importanța aplicării unei strategii ample vizând problematica fumatului în rândul tinerilor, o strategie axată pe descurajarea dobândirii acestui obicei. Prin urmare, după cum a subliniat în răspunsul său la E-004211/2013 ([3]), Comisia este de părere că, în afară de dispozițiile propunerii de revizuire a Directivei privind produsele din tutun, se impun măsuri suplimentare pentru a reduce semnificativ fumatul și pentru a-i descuraja pe tineri să înceapă să consume produse din tutun.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/eurobarometers/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/eurobaro_attitudes_towards_tobacco_2012_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006445/13
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Strategy for a global approach to tackling the problem of smoking among young people

I am grateful for the Commission's answer to my previous question on a strategy for a global approach to tackling the problem of smoking among young people, which summarises the types of action taken as part of a policy to discourage and reduce smoking: legislative measures, additional control measures for tobacco products, and educational and awareness campaigns.

Nevertheless, one aspect of my question was not addressed in the Commission's answer, namely the need to identify, understand and tackle what causes young people to start and continue smoking, which I consider vital in order to boost and maximise the impact of the measures and actions described by the Commission.

Can the Commission state its position on the need to promote an EU-level strategy for a global, cross-cutting approach to tackling the causes of smoking among young people, in order to achieve a lasting change in their attitude and behaviour in relation to smoking and combat the widespread consumption of tobacco among young people more effectively, given that prevention plays a key role in dealing with this problem?

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

The Commission regularly collects information on the use and attitudes of European citizens regarding tobacco through Eurobarometer surveys ([1]). The latest such survey indicated that smoking prevalence in 15-24 year old EU-citizens is slightly higher than in the total population examined (29% compared to 28% in the whole of the 15+age group), and that peer pressure is the most important reason for starting to smoke ([2]), followed by the smoking behaviour of parents..

The results of Eurobarometer surveys and other studies also indicate that different measures relating to product regulation, pricing and tax measures, prohibition of advertising, restrictions on access to tobacco products, creation of smoke-free environments, as well as educational and awareness campaigns help to reduce smoking prevalence.

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that a comprehensive strategy is important to tackle the issue of youth smoking focused on discouraging young people from starting to smoke. Therefore, as outlined in its reply to E-004211/2013 ([3]), the Commission believes that in addition to the provisions proposed in the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive, further measures, are indeed required to substantially reduce smoking prevalence and to discourage young people to start consuming tobacco products.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/eurobarometers/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/eurobaro_attitudes_towards_tobacco_2012_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006446/13
neuvostolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(5. kesäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Hizbollah-järjestön nauttima arvostus

Hizbollah on aseellista toimintaa harjoittava järjestö, jonka on todettu syyllistyneen mm. kansainväliseen terrorismiin Lähi-idässä ja Euroopassa sekä sotatoimiin Syyriassa. Meidän kannaltamme vakava esimerkki tästä on EU:n alueella tapahtunut Hizbollahin terroritoiminta, kuten viime kesänä itsemurhapommittajan isku bussiin Bulgariassa.

Hizbollahiin liittyvä ongelma johtuu sen harjoittamasta terroritoiminnasta samalla kun se nauttii kansainvälistä hyväksyntää. Hizbollahin aseellisen väkivallan ja sen nauttiman luottamuksen välillä vallitsee räikeä ristiriita. Ongelma liittyy Hizbollahin asemaan ja rooliin kansainvälisenä poliittisena toimijana, ei sen yksittäisiin toimiin ja niiden tuomittavuuteen.

Millä tavalla neuvosto perustelee EU:n hitautta tuomita Hizbollah terroritoimintaa harjoittavana järjestönä? Onko odotettavissa, että neuvosto päätyy kielteiseen linjaukseen Hizbollahin suhteen? Neuvoston vastauksesta (E-001276/2013) ilmenee neuvoston kielteinen kanta kaikkea terrorismia kohtaan. Eikö tästä seuraa, että terroritoimintaa harjoittava järjestö luokitellaan terroristijärjestöksi ja siihen suhtaudutaan sen mukaisesti?

Vastaus
(30. syyskuuta 2013)

Kuten kysyjä ehkä tietää, neuvosto päätti 22. heinäkuuta 2013 merkitä Hizbollahin sotilaallisen siiven EU:n terroristijärjestöjen luetteloon.

Unioni vahvisti samalla olevansa sitoutunut tukemaan Libanonin vakautta. Neuvosto ja komissio myös korostivat yhteisessä julkilausumassa, että päätös ei estä vuoropuhelun jatkamista kaikkien Libanonin poliittisten puolueiden kanssa eikä vaikuta laillisiin rahansiirtoihin Libanoniin tai EU:n ja sen jäsenvaltioiden tuen, kuten humanitaarisen avun toimittamiseen Libanoniin. Lisäksi neuvosto ja komissio sitoutuivat tarkastelemaan päätöstä uudelleen kuuden kuukauden kuluttua.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006446/13
to the Council
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Reputation enjoyed by Hezbollah

Hezbollah is an organisation committed to armed struggle and is proven to have been involved, *inter alia*, in international terrorism in the Middle East and Europe and in the fighting in Syria. A serious example of this from our point of view is Hezbollah's terrorist activities within the borders of the European Union, for example last summer's attack by a suicide bomber on a bus in Bulgaria.

The problem with Hezbollah arises from the fact that it engages in terrorism while at the same time enjoying international approval. There is a serious contradiction between Hezbollah's armed violence and the confidence that the organisation enjoys. The problem is concerned with Hezbollah's status and role as an international political actor, not with its individual actions and their reprehensible nature.

How does the Council justify the EU's slowness in condemning Hezbollah as an organisation which engages in terrorism? Can the Council be expected to adopt a negative line towards Hezbollah? The Council's answer to Question E-001276/2013 expresses the Council's negative attitude towards all terrorism. Does it not follow from this that an organisation which engages in terrorism should be classified as a terrorist organisation and treated accordingly?

Reply
(30 September 2013)

As the Honourable Member may know, on 22 July 2013 the Council agreed to designate the Hezbollah Military Wing on the EU list of terrorist organisations.

At the same time, the Union reaffirmed its commitment to the stability of Lebanon. In that regard, the Council and the Commission underlined in a Joint Declaration that this decision does not prevent the continuation of dialogue with all political parties in Lebanon and that it does not affect legitimate financial transfers to Lebanon and the delivery of assistance, including humanitarian assistance, from the EU and its Member States in Lebanon. They also undertook a commitment to review this decision in six months.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-006447/13
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(5 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Cultivarea camelinei în UE

Având în vedere dependența Uniunii de importurile de proteaginoase și faptul că există o plantă oleaginoasă numită „camelina sativa", care prezintă o rezistență sporită la secetă, boli și dăunători și nu este pretențioasă față de sol, adaptându-se bine și la solurile nisipoase sau sărace în substanțe hrănitoare, care ar putea contribui la limitarea dependenței UE față de importurile de soia din țări terțe pentru creșterea animalelor:

Ar putea susține Comisia un proiect-pilot care să aibă ca scop următoarele:

1. creșterea gradului de conștientizare a fermierilor cu privire la beneficiile cultivării camelinei;

2. schimbul de cunoștințe între fermierii din diferite țări, cultivatori de camelină;

3. finanțarea unui studiu referitor la valoarea adăugată a acestei culturi pe piața agricolă europeană?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(28 iunie 2013)

Comisia este interesată să studieze posibilitățile de îmbunătățire a competitivității culturilor proteice din agricultura internă. Din acest motiv, a fost lansat un focus grup dedicat de către punctul de servicii al Parteneriatului european pentru inovare „Productivitatea și durabilitatea agriculturii" (EIP). Acest focus grup va analiza posibilitățile și metodele de îmbunătățire a competitivității plantelor proteice în general. Focus grupul poate totodată să definească nevoi de cercetare specifice.

Pe lângă activitatea focus grupului, desfășurarea unui proiect pilot referitor la posibilitățile de a cultiva Camelina sativa în diferite regiuni poate oferi cunoștințe care ar putea fi utile pentru îmbunătățirea competitivității culturilor proteice.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006447/13
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Camelina cultivation in the EU

The Union currently relies on imports of protein crops. However, the oilseed crop Camelina sativa is highly resistant to drought, diseases and pests and does not pose any particular soil requirements, adapting well to sandy soil and soil with low nutrient levels. This crop could thus help curb the EU's dependency on soya imports from third countries for animal feed.

Could the Commission support a pilot project with the following objectives:

1. Gradually making farmers aware of the benefits of growing camelina;

2. Promoting exchanges of know-how among farmers growing camelina in various countries;

3. Financing a study on the added value that this crop offers on the European agricultural market?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2013)

The Commission is interested in exploring ways to improve the competitiveness of domestically grown protein crops. For this reason a dedicated focus group has been launched by the Service point of the European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' (EIP). This focus group will explore possibilities and methods to improve the competitiveness of protein crops in general. The focus group may also define specific research needs.

In addition to the work of the focus group, a pilot project on the possibilities of Camelina sativa in different regions could provide knowledge that could be useful for the improvement of competitiveness of protein crops.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006448/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Método de fijación del Euribor

Considerando que, tal como se establece en el Libro Blanco de la Comisión, de 18 de diciembre de 2007, sobre la integración del mercado europeo de crédito hipotecario, el tipo de interés, y por tanto el European Interbank Offered Rate — Euribor, es un elemento esencial de la información al consumidor;

Considerando que, si bien el índice Euribor debiera indicar el tipo de interés promedio al que las entidades financieras se prestan dinero en el mercado interbancario del Euro, viene siendo publicado diariamente por Federación Bancaria Europea sin control institucional alguno;

Considerando que la fórmula adoptada para calcular los índices de referencia debiera responder a una lógica matemática y económica precisa y a criterios de información, transparencia y posibilidad de comparación, y que en la actualidad sigue siendo secreta su elaboración, no siendo publicadas las pretendidas operaciones sobre las que se efectúa el cálculo;

Considerando los numerosos abusos en la fijación de dicho índice (Expediente de la Comisión Memo 11/711 de 19 de octubre de 2011, la Comisión del Mercado de Valores de Canadá demanda a seis grandes bancos (HSBC Holdings, JPMorgan Chase, Royal Bank of Scotland, UBS, Citigroup y Deutsche Bank), o el reconocimiento de Barclays de la manipulación del Euribor, entre otros);

¿Se plantea la Comisión un cambio de modelo en el sistema de fijación del European Interbank Offered Rate? En caso contrario, ¿qué acciones plantea la Comisión para la introducción de una mínima transparencia en relación a los particulares?

¿Cree la Comisión que debe procederse a una modificación del European Interbank Offered Rate y que sería conveniente que la fijación del índice Euribor fuera retirada a la Federación Bancaria Europea y encomendada directamente a la Autoridad Bancaria Europea (ABE), según el Reglamento (UE) n° 1093/2010 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 24 de noviembre de 2010, y todo ello bajo la regulación, el control y la supervisión del Banco Central Europeo?

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

La Comisión ha actuado con celeridad al adoptar propuestas modificadas de un Reglamento ([1]) y una Directiva ([2]) sobre el abuso del mercado, a fin de prohibir claramente y tipificar como delito en toda la Unión la manipulación de índices de referencia como el Euribor.

Por lo que se refiere a los sistemas utilizados para generar índices de referencia, la Comisión inició el 5 de septiembre de 2012 un proceso de consultas ([3]) a fin de detectar las deficiencias en todas las etapas del proceso de referenciación, incluida la aportación de datos a los índices de referencia. En particular, quedaron de manifiesto las deficiencias potenciales debidas al cálculo de índices de referencia como el Euribor y la necesidad de una transparencia adecuada. También se abordó el problema de cómo llevar a cabo una supervisión lo más eficaz posible. Una propuesta de ley está ahora prevista para el verano de 2013.

El 11 de enero de 2013, la Autoridad Europea de Valores y Mercados (ESMA) y la Autoridad Bancaria Europea (EBA) remitieron una carta a la Federación Bancaria Europea en la que formularon diez recomendaciones para mejorar el funcionamiento del Euribor. La EBA también formuló recomendaciones a las autoridades nacionales sobre la supervisión de los bancos participantes en el grupo de trabajo Euribor a fin de reforzar la gobernanza interna de los bancos del grupo de trabajo Euribor ([4]).

El 6 de junio de 2013, la ESMA y la EBA formularon una serie de principios en materia de procedimientos de fijación de índices de referencia ([5]) que proporcionan a los participantes en el mercado un marco general para la fijación de esos índices.

([1]) Propuesta modificada de Reglamento sobre las operaciones con información privilegiada y la manipulación del mercado (abuso de mercado), COM(2012) 421 final.
([2]) Propuesta modificada de Directiva sobre las sanciones penales aplicables a las operaciones con información privilegiada, COM(2012) 420 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2012/benchmarks_en.htm
([4]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/system/files/2013-13.pdf
([5]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/news/Press-release%E2 %80 %94ESMA-and-EBA-publish-final-principles-benchmarks?t=326&o=home

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006448/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Method of calculating Euribor

Whereas, as established in the Commission's White Paper of 18 December 2007 on the Integration of EU Mortgage Credit Markets, the interest rate, and thus the Euro Interbank Offered Rate (Euribor), is an essential part of consumer information;

Whereas, although the Euribor was supposed to indicate the average interest rate at which financial institutions lend money on the euro interbank market, it is published daily by the European Banking Federation without any institutional supervision;

Whereas the formula used to calculate the reference rate was supposed to be based on a mathematical and economic calculation, and criteria of information, transparency and comparability, but the way in which it is set continues to be a secret, as the supposed transactions on which it is based are not published;

Whereas there are numerous abuses of the calculation of this rate (Commission memo 11/711 of 19 October 2011, the Canadian Competition Bureau's case against six major banks (HSBC Holdings, JPMorgan Chase, Royal Bank of Scotland, UBS, Citigroup and Deutsche Bank), the admission by Barclays that it manipulated the Euribor, etc.);

Does the Commission intend to change the system used to calculate the Euro Interbank Offered Rate? If not, what actions does it intend to take to introduce a minimum level of transparency for private individuals?

Does the Commission believe that the Euro Interbank Offered Rate should be changed and that responsibility for calculating the Euribor rate should be taken away from the European Banking Federation and given directly to the European Banking Authority (EBA), in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010, ensuring that all of this is subject to the regulation, control and supervision of the European Central Bank?

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

The Commission has acted promptly by adopting amended proposals for a regulation ([1]) and for a directive ([2]) on market abuse, to clearly prohibit and criminalise throughout the Union the manipulation of benchmarks including EURIBOR.

Concerning the systems used to produce benchmarks, on 5 September 2012 the Commission launched a consultation ([3]) with the aim of identifying shortcomings at every stage of the benchmark process including the contribution of data to benchmarks. In particular it highlighted shortcomings that may arise in the calculation of benchmarks such as EURIBOR and the need for adequate transparency to be provided. It also addressed the issue of how supervision may be carried out most effectively. A proposal for legislation is now foreseen in summer 2013.

On 11 January 2013, the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) and the European Banking Authority (EBA) sent a letter to the European Banking Federation (EBF) making 10 recommendations to improve the functioning of EURIBOR. The EBA also issued recommendations to national authorities on the supervisory oversight of banks participating in the EURIBOR panel aimed at strengthening EURIBOR panel banks' internal governance ([4]).

On 6 June 2013 the ESMA and the EBA issued a set of Principles for Benchmark-Setting Processes ([5]) which provides market participants with a genaral framework for benchmark setting.

([1]) Amended proposal for a regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation, COM(2012) 421 final.
([2]) Amended proposal for a directive on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation, COM(2012) 654 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2012/benchmarks_en.htm
([4]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/system/files/2013-13.pdf
([5]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/news/Press-release%E2%80%94ESMA-and-EBA-publish-final-principles-benchmarks?t=326&o=home

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006449/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(5 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Criterios de sostenibilidad de los biocarburantes

La Directiva 2009/28/CE relativa al fomento del uso de energía procedente de fuentes renovables establece los objetivos de consumo de energías renovables que cada Estado miembro debe cumplir en el año 2020, alcanzando el 10 % del consumo en el sector del transporte.

El artículo 17 de dicha Directiva establece los «criterios de sostenibilidad» —y los mecanismos de verificación de los mismos— que deben cumplir los biocombustibles para poder computar su utilización como energía renovable a efectos del cumplimiento de los objetivos de la Directiva. En este sentido, la normativa es inequívoca al establecer que «no se tendrán en cuenta los biocarburantes y biolíquidos que no cumplan los criterios de sostenibilidad establecidos en el artículo 17, apartados 2 a 6».

El pasado 22 de febrero, el Gobierno español aprobó el Real Decreto-ley 4/2013 de «medidas de apoyo al emprendedor y de estímulo del crecimiento y de la creación de empleo», que incluye en el artículo 42 una modificación del Real Decreto 1597/2011, de 4 de noviembre que transponía lo referido a los criterios de sostenibilidad de los biocombustibles líquidos en España.

La modificación establece textualmente la suspensión, de manera indeterminada, de la aplicación de los criterios de sostenibilidad exigibles en España desde el 1 de enero de 2013, fecha tardía debido a una trasposición ya demorada de la citada Directiva. Durante este período indeterminado los criterios de sostenibilidad tendrán carácter indicativo, suspendiéndose así la posibilidad de incoar expediente sancionador alguno más que por la falta de remisión de la información requerida.

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento y considera compatible la Comisión la modificación llevada a cabo por el Gobierno español que suspende los criterios de sostenibilidad de los biocarburantes requeridos en el artículo 17 de la Directiva 2009/28/CE?

2. ¿Debe interpretarse que, fruto de la suspensión, ningún biocarburante consumido en España debería computar favorablemente para los objetivos de consumo que establece la Directiva europea?

3. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión pedir información al Gobierno de España?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de las medidas adoptadas por España y está recabando más información para decidir si procede emprender alguna actuación a escala de la UE, como por ejemplo la incoación de un procedimiento de infracción.

Según el artículo 17, apartado 1, de la Directiva 2009/28/CE, los biocarburantes y biolíquidos solamente pueden tenerse en cuenta en el cómputo de los objetivos nacionales en materia de energías renovables si cumplen los criterios de sostenibilidad establecidos en la Directiva. Al mismo tiempo, el artículo 18, apartado 3, establece que los Estados miembros han de tomar disposiciones para que los agentes económicos adopten las medidas necesarias para garantizar un nivel adecuado de auditoría independiente de la información y demuestren que la han llevado a cabo.

La Comisión está siguiendo de cerca si España cumple las obligaciones que tiene en virtud de la Directiva 2009/28/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006449/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Sustainability criteria for biofuels

Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources sets out the renewable energy targets that each Member State must achieve by 2020, including a 10% share for renewables in the transport sector.

Article 17 of the directive lays down the 'sustainability criteria' — and corresponding verification mechanisms — that must be fulfilled by biofuels in order to be taken into account as a renewable energy for the purposes of achieving the targets in the directive. In this regard, the article states unequivocally that 'biofuels and bioliquids shall be taken into account (…) only if they fulfil the sustainability criteria set out in paragraphs 2 to 6'.

On 22 February, the Spanish Government approved Royal Decree-Law 4/2013 on 'measures to support entrepreneurs, stimulate growth and create employment', which includes in Article 42 an amendment to Royal Decree 1597/2011 of 4 November transposing the provisions on the sustainability criteria for bioliquids into Spanish law.

The amendment enshrines the suspension, for an unspecified period of time, of the application of the sustainability criteria required in Spain from 1 January 2013, which was already behind schedule due to delayed transposition of the directive in question. During this unspecified period, the sustainability criteria will be indicative, thereby suspending the possibility of initiating any sanctions except in the case of failure to provide the information required.

1. Is the Commission aware of the Spanish Government's amendment that suspends the sustainability criteria for biofuels, required under Article 17 of Directive 2009/28/EC, and does it believe that this amendment is compatible?

2. Should this suspension be interpreted as meaning that no biofuel used in Spain should be counted favourably for the consumption targets laid down in the European Directive?

3. Does the Commission intend to ask the Spanish Government for information?

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

The Commission is aware of the Spanish measures and it is gathering further information with the view to consider whether additional EU action is appropriate, including launching an infringement procedure.

According to Article 17. 1 of Directive 2009/28/EC, biofuels and bioliquids shall be taken into account against the national renewable energy targets only if they fulfil the sustainability criteria laid down in the directive. At the same time, according to Art. 18.3, Member States are responsible for requiring economic operators to arrange for an adequate standard of independent auditing of the information and to provide evidence that this has been done.

The Commission is monitoring closely whether Spain meets its obligations under Directive 2009/28/EC.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006450/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Klimawandel — Sicherheit vor zukünftigen Hochwassergefahren

Nach dem Jahrhundert-Hochwasser im Jahr 2002 ist wieder ein großer Teil Österreichs und auch Deutschlands von schweren Überflutungen betroffen worden. Es ist bereits das zweite Jahrhunderthochwasser im 21. Jahrhundert, und Umweltschutzexperten prognostizieren, dass man in Zukunft sogar von noch stärkeren Hochwassern betroffen sein könnte. Klimaforscher zeigen auf, dass sich im Zuge des Klimawandels grundlegende Faktoren ändern, die weitere Extremereignisse beeinflussen werden. Wissenschaftler halten es für wahrscheinlich, dass im Zuge der Erwärmung des Mittelmeeres mehr Wasser verdunsten wird, was zu noch größeren Regenmengen führen kann. Das Risiko erhöht sich außerdem auch mit der immer weiter voranschreitenden Verbauung. Trotz Warnungen von Umweltexperten werden große Flächen von Land für Straßen, Gebäude und Infrastruktur geopfert. Bebautes Land verliert seine ökologischen Funktionen; es kann dort kein Wasser versickern, und in der Folge steigt das Hochwasserrisiko noch weiter an.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wäre es nicht an der Zeit, dass die Regierungen der EU-Mitgliedstaaten länderübergreifende Strategien zur Minimierung langfristiger Klimagefahren verfolgen? Welchen Einfluss kann die Kommission darauf nehmen?

2. Wenn man den Experten zuhört, sollten in der Raumordnungspolitik rasch weiterführende Schritte gesetzt werden, die die Zersiedelung stoppen. Welche Maßnahmen könnten das nach Meinung der Kommission sein?

3. Das derzeitige Hochwasser in Österreich und Deutschland erfordert nachhaltige Maßnahmen, um der in den Krisengebieten ansässigen Bevölkerung möglichst große Sicherheit vor zukünftigen Hochwassergefahren zu geben? Was kann die Kommission dazu beitragen?

4. Den betroffenen Menschen sollte jetzt rasch und unbürokratisch geholfen werden; es sollten aber auch Strategien verfolgt werden, die diese langfristigen und drohenden Klimagefahren minimieren. Wie schauen die Zielsetzungen auf EU-Ebene dahin gehend aus?

Antwort von Frau Hedegaard im Namen der Kommission
(30. Juli 2013)

Die Auswirkungen des Klimawandels machen sich in der Tat häufig grenzübergreifend bemerkbar. In der unlängst überarbeiteten Anpassungsstrategie der EU ([1]) ist das grenzübergreifende Hochwassermanagement als prioritärer Bereich für die Anpassung aufgeführt; hierdurch kommt es für eine finanzielle Unterstützung der EU etwa aus dem künftigen LIFE-Programm oder dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung infrage.

Außerdem wird in der Hochwasserrichtlinie ([2]) ein Rahmen für die Bewertung und das Management von Hochwasserrisiken festgelegt. Danach müssen die Mitgliedstaaten bis 2015 Hochwasserrisikomanagementpläne erstellen. Vorläufige Hochwasserrisikobewertungen unter Berücksichtigung des Klimawandels mussten bis Ende 2011 bereitgestellt werden. Hochwassergefahrenkarten und Hochwasserrisikokarten werden bis 2013 vorliegen. Die Festlegung konkreter Ziele zur Risikoeindämmung und die Auswahl der Maßnahmen ist Sache der Mitgliedstaaten.

Die Hochwasserrisikomanagementpläne bieten den Mitgliedstaaten eine gute Gelegenheit, Überlegungen zum Management von Hochwasserrisiken in andere Politikbereiche einzubeziehen, so etwa die Landnutzung und -entwicklung, die hauptsächlich in die Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten fallen.

Die EU und ihre Mitgliedstaaten haben ihre Bemühungen zur Verhinderung bzw. Abmilderung von Katastrophenrisiken durch die Umsetzung der EU-Politik zur Katastrophenverhütung ([3]) und den Vorschlag der Kommission zur Stärkung des Katstrophenschutzverfahrens der EU ([4]) erheblich verstärkt.

([1]) KOM(2013)216 Mitteilung „Eine EU-Strategie zur Anpassung an den Klimawandel".
([2]) Richtlinie 2007/60/EG, ABl. L 288 vom 6.11.2007, S. 27.
([3]) KOM(2009)82 Mitteilung: „Ein Gemeinschaftskonzept zur Verhütung von Naturkatastrophen und von Menschen verursachten Katastrophen".
([4]) KOM(2011)934 Vorschlag für einen Beschluss über ein Katastrophenschutzverfahren der Union (noch im Verhandlungsstadium) zur Ersetzung der Entscheidungen 2007/779/EG, Euratom des Rates und 2007/162/EG, Euratom des Rates.

Die Anpassungsstrategie der EU erfordert die Annahme von Anpassungsstrategien auf nationaler und subnationaler Ebene und umfasst Leitlinien sowie mögliche finanzielle Unterstützung für die Erarbeitung dieser Maßnahmen. Die Maßnahmen sollten mit den nationalen Risikomanagementplänen vereinbar sein.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006450/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Climate change — Protection from future flood risks

After the flood of the century in 2002, a large part of Austria and Germany has again been hit by severe flooding. This is already the second massive flood of the 21st century and environmental experts are predicting that we could be affected by even greater floods in the future. Climatologists point out that, as climate changes, fundamental factors are changing and affecting further extreme events. Scientists believe it is likely that, as the temperature of the Mediterranean rises, more water will evaporate and that this may lead to even greater amounts of rainfall. In addition, the risk increases with more and more construction. Despite warnings from environmental experts, large areas of land are being sacrificed for roads, buildings and infrastructure. Built-up land loses its ecological functions; there, no water can seep away and, as a result, the risk of flooding becomes even greater.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it not high time that the governments of the EU Member States pursued transnational strategies in order to minimise long-term dangers from climate change? What influence can the Commission bring to bear on this?

2. If you listen to the experts, environmental planning policy should rapidly instigate further measures to stop overdevelopment. What measures, in the Commission's opinion, could these be?

3. The current flooding in Austria and Germany requires sustained action in order to give people living in the crisis areas the greatest possible protection against future risks of flooding. How can the Commission contribute to such efforts?

4. The people affected need rapid assistance now, without any red tape. but we also need to pursue strategies that will minimise these long-term imminent dangers produced by climate change. What are the objectives at EU level to that effect?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

Climate change impacts often are transnational indeed. The newly updated EU Adaptation Strategy ([1]) does list cross-border management of floods as a priority area for adaptation; it may as such benefit from EU financial support, e.g. through the future LIFE Programme or the European Regional Development Fund.

The Floods Directive ([2]) also establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks. Member States (MS) have to adopt Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP) by 2015. Preliminary flood risk assessments, taking account of climate change, were required by the end of 2011. Flood hazard and risk maps will follow by 2013. The setting of concrete risk reduction objectives and selection of measures is left to Member States.

The FRMP offer a good opportunity for Member States to integrate flood risk management considerations into other policy areas, such as land use and development policies which are primarily policies of national competence.

The Union and its Member States have significantly stepped up efforts to prevent and mitigate disaster risks with the implementation of the EU disaster prevention policy ([3]) and the Commission's proposal to strengthen the Union's Civil Protection Mechanism ([4]).

The EU Adaptation Strategy calls for the adoption of adaptation strategies at national and subnational levels, and provides guidelines and potential financial support for their development. They should be coherent with national risk management plans.

([1]) COM(2013) 216 Communication 'An EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change'.
([2]) Directive 2007/60/EC, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007, p. 27.
([3]) COM(2009)0082 Communication 'A Community approach on the prevention of natural and man-made disasters'.
([4]) COM(2011)0934 Proposal for a decision on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (under negotiations) to replace Council Decision No 779/2007 and Council Decision 2007/162.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006451/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 juni 2013)

Betreft: Wijzigingen aan het voorstel voor een belasting op financiële transacties: nog altijd onwettig

Volgens een vertrouwelijk rapport van de Commissie waar de *Financial Times* ([1]) naar verwijst, zullen beurzen en verrekenkantoren de belasting op financiële transacties moeten innen namens de lidstaten die aan deze belasting deelnemen. Doen zij dit niet dan zullen de financiële instellingen die gevestigd zijn in de zone waar deze belasting geldt geen zaken met hun willen doen.

Niet alleen klinkt dit als een dreigement aan het adres van ondernemingen die in niet-deelnemende lidstaten zijn gevestigd, maar het is ook niet conform de EU-wetgeving. In artikel 2, lid 1, onder a), van Richtlijn 2010/24/EU van de Raad betreffende de wederzijdse bijstand inzake de invordering van schuldvorderingen die voortvloeien uit belastingen, rechten en andere maatregelen ([2]) staat: „Deze richtlijn is van toepassing op schuldvorderingen die voortvloeien uit […] alle vormen van belastingen en rechten, geheven door of ten behoeve van een lidstaat […], dan wel ten behoeve van de Unie". Dit betekent dus dat een desbetreffende verplichting niet aan particuliere bedrijven kan worden opgelegd, met name niet wanneer deze zijn gevestigd buiten het gebied waar de versterkte samenwerking geldt.

Daarnaast zal dit voorstel ook negatieve gevolgen hebben voor de interne markt. Financiële instellingen die zijn gevestigd buiten de zone waar deze belasting geldt, zullen hun transacties met banken en investeringsondernemingen binnen de zone waar deze belasting geldt, reduceren. Dit zal leiden tot verstoring van de concurrentie en tot fragmentatie van de interne markt.

1. Kan de Commissie het bestaan van dit rapport bevestigen?

2. Is de Commissie het eens met mijn stellingen?

3. Zo niet, kan de Commissie een andere uitleg geven?

Wat verder de gevolgen van een belasting op financiële transacties voor staatsschulden en de kosten van leningen betreft, bevestigt de Commissie dat de lidstaten „zich in een betere positie bevinden om toegang tot dergelijke informatie te hebben".

4. Waarom heeft de Commissie een voorstel ingediend zonder over volledige informatie te beschikken?

5. Deelt de Commissie mijn stelling dat dit gelijk staat aan het indienen van een voorstel zonder het goed en op passende wijze te hebben voorbereid?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(1 augustus 2013)

1-2. Neen.

3. Het voorstel van de Commissie tot uitvoering van de nauwere samenwerking op het gebied van belasting op financiële transacties (FTT) in de EU (COM(2013) 71) schrijft slechts de bevoegdheden, rechten en verplichtingen van de lidstaten voor met betrekking tot een gemeenschappelijk FTT-stelsel. Aangezien er geen bilaterale akkoorden en/of multilaterale overeenkomsten zijn gesloten met niet-deelnemende lidstaten en derde landen, kunnen beurzen en clearinginstellingen buiten het grondgebied van de lidstaten die aan de nauwere samenwerking op het gebied van de FTT deelnemen, enkel op vrijwillige basis bij de inning van de FTT worden betrokken.

4-5. Voor haar oorspronkelijke FTT-voorstel (COM(2011) 594) heeft de Commissie alle beschikbare informatie gebruikt en een volwaardige effectbeoordeling uitgevoerd. Deze effectbeoordeling behoudt grotendeels haar geldigheid in het kader van de huidige procedure voor nauwere samenwerking. Met het oog op het voorstel van de Commissie tot uitvoering van nauwere samenwerking (SWD(2013) 28) heeft de Commissie een aanvullende analyse uitgevoerd. Deze aanvullende analyse bevat informatie over de impact van de FTT op staatsobligaties en financieringskosten.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/f8c32b06-c2de-11e2-9bcb-00144feab7de.html#axzz2VLI9hxdE.
([2]) Die door de Commissie zelf wordt genoemd in haar antwoord op mijn vraag E-003924/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006451/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Changes to the proposal on FTT: still unlawful

According to a confidential Commission report referred to in the *Financial Times* ([1]), exchanges and clearing houses will have to collect the financial transaction tax on behalf of participating Member States: otherwise, financial undertakings based in the FTT zone will not be willing to trade with them.

Not only does this sound like a threat to businesses based in non-participating Member States, but it also infringes EC law. According to Article 2(1)(a) of Council Directive 2010/24/EU ([2]) concerning mutual assistance for the recovery of claims relating to taxes, duties and other measures, the directive 'shall apply to all claims relating to […] all taxes and duties of any kind levied by or on behalf of a Member State […], or on behalf of the Union'. Therefore, no obligation in this respect can be imposed on private businesses, particularly if they are based outside the area in which enhanced cooperation is enforced.

Furthermore, this proposal will negatively impact the single market. Financial trading institutions based outside the FTT zone will reduce their volume of trade with banks and investment firms based within the FTT zone. This will result in distortion of competition and fragmentation of the single market.

In the light of this:

1. Can the Commission confirm the existence of this report?

2. Does the Commission agree with my statements?

3. If not, can the Commission provide an alternative explanation?

Moreover, regarding the impact of the FTT on government debt and borrowing costs, the Commission affirms that 'Member States might be better placed to have access to such information'.

In the light of this:

4. Why has the Commission submitted a proposal without having access to complete information?

5. Does the Commission agree that this equates to submitting a proposal without having properly and accurately evaluated it?

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

1-2. No.

3. The Commission proposal for implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax (FTT) in the EU [COM(2013) 71] merely prescribes the competences, rights and obligations of the participating Member States in respect of a common system of the FTT. In the absence of bilateral agreements and/or multilateral conventions with non-participating Member States and third countries, exchanges and clearing houses situated outside the territory of the Member States participating in the enhanced cooperation in the area of the FTT can thus only be involved in the FTT collection on a voluntary basis.

4. and 5. The Commission has used all information available and carried out a fully-fledged impact assessment for its initial FTT proposal [COM(2011) 594] which still remains largely valid in the enhanced cooperation procedure. Additional analysis has been undertaken in view of the Commission proposal on the implementation of the enhanced cooperation [SWD(2013) 28]. This additional analysis provides information on the impact of FTT on government bonds and borrowing costs.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/f8c32b06-c2de-11e2-9bcb-00144feab7de.html#axzz2VLI9hxdE
([2]) Mentioned by the Commission itself in its answer to my Question E-003924/2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006452/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Relazioni della Turchia con l'Organizzazione di cooperazione di Shanghai (SCO)

Nel luglio 2012, alla televisione turca, il Primo ministro turco, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, scherzava con il Presidente della Russia, Vladimir Putin, dicendo che la Turchia avrebbe potuto aver interesse a dimenticare la possibile adesione all'Unione europea, se le fosse stato proposto di aderire alla Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Più di recente, nel gennaio 2013, Erdoğan ha abbandonato l'atteggiamento scherzoso e ancora una volta ha commentato la possibilità di valutare altrimenti la prospettiva di adesione all'UE della Turchia sostituendola con l'obiettivo di aderire alla cooperazione di Shanghai. Alla Turchia, è stato conferito lo status di paese candidato nel 1999, seguito dall'inizio dei negoziati di adesione nel 2005. Il processo di adesione della Turchia all'Unione europea si è recentemente tradotto in frustrazione per codesto paese, come dimostrano le prese di posizione del Primo ministro Erdoğan negli ultimi due anni.

L'Organizzazione di cooperazione di Shanghai è stata fondata il 15 giugno 2001 a Shanghai, in Cina, dai suoi paesi fondatori: Repubblica popolare cinese, Repubblica del Kazakistan, Repubblica del Kirghizistan, Federazione Russa, Repubblica del Tagikistan e Repubblica dell'Uzbekistan. Si tratta di un'organizzazione internazionale intergovernativa che serve a promuovere forti relazioni tra i suoi Stati membri in vari settori di politica e interazione. Le aree coperte dalla SCO vanno dal promuovere la cooperazione nei settori dell'istruzione, dell'energia e del turismo, al garantire la pace, la sicurezza e la stabilità nella regione procedendo verso un nuovo ordine internazionale democratico. Consta attualmente di sei Stati membri, di altri cinque con lo status di osservatore e altri tre classificati come partner di dialogo. La Turchia è la più recente aggiunta all'elenco dei partner di dialogo, dopo il riconoscimento formale da parte della SCO, il 26 aprile 2013.

L'elevazione della Turchia allo status di interlocutore della SCO solleva dubbi circa l'impegno e i sentimenti del paese nei confronti del processo di adesione all'Unione europea. Detto cambiamento di status mi porta a chiedere:

1. Come crede l'Alto Rappresentante che il cambiamento di status della Turchia, presso la SCO, influenzerà il prosieguo della procedura di adesione all'UE?

2. Come intende l'Alto Rappresentante affrontare l'attuale situazione della Turchia quale candidato per l'adesione all'Unione, alla luce delle sue nuove relazioni formali con la SCO? L'Alto Rappresentante intende contribuire ad accelerarne il processo di adesione?

Risposta data da Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(9 agosto 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte fornite alle precedenti interrogazioni scritte E-001041/2013, E-001029/2013, E-0001174/2013, E-001272/2013 e E-001238/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006452/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Turkey's relations with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

In July 2012 on Turkish television, the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, joked with Russia's President, Vladimir Putin, that Turkey might be interested in forgetting about its possible accession to the European Union if the possibility of joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) were proposed. More recently, in January 2013, Erdoğan abandoned his joking manner and once again commented on the possibility of re-evaluating Turkey's prospect of EU membership and replacing it with the goal of joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Turkey was given its status of candidate country in 1999, followed by the start of accession negotiations in 2005. The process of Turkey's accession to the EU has recently been met with frustration by the country, as demonstrated by Prime Minister Erdoğan's remarks in the past two years.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was founded on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai, China, by its founding member states: the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan. It is an intergovernmental international organisation which serves to promote strong relationships between its member states in various areas of policy and interaction. The areas covered by the SCO range from promoting cooperation in the fields of education, energy and tourism, to ensuring peace, security and stability in the region and moving towards a new democratic international order. It is currently made up of six member states, with five other states holding observer status and three more classified as dialogue partners. Turkey is the most recent addition to its list of dialogue partners, after formal recognition by the SCO on 26 April 2013.

Turkey's elevation to the status of dialogue partner of the SCO raises questions as to the country's commitment and feelings towards its process of accession to the European Union. This change of status leads me to ask:

1. How does the High Representative believe Turkey's change of status in relation to the SCO will affect its continued pursuit of accession to the EU?

2. How does the High Representative plan to address Turkey's present status as a candidate for Union membership in light of its new formal relationship with the SCO? Does the High Representative intend to help speed up the process?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous written questions E-001041/2013, E-001029/2013, E-0001174/2013, E-001272/2013 and E-001238/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006453/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(5 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Conseguenze del bail-in

Il bail-in, cioè quell'espediente contabile che le banche ormai utilizzano al fine di aumentare il loro capitale, consiste nel convertire asset della banca (azioni, obbligazioni subordinate, immobilizzazioni, crediti) in capitale ordinario.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se riesce ad immaginare lo stato d'animo dei risparmiatori spagnoli clienti di Bankia quando il 28 maggio scorso le azioni che avevano ricevuto in cambio dei loro depositi hanno perso il 50 % del valore di emissione, vedendo così andare in fumo, dalla mattina alla sera, miliardi di risparmi;

2. se è questo il sistema di salvataggio bancario in serbo per tutti i sudditi della zona euro, essendo il bail-in uno dei pilastri dell'Unione bancaria;

3. se ha un'idea di quel che potrebbe succedere negli Stati membri dell'UE quando gli elettori (si voterà fra meno di un anno) cominceranno a capire quali intenzioni si celano dietro il piano dell'Unione bancaria, vale a dire il fatto che si tratta di un marchingegno per utilizzare i soldi dei risparmiatori per salvare gli speculatori;

4. se teme che questo meccanismo rappresenti una perversione di fondo che rischia di aumentarne in modo esponenziale gli effetti sistemici;

5. se dubita o no che il sistema, mai riformato, stia ricevendo colpi mortali e si appresti a far scoppiare la bolla segnalata dalla fuga dai titoli di Stato americani, come effetto della politica di espansione monetaria?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2013)

La Commissione segnala che il bail-in non consiste nel convertire gli attivi bancari in capitale ordinario come sostenuto nell'interrogazione, bensì nel convertire le passività delle banche in azioni. I creditori delle banche, ossia i titolari di debito subordinato, diventano in tal modo investitori permanenti.

Il bail-in del debito subordinato può infatti garantire una capitalizzazione corretta e contribuire a ripristinare la fiducia nel sistema bancario. Può inoltre evitare il ricorso a ricapitalizzazioni finanziate dallo Stato (o tende almeno a ridurne al minimo la necessità), contribuendo così a limitare eventuali aumenti futuri del debito pubblico e della pressione fiscale. Nel complesso ciò consente di evitare la soluzione altamente indesiderabile della liquidazione degli istituti finanziari che produce ripercussioni negative sui depositanti e sull'economia in generale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006453/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Consequences of bail-ins

Bail-ins, the accounting tactic now used by banks to increase their capital, involve converting the bank's assets (shares, subordinated bonds, fixed assets, receivable debts) into ordinary capital.

1. Can the Commission imagine how Spanish savers with accounts at Bankia felt when, on 28 May 2013, the shares which they had received in exchange for their deposits saw 50% wiped off their issuing value and billions of euros in savings went up in smoke overnight?

2. Is this the bank bailout system in store for the whole euro area, since the bail-in is one of the pillars of banking union?

3. Does the Commission have any idea of what might happen in the EU Member States when voters (elections will be held within the next year) start to understand the hidden intentions of banking union, namely that it is a ruse to use savers' money to save speculators?

4. Does it fear that this mechanism represents a fundamental perversion which risks an exponential increase in the systemic effects it causes?

5. Does it suspect that the system, which has never been reformed, is being mortally wounded and that the bubble marked by the flight of US government bonds is about to burst, as an effect of expansionary monetary policy?

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

The Commission notes a bail-in does not consist, as alluded in the question, in the convertion of bank assets into ordinary capital, but rather in the convertion of bank's liabilities into shares. Bank's creditors, and namely holders of subordinate debt, become thereby permanent investors.

Indeed, the bail-in of subordinate debt can ensure proper capitalisation and help restoring confidence in the bank. Also, it can avoid recourse to, or at least minimise the need for, a state-funded recapitalisation that would ultimately lead to higher public debt, and hence higher future tax pressure. Altogehter, this precludes the much unnecessary outcome of resolving financial institutions, with all the negative impact this could have on depositors and the economy.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006454/13
adresată Comisiei
Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE)
(5 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Ambiguități în interpretarea propunerii de directivă privind cotele de femei în consiliile de administrație

În baza propunerii de directivă a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului privind îmbunătățirea ponderii sexului nereprezentat ca și administratori neexecutivi ai societăților listate la bursă și măsuri conexe, inițiatorul propune, la articolul 4 alineatul (1) ca, până în anul 2020 cel târziu (respectiv 2018, pentru anumite societăți publice), sexul reprezentat sub 40% în consiliile de administrație ca administratori neexecutivi să ajungă la acest procent.

Criteriul aplicat în vederea atingerii procentului de 40% este, conform articolului 4 alineatul (3), acordarea priorității candidatului aparținând sexului subreprezentat, atunci când există mai mulți candidați și aceștia sunt egal calificați sub aspect al eligibilității, competenței și performanței profesionale.

Fără a pune în discuție necesitatea echilibrării ponderii reprezentării sexelor în consiliile de administrație, așa cum Comisia relevă în preambulul propunerii de directivă și fără a contesta obiectivitatea criteriului de departajare dintre candidați, în scopul desemnării candidatului aparținând sexului subreprezentat, punem în vedere Comisiei și așteptăm răspuns din partea ei la următoarele întrebări:

Ce se întâmplă dacă, aplicând respectivul criteriu de departajare prevăzut de directivă, societățile listate nu reușesc ca, până în 2020 (respectiv 2018), să atingă procentul de 40%? Consideră Comisia că, în temeiul articolului 4 alineatul (2) din propunere, obiectivul ce trebuie îndeplinit în mod obligatoriu până în 2020 (respectiv 2018) nu este procentul de 40%, ci procentul efectiv atins, oricare ar fi acesta?

Vor fi respectivele societăți listate sancționate de către statele membre, așa cum propune Comisia la articolul 6 din propunerea de directivă, în caz că nu ating procentul de 40%, deși au aplicat criteriul de departajare? Poate fi aplicată o sancțiune în lipsa culpei?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(19 iulie 2013)

Propunerea Comisiei de Directivă privind echilibrul de gen în organele de conducere ale societăților cotate la bursă, care este în curs de examinare de către colegislatori [COM (2012) 614 final], stabilește obiectivul ca, până în 2020 (sau 2018, pentru întreprinderile publice), sexul subreprezentat să dețină 40 % din funcțiile de directori neexecutivi. Acest obiectiv este o obligație cu privire la mijloace, nu o obligație cu privire la rezultat.

Prin urmare, societățile cotate la bursă care nu ating obiectivul în termenul stabilit vor trebui sancționate numai dacă nu respectă normele procedurale și obligațiile de raportare prevăzute la articolele 4 și 5 din directiva propusă. Aceste obligații sunt menite să sporească transparența procedurilor de numire în cadrul organelor de conducere și să asigure că acestea se bazează pe criterii de calificare obiective. În plus, scopul obligațiilor de raportare este concentrarea atenției opiniei publice asupra performanței întreprinderilor din perspectiva obiectivelor de asigurare a echilibrului de gen.

Comisia consideră că această abordare echilibrată va reuși să remedieze dezechilibrele actuale de gen existente în organele de conducere ale întreprinderilor, în același timp lăsându-le acestora flexibilitatea necesară.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006454/13
to the Commission
Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Ambiguities in interpreting the proposed Directive on quotas of women on boards of directors

Under the proposed Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures, the initiator proposes, in Article 4(1), that by 2020 (2018 for certain public companies) at the latest, the gender represented by less than 40% on boards as non-executive directors should reach this percentage.

According to Article 4(3), the criterion for achieving the 40% is that priority shall be given to the candidate of the under-represented sex when there are several candidates and they are equally qualified in terms of eligibility, competence and professional performance.

Without questioning the need to balance the proportion of gender representation on boards of directors, as the Commission points out in the preamble to the proposed Directive, and without contesting the objectivity criterion for candidate selection in order to appoint the candidate belonging to the under-represented gender, we ask the Commission the following questions and await a response:

What happens if, in applying this distribution criterion stipulated in the directive, listed companies fail to achieve the 40% by 2020 (or 2018, as applicable)? Does the Commission believe that pursuant to Article 4(2) of the proposal the target that must be reached by 2020 (or 2018, as applicable) is not 40%, but the actual percentage reached, whatever it may be?

Will the respective listed companies be fined by the Member States, as proposed by the Commission in Article 6 of the proposed Directive if they do not reach the 40%, despite having applied the distribution criterion? Can a sanction be applied without fault?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

The Commission proposal for a directive on gender balance on boards of listed companies under examination of the co-legislators (COM(2012)614 final) defines an objective of 40% of non-executive director positions to be held by the under-represented sex by 2020 (or 2018 for public undertakings). This objective is an obligation of means, not an obligation of result.

Consequently, listed companies failing to reach the objective by the deadline will only have to be sanctioned if they do not comply with the procedural and reporting obligations of Articles 4 and 5 of the proposed Directive. These obligations are designed to enhance the transparency of board appointment procedures and to ensure that they are based on objective qualification criteria. Moreover the reporting duties are meant to focus public attention on companies' performance with regard to the gender balance objectives.

The Commission believes that this balanced approach will succeed in redressing current gender imbalances in company leadership while at the same time leaving the necessary flexibility to companies.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006455/13
aan de Raad (Voorzitter Europese Raad)
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 juni 2013)

Betreft: PCE/PEC — Verklaringen van de voorzitter van de Raad over de onderhandelingen met Turkije

Tijdens zijn bezoek in Ankara op 23 mei 2013 verklaarde de voorzitter van de Raad dat hij de onderhandelingen over de toetreding van Turkije nieuw leven wil inblazen. Hij wil dat er nieuwe hoofdstukken worden geopend. Enkele dagen later braken er grote onlusten uit in Turkije over het volgens velen dictatoriale optreden van premier Erdogan. De televisiebeelden van het uiterst gewelddadige optreden van de politiediensten gingen de wereld rond. Er vielen op dit moment minstens twee doden. Zelfs mensen die berichten op Twitter verstuurden werden gearresteerd.

Is de voorzitter van de Europese Raad nog altijd van mening dat er nieuwe hoofdstukken moeten worden geopend in de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije, nu het autoritaire karakter van het islamistische AKP-bestuur voor iedereen is duidelijk geworden?

Bij het begin van de onderhandelingen werd door de Raad en de Commissie benadrukt dat de onderhandelingen op elk moment zouden kunnen worden stilgelegd als duidelijk zou blijken dat Turkije de voorwaarden niet nakomt. Is de voorzitter van de Raad van mening dat de gebeurtenissen in Turkije zo'n moment zijn, of niet?

Antwoord
(12 augustus 2013)

Na het bezoek van de voorzitter heeft de Raad Algemene Zaken (RAZ) op 25 juni 2013 een besluit genomen over de vraag of er nog andere onderhandelingshoofdstukken moeten worden geopend. De Raad heeft besloten hoofdstuk 22 te openen, en daarbij benadrukt dat de intergouvernementele conferentie met Turkije zal plaatsvinden na de presentatie door de Commissie van haar jaarlijkse voortgangsverslag en na een bespreking in de RAZ waarbij het gemeenschappelijk standpunt van de Raad voor de opening van hoofdstuk 22 wordt bevestigd en de datum voor de toetredings-conferentie wordt vastgelegd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006455/13
to the Council (President of the European Council)
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: PCE/PEC — Statements by the President of the Council on negotiations with Turkey

During his visit to Ankara on 23 May 2013, the President of the Council said that he wanted to give new impetus to the negotiations on Turkey's accession, that he wanted new chapters to be opened. Several days later, large-scale unrest broke out in Turkey against what many believe to be Prime Minister Erdoğan's dictatorial rule. Televised images of an extremely violent police crackdown went around the world. At least two people have died to date. Even people sending messages on Twitter have been arrested.

Does the President of the Council still believe that new chapters should be opened in the accession negotiations with Turkey now that the authoritarian nature of the Islamist AKP administration has become obvious to everyone?

At the start of the negotiations, the Council and the Commission stressed that they could be halted at any moment if it became clear that Turkey was not satisfying the conditions. Does the President of the Council believe that the events in Turkey could be such a moment? Or does he not share that view?

Reply
(12 August 2013)

After the President's visit, the General Affairs Council (GAC) of 25 June took a decision on the question of opening new chapters for negotiation. The Council agreed to open Chapter 22 and underscored that the Inter-Governmental Conference with Turkey will take place after the presentation of the Commission's annual progress report and following a discussion of the GAC which will confirm the common position of the Council for the opening of Chapter 22 and determine the date for the accession conference.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006456/13
aan de Raad (Voorzitter Europese Raad)
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 juni 2013)

Betreft: PCE/PEC — Deelname van Turkije aan Europese topontmoetingen

Tijdens een gemeenschappelijke persconferentie met de Turkse premier Erdogan heeft de voorzitter van de Raad volgens *Today's Zaman* van 24 mei 2013 onder meer verklaard dat Turkije voortaan zou moeten kunnen deelnemen aan de Europese topontmoetingen.

Klopt het dat de voorzitter van de Raad dat verklaard heeft?

Werd dat idee al besproken met de lidstaten?

Hoe kan een niet-lidstaat deelnemen aan de Europese topontmoetingen?

Zou deze regeling ook gelden voor andere kandidaat-lidstaten of derde landen? Zo neen, waarom wordt een uitzondering gemaakt voor Turkije?

Antwoord
(12 augustus 2013)

De verklaring van voorzitter Herman Van Rompuy staat reeds op de website van de Europese Raad (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/137262.pdf), waar het geachte Parlementslid zich ervan kan vergewissen dat er geen gewag wordt gemaakt van de punten waaraan hij refereert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006456/13
to the Council (President of the European Council)
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: PCE/PEC — Turkey's attendance at European summits

During a joint press conference with Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan, the President of the European Council said, among other things, that Turkey should be able to attend European summits in future, as reported by *Today's Zaman* on 24 May 2013.

Is it true that the President of the Council said that?

Has this idea been discussed with the Member States?

How can a non-Member State attend European summits?

Would this arrangement also be valid for other candidate countries or third countries? If not, why is an exception being made for Turkey?

Reply
(12 August 2013)

The statement made by President Van Rompuy has already been published on the European Council website (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/137262.pdf), and if the Honourable Member would care to take a look, he will see that it does not contain the references to which he refers.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006457/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 juni 2013)

Betreft: Festiviteiten rond herdenking van de Ottomaanse verovering van Constantinopel

Op 29 mei legde de Turkse eerste minister Erdogan in Istanbul de eerste steen van een nieuwe brug over de Bosporus. De datum werd uitgekozen omdat op die dag de verjaardag van de Ottomaanse verovering van Byzantium wordt gevierd. Er werden dan ook allerlei festiviteiten georganiseerd.

De heer Erdogan verklaarde bij die gelegenheid dat er door de Turkse invasie van Constantinopel een einde kwam aan „een donkere bladzijde in de geschiedenis" (Katholische Nachrichten Agentur, 1 juni 2013).

Welke conclusies trekt de Commissie uit deze verklaring? Is ze bevorderlijk voor het verdere verloop van de onderhandelingen over de toetreding van Turkije?

Is de Commissie bekend met de festiviteiten om de Ottomaanse invasie van Constantinopel te vieren? Verleent ze hiervoor steun? Zijn er garanties dat er hiervoor geen middelen uit de pretoetredingssteun worden gebruikt?

Geeft de Commissie financiële steun voor de bouw van de nieuwe brug over de Bosporus? Zo ja, hoeveel?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(26 juli 2013)

Vraagstukken met betrekking tot de geschiedenis van een kandidaat-lidstaat of de interpretatie van die geschiedenis maken geen deel uit van het pretoetredingsproces van Turkije.

De Commissie benadrukt evenwel dat volgens de beginselen van artikel 3 van het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie alle partijen in een kandidaat-lidstaat (zoals Turkije) iedere dag werk moeten maken van een klimaat dat bevorderlijk is voor vrede, gemeenschappelijke waarden en het welzijn van de bevolking.

Er zijn geen EU-middelen gemoeid met de bouw van de nieuwe brug over de Bosporus of met de festiviteiten waarnaar in de vraag wordt verwezen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006457/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 June 2013)

Subject: Festivities commemorating the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople

On 29 May, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan laid the first stone in Istanbul for a new bridge over the Bosphorus. The date was chosen because it was the anniversary of the Ottoman conquest of Byzantium. All kinds of festivities were held that day to mark the occasion.

Mr Erdoğan said during the ceremony that the Turkish invasion of Constantinople put an end to 'a dark chapter in history' (*Katholische Nachrichten Agentur*, 1 June 2013).

What conclusions does the Commission draw from this statement? Is it conducive to the future progress of the accession negotiations with Turkey?

Does the Commission know about the festivities celebrating the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople? Does it support them? Are there guarantees that no pre-accession assistance funds are being used for this purpose?

Is the Commission providing any financial support for the construction of the new bridge over the Bosphorus? If so, how much?

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

The matter concerning history of a candidate country or its interpretation is not covered under the pre-accession process related to Turkey.

Nevertheless, the Commission underlines that, according to the principles established by Article 3 of the TEU, an atmosphere conducive to peace, common values and well-being of people should be built every day by all stakeholders in a candidate country like Turkey.

There are no EU funds used for the construction of the new bridge over the Bosporus or for the festivities mentioned in the question.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006458/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Proyecto de construcción del mercado de la zona norte de Alicante

La Junta de Gobierno Local del Ayuntamiento de Alicante decidió, el 14 de mayo del pasado año 2012, aceptar el acta de comprobación del replanteo de las obras vinculadas al contrato relativo a la ejecución de las obras comprendidas en el Proyecto básico y de ejecución de equipamiento cívico-comercial Mercado Zona Norte, cofinanciado por la Comisión Europea con cargo al Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER), dentro de la Iniciativa Urbana (URBAN) prevista en el eje 5 «Desarrollo sostenible urbano y local» del Programa operativo FEDER de la Comunidad Valenciana 2007-2013, con el lema «Una manera de hacer Europa».

En dicha acta, suscrita el 8 de noviembre de 2011, se acordó suspender el inicio de las obras de un proyecto cofinanciado en un 70 % por el FEDER y que pretende equipar la zona norte de la ciudad de Alicante con un mercado municipal. El proyecto se aprobó el 20 de diciembre de 2010 por la Junta de Gobierno Local del Ayuntamiento de Alicante, suspendiéndose el inicio de las obras al constatarse en el acta de comprobación del replanteo la necesidad de rehacer el proyecto para garantizar la seguridad de los trabajadores durante los trabajos de excavación de los terrenos sobre los que se ha proyectado el mercado.

La Junta de Gobierno Local del Ayuntamiento de Alicante celebrada el 14 de mayo de 2012, además de acordar aceptar el acta antes citada, acordó también resolver el contrato pactado con la mercantil Esclapés e Hijos S.L. para ejecutar las obras proyectadas, con la intención de volver a licitar las obras ante el sensible encarecimiento del precio de las mismas que suponía introducir las modificaciones necesarias para garantizar la seguridad de los trabajadores.

Sin embargo, más de un año después sigue sin licitarse la ejecución del nuevo proyecto e incluso en el presupuesto para el presente año 2013 del Ayuntamiento de Alicante ha desaparecido la partida presupuestaria específica (33 — 431 — 62201) que había figurado en años anteriores, partida que en 2012 ascendió a 1 425 millones de euros y que en 2010 y 2011 fue de un millón de euros.

En el caso de que el Ayuntamiento de Alicante no vuelva a licitar el proyecto, ¿será retirado el 70 % de cofinanciación del mismo?

¿Cuáles son las fechas límite que tiene el Ayuntamiento de Alicante para iniciar y terminar las obras de construcción del mercado y no perder los fondos que cofinancian el proyecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión espera que se ejecute la totalidad de la asignación del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional gestionada por el Ayuntamiento de Alicante. La Comisión entiende que, dada la profunda crisis económica, el proyecto «Mercado Municipal de la Zona Norte» será sustituido por un proyecto diferente, «revitalización comercial de la Zona Norte de Alicante». El nuevo proyecto se centrará en la innovación y promoción comercial de las actividades existentes en la zona en cuestión.

No hay fecha inicial específica para estos proyectos. La fecha final de admisibilidad de los gastos será el 31 de diciembre de 2015. El proyecto debe terminarse a más tardar el 31 de marzo de 2017.

La Comisión recuerda asimismo que, según el principio de gestión compartida, no podrá intervenir en la selección de los proyectos (con excepción de los grandes proyectos), ya que ello es competencia exclusiva de las autoridades nacionales de gestión, siempre que sus decisiones estén en consonancia con los documentos de programación aprobados en concertación con la Comisión y que respeten la legislación vigente. Por lo tanto, la Comisión sugiere a Su Señoría que se ponga en contacto directamente con la autoridad de gestión del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional en España.

Administración del FEDER
Ministerio de Hacienda y Administraciones Públicas
Paseo de la Castellana, 3
E-28071 Madrid

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006458/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Project to build a market in the north of Alicante

On 14 May 2012, the Local Executive of Alicante City Council accepted the approval of the redesign of the work connected with the contract to carry out work under the basic and implementation plan for civic and commercial facilities, pertaining to the market in north Alicante. This project is co-financed by the Commission through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), as part of the URBAN Community Initiative. It is part of the ERDF Operational Programme 2007-2013 for the Valencian Community (the motto of which is 'A way to build Europe'), under priority 5, 'Urban and local sustainable development'.

This approval, which was signed on 8 November 2011, established that the start of work on the project would be suspended. The project, which is 70% co-funded by the ERDF, and which is intended to give the northern part of the city of Alicante a municipal market, was approved on 20 December 2010 by the Local Executive of Alicante City Council. The start of the work was suspended because the approval of the redesign established that the project needed to be revised in order to ensure the safety of workers during excavation of the land earmarked as the planned site of the market.

During the meeting of the Local Executive of Alicante City Council on 14 May 2012, in addition to accepting the aforementioned approval, the Council also agreed to terminate the contract with the company Esclapés e Hijos S.L. to perform the planned work. The City Council made this decision with the intention of putting the work out to tender again, in view of the significant increase in the cost of the work as a result of the modifications required to ensure workers' safety.

However, more than one year on, the new project has not yet gone out to tender. Furthermore, Alicante City Council's budget for 2013 no longer includes the specific budget line (33 — 431 — 62201) that appeared in previous years. In 2012, this line was EUR 1.425 billion, and in 2010 and 2011, it was EUR 1 million.

If Alicante City Council does not put the project out to tender again, will the 70% co-financing for the project be withdrawn?

What are the deadlines by which Alicante City Council must start and finish building work on the market, so as not to lose the co-financing for the project?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The Commission expects the total allocation from the European Regional Development Fund being managed by Alicante City Council to be implemented. The Commission understands that, due to the deep impact of the crisis, the project 'Municipal Market Zona Norte' will be replaced by a different project 'Commercial revitalisation of the area Zona Norte'. The new project focuses on innovation and commercial promotion of the existing economic activities in the area concerned.

There is no specific start date for such projects. The end date for eligibility of expenditure is 31 December 2015. The project has to be finished by 31 March 2017.

The Commission also reminds that under the shared management principle, it may not intervene in the selection of the projects (except for major projects), as this comes under the exclusive competence of the national managing authorities, provided that their choices are in line with the programming documents adopted in consultation with the Commission, and that they comply with current legislation. Therefore the Commission suggests the Honourable Member to contact directly the managing authority of the European Regional Development Fund in Spain.

Administración del FEDER
Ministerio de Economía y Hacienda
Paseo de la Castellana, 162
E-28071 Madrid

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006459/13
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Repercusión de los recortes presupuestarios en el desmantelamiento de las medidas para cubrir las necesidades básicas de los discapacitados

El artículo 26 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea (UE) reconoce el derecho de las personas discapacitadas, que, no lo olvidemos, representan más del 15 % de la población de la UE, a «beneficiarse de medidas que garanticen su autonomía, su integración social y profesional y su participación en la vida de la comunidad». Sin embargo, los recortes provocados por las políticas de austeridad impuestas por la troika están afectando directamente a las personas con discapacidad y sus familias. Y, lo que es más grave, más de 1 de cada 5 personas con discapacidad (21,1 %) corren el riesgo de experimentar pobreza en la EU en comparación con las personas sin discapacidad (14,9 %).

La satisfacción de las necesidades básicas de este colectivo no solo no están siendo mejoradas sino que las medidas conexas se están desmantelando debido a los recortes directos sobre el presupuesto, el cierre total o parcial de los servicios sociales y la fusión de servicios; los recortes de personal, de salarios y en las ayudas a la vida independiente; el retraso de los pagos; los aplazamientos de desarrollos y reformas; el impacto sobre los servicios y apoyos al empleo, etc.

En el caso específico español, los recortes se cifran ya en más de un 30 % y han provocado la necesidad de eliminar o posponer proyectos que ya estaban planeados.

El Fondo Social Europeo es un instrumento fundamental para apoyar y financiar la inclusión efectiva de las personas con discapacidad en la sociedad y en el mercado laboral. Las organizaciones de discapacitados reconocen la contribución positiva realizada por el Fondo Social Europeo, en particular en cuanto a atenuar el impacto de los recortes de financiación en las iniciativas que ya estaban en marcha antes de la crisis.

¿Qué acciones piensa realizar la Comisión para garantizar que los recortes presupuestarios no mermen seriamente la capacidad de muchos Estados miembros para apoyar a los discapacitados?

¿No cree la Comisión que hoy, más que nunca, es imprescindible la ayuda de la Unión para evitar que los discapacitados sufran situaciones de pobreza y exclusión social?

¿No cree la Comisión que el Fondo Social Europeo debe contar con una asignación presupuestaria elevada para poder hacer frente a todos los desafíos (discapacidad, desempleo juvenil, etc.)?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión invita a los Estados miembros a hacer uso de los fondos europeos, como los Fondos Estructurales de la UE, para mejorar la accesibilidad, luchar contra la discriminación y promover la igualdad de oportunidades.

La ayuda de la UE a las personas con discapacidad destinada a su inclusión social, empleabilidad y educación se canaliza principalmente a través del Fondo Social Europeo (FSE), la principal herramienta financiera con la que la UE concreta los objetivos estratégicos de su política social en acción.

La propuesta de la Comisión sobre los Fondos Estructurales para el período 2014-2020 ([1]) prevé que un porcentaje mínimo del 25 % del presupuesto de la política de cohesión se asigne al FSE y al menos el 20 % de la dotación del FSE se centre en los objetivos de inclusión social. La Comisión está de acuerdo en que, puesto que tanto se espera del FSE, este presupuesto mínimo garantizado es aún más necesario para abordar los retos actuales. El Reglamento del FSE está siendo negociado actualmente por los colegisladores.

En la propuesta de la Comisión sobre el FSE existen prioridades de inversión destinadas a combatir la discriminación basada en la discapacidad y a mejorar el acceso a servicios asequibles, sostenibles y de calidad, incluidos los servicios sanitarios y sociales.

Enfoques más específicos son también importantes para hacer frente a la escasez de recursos: el FSE promoverá asimismo la innovación social, ante todo con el fin de probar y generalizar toda solución innovadora en materia de necesidades sociales, y facilitará el desarrollo de capacidades en materia de innovación social apoyando en particular el aprendizaje mutuo, la creación de redes y la difusión de buenas prácticas y metodologías.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=62&langId=es

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006459/13
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Repercussions of healthcare cuts on the basic needs of persons with disabilities

Article 26 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union recognises the right of persons with disabilities, who represent over 15% of the EU's population, 'to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community'. However, the cuts arising from Troika-imposed austerity policies are directly affecting persons with disabilities and their families. Even more seriously, over one in five persons with a disability (21.1%) is in danger of falling into poverty in the EU, compared with 14.9% of those without disability.

Not only are the basic needs of this population group not being better met, but accompanying measures are being dismantled due to direct budget cuts, the total or partial closure of social services and the fusions of services; cuts in staffing, salaries and independent living assistance; delayed payments; postponement of new developments and reforms; the impact on services and employment support, etc.

Specifically in the case of Spain, the level of cuts is already over 30% and has made it necessary to eliminate or postpone projects which were already at the planning stage.

The European Social Fund (ESF) is a key instrument for supporting and funding the effective inclusion of people with disabilities in society and the labour market. Disability rights organisations recognise the ESF's positive contribution, particularly in terms of softening the impact of funding cuts on initiatives which were already underway before the start of the crisis.

What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that budget cuts do not seriously curtail many Member States' capacity to support people with disabilities?

Does the Commission not feel that the EU's support is now more essential than ever to prevent people with disabilities from falling into poverty and social exclusion?

Does the Commission not feel that the ESF should be provided with a substantial budget allocation so that it can properly address all the existing challenges (disability, youth unemployment, etc)?

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

The Commission encourages Members States to use European funds, including EU structural funds, to improve accessibility, combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities.

The EU support to persons with disabilities and their social inclusion, employability and education is mostly channelled through the European Social Fund, the main financial tool through which the EU translates its strategic social policy aims into action.

The Commission proposal on Structural Funds for 2014-2020 ([1]) envisaged that a minimum share of 25% of the cohesion policy budget should be allocated to the ESF and at least 20% of ESF funding targets the social inclusion objectives. The Commission agrees that given the additional expectation placed on the ESF this guaranteed minimum budget is even more necessary to address the existing challenges. The ESF regulation is currently negotiated by the co-legislators.

In the Commission's ESF proposal there are investment priorities aimed at combating discrimination based on disability and enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, including healthcare and social services.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=62&langId=en

More targeted approaches are also important to face the shortage of resources: the ESF will also promote social innovation, in particular with the aim of testing and scaling up innovative solutions to address social needs and will facilitate capacity building for social innovation, in particular through supporting mutual learning, establishing networks, and disseminating good practices and methodologies.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006460/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(6 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Convenio entre la Generalitat Valenciana (España) y Fedaver en la gestión de fondos europeos

Recientemente, los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) se han hecho eco de una información que afirma que el Gobierno de la Generalitat Valenciana gestionó ineficazmente 128 millones de euros de líneas para el desarrollo rural en el periodo 2008-2013. La fiscalía valenciana ha investigado esta situación para verificar si la gestión de estos recursos públicos hubiese sido constitutiva de delito.

Se da la circunstancia de que, en el año 2010, el Departamento de Agricultura de la Generalitat Valenciana firmó un convenio de colaboración con una entidad privada, Fedaver, cediéndole la gestión total o parcial de las ayudas mediante la tramitación material de los expedientes administrativos correspondientes. Este convenio, según las informaciones publicadas, incluye una cláusula señalando expresamente que el acuerdo no debía remitirse a la UE, principal financiadora de las ayudas. Además, Fedaver percibió ingresos a cambio de la tramitación de los expedientes, plagados de irregularidades o destinados a fines prohibidos por la normativa europea, según la fiscalía.

A la luz de estas informaciones se formulan las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de las actuaciones de la fiscalía valenciana en relación con el convenio entre el Gobierno valenciano y Fedaver?

2. ¿Le consta a la Comisión que han habido irregularidades y gestiones ineficaces en el uso de los 128 millones de euros destinados al desarrollo rural valenciano en el periodo 2008-2013?

3. ¿Ha tomado la Comisión alguna iniciativa dirigida al Gobierno valenciano relativa a la gestión de los fondos de desarrollo rural concedidos al mismo?

4. ¿Cuál es el desglose por años de las subvenciones concedidas por la UE entre los años 2007 y 2013 a la Generalitat valenciana procedentes de los fondos europeos de desarrollo rural, desarrollo regional y cohesión social?

5. ¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de irregularidades cometidas por parte del Gobierno de la Generalitat Valenciana en la gestión y el uso de los fondos anteriormente mencionados?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de julio de 2013)

1. La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de ninguna ayuda del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader) asignada para el funcionamiento de la Red Valenciana de Desarrollo Rural (Fevader), aunque sí a los ocho grupos de acción local.

2. A falta de información precisa, la Comisión no puede pronunciarse. Las irregularidades por 10 000 euros o más a cargo del presupuesto de la UE que hayan sido objeto de un primer acto de comprobación administrativa o judicial son comunicadas por los Estados miembros a la OLAF ([1]). La Comisión conoce los problemas de tesorería de la administración autonómica, que dieron lugar a una liberación de créditos del Feader por valor de 5,4 millones de euros en 2012.

3. La Comisión hace un seguimiento periódico de la gestión financiera de los fondos del Feader mediante diferentes herramientas, como el Comité de seguimiento y las reuniones de revisión anual, y realizando inspecciones y otras actuaciones, según lo dispuesto por el Reglamento (CE) n° 1290/2005 ([2]).

4. La Comisión enviará directamente a Su Señoría y a la Secretaría del Parlamenteo un cuando con el desglose anual de las subvenciones de los fondos de la UE a los programas regionales de la Comunidad Valenciana.

([1]) Aplicación del artículo 3, apartado 1, y del artículo 12, apartado 1, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1681/94 de la Comisión, modificado por el Reglamento (CE) n° 2035/2005 de la Comisión.
([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1290/2005 del Consejo, sobre la financiación de la política agrícola común (DO L 209 de 11.8.2005).

5. La Comisión no tiene constancia de ninguna irregularidad por parte del Gobierno de la Generalitat Valenciana en relación con la gestión y el uso de los fondos anteriormente mencionados. La Comisión sigue muy de cerca la ejecución de los programas y aplica los procedimientos previstos por la normativa cuando se detectan deficiencias en los sistemas de gestión y control o irregularidades en los Estados miembros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006460/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Agreement on the management of European funding between the Valencian regional government (Spain) and FEDAVER

It has recently been media reports in the Valencian Community (Spain) that the Valencian regional government mismanaged EUR 128 million in rural development funding during the 2008-2013 period. The Valencian tax authorities have investigated the situation to establish whether a crime was committed in the management of these public funds.

It so happens that in 2010 the Valencian government's department of agriculture signed a collaboration agreement with a private body, FEDAVER, giving it partial or total control of aid management by making it responsible for processing the relevant administrative forms. According to news reports, a clause was included specifically stating that the agreement should not be forwarded to the EU, which is the main source of the aid in question. FEDAVER was also remunerated for processing the forms, which according to the tax authorities were full of irregularities or destined for purposes prohibited under EC law.

This information raises the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of the actions taken by the Valencian tax authorities in relation to the agreement between the regional government and FEDAVER?

2. Does the Commission know whether there were irregularities and inefficiency in the handling and use of EUR 128 million in funding for Valencian rural development during the 2008-2013 period?

3. Has the Commission taken any action vis-à-vis the Valencian regional government in relation to the handling of rural development funds granted to the latter?

4. What is the annual breakdown of aid from the European rural development, regional development and social cohesion funds granted by the EU to the Valencian government between 2007 and 2013?

5. Is the Commission aware of any irregularities on the part of the Valencian regional government in relation to the management and use of the abovementioned funds?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2013)

1. The Commission is not aware of any European Agricultural Funds for Rural Development (EAFRD) allocated to the functioning of the Valencia Network for Rural Development (FEVADER), but to the eight local action groups.

2. The Commission cannot take a position in the absence of precise information. Any irregularities of minimum EUR 10,000 chargeable to the Community budget which have been the subject of a primary administrative and/or judicial finding are reported by Member States to OLAF ([1]). The Commission is aware of the treasury problems the regional administration is confronted to, which resulted in a de-commitment of EUR 5.4 million EAFRD in 2012.

3. The Commission follows up the financial management of the EAFRD funds regularly through different tools including the Monitoring Committee and the Annual Review meetings and by carrying out controls and other measures as established by Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 ([2]).

4. The Commission is sending direct to the Honourable Member and to Parliament Secretariat a table containing the annual financing breakdown per EU Fund for the regional programmes of Comunidad Valenciana .

5. The Commission is not aware of any irregularities on the part of the Valencian regional government in relation to the management and use of the abovementioned funds. The Commission follows very closely the implementation of the programmes, and applies the procedures foreseen in the regulations whenever deficiencies in the management and control systems or irregularities are detected in the Member State.

([1]) Application of arts. 3(1) and 12(1) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1681/94 as amended by Commission Regulation (EC) No 2035/2005.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC)No 1290/2005 on the financing of the common agricultural policy., OJ L 209, 11.8.2005.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006461/13
an die Kommission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Weiterreise von in Italien gemeldeten Asylsuchenden nach Deutschland

Seit geraumer Zeit halten sich mehrere afrikanische Flüchtlinge in Deutschland auf, die als gemeldete Asylsuchende in Italien von den italienischen Behörden zur Weiterreise aufgefordert wurden. Sie erhielten dafür 500 EUR und ein drei Monate gültiges Schengen-Visum. In Deutschland können diese Asylsuchenden weder einen Asylantrag stellen (dieses Verfahren läuft bereits in Italien) noch von den damit einhergehenden Aufnahmeleistungen profitieren. Sie leben daher auf der Straße und hoffen in Obdachlosenunterkünfte aufgenommen zu werden.

1. Ist die Ausstellung eines solchen Schengen-Visums während eines laufenden Asylverfahrens mit geltendem Europarecht vereinbar und vor allem mit der Dublin-II-Verordnung?

2. Verstößt das Verhalten der italienischen Behörden gegen die Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union, insbesondere gegen die Artikel 18 und 19?

3. Wie beurteilt die Kommission dieses Verhalten der italienischen Behörden? Verstößt Italien nach Einschätzung der Kommission gegen den Geist der Verträge?

4. Was gedenkt die Kommission zu tun, um in der Zukunft ein derartiges Vorgehen der italienischen Behörden zu verhindern?

Bitte berücksichtigen Sie in Ihrer Antwort die Gliederung der Anfrage und antworten Sie auf jede Einzelfrage gesondert.

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(1. August 2013)

Normalerweise sind Drittstaatsangehörige, die sich rechtmäßig in einem „Schengen-Staat" aufhalten, im Besitz eines Dokuments, das ihnen Reisefreiheit verleiht (z. B. ein Visum für einen kurzfristigen Aufenthalt, eine Aufenthaltsgenehmigung oder ein Visum für einen längerfristigen Aufenthalt).

Es kann jedoch vorkommen, dass eine Person, die sich rechtmäßig im Land aufhält, nicht über ein solches Dokument verfügt, das ihr die Einreise in einen anderen Mitgliedstaat gestattet. Nach Artikel 7 des Visakodexes ([1]) müssen Drittstaatsangehörige, die sich rechtmäßig im Hoheitsgebiet eines Mitgliedstaats aufhalten, aber nicht im Besitz eines Dokuments sind, das ihnen Reisefreiheit gewährt, beim Konsulat des zuständigen Mitgliedstaats ein Visum beantragen (dies ist im Prinzip der Mitgliedstaat, der das einzige oder das Hauptziel des Aufenthalts ist, in dem hier beschriebenen Fall also Deutschland).

In der Dublin-II-Verordnung sind die Kriterien und Verfahren zur Bestimmung des Mitgliedstaats, der für die Prüfung eines von einem Drittstaatsangehörigen in einem Mitgliedstaat gestellten Asylantrags zuständig ist, festgelegt. Danach ist der Mitgliedstaat, der einem Asylbewerber ein Visum erteilt hat, unter bestimmten Bedingungen für die Prüfung des Asylantrags zuständig.

Wenn ein Asylbewerber mit einem Schengen-Visum nach Deutschland einreist, das von einem anderen Mitgliedstaat ausgestellt wurde, und andere Bestimmungen der Dublin-Verordnung keinen Vorrang haben, dann ist dieser andere Mitgliedstaat zuständig und muss entsprechend den Asylbewerber aufnehmen und den Asylantrag prüfen.

Angesichts dieser allgemeinen Argumentation sieht sich die Kommission nicht in der Lage, auf der Grundlage der von der Frau Abgeordneten übermittelten Angaben festzustellen, ob Italien gegen EU-Recht (einschließlich der Charta der Grundrechte) verstoßen hat.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 810/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rats vom 13. Juli 2009 über einen Visakodex der Gemeinschaft (Visakodex) (ABl. L 243 vom 15.9.2009, S. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006461/13
to the Commission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Onward travel to Germany by asylum-seekers registered in Italy

For some time now, numerous African refugees who are registered as asylum-seekers in Italy have been living in Germany, having been encouraged by the Italian authorities to travel onwards. They were paid EUR 500 and received a three-month Schengen visa for this purpose. These asylum-seekers are unable to apply for asylum in Germany (as their cases are already being processed in Italy) nor can they benefit from the associated services offered by host countries. They therefore find themselves living on the streets in the hope of finding accommodation in homeless shelters.

1. Is the granting of such a Schengen visa while an asylum application is being processed compatible with European law and, above all, with the Dublin II Regulation?

2. Does this practice by the Italian authorities violate the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in particular Articles 18 and 19?

3. How does the Commission assess this practice of the Italian authorities? In the view of the Commission, is Italy in violation of the spirit of the agreements?

4. What does the Commission intend to do to prevent such practices on the part of the Italian authorities in future?

Please respect the structure of the question in your reply and answer each individual question separately.

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

Normally, a third-country national legally present in a 'Schengen State' holds a document allowing him to circulate freely (e.g. a short-stay visa, a residence permit, a long-stay visa).

However, situations may arise where a person legally present does not hold a document allowing him to travel to another Member State. According to the Visa Code ([1]) (Art. 7), a person legally present in a Member State, but not holding a document allowing him to circulate, must apply for a visa at the embassy of the competent Member State (i.e. in principle, the Member State of sole/main destination — Germany in the case described by the Honourable Member).

The Dublin II Regulation sets the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged with one of the Member States by a third-country national. According to one of its criteria, a Member State which issued a visa to an asylum-seeker is, subject to certain rules, responsible for examining his asylum application.

If an asylum-seeker enters Germany on the basis of a Schengen visa issued by another Member State, and if other provisions of the Dublin Regulation do not take precedence, that other Member State is responsible and must take charge of the asylum-seeker and examine his application.

On the basis of this general reasoning, the details presented by the Honourable Member are not sufficient for the Commission to establish that there has been a violation of the EU acquis, including the Charter, by Italy.

([1]) Regulation (EC) 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council establishing a Community Code on Visas (the Visa Code). OJ L 243, 15.9.2009, p 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006462/13
an die Kommission
Richard Seeber (PPE)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Nitrosamine — Verifizierungstest Round Robin EN 71-12

Im Juni 2013 wird die neue europäische Spielzeugrichtlinie 2009/48/EG in Kraft treten, die auch den Artikel „Luftballons" betrifft. Für Luftballons ist unter anderem die Einhaltung von Grenzwerten bei den Nitrosaminen und nitrosierbaren Aminen im neuen Regelwerk vorgesehen. Im vergangenen Jahr wurde zur Evaluierung der vorgesehenen Werte ein Verifizierungstest (Round Robin EN 71-12) durch das CEN durchgeführt.

Die vorgeschriebene Technik zur Messung von Nitrosaminen scheint allerdings noch nicht ausgereift zu sein, um derart kleine Mengen mit großer Wiederholgenauigkeit zu messen. Einzelne Messungen in den verschiedenen zertifizierten Laboratorien dürften erhebliche Messunterschiede aufweisen. Ein sicheres und quantifizierbares Messergebnis scheint daher derzeit nicht gewährleistet werden zu können, sondern könnte von der Wahl des Laboratoriums abhängen.

1. Wie gedenkt die Kommission die entstandene Problematik zu bewältigen?

2. Welche technischen Verbesserungen plant die Kommission, um aussagekräftige und zuverlässige Messergebnisse zu ermöglichen?

3. Ist bis zur Überarbeitung des Messverfahrens und zur Festlegung von neuen Grenzwerten ein Toleranzwert oder ein Toleranzzeitraum geplant?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(9. Juli 2013)

Die neue Richtlinie 2009/48/EG für Spielzeugsicherheit gilt seit dem 20. Juli 2011, lediglich die chemischen Anforderungen, auch für Nitrosamine und nitrosierbare Stoffe, gelten erst ab dem 20. Juli 2013.

Die Kommission wurde von zuständigen Fachleuten des CEN darüber informiert, dass der Verifizierungstest (Round Robin EN 71-12) zur Messung der Nitrosamine in Luftballons erfolgreich abgeschlossen wurde. Die beobachteten unterschiedlichen Ergebnisse der teilnehmenden Labors wurden als akzeptabel eingestuft. Für die Durchführung eines Tests muss das einzelne Labor im Vorhinein seine Leistungsfähigkeit bei Tests nachweisen, damit gewährleistet ist, dass die Ergebnisse aussagekräftig und zuverlässig sind.

In der Spielzeugrichtlinie 2009/48/EG ist festgelegt, dass die Migration von Nitrosaminen und nitrosierbaren Stoffen bei bestimmten Spielzeugen ab dem 20. Juli 2013 0,05 mg/kg bzw. 1 mg/kg nicht überschreiten darf. Nach der Richtlinie ist die Kommission nicht befugt, diese Migrationsgrenzen zu ändern.

Angesichts dessen plant die Kommission nicht, einen Toleranzwert oder einen Toleranzzeitraum einzuführen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006462/13
to the Commission
Richard Seeber (PPE)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Nitrosamines — Round Robin EN 71-12 verification test

The new European Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC will come into force in June 2013, also covering 'balloons'. One of the requirements for balloons contained in the new set of rules is compliance with limit values for nitrosamines and nitrosatable amines. Over the last year, CEN has conducted a verification test (Round Robin EN 71-12) to assess the planned values.

The prescribed technique for measuring nitrosamines does yet not seem sufficiently sophisticated to measure such small quantities with great consistent accuracy. Individual measurements in the various certified laboratories seem to contain serious divergences. Thus, it seems impossible to guarantee a reliable and quantifiable measurement result, as a great deal seems to depend on the choice of laboratory.

1. How does the Commission intend to deal with this problem?

2. What technical improvements is the Commission planning to ensure that meaningful and reliable results can be obtained?

3. Are there any plans to introduce a tolerance value or tolerance period until the measurement process can be revised and new limit values are defined?

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

The new Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC has been applicable since 20 July 2011, only the chemical requirements, including for nitrosamines and nitrosatable substances, will start to be applicable as of 20 July 2013.

The Commission has been informed by relevant CEN experts that the round robin EN 71-12 test for the measurement of nitrosamines in balloons was successfully concluded. The observed variability of the results between the participating laboratories was considered as acceptable. When carrying out a test, an individual laboratory has to demonstrate its in-house test performance upfront, in order to ensure that the test results it generates are meaningful and reliable.

The Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC provides that nitrosamines and nitrosatable substances must not migrate from certain toys in quantities above 0.05 mg/kg and 1 mg/kg, respectively as of 20 July 2013. The directive does not empower the Commission to amend these migration limits.

In view of the above the Commission has no plans to introduce a tolerance value or a tolerance period.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006463/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Unterschiede bei den Strompreisen in der EU

Ende Mai 2013 veröffentlichte die Statistikbehörde Eurostat Daten, nach denen die Strompreise in der EU im ersten Halbjahr des Jahres 2012 gegenüber dem Jahr 2011 um durchschnittlich 6,6 % gestiegen sind. Den in absoluten Zahlen niedrigsten Strompreis gab es mit 9,6 EUR pro 100 Kilowattstunden (kWh) in Bulgarien. Auch in Rumänien und Estland waren die Preise ähnlich niedrig. Am teuersten war Strom mit 29,7 EUR pro 100 kWh in Dänemark vor Zypern, Deutschland und Italien.

1. Welche Gründe sieht die Kommission für die große Preisdifferenz zwischen den Mitgliedsländern mit den günstigsten und den Ländern mit den teuersten Strompreisen?

2. Welche Auswirkungen haben die Strompreisdifferenzen nach Ansicht der Kommission auf die wirtschaftliche und politische Situation in der EU oder einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten?

3. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen, um die Strompreisdifferenz in der EU zu verringern?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(18. Juli 2013)

1. Neben den Bedingungen in den nationalen Energiesystemen, z. B. Grad des Wettbewerbs, Erzeugungsmix, Umfang von Angebot und Nachfrage, haben die in einigen Mitgliedstaaten weiter bestehende Preisregulierung und die damit verbundenen Parameter einen erheblichen Einfluss auf die Unterschiede bei den Endenergiepreisen in der EU. Die Übertragungs-/Fernleitungs- und Verteilernetzentgelte sowie Steuern und Abgaben, die ebenfalls von den Mitgliedstaaten festgelegt werden, tragen zu diesen Unterschieden bei. Diese Entgelte, Steuern und Abgaben machen in einigen Mitgliedstaaten mehr als 50 % der endgültigen Endkundenpreise aus.

2. Bis Ende 2013 wird die Kommission eine Analyse der Zusammensetzung der Energiepreise und Energiekosten sowie der entsprechenden Preis- und Kostentreiber in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten vorlegen, in der auch die Auswirkungen der Preise auf die Verbraucher und auf die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der EU im Vergleich zu ihren weltweiten wirtschaftlichen Wettbewerbern näher betrachtet werden sollen.

3. Die Kommission vertritt bereits seit langem den Standpunkt, dass die Energiepreise so weit wie möglich durch die Marktkräfte und den Wettbewerbsdruck innerhalb des EU-Energiebinnenmarktes gebildet werden sollten. Durch Marktreformen konnte eine Preissenkung und Preiskonvergenz erzielt werden, wenn ein stärkerer Wettbewerb und eine grenzüberschreitende Marktkopplung eingeführt wurden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006463/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Energy price disparities in the EU

The Statistical Office Eurostat published data at the end of May 2013 showing that energy prices in the EU in the first half of 2012 were on average 6.6% higher than in 2011. The lowest price for energy in absolute terms was EUR 9.60 per 100 kilowatt hours (kWh) in Bulgaria. Prices in Romania and Estonia were similarly low. Energy prices were highest in Denmark at EUR 29.70 per 100 kWh, followed by Cyprus, Germany and Italy.

1. What in the Commission's view is the reason for this wide disparity between the Member States in terms of the highest and lowest energy prices?

2. What effect does the Commission believe energy price disparities are having on the economic and political situation in the EU or in individual Member States?

3. Is the Commission planning measures to reduce these disparities within the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2013)

1. Besides conditions in the national energy systems, such as the level of competition, the generation mix, or supply and demand levels, the continuation of price regulation in some Members States and its parameters substantially contribute to the disparity of final prices across the EU. Transmission and distribution charges as well as taxes and levies, all equally determined at Member States' level, contribute to the disparity. These charges, taxes and levies constitute in some Member States over 50% of final retail prices.

2. By the end of 2013, the Commission will present an analysis of the composition and drivers of energy prices and costs in Member States, looking in greater detail at the impact of prices on consumers and on the EU's competitiveness vis-à-vis its global economic competitors.

3. The Commission's long-standing position is that energy prices should be as much as possible formed by market forces and competitive pressures within the EU internal energy market. Market reforms have worked to decrease and converge prices where stronger competition was introduced and markets were coupled across borders.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006464/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen Deutschland wegen Flughafen in Berlin

Medienberichten zufolge hat die EU-Kommission wegen des Großbauprojekts zum neuen Berliner Hauptstadtflughafen ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen Deutschland eingeleitet. Bei der Planung der Flugrouten sollen Umweltgesetze missachtet worden sein.

1. Gegen welche konkreten EU-Richtlinien soll in diesem Fall nach Ansicht der Kommission verstoßen worden sein?

2. Hat die Kommission das Verfahren auf eigene Initiative hin eröffnet oder sind im Vorfeld bestimmte Interessengruppen mit einer Beschwerde an die Kommission herangetreten? Wenn ja, welche?

3. Kann der Flughafen auch eröffnet werden, solange das Vertragsverletzungsverfahren läuft, oder wird das Verfahren die voraussichtliche Eröffnung des Flughafens verzögern?

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

Am 30. Mai 2013 hat die Kommission gegen Deutschland ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren eingeleitet, weil das deutsche Luftverkehrsrecht nicht mit dem EU-Recht vereinbar ist. Dabei geht es um einen mutmaßlichen Verstoß gegen die Richtlinie 2011/92/EU über die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung bei bestimmten öffentlichen und privaten Projekten ([1]) und die Richtlinie 92/43/EG zur Erhaltung der natürlichen Lebensräume sowie der wildlebenden Tiere und Pflanzen ([2]).

Grundlage für das Verfahren sind Beschwerden von Einzelpersonen und Bürgerinitiativen im Rahmen der Bewertung von Fragen des Luftverkehrs im Zusammenhang mit dem neuen Flughafen Berlin-Brandenburg (BER).

Das eingeleitete Vertragsverletzungsverfahren geht nicht speziell auf den neuen Berliner Flughafen ein, sondern dient dazu, Fälle von Nichteinhaltung der einschlägigen Vorschriften zu veranschaulichen. Die Eröffnung des Berliner Flughafens (BER) ist hierbei nicht Gegenstand des Verfahrens.

([1]) ABl. L 26 vom 28.1.2012.
([2]) ABl. L 206 vom 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006464/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 June 2013)

Subject: Infringement proceedings against Germany in relation to Berlin airport

According to media reports, the Commission has initiated infringement proceedings against Germany in relation to the major development at Berlin's new city airport. It is alleged that environmental laws were not complied with during the planning of flight paths.

1. Can the Commission say exactly which EU directives were breached in this regard?

2. Did the Commission initiate the proceedings of its own accord or did it act on a complaint made by particular interest groups? If so, which ones?

3. Can the airport be opened while the infringement proceedings are ongoing, or will the proceedings delay the intended opening?

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

On 30 May 2013, the Commission opened an infringement procedure against Germany for non-compliance of its national air traffic law with European environmental law. It concerns a possible infringement of Directive 2011/92/EU ([1]) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment and Directive 92/43/EC ([2]) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

The procedure is based on complaints which were lodged by individuals as well as citizen groups in the context of its assessment of air traffic issues related to the new airport Berlin-Brandenburg (BER).

The initiated infringement procedure does not address specifically Berlin's new city airport but rather uses it to illustrate the instances of non-conformity. The opening of Airport Berlin BER is not subject to proceedings in this case.

([1]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012,.
([2]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

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