ISSN 1725-2504

Europeiska unionens officiella tidning

C 174 E

Svensk utgåva

Meddelanden och upplysningar

56 årgången

20 juni 2013

Informationsnummer | Innehållsförteckning | Sida

SV

Meddelande till läsaren

Denna publikation innehåller skriftliga frågor från Europaparlamentets ledamöter med svar från en unionsinstitution.

Vid varje fråga och svar ges originalversionen före eventuell översättning.

I vissa fall kan svaret ges på ett annat språk än frågan. Detta beror på arbetsspråket i det utskott som svarar.

Frågorna och svaren publiceras enligt artikel 117 i Europaparlamentets arbetsordning.

Alla frågor och svar finns på Europaparlamentets webbplats (Europarl) under rubriken Parlamentsfrågor:

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

FÖRKORTNINGAR FÖR DE POLITISKA GRUPPERNA

PPE	Europeiska folkpartiets grupp (kristdemokrater)
S&D	Gruppen Progressiva förbundet av socialdemokrater och demokrater i Europaparlamentet
ALDE	Gruppen Alliansen liberaler och demokrater för Europa
Verts/ALE	Gruppen De gröna/Europeiska fria alliansen
ECR	Gruppen Europeiska konservativa och reformister
GUE/NGL	Gruppen Europeiska enade vänstern/Nordisk grön vänster
EFD	Gruppen Frihet och demokrati i Europa
NI	Grupplösa

SV

IV

(Upplysningar)

UPPLYSNINGAR FRÅN EUROPEISKA UNIONENS INSTITUTIONER, BYRÅER OCH ORGAN

EUROPAPARLAMENTET

SKRIFTLIGA FRÅGOR MED SVAR

Skriftliga frågor från Europaparlamentets ledamöter med svar från en unionsinstitution

(2013/C 174 E/01)

Innehållsförteckning **Sida**

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005535/12
an die Kommission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(31. Mai 2012)

Betrifft: Visa für zivilgesellschaftliche Organisationen in der Ukraine

Im Herbst vergangenen Jahres hat die Ukraine eine Visaverordnung in Kraft gesetzt, nach der zivilgesellschaftliche Organisationen die für die Erteilung eines Visums notwendige Einladung ausstellen müssen. Voraussetzung hierfür ist jedoch eine Registrierung, für die allerdings bisher kein Rechtsweg vorgesehen ist. Die hierfür notwendige Behörde befindet sich nach Auskunft der ukrainischen Botschaft in Deutschland erst „im Aufbau".

Langzeitfreiwillige, die eine Einladung einer zivilgesellschaftlichen Organisation bei ukrainischen Konsulaten vorlegen, erhalten daher kein Visum mehr. Auch die Durchführung des Europäischen Freiwilligendienstes ist in der Ukraine damit gefährdet.

Die Kommission wird daher Folgendes gefragt:

1. Ist der Kommission diese Problematik bekannt? Wenn ja, hat sie diese gegenüber der urkanischen Regierung kritisch angesprochen?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission diese Visa-Regelung?

3. Welche Möglichkeiten sieht sie, um eine Verbesserung der Situation zu erreichen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(6. August 2012)

Nach ukrainischem Recht sind EU-Bürger bei Reisen in die Ukraine von höchstens 90 Tagen von der Visumpflicht befreit. Daher können Freiwillige, die für diesen kurzen Zeitraum in der Ukraine bleiben möchten, visumfrei einreisen. Der Kommission sind diesbezüglich keine Probleme bekannt.

Die Visumpflicht für Zeiträume von mehr als 90 Tagen und die entsprechenden Ausstellungsverfahren fallen jedoch in die nationale Zuständigkeit der Ukraine.

Die EU-Delegation in Kiew wurde in jüngster Zeit von Bürgerinnen und Bürgern der EU kontaktiert, die als Freiwillige arbeiten und Probleme bei der Beantragung eines Visums für einen langfristigen Aufenthalt oder eines Aufenthaltstitels hatten. Die EU-Delegation hat diese Probleme in informellen Kontakten mit den ukrainischen Behörden angesprochen.

Fragen im Zusammenhang mit der Registrierung von EU-Bürgern wurden in den jüngsten politischen Dialogen mit der Ukraine angesprochen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005535/12
to the Commission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(31 May 2012)

Subject: Visa requirements for civil society organisations in Ukraine

In autumn 2011, Ukraine brought into force a regulation requiring civil society organisations to issue invitations before visas could be issued. However, no legal channels yet exist for the necessary registration procedures. According to the Ukrainian Embassy in Germany, the relevant authority is still 'in the process of being set up'.

This means that long-standing volunteers who present a civil-society invitation to Ukrainian consulates will no longer receive a visa. This is also putting European voluntary services in Ukraine at risk.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem? If so, has it expressed its criticism to the Ukrainian Government?

2. What view does the Commission take of this visa regulation?

3. How does it consider that matters could be improved?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2012)

According to Ukrainian law, EU citizens are exempt from the visa requirement when travelling to Ukraine for a period of time not exceeding 90 days. Therefore, volunteers who wish to stay in Ukraine for such a short period can travel visa-free. The Commission is not aware of any problems in this context.

Visa requirements for periods exceeding 90 days and the corresponding issuing procedures is a national competence of Ukraine.

The EU Delegation in Kyiv has been approached lately by EU citizens working as volunteers who have faced problems when applying for long term visas or residence permits. The EU Delegation has raised these concerns in informal contacts with Ukrainian authorities.

Issues related to the registration of EU citizens have been raised in recent political dialogues with Ukraine.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005536/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(31 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: España, bancos y FEEF

Considerando la crisis del sistema bancario español. Considerando que la recapitalización por parte del Gobierno español basada en el aumento de la deuda pública (vía inyección directa en casos como Bankia, o acudiendo al mercado), significa una agudización de la interdependencia entre la salubridad de los bancos y la de las cuentas públicas españolas. Sabiendo que esto está comportando un claro riesgo para la estabilidad y la solvencia de la Unión Económica y Monetaria y aumenta los tipos de interés de los bonos del tesoro español, llevando a la prima de riesgo a los 533 puntos básicos ([1]).

Dado el alto nivel de integración del sistema bancario europeo y los riesgos de contagio en la eurozona, la Facilidad Europea de Estabilidad Financiera (FEEF) contempla la posibilidad de otorgar líneas de préstamos específicas para recapitalizar instituciones financieras ([2]). Sin embargo, esta opción aumentaría la deuda pública y por tanto no es consistente con el objetivo consolidación fiscal requeridos por la Comisión. Objetivos que ya sabemos hoy que serán imposibles de cumplir.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que el acceso al FEEF debe ir acompañada de un ajuste adicional en las cuentas públicas y en el plan de reformas estructurales, profundizando en la senda de los recortes socialmente dañinos y en la depresión de la economía española? Si es así, ¿qué calendario de consolidación fiscal prevé para España en 2012-13-14? ¿Considera asumible el impacto social de dicho calendario?

2. ¿Considera que una licencia bancaria a la FEEF y al futuro Mecanismo de Estabilidad Europeo permitiría reducir la prima de riesgo y los costes de refinanciación de la deuda pública española? ¿Tiene pensado presentar una propuesta para esto? ¿Con qué mecanismos de control democrático contaría una recapitalización bancaria europea?

3. ¿Considera que el Banco Central Europeo debería erigirse en prestamista de última instancia frenando así cualquier duda en los mercados de deuda nacionales?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de agosto de 2012)

1. El 25 de junio de 2012, el Gobierno español solicitó una ayuda financiera exterior en el marco de la reestructuración y recapitalización en curso del sector bancario español. Esta ayuda se ha pedido con arreglo a las condiciones de la ayuda financiera de la Facilidad Europea de Estabilización Financiera (FEEF). En la cumbre de la zona del euro de 29 de junio de 2012, los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno especificaron que la ayuda la asumirá posteriormente el MEDE (Mecanismo Europeo de Estabilidad) cuando sea plenamente operativo.

En relación con el esfuerzo de saneamiento presupuestario, la Comisión propuso la ampliación un año, esto es, hasta 2014, del plazo de corrección del PDE (procedimiento de déficit excesivo), ampliación que aprobó por unanimidad el Consejo Ecofin en julio de 2012, habida cuenta del deterioro de la coyuntura económica y sus repercusiones presupuestarias.

2. Hay que debatir y estudiar todas las ideas que puedan ser útiles, aunque las decisiones sobre las características y los instrumentos del FEEF y el MEDE incumben a los Estados miembros de la zona del euro.

3. La Comisión no hace comentarios sobre la política monetaria.

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/05/30/actualidad/1338362319_465496.html
([2]) http://www.efsf.europa.eu/attachments/efsf_guideline_on_recapitalisation_of_financial_institutions.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005536/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(31 May 2012)

Subject: Spain, banks and the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF)

The Spanish banking system is in crisis. Recapitalisation by the Spanish Government based on increasing public debt (via direct injection in cases like Bankia, or through the market) involves deepening interdependence between banks and Spanish public accounts. This represents a clear risk to the stability and solvency of the Economic and Monetary Union and an increase in interest rates on Spanish treasury bills, taking the risk premium to 533 basis points ([1]).

Given the high level of integration in the European banking system and contagion risk in the euro area, the EFSF provides the possibility of making specific credit lines available to recapitalise financial institutions ([2]). However, this option would increase public debt and, therefore, is not consistent with the fiscal consolidation objective required by the Commission. These are objectives that we already know we cannot fulfil.

1. Does the Commission believe that access to the EFSF entails a further tightening of public accounts and the structural reform agenda, deepening the socially harmful cuts and recession in the Spanish economy? If so, what is the fiscal consolidation calendar planned for Spain in 2012-2014? Does the Commission consider the social impact of this calendar acceptable?

2. Does it consider that a banking licence for the EFSF and for the future European Stability Mechanism would reduce risk premiums and refinancing costs for Spanish public debt? Does it plan to submit a proposal for this? What democratic control mechanisms would a European bank recapitalisation have?

3. Does it believe that the European Central Bank should establish itself as the last-resort lender, thus removing any doubts in the domestic debt markets?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2012)

1. On 25 June 2012, the Spanish Government requested external financial assistance in the context of the ongoing restructuring and recapitalization of the Spanish banking sector. The assistance is sought under the terms of the Financial Assistance for the Recapitalisation of Financial Institutions by the EFSF (European Financial Stability Facility). The Heads of State and Government at the Euro Area Summit of 29 June 2012 specified that the assistance will subsequently be taken over by the ESM (European Stability Mechanism), once the latter is fully operational.

In relation to the budget consolidation path, an extension of the EDP (Excessive Deficit Procedure) correction deadline by one year, i.e. up to 2014, was proposed by the Commission and approved unanimously by the Ecofin Council in July 2012, given the deterioration in the economic environment and the budgetary implications.

2. All potentially useful ideas need to be debated and considered. Decisions on the features and instruments of the EFSF and ESM belong however to euro area Member States.

3. The Commission does not comment on monetary policy.

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/05/30/actualidad/1338362319_465496.html
([2]) http://www.efsf.europa.eu/attachments/efsf_guideline_on_recapitalisation_of_financial_institutions.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005538/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(31 mei 2012)

Betreft: Cyprus bezorgd over mogelijke Syrische vluchtelingen

Cyprus houdt er serieus rekening mee dat er massaal bootjes met Syrische vluchtelingen op het eiland zullen aankomen, mocht de situatie in Syrië niet verbeteren of verder verslechteren; Cyprus kan daarmee een toegangspoort tot de EU voor Syriërs worden.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Cyprus worried about potential Syrian refugees" ([1])?

2. Deelt de Commissie de zorgen van Cyprus? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Heeft de Commissie lering getrokken uit de vele bootjes met Noord-Afrikaanse vluchtelingen die op het Italiaanse eiland Lampedusa zijn aangekomen? Zo neen, waarom niet? Zo ja, is de Commissie dientengevolge voornemens te voorkomen dat Syrische vluchtelingen massaal met bootjes naar Cyprus zullen trekken resp. dat deze vluchtelingen via Cyprus de EU kunnen binnenkomen? Zo ja, hoe? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(20 juli 2012)

De Commissie volgt met bezorgdheid de gebeurtenissen in Syrië en hoopt dat er snel een einde komt aan het geweld en dat er in dat land een inclusieve, ordelijke en vreedzame overgang komt.

Tot nu toe zijn er blijkbaar nog geen Syrische vluchtelingen met bootjes op Cyprus aangekomen en het aantal asielaanvragen in de EU door Syrische onderdanen is nog steeds relatief laag, met in totaal 2 447 asielaanvragen in het eerste kwartaal van 2012.

De meeste Syrische vluchtelingen zijn aangekomen via de Grieks/Turkse grens waar in het eerste kwartaal van 2012, 630 personen zijn geregistreerd (d.w.z. 88 % van het totaal voor alle EU-buitengrenzen).

De Commissie staat klaar om Cyprus alle nodige steun te verlenen in het geval van een massale toestroom van personen die internationale bescherming behoeven. Bovendien kan Cyprus te allen tijde verzoeken om steun van EU-agentschappen, met name het Europees Ondersteuningsbureau voor asielzaken.

Ook moet eraan worden herinnerd dat de lidstaten het beginsel van „non-refoulement" moeten eerbiedigen, d.w.z. dat een persoon niet mag worden teruggezonden naar een derde land waar hij het gevaar kan lopen te worden mishandeld of waar hij verder kan worden doorgezonden naar landen waar hij een dergelijk gevaar loopt.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/22/116408.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005538/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(31 May 2012)

Subject: Cyprus concerned about potential Syrian refugees

Cyprus is seriously concerned about a massive number of small boats containing Syrian refugees arriving on the island if the Syrian situation does not improve or deteriorates further. Cyprus could thus become an entry port to the EU for Syrians.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report entitled 'Cyprus worried about potential Syrian refugees'? ([1])

2. Does the Commission share Cyprus' concerns? If not, why not?

3. Has the Commission drawn lessons from the many North African refugees that arrived on the Italian island of Lampedusa? If not, why not? If so, does the Commission therefore intend to prevent Syrian refugees from arriving *en masse* in Cyprus by boat, or from entering the EU via Cyprus? If so, how? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(20 July 2012)

The Commission follows with concern events in Syria and hopes for a rapid end of the violence and an inclusive, orderly and peaceful transition.

To date, no arrivals of Syrian refugees by boat to Cyprus have been registered and the number of asylum applications in the EU from Syrian nationals remains relatively low, with a total of 2 447 asylum applications in the first quarter of 2012.

The main arrivals of Syrian nationals have been registered at the Greek/Turkish border where in the first quarter of 2012, 630 persons were detected (which represents 88% of the total detections for all EU external borders).

The Commission stands ready to provide all necessary support to Cyprus in the event of large-scale flows of persons in need of international protection. In addition, Cyprus can at any point request support measures from EU Agencies, in particular the European Asylum Support Office.

It should also be recalled that Member States are bound to respect the principle of non-refoulement, so no person should returned to a third country where the person concerned might run the risk of ill-treatment or might be subject to further removal to territories in which he or she may run such a risk.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/22/116408.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005539/12
a la Comisión
María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D) y Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(31 de mayo de 2012)

Asunto: Enfoque Global de la Migración y la Movilidad

Los procesos políticos desencadenados por la «primavera árabe» han representado un desafío para la política migratoria de la UE. Con objeto de optimizar los beneficios de una migración bien gestionada que dé respuesta rápida a la llegada de refugiados, solicitantes de asilo, desplazados temporales e inmigrantes irregulares, la Comisión presentó el 18 de noviembre de 2011 una Comunicación sobre un Enfoque Global de la Migración y la Movilidad (COM(2011)743 final), que pretende adaptar el marco de la política migratoria de la UE. Esta Comunicación prevé una serie de medidas dirigidas a evitar la migración irregular y promover la migración regular selectiva a la UE que serán de aplicación para el futuro, especialmente para los países beneficiarios de la Política Europea de Vecindad.

Con respecto al continente latinoamericano, la Comunicación hace referencia a los diálogos de alto nivel sobre migraciones. En este sentido, nos permitimos recordarle que el Grupo de Trabajo sobre Migraciones constituido en el seno de la Asamblea Parlamentaria Eurolat aprobó un informe sobre migraciones en las relaciones UE-ALAT con una serie de recomendaciones, tales como la necesidad de incluir al continente en el ámbito de aplicación del Enfoque Global y de sus instrumentos, incluyendo los acuerdos de movilidad, las misiones migratorias, los perfiles de la migración y las plataformas de cooperación.

Ante la ausencia de un apartado específico para la región en la Comunicación antes mencionada, nos gustaría aclarar las siguientes cuestiones:

1. ¿Qué implicaciones concretas tiene para América Latina y el Caribe la implementación del Enfoque Global de la Migración y la Movilidad?

2. ¿Cómo afectará a los inmigrantes de esta región que viven actualmente en la UE?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmströmon en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de julio de 2012)

Las conclusiones del Consejo sobre el Enfoque Global de la Migración y la Movilidad (GAMM, por sus siglas en inglés), adoptadas el 29 de mayo de 2012, confirman el GAMM como el marco general de la política exterior de la UE en materia de migración y asilo que se aplicará globalmente a todos los terceros países pertinentes. Las modalidades de cooperación se individualizarán y se adaptarán tanto a las necesidades específicas de la UE como a las de la región o el país tercero de que se trate.

El diálogo de migración UE-América Latina y Caribe (CELAC) se menciona expresamente como un proceso que tiene que continuar para atender a una región cada vez más importante.

Las conclusiones del Consejo también confirman que el GAMM deberá tener debidamente en cuenta la perspectiva de los migrantes, incluyendo una mayor implicación en el diálogo y la cooperación con los terceros países con diáspora y las organizaciones de migrantes. El marco GAMM, sin embargo, no está dirigido directamente a los migrantes procedentes de la región CELAC que viven en la UE, ni les afecta específicamente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005539/12
to the Commission
María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D) and Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(31 May 2012)

Subject: Global Approach to Migration and Mobility

Political processes triggered by the 'Arab Spring' have been a challenge for EU immigration policy. On 18 November 2011, the Commission presented its communication on a renewed Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (COM(2011)0743 final). This aims to adapt the framework of EU immigration policy, optimising the benefits of well-managed migration that responds quickly to the arrival of refugees, asylum-seekers, temporarily displaced persons and irregular migrants. This communication identifies a series of measures to prevent irregular migration and promote regular selective migration to the EU, which are to be implemented in the future, especially in countries benefiting from the European Neighbourhood Policy.

The communication refers to the high-level dialogue on migration with Latin America. In this regard, the Working Group on EU-LAC Migration Issues set up within the EUROLAT Parliamentary Assembly adopted a report on migration in EU-LAC relations which contained a series of recommendations, such as the need to include the continent within the scope of the Global Approach and its instruments, including mobility partnerships, migration missions, migration profiles and cooperation platforms.

Given that there is no specific paragraph dedicated to the region in this communication, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. What practical implications will implementing the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility have for Latin America and the Caribbean?

2. How will it affect immigrants from this region now living in the EU?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Council Conclusions on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM), adopted on 29 May 2012, confirm the GAMM as the overarching framework of the EU's external migration and asylum policy that will be applied globally to all relevant third countries. Cooperation modalities will be tailor-made and adapted to the specific needs of both the EU and the region or third country concerned.

The EU-Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAC) migration dialogue is explicitly mentioned as a process that needs to continue in order to cater for an increasingly important region.

The Council Conclusions also confirm that GAMM should adequately take into account the migrant's perspective, including a stronger involvement in the dialogue and cooperation with third countries of diaspora and migrant organisations. However, the GAMM framework does not directly address or affect specifically migrants from the CELAC region living in the EU.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005542/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(1 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Promoción de la tauromaquia y recortes sociales en el Estado español

La Unión Europea ha desarrollado desde su constitución y sucesivas ampliaciones una compleja red de disposiciones, tratados e iniciativas que procuran mejorar y reforzar la protección de la ciudadanía de los Estados miembros en campos como la sanidad o la educación.

La defensa de los derechos sociales, contemplada en la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea, es una base comunitaria para proteger a los ciudadanos, promoviendo valores como la solidaridad, la igualdad, la justicia, la protección de colectivos como los trabajadores, las mujeres o las personas menores de edad, especialmente vulnerables en el actual contexto de crisis económica y social. Por ello, resulta paradójico que el Gobierno del Estado español anuncie recortes en el ámbito educativo por valor de al menos 3 000 millones de euros, que supondrán un deterioro evidente del modelo educativo y de la calidad de la enseñanza, aumentando el número de alumnos por aula, no supliendo las bajas de los profesores, endureciendo los requisitos para acceder a las ayudas para estudiar en la Universidad pública, aumentando el coste de las tasas en los estudios superiores y, en definitiva, reduciendo la inversión estatal en la enseñanza pública. Sin embargo, estos recortes masivos no parecen afectar a aspectos más superficiales como la tauromaquia.

A la par que se anunciaban recortes presupuestarios para los aspectos ya descritos, el ministro de educación, cultura y deporte anunciaba la reactivación de una comisión consultiva de carácter nacional sobre tauromaquia, que seguramente tendrá un coste importante en dietas y demás gastos superfluos, además de anunciar el impulso de estos festejos crueles como parte de la estrategia global de turismo de España.

¿Tiene constancia la Comisión del uso de fondos comunitarios para financiar intervenciones relacionadas con los festejos taurinos?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de julio de 2012)

1. y 3. Por principio, la Comisión no opina sobre un asunto que es competencia exclusiva de las autoridades nacionales en cuestión.

2. La Comisión no tiene constancia de ninguna operación cofinanciada en relación con festejos taurinos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005542/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Promotion of bullfighting and cuts in social services in Spain

Since its establishment and throughout successive enlargements, the European Union has developed a complex network of provisions, treaties and initiatives aimed at improving and strengthening the protection afforded to citizens of Member States in health, education, and other areas.

The defence of social rights enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is a Union-wide framework for the protection of citizens, promoting the values of solidarity, equality, justice and the protection of groups such as workers, women or the young, who are particularly vulnerable at this time of economic and social crisis. Hence, it seems paradoxical that the Spanish Government should announce cuts of at least EUR 3 000 million in the education sector. The consequence will be a manifest deterioration in the educational model and the quality of teaching; furthermore, the number of students per class will increase, teachers who leave will not be replaced, grants to study at public universities will be subject to tighter conditions of eligibility, fees for higher education will be raised, and state investment in public education will fall. However, these massive cuts apparently do not affect more peripheral activities like bullfighting.

At the same time as announcing budget cuts in the areas mentioned above, the Minister for Education, Culture and Sport announced that a national consultative committee on bullfighting is being reactivated, which will undoubtedly involve substantial amounts of expenses and other needless costs, and, moreover, that this cruel entertainment is to be promoted as part of Spain's overall tourism strategy.

Does the Commission have any evidence that EU funds have been used to finance bullfighting-related activities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

1. and 3. It is the Commission policy not to comment on a matter which is solely for the national authorities concerned.

2. The Commission is not aware of any co-financed operation relating to bullfighting activities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005543/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(1 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Creación de un refugio de caballos con cargo a fondos comunitarios

El Tratado de Lisboa compromete a la Unión Europea a respetar una serie de principios fundamentales, entre ellos el bienestar de los animales. El bienestar animal es, además, una preocupación creciente de los ciudadanos europeos, como demuestran los avances legislativos que se han dado en los últimos años en diferentes países y también en el seno de la UE.

En respuesta a la pregunta E-004918/2011, la Comisión explicaba que en el marco del desarrollo rural existen fondos para invertir en el avance de medidas más allá de las normas de bienestar animal obligatorias. En este sentido, la creación de un refugio de caballos planteada por la Fondation Franz Weber y la Asociación Animalista Libera en territorio gallego, se trata de una iniciativa que pretende no sólo mejorar el bienestar del ganado equino, permitiendo evitar el sacrificio de los animales y realizar acciones de rehabilitación de los caballos que hayan sido maltratados o abandonados por ganaderos, sino también promover el avance del denominado turismo sostenible, la oferta de turismo rural de la zona donde se sitúen las instalaciones, el desarrollo de programas educativos en colaboración con las autoridades gallegas que permitan difundir el conocimiento del medio ambiente a personas de todas las edades, la creación de puestos de trabajo «verdes» y otros beneficios colaterales.

Se trata, por tanto, de innovar en el ámbito de la mejora del bienestar animal, partiendo de la rehabilitación de caballos como base para reactivar y fomentar el turismo más preocupado por el medio ambiente.

1. ¿Considera factible la Comisión financiar medidas de desarrollo rural destinadas al bienestar animal y al turismo sostenible como la descrita, por medio de alguno de los fondos comunitarios?

2. ¿Contempla la estrategia 2011-2015 alguna medida concreta para la financiación, colaboración o apoyo a organizaciones no lucrativas dedicadas al bienestar o protección de los animales?

3. ¿Qué iniciativas o movimientos ha desarrollado la Comisión durante 2011 y primeros meses de 2012 para el bienestar de los animales?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de julio de 2012)

1. El programa de desarrollo rural de la región española de Galicia contiene una medida destinada a mejorar el bienestar de los animales. La contribución del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader) a esta medida específica asciende a 361 279 EUR para el periodo de programación 2007-2013. La selección de los beneficiarios de las ayudas concedidas en el marco de dicha medida es competencia de la autoridad de gestión del programa.

2. La estrategia de la UE en materia de bienestar de los animales ([1]) consiste en una Comunicación de la Comisión que no va acompañada de medidas financieras. En ella se contempla la posibilidad de presentar una propuesta legislativa en 2014 relativa a una normativa marco de la UE sobre el bienestar de los animales. En estos momentos, la Comisión no tiene previsto financiar organizaciones o proyectos locales, regionales o nacionales específicos dedicados a la protección de los animales.

3. A partir de 2012, la Comisión tiene previsto desarrollar actividades sobre el bienestar de los animales, tal como figuran en el anexo de la estrategia de la UE sobre el bienestar de los animales. En 2011, la Comisión adoptó un informe sobre el impacto del Reglamento (CE) n° 1/2005 del Consejo ([2]), relativo a la protección de los animales durante el transporte ([3]).

([1]) Estrategia de la Unión Europea para la protección y el bienestar de los animales 2012-2015; COM(2012) 6 final.
([2]) DO L 3 de 5.1.2005.
([3]) COM(2011) 700 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005543/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Creation of a horse sanctuary using EU funding

Under the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union is committed to a number of basic principles, among them animal welfare. Animal welfare is also a growing concern for European citizens, as seen in the legislative progress that has been made in recent years in various countries and within the EU itself.

The Commission explained in its reply to Question E-004918/2011 that rural development funding is available for investment in animal welfare measures going beyond mandatory standards. In this regard, the planned creation of a horse sanctuary by the Franz Weber Foundation and the Asociación Animalista Libera (Free Animal Association) in Galicia is an initiative aimed at not only improving the welfare of equine livestock by avoiding unnecessary destruction of horses and rehabilitating those abandoned or mistreated by their breeders, but also promoting what is known as sustainable tourism and rural tourism facilities in horse breeding areas. It also aims to develop educational programmes in tandem with the Galician authorities, to spread knowledge of the natural environment among all age groups and to create 'green' jobs and other associated benefits.

This is therefore a fresh animal welfare initiative, starting with the rehabilitation of horses in order to reactivate and promote the most ecological forms of tourism.

1. Does the Commission think it feasible to provide EU funding for rural development measures aimed at promoting animal welfare and sustainable tourism as described?

2. Does the 2011-2015 strategy envisage any concrete measures for financing, working with or supporting non-profit-making organisations concerned with animal welfare and protection?

3. What animal welfare initiatives or activities has the Commission developed during 2011 and the first few months of 2012?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

1. The rural development programme of the Spanish region of Galicia contains a measure aiming at improving animal welfare. The contribution of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to this specific measure amounts to EUR 361,279 for the 2007-2013 programming period. The selection of the beneficiaries of support under this measure is a competence of the managing authority of the programme.

2. The EU animal welfare strategy ([1]) is a communication from the Commission and is not accompanied by financial measures. It envisages for 2014 the possibility of presenting a legislative proposal for an EU animal welfare framework law. At this stage, the Commission does not consider the possibility of funding specific local, regional or national projects or organisations aiming at protecting animals.

3. From 2012, the Commission aims at developing activities on animal welfare as listed in the annex to the EU animal welfare strategy. In 2011, the Commission adopted a report on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 ([2]) on the protection of animals during transport ([3]).

([1]) The EU strategy on the protection and welfare of animals 2012-215, COM(2006) 6 final.
([2]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005.
([3]) COM(2011) 700 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005544/12
an die Kommission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(1. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Ryanair und Beihilfeverfahren Flughafen Hahn

Ryanair-Chef Michael O'Leary hat der EU-Kommission öffentlich vorgeworfen, im Zusammenhang mit den Beihilfeverfahren bezüglich des deutschen Flughafens Hahn einen „Feldzug" gegen die irische Billigfluglinie zu führen. Seit Jahren stünden Ryanair und die von ihr angeflogenen Flughäfen unter dem Verdacht, illegale staatliche Beihilfen erhalten bzw. davon profitiert zu haben. Wie die Zeitung *Rheinpfalz* in ihrer Ausgabe vom 10.5.2012 berichtet, sprach er von „Kommunisten" in der EU-Kommission, die den Flugverkehr „überregulieren" wollten.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Sind die Äußerungen und Vorwürfe bekannt und was hat die Kommission dazu anzumerken?

2. Seit wann laufen die Beihilfeverfahren gegen den Flughafen Hahn, und welche anderen Ryanair-Ziele sind von Beihilfeverfahren betroffen?

3. Wo liegen die Gründe für die jahrelangen Verzögerungen der Beihilfeverfahren?

4. Welche Beihilfeverfahren im Zusammenhang mit Ryanair sind seit 2000 (und wann) abgeschlossen worden?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(26. Juli 2012)

1. Der Kommission sind diese Äußerungen bekannt, aber sie hat nicht die Absicht, dazu Stellung zu nehmen, denn ihre Aufgabe besteht darin, die Einhaltung des EU-Beihilferechts zu gewährleisten und dadurch zu fairen Bedingungen für den wirksamen Wettbewerb im Luftverkehr ungeachtet des Geschäftsmodells eines Marktteilnehmers beizutragen.

2. Die förmlichen Prüfverfahren zum Flughafen Frankfurt-Hahn wurden am 16. Juni 2008 ([1]) bzw. am 13. Juli 2011 ([2]) eröffnet. 2007 und 2008 eröffnete die Kommission förmliche Verfahren, um die Vereinbarungen zwischen Ryanair und den Flughäfen Lübeck-Blankensee, Berlin-Schönefeld, Tampere-Pirkkala, Aarhus, Alghero und Bratislava zu prüfen. Seit Januar 2012 hat die Kommission förmliche Prüfungen zu den folgenden Flughäfen eröffnet oder ausgeweitet: Altenburg-Nobitz, Zweibrücken, Pau, La Rochelle, Angoulême, Carcassonne, Nîmes, Beauvais, Charleroi, Klagenfurt, Västerås, Lübeck-Blankensee und Alghero.

3. Diese Fälle sind komplex, denn sie beziehen sich auf unterschiedliche Maßnahmen und erfordern die Analyse komplexer wirtschaftlicher Fragen in einem Wirtschaftszweig, der in den vergangenen zehn Jahren starke Veränderungen durchlaufen hat. Zudem muss die Kommission die jüngsten Urteile der Unionsgerichte in diesem Bereich berücksichtigen. Die Kommission hat in einigen Fällen einen externen Sachverständigen beauftragt zu prüfen, ob die Vereinbarungen zwischen den Flughäfen und den Fluggesellschaften zu Marktbedingungen geschlossen wurden. Insbesondere nach dem Urteil des Gerichts erster Instanz in der Rechtssache T-196/04 — Ryanair/Kommission (Charleroi) ([3]), mit dem eine Entscheidung der Kommission bezüglich eines von Ryanair bedienten Flughafens für nichtig erklärt wurde, musste die Kommission prüfen, welche Auswirkungen das Urteil auf die laufenden Untersuchungen hat.

4. Im Februar 2004 nahm die Kommission eine abschließende Entscheidung über den Flughafen Charleroi und Ryanair ([4]) an, die im Dezember 2008 vom Gericht der Europäischen Union aufgehoben wurde ([5]). Im Januar 2010 stellte die Kommission in einem abschließenden Beschluss über den Flughafen Bratislava und Ryanair ([6]) fest, dass die Vereinbarung zwischen beiden Seiten keine Beihilfe enthält.

([1]) Sache C 29/2008 (ABl. C 12 vom 7.1.2009, S. 6).
([2]) Sache SA.32833, verfügbar auf der Website der GD COMP, noch nicht veröffentlicht; Pressemitteilung IP/11/874.
([3]) http://curia.europa.eu/de/actu/communiques/cp08/aff/cp080097de.pdf
([4]) Sache C 76/2002 (ABl. C 137 vom 30.4.2004, S. 1).
([5]) Siehe Fußnote 3.
([6]) Sache C 12/2008 (ABl. L 27 vom 1.2.2011, S. 24).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005544/12
to the Commission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Ryanair and proceedings concerning the granting of subsidies at Hahn Airport

Ryanair chief executive Michael O'Leary has publicly accused the Commission of waging a 'crusade' against the Irish low-cost airline in connection with proceedings concerning the granting of subsidies at Hahn Airport in Germany. For many years, Ryanair and the airports to which it flies have been suspected of receiving, or profiting from, illegal state subsidies. As the *Rheinpfalz* newspaper reported on 10 May 2012, Mr O'Leary referred to 'communists' in the Commission who wanted to 'over-regulate' air travel.

1. Is the Commission aware of these remarks and accusations, and if so what is its response?

2. When were the proceedings concerning state subsidies initiated against Hahn Airport and what other Ryanair destinations are the subject of such proceedings?

3. What are the reasons for the years of delays in the proceedings concerning the granting of subsidies?

4. What proceedings concerning the granting of subsidies which are linked to Ryanair have been concluded since 2000 (and when)?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of these remarks, but has no intention to comment them as its task is to ensure the respect of state aid law, thereby promoting fair conditions for effective competition in the aviation sector, regardless of the business model, pursued by any given operator.

2. The formal investigations in relation to Frankfurt-Hahn airport were initiated on 16 June 2008 ([1]) and on 13 July 2011 ([2]). In 2007 and 2008, the Commission initiated formal investigations concerning the Ryanair agreements with these airports: Lübeck-Blankensee, Berlin-Schönefeld, Tampere-Pirkkala, Aarhus, Alghero and Bratislava. Since January 2012 the Commission has opened or extended formal investigations concerning these airports: Alternburg-Nobitz, Zweibrücken, Pau, La Rochelle, Angoulême, Carcassonne, Nîmes, Beauvais, Charleroi, Klagenfurt, Västerås, Lübeck-Blankensee and Alghero.

3. The cases are complex: they involve different measures and the analysis of complex economic questions in a business sector which has gone through important changes in the last decade. Also the Commission must take into account the most recent judgments of the EU Courts in this area. The Commission has engaged an external expert in several cases to analyse whether the agreements between the airports and the airlines were concluded on market terms. In particular, following the judgment of the Court of First Instance in Case T-196/04 *Ryanair/Commission* (Charleroi) ([3]), which declared null and void a Commission's decision which concerned an airport served by Ryanair, the Commission had to analyse its impact on the ongoing investigations.

4. In February 2004 the Commission adopted a final decision on Charleroi airport and Ryanair ([4]), and in December 2008 the General Court annuled this decision ([5]). In January 2010 the Commission adopted a final (no aid) decision on Bratislava airport and Ryanair ([6]).

([1]) Case C 29/2008, published in OJ C 12, 7.1.2009, p. 6.
([2]) Case SA.32833 available on DG COMP's website, not yet published; press release http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/874.
([3]) http://curia.europa.eu/fr/actu/communiques/cp08/aff/cp080097fr.pdf
([4]) Case C 76/2002, OJ L 137, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([5]) See footnote 3.
([6]) Case C 12/2008, OJ L 27, 1.2.2011, p. 24.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005545/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Diskriminazzjoni b'rabta mat-tariffi tas-servizzi pubbliċi

Ċittadini tal-UE residenti f'Malta li mhumiex Maltin jirċievu kontijiet tas-servizzi pubbliċi iktar għoljin minn dawk tal-Maltin residenti f'Malta. Dan għaliex tnaqqis fuq il-kontijiet tas-servizzi pubbliċi qiegħed jingħata lil ċittadini residenti f'Malta, irrispettivament min-nazzjonalità tagħhom. Però ċittadini tal-UE residenti f'Malta li mhumiex Maltin qed jintalbu biex jagħtu prova li huma normalment residenti f'Malta sabiex jikkwalifikaw għal dan it-tnaqqis, filwaqt li l-ebda evidenza ta' dan it-tip mhi qed tiġi mitluba mingħand ċittadini Maltin. Din il-proċedura amministrattiva wasslet għal sitwazzjoni fejn numru ta' ċittadini li mhumiex Maltin qed iħallsu rati tas-servizzi pubbliċi iktar għoljin.

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkonferma din il-prattika hix diskriminatorja fid-dawl tal-liġi tal-UE?

2. X'azzjoni qed tieħu l-Kummissjoni sabiex tiżgura li ma jkunx hemm diskriminazzjoni, diretta jew indiretta, fir-rigward tat-tariffi tas-servizzi pubbliċi f'Malta?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Lulju 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni hi konxja tas-sitwazzjoni msemmija mill-Onorevoli Membru.

Il-Kummissjoni rċeviet numru ta' lmenti minn ċittadini tal-Unjoni residenti f'Malta dwar nuqqas ta' aċċess għat-tariffi tal-ilma u tal-elettriku mnaqqsa. Apparentament, it-tariffi tal-ilma u l-elettriku mnaqqsa mitluba mill-Automated Revenue Management Services Ltd kienu disponibbli għaċ-ċittadini tal-Unjoni biss taħt ċerti kundizzjonijiet li ma kinux japplikaw għaċ-ċittadini Maltin.

Il-Kummissjoni kkuntattjat lill-awtoritajiet Maltin permezz ta' ittri darbtejn fl-2011 fir-rigward tal-kwistjonijiet imsemmija hawn fuq. F'dawn l-ittri, il-Kummissjoni stiednet lill-awtoritajiet Maltin biex iwieġbu lista ta' mistoqsijiet dwar, fost affarijiet oħrajn, it-tariffi imposti fuq ċittadini tal-UE, id-disponibbiltà tat-tariffi mnaqqsa għaċ-ċittadini Maltin u l-iskema Maltija ta' residenza permanenti.

L-awtoritajiet Maltin wieġbu għall-ittri tal-Kummissjoni. Skont l-informazzjoni pprovduta, l-awtoritajiet Maltin issa biddlu l-prattika tagħhom.

Il-Kummissjoni qed tanalizza jekk il-prattika l-ġdida hix konformi mal-liġi tal-UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005545/12
to the Commission
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Discrimination in relation to utility tariffs

EU citizens residing in Malta who are not Maltese nationals receive higher utility bills than Maltese nationals residing in Malta. This is because reductions on utility bills are being granted to citizens residing in Malta, regardless of their nationality. However, non-Maltese EU citizens residing in Malta are being asked to prove that they are ordinarily resident in Malta in order to qualify for these reductions, whereas no such evidence is being sought from Maltese citizens. This administrative procedure has led to a situation whereby a number of non-Maltese nationals are paying higher utility rates.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether this practice is discriminatory in the light of EC law?

2. What action is the Commission taking to ensure that there is no discrimination, direct or indirect, in relation to utility tariffs in Malta?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the situation mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The Commission has received a number of complaints from Union citizens residing in Malta concerning a lack of access to reduced water and electricity tariffs. Apparently, the reduced water and electricity tariffs charged by Automated Revenue Management Services Ltd were available to Union citizens only under certain conditions, which did not apply to Maltese citizens.

The Commission contacted the Maltese authorities by letters twice in 2011 in relation to the abovementioned issues. In these letters, the Commission invited the Maltese authorities to reply to a list of questions concerning, among other issues, the tariffs charged to EU citizens, the availability of the reduced tariffs to Maltese citizens and the Maltese permanent residence scheme.

The Maltese authorities replied to the Commission's letters. According to the information provided, the Maltese authorities have now changed their practice.

The Commission is analysing whether the new practice is in line with EC law.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005546/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Diffikultajiet għar-rikonoxximent tal-kwalifiki professjonali f'Malta

Ir-rikonoxximent tal-kwalifiki professjonali hu pedament importanti fis-suq intern. Skont id-Direttiva tal-Kwalifiki Professjonali, il-professjonisti jistgħu jsegwu l-professjoni tagħhom fi kwalunkwe Stat Membru irrispettivament mill-pajjiż li fih huma jkunu kisbu l-kwalifiki tagħhom. Il-liġi tal-UE tobbliga lill-Istati Membri biex jirrikonoxxu l-kwalifiki professjonali miksuba minn individwu fi Stat Membru ieħor jew aktar.

1. F'Malta, ir-rikonoxximent tal-kwalifiki jsir mill-Kunsill Malti għall-Kwalifiki. Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja tal-għadd ta' każijiet fejn il-professjonisti ltaqgħu ma' diffikultajiet biex jiksbu r-rikonoxximent tal-kwalifiki tagħhom mingħand l-awtoritajiet Maltin?

2. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkonferma jekk il-proċeduri amministrattivi adottati mill-awtoritajiet Maltin jikkonformawx bis-shih mad-dispożizzjonijiet tad-Direttiva tal-Kwalifiki Professjonali?

3. X'azzjoni qiegħda tieħu l-Kummissjoni biex tissorvejla l-konformità tal-proċeduri ta' rikonoxximent f'Malta mad-dispożizzjonijiet relevanti tal-liġi tal-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(10 ta' Lulju 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni qiegħda teżamina żewġ ilmenti dwar il-proċedura tar-rikonoxximent tal-kwalifiki professjonali f'Malta. Ilment minnhom huwa marbut mat-tagħlim, u l-ieħor mal-professjoni tat-tekniku dentali. Il-Kummissjoni ma rċeviet l-ebda lment ieħor rigward ir-rikonoxximent tal-kwalifiki professjonali f'Malta.

B'mod ġenerali, Malta adottat il-liġijiet u r-regolamenti meħtieġa biex tiġi konformi mad-Direttiva tal-Kwalifiki Professjonali. Is-servizzi tal-Kummissjoni għadhom kif nedew inkjesti mal-awtoritajiet ta' Malta fir-rigward ta' ċerti professjonijiet (il-veterinarji, il-konsulenti ambjentali).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005546/12
to the Commission
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Difficulties with recognition of professional qualifications in Malta

The recognition of professional qualifications is an important cornerstone of the internal market. According to the Professional Qualifications Directive, professionals may pursue their profession in any Member State regardless of the country in which they obtained their qualifications. EC law obliges Member States to recognise the professional qualifications obtained by an individual in one or more other Member States.

1. In Malta recognition of qualifications is carried out through the Malta Qualifications Council. Is the Commission aware of a number of cases whereby professionals have encountered difficulties in getting their qualifications recognised by the Maltese authorities?

2. Can the Commission confirm whether the administrative procedures adopted by the Maltese authorities are fully in line with the provisions of the Professional Qualifications Directive?

3. What action is the Commission taking to monitor the conformity of recognition procedures in Malta with the relevant provisions of EC law?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

The Commission is examining two complaints concerning the recognition procedure in Malta. One complaint relates to teaching and another one to the profession of dental technician. The Commission has not received other complaints relating to the recognition of professional qualifications in Malta.

In general, Malta adopted the necessary laws and regulations in order to comply with the Professional Qualifications Directive. At present, the Commission services have launched enquiries with the Maltese authorities on certain professions (veterinarians, environmental consultants).

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005547/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Proċedura ta' ksur fuq il-pensjonijiet tal-irtirar

L-awtoritajiet Maltin qed inaqqsu l-pensjonijiet Maltin tal-irtirar bl-ammont tal-pensjonijiet tas-"servizz" tal-impjegati taċ-ċivil li individwi jistgħu jirċievu minn Stati Membri oħra.

Fi Frar 2012, il-Kummissjoni talbet lill-awtoritajiet Maltin biex itemmu din il-prattika. Intbagħtet opinjoni motivata lill-awtoritajiet Maltin taħt il-proċedura ta' ksur tal-UE, li tat data ta' skadenza ta' xahrejn biex il-Kummissjoni tiġi infurmata dwar kwalunkwe miżura li tkun ittieħdet biex il-leġiżlazzjoni Maltija ssir konformi mal-liġi tal-UE. Din id-data ta' skadenza issa għaddiet.

1. Billi d-data ta' skadenza ta' xahrejn skadiet, tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkonferma jekk irċevietx risposta mingħand l-awtoritajiet Maltin?

2. Il-Kummissjoni hi sodisfatta bis-sħiħ bir-risposta li rċeviet u ser ttemm il-proċedura ta' ksur?

3. L-awtoritajiet Maltin se jkomplu jnaqqsu pensjonijiet tal-impjegati taċ-ċivil irċevuti minn Stati Membri oħra minn intitolamenti tal-pensjoni tal-irtirar Maltin?

4. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkonferma wkoll jew l-awtoritajiet Maltin jistgħux inaqqsu kwalunkwe pensjoni oħra mill-intitolamenti tal-pensjoni tal-irtirar Maltin?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(16 ta' Lulju 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni għadha ma rċevitx it-tweġiba uffiċjali minn Malta għall-Opinjoni Motivata dwar il-proċedura ta' ksur fir-rigward tat-tnaqqis tal-pensjonijiet tal-irtirar. Madankollu, wara talba mill-Kummissjoni, l-awtoritajiet Maltin ħabbru li din it-tweġiba se tasal dalwaqt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005547/12
to the Commission
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Infringement procedure on old age pensions

The Maltese authorities have been reducing Maltese old age pensions by the amount of civil servant 'service' pensions which individuals may receive from other Member States.

In February 2012, the Commission requested that the Maltese authorities stop this practice. A reasoned opinion was sent to the Maltese authorities under the EU infringement procedure, giving Malta a two-month deadline to inform the Commission of any measures undertaken to bring Maltese legislation into line with EC law. This deadline has now lapsed.

1. Given that the two-month deadline has expired, can the Commission confirm whether it has received a reply from the Maltese authorities?

2. Is the Commission fully satisfied with the reply it has received and will it terminate the infringement procedure?

3. Will the Maltese authorities still deduct any civil servant pensions received from other Member States from Maltese old age pension entitlements?

4. Can the Commission also confirm whether the Maltese authorities may deduct any other pensions from the Maltese old age pension entitlements?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2012)

The Commission has not yet received the official reply by Malta to the Reasoned Opinion concerning the infringement procedure on the deduction of old-age pensions. However, at the request of the Commission, the Maltese authorities announced that this reply would arrive shortly.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005548/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Giornalisti uccisi in Messico

Il 18 maggio scorso, nel Messico nord-occidentale, è stato ritrovato il cadavere di un famoso giornalista che si occupava di cronaca nera, Marco Aurelio Avila García. Appena il giorno prima era stato rapito in un autolavaggio nella città di Ciudad Obregón, dove viveva e lavorava per due quotidiani locali.

Qualche giorno prima, in un'altra zona del paese, era stato rinvenuto il cadavere di un altro giornalista, René Orta Salgado, che lavorava per il quotidiano «El Sol».

Queste due uccisioni si sono sommate alle quattro avvenute nelle settimane precedenti: tre fotografi specializzati nelle inchieste sui reati della polizia e della criminalità organizzata e una giornalista specializzata in cronaca nera e corruzione politica.

Dunque in un solo mese ben sei giornalisti che si occupavano delle attività della criminalità organizzata sono stati uccisi a causa del lavoro che svolgevano. In un paese come il Messico, che ogni giorno combatte contro la piaga del narcotraffico e del crimine organizzato, rappresenta un fattore molto grave che mette in luce come i boss possano agire come vogliono contro chi lede i loro interessi.

Uccidere giornalisti non significa poi spezzare solamente delle vite umane, ma al contempo schiacciare il diritto d'informazione in un paese in cui ce n'è estremamente bisogno.

Si interroga l'Alto Rappresentante per sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti di sistematica violazione dei diritti umani suesposti;

2. quali azioni e provvedimenti possono essere intrapresi per garantire la tutela e la sicurezza di chi rischia la vita raccontando le attività del crimine organizzato in Messico.

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2012)

1. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza delle continue minacce e aggressioni ai danni di giornalisti in Messico. L'AR/VP rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla sua risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-008191/2011 ([1]).

2. Al fine di migliorare la sicurezza dei giornalisti, il servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE) sta incoraggiando e sostenendo gli sforzi del Messico in due direzioni: creare e attuare un efficace meccanismo di protezione dei giornalisti e ridurre l'impunità per i reati commessi contro tale categoria vulnerabile. In questo senso il corpus legislativo messicano offre un quadro positivo e adeguato: la riforma del sistema di giustizia penale del 2008 è volta a migliorare il funzionamento del sistema giudiziario e a tutelare i diritti dei cittadini; la riforma costituzionale del 2011 integra le norme internazionali in materia di diritti umani nell'ordine giuridico interno; la legge intesa a tutelare i difensori dei diritti umani e i giornalisti, adottata nell'aprile 2012, introduce l'obbligo di creare meccanismi di protezione per tutti e tre i livelli dell'amministrazione messicana.

Il 7 maggio 2012 l'UE ha reso un'ulteriore dichiarazione locale, accogliendo favorevolmente l'adozione di questa legge da parte del Congresso messicano e invitando ad una sua rapida attuazione, visti i frequenti omicidi di giornalisti.

Al momento il SEAE intende pertanto concentrare la propria azione sul controllo e il sostegno dell'effettiva attuazione del quadro giuridico messicano, mobilitando i diversi strumenti a sua disposizione: il dialogo ad alto livello UE-Messico in materia di diritti umani, la strategia locale dell'UE per attuare i propri orientamenti sui difensori dei diritti umani e la programmazione della cooperazione dell'UE, mirando soprattutto al sostegno delle riforme della giustizia, dei diritti umani e dei sistemi di contrasto della criminalità.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005548/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Journalists murdered in Mexico

On 18 May 2012, Marco Aurelio Avila García, a well-known crime reporter, was found dead in northwestern Mexico. He had been abducted the day before from a carwash in Ciudad Obregón, where he lived and worked for two local daily newspapers.

A few days earlier, the body of another journalist, René Orta Salgado, who worked for the daily *El Sol* newspaper, was found in another part of the country.

These two murders followed four others that had occurred in the previous weeks: three photographers specialising in investigating crimes committed by the police and organised crime and a female journalist who reported on crime and political corruption.

Hence, in a single month six journalists involved in reporting organised crime were killed because of their work. In a country like Mexico, which is engaged in a daily battle against drug trafficking and organised crime, these serious events highlight how crime bosses take action against those who harm their interests.

Killing journalists not only destroys human lives, it also suppresses the right to information in a country that desperately needs it.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative state:

1. Whether she is aware of the systematic violation of human rights described above?

2. What actions and measures can be taken to ensure the protection and safety of people who risk their lives reporting on organised crime in Mexico?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2012)

1. The Vice-President/High Representative is aware of the repeated threats and attacks against journalists in Mexico. The VP/HR would refer the Honourable Member to her answer to Written Question E-008191/2011 ([1]).

2. With a view to improving the security of journalists, the European External Action Service (EEAS) has been encouraging and supporting Mexican efforts in two main directions: set up and implement an effective protection mechanism for journalists, and reduce the impunity of crimes against this vulnerable category. The Mexican legislative corpus offers a positive and sufficient framework in this sense: the criminal justice system reform of 2008 is meant to improve the functioning of the judicial system and guarantee the citizens' rights; the constitutional reform of 2011 integrates the international human rights standards in the domestic judicial order; and the law for the protection of human rights defenders and journalists, adopted in April 2012, introduces the obligation for all three levels of the Mexican administration to establish protection mechanisms.

On 7 May 2012 the EU issued a further local declaration, welcoming the adoption by the Mexican Congress of this law and calling for its swift implementation in view of the frequent murders of journalists.

Indeed the EEAS now intends to focus its action on monitoring and supporting the effective implementation of the Mexican legal framework. It will do so by mobilising the different instruments at its disposal: the EU-Mexico high-level dialogue on human rights, the EU local strategy to implement its guidelines on human rights defenders and the programming of the EU cooperation, notably in support of the reforms to the justice, human rights and law enforcement systems.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005549/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Esplosione a Nairobi e sicurezza del turismo in Kenia

Almeno trenta persone sono rimaste ferite — dieci versano in gravi condizioni — a causa della violenta esplosione che si è verificata nel centro di Nairobi. Le cause dell'esplosione, che ha fatto tremare molti palazzi del centro della capitale keniota, non sono ancora chiare. La polizia ha parlato, in un primo tempo, di un guasto elettrico. Il primo ministro keniano ha invece parlato di un atto di terrorismo. Una donna, rimasta ferita nell'esplosione, avrebbe detto di aver visto un uomo lasciare una borsa su uno scaffale di un negozio, poco prima dell'esplosione.

La capitale e il porto di Mombasa sono più volte stati presi di mira con attentati dinamitardi da quando, lo scorso ottobre, il Kenya ha inviato truppe e aerei in Somalia per combattere i guerriglieri ultra-islamici di «al-Shebab al-Mujaheddin», testa di ponte di al-Qaeda nella regione, responsabili di continui sconfinamenti e del sequestro di turisti e operatori umanitari stranieri. La notizia della deflagrazione è stata riferita immediatamente dai guerriglieri somali attraverso il loro sito on-line pur senza alcuna specifica rivendicazione.

Alla luce di quanto sovraesposto, si interroga l'Alto Rappresentante per sapere:

1. È a conoscenza della vicenda che ha interessato la città di Nairobi in Kenia?

2. L'UE non intende prendere provvedimenti al fine di garantire la sicurezza dei numerosi turisti europei che ogni anno decidono di trascorrere le vacanze in Kenia?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2012)

L'Unione europea e l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton sono pienamente a conoscenza dell'incidente verificatosi nella capitale keniota, Nairobi, e anche delle altre esplosioni avvenute nel paese.

Dal momento dell'incursione keniota in territorio somalo nell'ottobre 2011 è cresciuto il rischio di ritorsioni da parte di gruppi militanti. È probabile che almeno alcuni di questi attacchi siano commessi dai sostenitori di Al-Shabab o da gruppi estremisti analoghi, ma non è dimostrato che sia così per tutti gli attacchi.

Spetta principalmente agli Stati membri fornire consigli di viaggio e assistenza consolare ai cittadini dell'UE. Visto il numero considerevole di cittadini dell'UE potenzialmente a rischio, l'Unione europea solleva periodicamente la questione della sicurezza nel dialogo con le autorità keniote.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005549/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Explosion in Nairobi and tourism security in Kenya

At least 30 people have been injured — including 10 with serious injuries — following a violent explosion in Nairobi city centre. The cause of the explosion that rocked several buildings in the Kenyan capital is still unclear. Police initially blamed it on an electrical glitch but the Kenyan Prime Minister has now described it as an act of terrorism. A woman injured in the blast said she saw a man leaving a bag on a shelf in a shop just before the explosion.

Nairobi and the port of Mombasa have been the target of repeated bombings since last October, when Kenya sent troops and aircraft to Somalia to combat the militant Islamic group al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen. As al-Qa'ida's Somalia-based cell, this group is responsible for continuous border violations and the kidnapping of foreign tourists and aid workers. News of the blast was reported immediately by the Somali guerrillas via their website although they did not claim responsibility for it.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the incident that took place in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi?

2. Does the EU not intend to take measures to ensure the safety of the many European tourists who decide to spend their holidays in Kenya each year?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2012)

The EU and High Representative/Vice-President Ashton are fully aware of the incident that took place in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi as well as other explosions in Kenya.

Since Kenya's incursion into Somali territory in October 2011 there is a risk of retaliatory action by militant groups. It is likely that at least some of these attacks are perpetrated by affiliates of Al-Shabab or similar extremist groups, but this is not proven in the case of all such attacks.

Providing travel and consular advice for EU citizens is primarily a responsibility for Member States. The EU regularly raises security concerns in its dialogue with Kenyan authorities given the numbers of EU citizens potentially at risk.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005552/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: La vinclozolina e i suoi effetti

Potrebbe avere un significativo impatto sulla diatriba «Nature vs. Nurture» il risultato ottenuto da un gruppo di ricercatori di un'università americana, che ha osservato un'eccessiva reazione allo stress in alcuni ratti in seguito all'esposizione delle generazioni precedenti a una determinata sostanza.

Gli studiosi hanno esposto alcune femmine gravide di ratto alla vinclozolina, un comune fungicida usato in agricoltura e orticoltura, di cui sono noti alcuni gravi effetti sul sistema endocrino sia in alcune specie animali sia nell'essere umano. I ricercatori hanno poi sottoposto la terza generazione di ratti a test comportamentali, rilevando che gli animali apparivano più ansiosi e più sensibili allo stress rispetto ai ratti di controllo, i cui ascendenti non erano stati esposti alla sostanza. Questi dati sono stati poi confermati da scansioni di risonanza magnetica dell'attività delle aree cerebrali legate alla risposta allo stress.

Inevitabile, dati i risultati, rivolgere l'attenzione alle possibili analogie con l'uomo e alla contaminazione ambientale diffusa in molte parti del mondo. Secondo quanto ha messo in luce la ricerca, la vinclozolina può avere un effetto transgenerazionale anche sui processi epigenetici che regolano l'espressione genica, influenzando per esempio il modo in cui i ratti scelgono il partner per l'accoppiamento. I risultati sembrano così gettare luce su un nuovo livello di influenza biologica non solo sul comportamento, ma anche potenzialmente sui disturbi mentali.

Alla luce di quanto sovraesposto, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza della ricerca compiuta dai ricercatori americani sulla vinclozolina;

2. se la sostanza summenzionata sia stata, in precedenza, valutata dal comitato direttivo sui pesticidi per controllare i livelli massimi di residui (LMR) contenuti in essa.

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(17 agosto 2012)

La Commissione desidera far presente all'onorevole deputato che nell'Unione europea la commercializzazione e l'uso della vinclozolina, sostanza sospettata di avere effetti endocrini, non è più consentita dal gennaio 2007.

Nel 2009 la Commissione aveva già abbassato diversi livelli massimi di residui (LMR) per quanto concerne la vinclozolina, livelli che non erano da ritenersi sicuri in base a un parere dell'Autorità per la sicurezza alimentare. La Commissione sta attualmente riesaminando i valori LMR per le sostanze che non sono più approvate nell'UE. Nel contesto di tale riesame si procederà a valutare anche i pochi LMR rimanenti per la vinclozolina.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005552/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Vinclozolin and its effects

Findings by a group of researchers at an American university could have a significant impact on the 'Nature vs Nurture' debate. They observed an excessive reaction to stress in some rats following the exposure of previous generations to a particular substance.

The researchers exposed some pregnant rats to vinclozolin, a common fungicide used in agriculture and horticulture, which is already known to have a number of serious effects on the endocrine system in some animal species and in humans. The researchers then carried out behavioural tests on the third generation of rats and noted that the animals seemed more anxious and sensitive to stress compared to the control group of rats whose forebears had not been exposed to the substance. This data was then confirmed by magnetic resonance imaging of activity in the brain areas connected to the stress response.

Given these findings, attention turns inevitably to possible analogies with humans and the pollution of the environment which is widespread in much of the world. According to the research findings, vinclozolin can also have a trans-generational effect on epigenetic processes which regulate the expression of genes, and so influence, for example, the way in which rats choose their mate. The findings thus seem to cast light on a new level of biological influence affecting not only behaviour but also, potentially, mental disorders.

1. Is the Commission aware of the research conducted by the American researchers on vinclozolin?

2. Has the Pesticide Steering Committee already assessed vinclozolin to check its maximum residue levels (MRL)?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

The Commission would like to observe to the Honourable Member that in the European Union the marketing and use of vinclozolin, a substance suspected to display endocrine effects, is no longer allowed since January 2007.

In 2009 the Commission has already lowered several maximum residue levels (MRLs) for vinclozolin, which were not safe according to an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority. The Commission is currently reviewing all MRLs for substances no longer approved in the EU. In the context of this review the few remaining MRLs for vinclozolin are also being evaluated.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005553/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Italiano trovato morto a Santo Domingo

Un italiano è stato trovato morto in un hotel di Santo Domingo: il corpo del 62enne, originario del Napoletano, è stato rinvenuto con una cinghia di stoffa al collo da un dipendente dell'albergo nella sua stanza a Josè Contreras.

Il dipendente ha riferito alla polizia che aveva ricevuto una telefonata di un amico di Continanza, preoccupato dal fatto di avere cercato numerose volte di comunicare con l'uomo ma inutilmente. Secondo quanto si è appreso dalle dichiarazioni del portavoce della polizia nazionale pubblicate su alcuni siti web locali, gli esperti medico-legali sarebbero al lavoro per determinare le circostanze che hanno portato alla morte dell'italiano. La notizia trova conferma alla Farnesina dove si precisa che l'Ambasciata d'Italia a Santo Domingo sta seguendo il caso ed è in contatto con i familiari.

Alla luce di quanto riportato, può l'Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è informata sull'omicidio di un cittadino italiano a Santo Domingo?

2. Può fornire altre informazioni dettagliate sui fatti?

3. Come intende intervenire per fare luce sulla questione?

4. In che modo intende garantire l'incolumità dei tanti cittadini europei, molti dei quali turisti, a Santo Domingo?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 luglio 2012)

L'UE ha appreso con rammarico la notizia del decesso del cittadino italiano Bruno Giovanni Continanza, avvenuto a José Contreras nella Repubblica dominicana. La delegazione dell'Unione europea nella Repubblica dominicana è in contatto con la sezione consolare dell'ambasciata italiana a Santo Domingo, cui spetta il compito di fornire la necessaria assistenza alla famiglia del defunto. Secondo le informazioni ricevute, l'Ambasciata è in contatto con la famiglia. La polizia ha informato le autorità italiane in merito al caso in data 28 maggio 2012, giorno del ritrovamento del corpo del sig. Continanza. Le autorità dominicane stanno conducendo le indagini per chiarire le circostanze che hanno portato alla sua morte. Al momento attuale, non sono state rese disponibili ulteriori informazioni. La Repubblica dominicana è una delle destinazioni più popolari nei Caraibi per i turisti europei. Il livello di sicurezza è paragonabile a quello di altri paesi della regione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005553/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Italian national found dead in Dominican Republic

An Italian national has been found dead in a Dominican Republic hotel. The 62-year-old from the Naples area was found by a hotel employee in his room at a hotel in José Contreras. He had a cloth belt around his neck.

The employee told the police that he had received a phone call from Mr Continanza's friend, who was concerned as he had been unable to contact the man on numerous occasions. According to statements made by a police spokesman published on local websites, forensic experts are trying to determine the circumstances of his death. The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed this news, stating that the Italian Embassy in Santo Domingo is monitoring the case and is in contact with the man's relatives.

In view of the above, could the Vice-President/High Representative please answer the following:

1. Has she been informed about the murder of an Italian citizen in Santo Domingo?

2. Can she provide further detailed information about the events?

3. What action does she intend to take to shed light on this matter?

4. How does she intend to guarantee the safety of the many European citizens in the Dominican Republic, many of whom are tourists?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

It is with regret that the EU learnt about death of the Italian national Mr Bruno Giovanni Continanza, which occurred in José Contreras in the Dominican Republic. The EU Delegation in the Dominican Republic has been in contact with the consular section of the Italian Embassy in Santo Domingo who is compentent for bringing the necessary assistance to the family of Mr Continanza. According to information received, the Embassy stays in contact with the family. The police informed the Italian authorities about the case on 28 May 2012, the day the body of Mr Continanza was discovered. The investigation is conducted by the Dominican authorities in view of elucidating the circumstances of the death. No additional information has been made available as this stage. The Dominican Republic is one of the most popular European tourist destinations in the Caribbean. The level of security is comparable with other countries of the region.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005555/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Risoluzione sull'iniziativa «Opportunità per i giovani»

Il Parlamento europeo ha approvato la risoluzione sull'iniziativa «Opportunità per i giovani» nella quale i termini «tirocini» e «diritti» compaiono nella stessa frase. Un duro colpo per quanti, nel pubblico come nel privato, si avvalgono oggi di migliaia di braccia e teste volenterose a basso costo, o come spesso accade completamente gratis. Si vogliono introdurre una Carta europea della qualità dei tirocini e stabilire norme minime per garantire il valore formativo dei tirocini, evitare gli sfruttamenti, assicurare la protezione sociale e creare apprendistati migliori e più numerosi nell'ambito dell'istruzione e formazione professionale, con l'obiettivo di agevolare la transizione dei giovani dall'istruzione al lavoro.

In Italia, lo stage, da momento formativo, eventualmente finalizzato all'inserimento nel mondo del lavoro, si è trasformato spesso in un calvario di sfruttamento, dove si lavora molto e si guadagna poco o niente. Secondo l'ultimo sondaggio, oltre la metà degli stage (52,4 %) non prevede alcun rimborso spese, mentre per un terzo dei tirocini è previsto un rimborso basso o molto basso: nel 14 % dei casi vengono offerti meno di 250 euro netti al mese, nel 17 % tra 250 e 500 euro al mese. La normativa che oggi regola gli stage in Italia (decreto interministeriale 192 del 1998) non prevede alcun obbligo di compenso, contrariamente a quanto è previsto ad esempio in Francia, dove tutti gli stage di durata superiore ai due mesi devono essere retribuiti con una cifra almeno pari al 30 % dello Smic (*Salaire minimum interprofessionnel de croissance*).

Alla luce di quanto sovraesposto, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. se può fornire maggiori informazioni circa la risoluzione sull'iniziativa «Opportunità per i giovani»;

2. se l'UE non intende creare un registro europeo degli stagisti suddiviso per Stati membri.

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(19 luglio 2012)

1. La Commissione è consapevole di casi in cui i tirocini rimpiazzano un'effettiva assunzione invece di aiutare i giovani nella loro transizione dall'istruzione al mondo del lavoro. Il recente studio «A comprehensive overview of traineeship arrangements in the 27 Member States» ([1]) (esame esaustivo delle soluzioni adottate nei 27 Stati membri per i tirocini) finanziato dalla Commissione europea conferma queste preoccupazioni.

Nel pacchetto Occupazione «Verso una ripresa fonte di occupazione» ([2]) del 18 aprile 2012 la Commissione ha annunciato una proposta di raccomandazione del Consiglio sui tirocini entro la fine del 2012. La Commissione sta conducendo attualmente consultazioni sulla portata dell'iniziativa (fino all'11 luglio ([3])) e ha già compilato un elenco dei possibili elementi di un tale quadro (contratto di tirocinio, obiettivi di apprendimento, adeguato riconoscimento, durata, eventuale retribuzione e sicurezza sociale). La proposta della Commissione verrà sviluppata sulla base delle risposte fornite alla consultazione. Essa verrà adottata a dicembre nel contesto di un «pacchetto gioventù».

2. La Commissione non intende per ora costituire un registro europeo degli stagisti.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7754&langId=en.
([2]) COM(2012)173.
([3]) Cfr. il sito web La vostra voce in Europa: http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005555/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Resolution on the Youth Opportunities Initiative

The European Parliament has adopted the resolution on the Youth Opportunities Initiative in which the terms 'traineeships' and 'rights' appear in the same sentence. This is a heavy blow for those in both the public and private sector who currently benefit from all those people volunteering as cheap or, as often happens, completely free labour. The aim is to introduce a European Quality Charter on Internships setting out minimum standards for internships to ensure their educational value and avoid exploitation while offering social protection, and creating more and better apprenticeships within Vocational Educational Training to facilitate young people's transition from education to employment.

In Italy, work experience has been transformed from a traineeship aimed at introducing young people into the world of work to an ordeal of shameless exploitation, where people work hard and earn little or nothing. According to the latest survey, over half of internships (52.4%) do not offer to reimburse any costs, while in one third of the placements only low or very low costs are reimbursed. In 14% of cases less than EUR 250 net is offered per month, while in 17% of cases EUR 250 to EUR 500 is offered per month. The legislation that now regulates internships in Italy (Interministerial Decree 192 of 1998) does not lay down any obligation to pay compensation, contrary to what is required in France for example, where a figure of at least 30% of the minimum wage (*Salaire minimum interprofessionnel de croissance* or SMIC) must be paid, for all placements lasting more than two months.

1. Is the Commission aware of this and if so, can it provide more information on the resolution on the Youth Opportunities Initiative?

2. Does the EU not intend to create a European register of interns per Member State?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of cases where traineeships replace jobs instead of helping young people in their education to work transition. The recent study on 'A comprehensive overview of traineeship arrangements in the 27 Member States' ([1]), funded by the European Commission, confirms these concerns.

In the Employment Package 'Towards a job-rich recovery' ([2]) of 18 April 2012 the Commission announced a proposal for a Council Recommendation on traineeships by the end of 2012. The Commission is currently consulting on the scope of the initiative (until 11 July ([3])) and listed possible elements of such a framework (traineeship contract, learning objectives, proper recognition, duration, possibly remuneration and social security). The Commission proposal will be developed on the basis of the responses to this consultation. It will be adopted as part of a 'youth package' in December.

2. The Commission does not intend to create a European register of interns for the time being.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7754&langId=en.
([2]) COM(2012)173.
([3]) See the Your voice in Europe website: http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005556/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Salvaguardia degli stock ittici europei

Secondo alcuni studi, circa il 25 per cento del pesce catturato in tutto il mondo è pescato illegalmente. Per quanto riguarda l'Europa, in particolare, la perdita economica potrebbe arrivare a 10 miliardi di euro entro il 2020.

Le leggi già in vigore nell'Unione Europea prevedono, dallo scorso anno, che qualunque pesce venduto sul suo territorio sia etichettato con la specie e la regione di origine e che entro il 2013 negli Stati membri vengano condotti studi pilota su nuovi metodi di tracciabilità. Uno dei problemi principali è che non esiste un metodo per provare l'esatta origine di un dato pesce e in alcune circostanze, per esempio quando è già cotto, non si riesce neanche a determinare la specie.

La salvaguardia degli stock ittici europei potrebbe ora contare su uno strumento in più grazie a un nuovo metodo di identificazione delle popolazioni di pesci messo a punto da un gruppo di ricercatori di un'università inglese. Grazie a questo metodo sarà possibile identificare una partita di pesce mediante il confronto di alcuni marker con altri raccolti in un database. Il metodo si è dimostrato efficace su quattro specie europee comuni — il merluzzo bianco, l'aringa atlantica, la sogliola comune e il nasello — tutte minacciate dalla pesca eccessiva e da quella illegale, non tracciata e non regolamentata.

Oltre a ciò è anche flessibile: si sono già definiti i marker per separare popolazioni di pesci su ampie scale geografiche, ma ciò non impedisce l'identificazione delle specie su scale molto più limitate, come quelle tipiche del merluzzo del Baltico e del Mare del Nord.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza del nuovo metodo di tracciabilità dei pesci e, in caso di risposta affermativa, se lo ritiene adeguato per risolvere il problema dell'assenza di un metodo con cui riconoscere l'origine di un dato pesce;

2. se ci sono altri progetti e studi, nell'ambito della salvaguardia degli stock ittici, compiuti negli Stati membri e finanziati dall'UE.

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(7 agosto 2012)

La Commissione ritiene che le nuove tecnologie contribuiscano a migliorare il controllo della pesca e che i marcatori genetici possano fornire informazioni sulla provenienza e le specie anche dopo un trattamento. Un riferimento a tali strumenti è stato incluso nell'articolo 13 del regolamento (CE) n. 1224/2009 ([1]).

Il Centro comune di ricerca della Commissione ha pubblicato una relazione in merito al potenziale contributo delle prove del DNA alla lotta contro la pesca illegale, compresa l'etichettatura non corretta ([2]). La Commissione ha inoltre sostenuto un progetto plurinazionale in questo campo, denominato FISHPOPTRACE (http://fishpoptrace.jrc.ec.europa.eu/) nell'ambito del settimo programma quadro dell'UE.

È importante sottolineare che le nuove tecnologie, oltre ad offrire un miglioramento delle attività di controllo da parte delle autorità nazionali, possono diventare uno strumento molto efficace per coinvolgere i consumatori europei nel nostro comune impegno a garantire una pesca sostenibile. Le informazioni fornite mediante le nuove tecnologie possono, ad esempio, consentire ai consumatori di effettuare scelte più consapevoli riguardo al pesce che acquistano, compresi l'origine del pesce e il tipo di attività di pesca (o acquacoltura) in cui sono stati prodotti.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1224/2009 del Consiglio, del 20 novembre 2009, che istituisce un regime di controllo comunitario per garantire il rispetto delle norme della politica comune della pesca, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 847/96, (CE) n. 2371/2002, (CE) n. 811/2004, (CE) n. 768/2005, (CE) n. 2115/2005, (CE) n. 2166/2005, (CE) n. 388/2006, (CE) n. 509/2007, (CE) n. 676/2007, (CE) n. 1098/2007, (CE) n. 1300/2008, (CE) n. 1342/2008 e che abroga i regolamenti (CEE) n. 2847/93, (CE) n. 1627/94 e (CE) n. 1966/2006.

([2]) http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/111111111/16295/1/jrc_rr_deterring%20illegal%20fisheries_for_web-2_180511.pdf

Le nuove tecnologie possono inoltre migliorare il controllo passando dalle tradizionali e generalmente costose ispezioni portuali o a bordo ad un'analisi dei dati molto più efficiente e simile ad un audit, al fine di individuare irregolarità sospette.

La riforma della politica comune della pesca continuerà ad intensificare l'uso di nuove tecnologie per il controllo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005556/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Safeguarding European fish stocks

According to some studies, around 25 per cent of fish caught worldwide are fished illegally. For Europe in particular, the resulting economic loss could reach EUR 10 000 million by 2020.

Since last year, existing European Union legislation requires any fish sold within the EU to be labelled with the species and origin region, and pilot studies are to be conducted in Member States by 2013 on new traceability methods. One of the main problems is that there is no way to prove exactly where a given fish came from; in some circumstances (for example, when already cooked); it is impossible even to determine the species.

Efforts to protect European fish stocks may now have an additional tool to rely on: a new way to identify fish populations developed by a group of researchers at a British university. With this method, a batch of fish can be identified by comparing certain markers against those held in a database. The method has been effective on four common European species — the Atlantic cod, the Atlantic herring, the common sole and the hake — which are all threatened by overfishing and illegal, untraced and unregulated fishing.

It is also a flexible system: markers have already been established to distinguish between fish populations on large geographical scales, but this does not prevent it from identifying species in much smaller areas, such as the cod grounds in the Baltic and the North Sea.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Whether it is aware of this new fish-tracing method and if so whether it regards it as a suitable remedy for the inability to recognise an individual fish's origins?

2. Whether any other fish-stock protection projects or studies have been carried out with EU funding in Member States?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2012)

The Commission believes that new technologies contribute to improve fisheries control and that genetic markers can provide information on the provenance and species even after some form of processing. A reference to these tools has been included in Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 ([1]).

The Joint Research Centre of the Commission has published a report on how DNA testing could help fight illegal fishing including mislabelling ([2]). The Commission has also supported as part of the EU Seventh Framework Programme a multi country project in this field, FISHPOPTRACE (http://fishpoptrace.jrc.ec.europa.eu/).

It is important to underline that the new technologies, beyond the improvement of the control acivity by national authorities, can also become a very powerful tool to involve European consumers in our common effort to ensure sustainable fisheries. The information provided by the new technologies can, for example, allow consumers to make better informed choices about the fish they buy, including the origin of the fish, the type of fishery (or aquaculture) and where they were produced.

New technologies can also enhance control by changing the focus from traditional-style and generally expensive port or on-board inspection into much more efficient audit-like data analysis to detect suspected illegalities.

The common fisheries policy reform will continue to reinforce the use of new technologies for control.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy, amending Regulations (EC) No 847/96, (EC) No 2371/2002, (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 2115/2005, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007, (EC) No 676/2007, (EC) No 1098/2007, (EC) No 1300/2008, (EC) No 1342/2008 and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 2847/93, (EC) No 1627/94 and (EC) No 1966/2006.

([2]) http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/111111111/16295/1/jrc_rr_deterring%20illegal%20fisheries_for_web-2_180511.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005557/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Terremoti e fenomeno del «fracking»

Non pochi scienziati, tecnici ed esperti affermano che i terremoti, che stanno funestando il territorio dell'Emilia Romagna, sarebbero in buona parte imputabili al cosiddetto fenomeno del «fracking», ovvero le perforazioni a scopo esplorativo nel sottosuolo.

In sostanza, viene ipotizzata una causa ben poco naturale per i movimenti sismici di questi giorni. È il caso di Rivara, piccolo comune fra San Felice sul Panaro e Finale Emilia, le zone maggiormente colpite dal sisma del 20 maggio e da quello del 29 maggio, che ha causato altri cinque morti. A Rivara una società ha progettato un grande deposito sotterraneo della capacità di 3,2 miliardi di metri cubi di gas, su un'area di 120 km quadrati. Nonostante i devastanti terremoti dei giorni scorsi e di questi giorni, la società petrolifera considera il territorio a basso rischio sismico e insiste per la realizzazione del progetto. La zona in questione, infatti, non è mai stata catalogata a rischio sismico e questo contribuisce in misura ancora maggiore ad alimentare i sospetti su quanto sta avvenendo. Insomma, il tutto sarebbe riconducibile ad un particolare termine tecnico: «fracking» (fratturare), che consiste nell'iniettare grossi quantitativi di acqua e sostanze chimiche, solitamente con composti industriali segreti, oltre ad anidride carbonica, all'interno del terreno. Vengono in tal modo provocate vere e proprie esplosioni sotterranee e conseguenti frantumazioni che danno la possibilità di evidenziare la presenza di giacimenti di gas.

Il governo francese ha vietato la ricerca di pozzi con la tecnica del «fracking» proprio a causa dei movimenti sismici che ne derivano, e altrettanto ha fatto lo stato americano del Vermont.

Alla luce di quanto sovraesposto, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

Se non ritiene di dover potenziare la ricerca sulla tecnica del «fracking» e finanziarla tramite il Settimo Programma Quadro (7° PQ) oppure il Programma Quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione.

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(24 luglio 2012)

Il fenomeno della sismicità indotta, noto anche come microsismicità, quale conseguenza della fratturazione idraulica («fracking») è stato talvolta segnalato in seguito alla produzione di gas e petrolio e anche a operazioni geotermiche. La sismicità indotta è generalmente di magnitudo molto bassa e non distruttiva, anche se in rari casi può essere avvertita dalla popolazione.

L'attuale 7° programma quadro di ricerca (7° PQ) non costituisce una base giuridica per avviare attività di ricerca o di dimostrazione nell'ambito delle tecnologie per la prospezione o la produzione di idrocarburi, come la fratturazione idraulica. Tuttavia, nell'ambito dell'energia geotermica, il 7° PQ sostiene la ricerca per capire meglio i meccanismi della sismicità indotta e dei relativi eventuali impatti ambientali nonché studiare le modalità per attenuarne la frequenza. Analogamente, neanche il Programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (PIC) sostiene questo tipo di ricerca. La parte «Energia» del PIC, il programma «Energia intelligente — Europa», si incentra sull'efficienza energetica e le energie rinnovabili.

La Commissione ha tuttavia avviato lavori per valutare se il grado di tutela della salute umana e dell'ambiente offerto dalla vigente legislazione dell'UE, compresi gli aspetti relativi alla fratturazione idraulica, sia adeguato e se siano necessarie eventuali misure a livello unionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005557/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Earthquakes and fracking

Many scientists, engineers and experts believe that the earthquakes rocking the Emilia-Romagna region could to a large extent be attributable to fracking, a technique used to create fractures in the subsoil when conducting gas explorations.

In essence, their hypothesis is that the recent seismic activity is not due to natural causes but to an unnatural one. This is the case in Rivara, a small village between San Felice sul Panaro and Finale Emilia, the areas most affected by the 20 May 2012 earthquake, and by the quake on 29 May which caused a further five deaths. In Rivara, a company plans to build a large underground storage facility with capacity for 3 200 million m^3 of gas, in a 120 km^2 area. In spite of the recent devastating earthquakes, the oil company believes that the area has a low risk of earthquakes and insists on carrying out the project. The area concerned has never in fact been classified as being prone to earthquakes, which is further fuelling suspicions as to what is happening. In short, the whole situation appears to be attributable to fracking, which involves injecting large volumes of water and chemicals — usually containing secret industrial compounds and carbon dioxide — into the ground. This causes underground explosions and subsequent fractures, thereby making it possible to detect the presence of gas deposits.

The French Government has banned the use of fracking in oil prospecting precisely because of seismic disturbances. The US state of Vermont has imposed a similar ban.

In view of the above, does the Commission believe that research into fracking should be stepped up and funded through the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2012)

The phenomenon of induced seismicity (also referred to as micro-seismicity) in response to hydraulic fracturing ('fracking') has occasionally been reported from the production of oil and gas and also from geothermal operations. Induced seismicity is predominantly of very low magnitude and not destructive, although it can (in rare cases) be felt by the local population.

The current 7th Research Framework Programme (FP7) does not provide a legal basis to undertake research or demonstration activities in the area of hydrocarbon exploration or production technologies like hydraulic fracturing ('fracking'). However, in the area of geothermal energy FP7 supports research to better understand the mechanisms of induced seismicity and its possible environmental impacts, and to investigate ways to mitigate its occurrence. Likewise the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) does not support this kind of research. The focus of the energy part of CIP, the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme, is energy efficiency and renewable energies.

The Commission has nevertheless initiated work to assess whether the level of human health and environmental protection provided by the existing EU legislation, including as regards hydraulic fracturing, is appropriate, and whether or not additional measures at EU level are needed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005558/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Sicurezza delle autovetture elettriche

Uno schianto violentissimo tra una vettura di grossa cilindrata e un taxi elettrico avvenuto in Cina ha provocato tre vittime e innescato un vero e proprio processo sulla sicurezza delle vetture a batteria. Il fatto è accaduto a Shenzhen: il taxi ha immediatamente preso fuoco, come dimostra un filmato amatoriale girato con un cellulare subito dopo l'impatto.

Del caso discutono tutti i media cinesi sollevando dubbi sull'affidabilità delle batterie agli ioni di litio. La società produttrice assicura che il modello ha passato tutti i crash test, incluse prove specifiche antincendio; il rischio è infatti che le batterie agli ioni di litio possano esplodere qualora raggiungano temperature molto elevate. Ed è proprio per questo motivo che le automobili sono protette da gabbie di materiali ultraresistenti in grado di assorbire la forza generata dagli urti.

Quello accaduto in Cina è sicuramente l'episodio più grave nella recente storia dell'auto elettrica. Eppure non è l'unico: già qualche mese fa l'ente statunitense per i trasporti aveva posto sotto osservazione alcune autovetture con la richiesta di apportare modifiche strutturali per aumentare la protezione delle batterie. E sempre negli USA le autorità indagano sul caso di un veicolo ibrido plug-in che ha preso fuoco in garage incenerendo altre tre vetture.

Alla luce delle considerazioni sopraesposte l'interrogante chiede alla Commissione se negli Stati membri è prevista una procedura di test standardizzata e, in caso di risposta affermativa, se non ritiene doveroso aumentare i controlli introducendo altresì crash test più severi per garantire maggiore sicurezza ai consumatori europei.

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(19 luglio 2012)

Assicurare la sicurezza dei veicoli, anche di quelli dotati di sistemi di propulsione-trasmissione di nuova tecnologia, è una preoccupazione costante della Commissione. Come illustrato nel contesto della strategia UE per i veicoli puliti ed efficienti sul piano energetico ([1]), adottata il 28 aprile 2010, sono previste diverse misure per adattare il quadro normativo ai veicoli elettrici. In particolare per quanto concerne la sicurezza si sono già prese diverse misure regolamentari per fare sì che i veicoli elettrici siano almeno altrettanto sicuri di quelli convenzionali.

La Commissione ha ad esempio adottato nell'aprile 2011 il regolamento (UE) n. 407/2011 che include alcuni regolamenti internazionali dell'UNECE sulla sicurezza funzionale dei veicoli elettrici e sulla loro sicurezza in caso di collisione. Requisiti comuni si applicheranno pertanto su tutto il territorio dell'UE in tema di omologazione dei veicoli elettrici a partire dal 2012 (nuovi tipi di veicoli), mentre per i nuovi veicoli ciò avverrà a partire dal 2014.

Sono inoltre in corso lavori, sempre nell'ambito di UNECE, per sviluppare norme di sicurezza internazionale relative alle batterie dei veicoli elettrici. La Commissione lavora a stretto contatto con il Giappone e con altri partner internazionali per adottare queste norme entro la fine del 2012.

Inoltre, nel novembre 2011, si è deciso di costituire due gruppi di lavoro informali sui regolamenti applicabili ai veicoli elettrici nel contesto più ampio dell'UNECE, che si occupano rispettivamente della sicurezza e degli aspetti ambientali. L'iniziativa è stata adottata congiuntamente dall'UE, dagli Stati Uniti e dal Giappone, ma diversi altri paesi, compresa la Cina, hanno partecipato alle prime riunioni di tali gruppi. L'obiettivo è promuovere un'armonizzazione normativa internazionale e in particolare adottare un regolamento tecnico globale sui requisiti di sicurezza per i veicoli elettrici e le loro componenti entro il 2014.

([1]) COM(2010)186 definitivo del 28.04.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005558/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Safety of electric cars

A high-speed crash between a powerful sports car and an electric taxi in China has claimed three victims and sparked an enquiry into the safety of battery-powered cars. The accident took place in Shenzhen. The taxi promptly burst into flames, as shown in mobile phone footage taken immediately after impact.

The entire Chinese media are discussing the questions that the case raises about the reliability of lithium-ion batteries. The car manufacturer has offered its assurances that the model has passed all crash tests, including specific fire tests. The risk is in fact that lithium-ion batteries can explode if they reach very high temperatures. It is precisely for this reason that the cars are protected by cages of high-strength materials capable of absorbing the force generated by heavy impacts.

What happened in China is by far the worst incident in the recent history of the electric car. Yet it is not the only one. Several months ago, US transport authorities placed some cars under observation with a request to make structural changes to increase battery protection. Also in the US, the authorities are investigating the case of a plug-in hybrid vehicle that caught fire, setting alight three other cars in the garage.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether a procedure is planned for standardised tests in the Member States and, if so, does it not consider it essential to introduce more stringent crash tests to ensure greater safety for European consumers?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

Ensuring the safety of vehicles, also for those with new powertrain technologies, is a constant concern for the Commission. As explained in the EU strategy on clean and energy-efficient vehicles ([1]), adopted on 28 April 2010, a number of measures are foreseen to adapt the regulatory framework for electric vehicles. Particularly on safety, several regulatory measures have already been taken in order to ensure that electric vehicles are at least as safe as conventional ones.

For example, the Commission adopted Regulation (EU) No 407/2011 in April 2011 that mandates international requirements of UNECE on the functional safety of electric vehicles and their crash safety. Common requirements will therefore apply throughout the EU for receipt of electric vehicles from 2012 (new vehicle types) for new vehicles it will be from 2014.

In addition, work is currently underway, still within the UNECE to develop international safety standards for the electric vehicle batteries. The Commission works closely with Japan and other international partners in order to adopt such standards before the end of 2012.

Furthermore, in November 2011, it was decided to establish two informal working groups on electric vehicles regulations in a broader context of UNECE, covering safety and environmental aspects, respectively. The initiative was taken jointly by the EU, the United States and Japan, and many other countries, including China, participated in the first meetings of these groups. The aim is to promote international regulatory harmonisation and in particular to adopt a Global Technical Regulation on safety requirements for electric vehicles and their components by 2014.

([1]) COM(2010) 186 final, 28.4.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005559/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Tonni radioattivi

Arrivano sulle coste californiane i tonni contaminati in seguito al disastro di Fukushima. Contengono tracce di radioattività ben maggiori rispetto a quelli pescati nel 2008. Secondo una ricerca effettuata da un'università americana, dal marzo 2011 sono state trovate tracce sempre maggiori di cesio 137 e cesio 134 nelle carni di questi pesci: si tratta di isotopi radioattivi, che si producono all'interno del reattore durante la fissione nucleare dell'uranio.

Il fenomeno è dovuto al fatto che il tonno dell'Oceano Pacifico nasce in acque giapponesi, per poi migrare verso le coste americane, soprattutto quelle della California e del Messico. Quando lo tsunami ha colpito il Giappone nel marzo del 2011, grandi quantità di materiale radioattivo sono fuoriuscite dalla centrale di Fukushima, riversandosi in mare e contaminando le specie che lo abitano. Al fine di stabilire la portata del danno ecologico e stabilire quali siano le specie colpite, i ricercatori stanno esaminando anche altri animali acquatici autoctoni della zona.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. se ci sono Paesi membri che importano prodotti alimentari, e nello specifico il tonno, dalla California;

2. se le condizioni speciali stabilite dall'UE per l'importazione di alimenti per animali e prodotti alimentari originari del Giappone o da esso provenienti, a seguito dell'incidente alla centrale nucleare di Fukushima, sono sempre in vigore.

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2012)

1. Nel 2010 sono state importate dagli Stati Uniti (USA) nell'UE 146 tonnellate di tonno. I principali paesi importatori erano Italia, Spagna e Germania.

Nel 2011 soltanto 66 tonnellate di tonno sono state importate dagli USA nell'UE. I principali paesi importatori erano Italia e Germania.

2. Il regolamento di esecuzione (UE) ([1]) n. 284/2012/CE della Commissione che impone condizioni speciali per l'importazione di alimenti per animali e prodotti alimentari originari del Giappone o da esso provenienti a seguito dell'incidente alla centrale nucleare di Fukushima si applica fino al 31 ottobre 2012 ed è prevista la revisione del regolamento prima di tale data.

([1]) GU L 92 del 30.3.2012, pag.16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005559/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Radioactive tuna

Tuna caught off the Californian coast has been discovered to be contaminated due to the Fukushima disaster. The fish contain much higher traces of radioactivity than those caught in 2008. According to an American university study, increasingly higher levels of cesium-137 and cesium-134 have been found in the fishes' flesh since March 2011. These are radioactive isotopes that are produced inside the reactor during the nuclear fission of uranium.

The phenomenon occurs because Pacific Ocean tuna spawn in Japanese waters before migrating to American shores, particularly the coasts of California and Mexico. When the tsunami hit Japan in March 2011, large quantities of radioactive material leaked from the Fukushima power plant, spilling into the sea and contaminating the species there. In order to assess the extent of ecological damage and determine which species have been affected, researchers are examining other aquatic animals native to the area.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether any Member States import food products, particularly tuna, from California?

2. Whether the special conditions set by the EU for importing animal feed and food products from Japan, or originating from Japan, following the nuclear accident in Fukushima are still in force?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

1. In 2010, 146 tons of tuna was imported from the United States (US) into the EU. The main importing countries were Italy, Spain and Germany.

In 2011, only 66 tons of tuna was imported from the US into the EU. The main importing countries were Italy and Germany.

2. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) ([1]) of 29 March 2012 imposing special conditions governing the import of feed and food originating in or consigned from Japan following the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station is applicable until 31 October 2012 and it is foreseen to review the regulation before that date.

([1]) OJ L 92, 30.3.2012, p. 16.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-005561/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δηλώσεις κ. Μπαρόζο και δημοσίευμα για παρέμβαση κ. Παπαδήμου

Ο Πρόεδρος της Επιτροπής κ. Μπαρόζο, σε συνέντευξη που έδωσε στην ιταλική τηλεόραση (11.5.2012), αναφερόμενος στην Ελλάδα, δήλωσε: «εάν ένα μέλος της ομάδας δεν σέβεται τους κανόνες, είναι καλύτερα να βγει από την ομάδα». Σύμφωνα με δημοσίευμα (30/5/2012) του ειδησεογραφικού πρακτορείου Reuters, η παραπάνω δήλωση έγινε μετά από αίτημα τού τότε υπηρεσιακού πρωθυπουργού της Ελλάδας κ. Λ. Παπαδήμου.

Σύμφωνα με το ίδιο δημοσίευμα του Reuters, που επικαλείται ως πηγή αξιωματούχο της Επιτροπής, «ο κ. Παπαδήμος ήθελε ο κ. Μπαρόζο να προχωρήσει σε μια ισχυρή δήλωση, ελπίζοντας ότι θα αφυπνίσει τους ηγέτες των ελληνικών κομμάτων» (ώστε να σχηματίσουν κυβέρνηση) … και συνεχίζει ο αξιωματούχος της Επιτροπής: «Δεν ήταν πρωτοβουλία του Μπαρόζο. Ήταν απευθείας αίτημα, … και δεν έφερε αποτέλεσμα».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή,

— Ζητήθηκε καθ' οιονδήποτε τρόπο από τον κ. Παπαδήμο, ή άλλο στέλεχος της κυβέρνησης ή υπηρεσιακό παράγοντα ο οποίος τον εκπροσωπούσε, να υπάρξει παρέμβαση όπως αυτή που επικαλείται το πρακτορείο Reuters;

— Μπορεί να διευκρινίσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή τι εννοούσε ο «αξιωματούχος της Επιτροπής» λέγοντας, «Δεν ήταν πρωτοβουλία του Μπαρόζο. Ήταν απευθείας αίτημα, … και δεν έφερε αποτέλεσμα»;

— Μπορεί να δηλώσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ότι στις περιπτώσεις εθνικών εκλογών, σε οποιοδήποτε κράτος μέλος, κρατάει αυστηρή ουδετερότητα, όπως απαιτεί ο θεσμικός της ρόλος;

Απάντηση του κ. Barroso εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Ιουλίου 2012)

Είναι τακτική της Επιτροπής να μη σχολιάζει δημοσιεύματα που εμφανίζονται στον Τύπο. Η Επιτροπή σέβεται τις δημοκρατικές διαδικασίες των εθνικών εκλογών σε κάθε κράτος μέλος.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005561/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Statements by Mr Barroso and article on Mr Papademos' intervention

In an interview for Italian television (11 May 2012), speaking about Greece, the President of the European Commission Mr Barroso stated: 'if a member of a team does not respect the rules, it's better to leave the team'. According to an article (30 May 2012) by the Thomson Reuters news agency, this statement was made at the request of the caretaker Prime Minister of Greece at the time, Mr L Papademos.

According to the same Reuters article, a Commission official stated, 'Mr Papademos wanted Mr Barroso to make a strong statement hoping to wake up Greece's political leaders' (in order to form a government). The Commission official continues as follows: 'It wasn't Barroso's initiative. It was a direct request and it didn't work'.

Will the Commission answer the following:

— Did Mr Papademos or any other member of the government or agent acting on his behalf ask the Commission to intervene in the way described by Thomson Reuters?

— Could the Commission clarify what the 'Commission official' meant by saying that 'It wasn't Barroso's initiative. It was a direct request and it didn't work'?

— Could the Commission confirm that it observes strict neutrality in the event of national elections in any Member State, as required by its institutional role?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

It is Commission policy not to comment on articles appearing in the press. The Commission respects the democratic process of national elections in any Member State.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-005562/12
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(1er juin 2012)

Objet: Suppression des quotas laitiers et sucriers ainsi que des droits de plantation viticoles dans les zones à contrainte naturelle ou défavorisées

La Commission, dans sa proposition de réforme de la politique agricole commune (PAC), préconise la suppression, d'ici 2015, des quotas laitiers et sucriers, ainsi que des droits de plantation de vigne pour 2016.

Le Comité des régions de l'Union européenne, réuni le vendredi 4 mai 2012 en session plénière à Bruxelles, a adopté son avis sur la PAC 2014-2020, qu'il souhaite «plus juste» et «laissant la place à davantage de régulation». En particulier, il «demande que soient réexaminées les décisions antérieures relatives à la disparition des quotas laitiers et sucriers, ainsi que des droits de plantation viticoles».

1. La Commission compte-t-elle prendre en considération le rapport publié par le Comité des régions afin d'améliorer ses propositions concernant la réforme de la PAC?

2. La Commission a-t-elle réalisé une évaluation sur les conséquences économiques, sociales et environnementales qu'auraient de telles suppressions dans l'ensemble des États membres, notamment dans les régions dites à contrainte naturelles ou défavorisées?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(3 juillet 2012)

1. La Commission se félicite du rapport adopté par le Comité des régions le 4 mai 2012 sur la PAC à l'horizon 2020, qu'elle est actuellement en train d'examiner. Ce rapport constituera un élément important de la phase finale de la discussion sur les propositions de la Commission relatives à la réforme de la PAC.

2. L'analyse d'impact qui accompagne les propositions législatives en rapport avec la PAC à l'horizon 2020 comprend une analyse des incidences économiques, sociales et environnementales des mesures proposées dans le cadre de la réforme de la PAC, en particulier en ce qui concerne l'OCM unique. Une analyse des conséquences de la suppression des quotas sucriers fait notamment partie de cette analyse d'impact.

En ce qui concerne le secteur du lait, un second rapport est prévu en 2012 sur la suppression progressive des quotas laitiers et un rapport de suivi est programmé pour juin 2014 sur la mise en œuvre du paquet «lait»; il s'intéressera en particulier aux zones défavorisées. Pour ce qui est de la question des droits de plantation viticoles, la Commission a mis en place un groupe de haut niveau en avril 2012 dans le but d'élaborer des propositions novatrices visant à assurer, sur le long terme, la vitalité du secteur vitivinicole de l'UE face à l'augmentation de la concurrence mondiale.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005562/12
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Abolition of milk and sugar quotas, as well as viticulture planting rights in disadvantaged areas with a 'natural handicap'

In its proposal to reform the common agricultural policy (CAP), the Commission recommends the abolition of milk and sugar quotas between now and 2015, and of wine plantation rights in 2016.

The Committee of the Regions of the European Union, which met in plenary session on 4 May 2012, adopted its opinion on the CAP 2014-2020, calling for a 'fairer' policy 'allowing more room for regulation'. In particular, the CoR 'calls for previous decisions on the removal of milk and sugar quotas to be re-assessed, as well as planting rights in the wine sectors'.

1. Does the Commission intend to take the report published by the Committee of the Regions into consideration in order to improve proposals regarding the reform of the CAP?

2. Has the Commission carried out an evaluation on the economic, social and environmental consequences of such abolitions in all the Member States, particularly in disadvantaged areas with a so-called 'natural handicap'.

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

1. The Commission welcomes the report adopted by the Committee of the Regions on 4 May 2012 on the CAP 2020 that it is currently examining. This report will constitute an important element in the finalisation of the discussion on the Commission proposals to reform the CAP.

2. The Impact Assessment that accompanies the CAP legislative proposals for the CAP 2020 includes an analysis of the economic, social and environmental impacts of the proposed measures in the CAP reform, most notably in the area of the single CMO. An analysis of the impacts of the abolition of sugar quotas has been in particular included in this Impact Assessment.

Regarding the milk sector, a second report is due in 2012 on the phasing out of milk quotas and a follow-up report is scheduled by June 2014 on the implementation of the milk package, with particular focus on LFAs. On the issue of wine planting rights the Commission has launched a high level group in April 2012 with the aim of providing innovative proposals to secure the long-term vitality of the EU's wine sector in the face of growing world competition.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005563/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(1 juni 2012)

Betreft: Hoge tarieven voor mobiele telefonie — Grote verschillen tussen lidstaten

Ondanks de beslissing van de Belgische regulator om de nationale terminatietarieven in 2010 gevoelig te verlagen, heeft de Belgische consument hiervan nauwelijks effect gevoeld op zijn gsm-rekening. Blijkbaar blijft de concurrentie op de Belgische mobieletelefoniemarkt ondermaats en slaagt de consument er niet in om uit een kluwen van ontransparante tariefstructuren het voordeligste aanbod te halen.

Uit een enquête van de BEUC uit 2009 blijkt dat er een erg groot verschil is tussen de tarieven voor mobiele telefonie (en sms) in de verschillende lidstaten. In sommige lidstaten betaalt men meer dan 4 keer zoveel voor hetzelfde telefoongebruik.

De Belgische regering kondigt intussen aan de contractduur te beperken tot zes maanden en aldus een einde te maken aan de opzeggingskosten waarmee klanten geconfronteerd worden als zij van operator willen veranderen. Maar België is zeker niet de enige lidstaat waar er nog een grote marge is voor verdere prijsverlagingen.

1. Kan de Commissie meedelen welke initiatieven ze kan nemen om de concurrentie verder aan te moedigen zodat consumenten hieruit voordeel halen?

2. Hoe kunnen de grote tariefverschillen tussen de lidstaten worden afgebouwd?

3. Heeft de Commissie beste praktijken kunnen identificeren die verdere verspreiding verdienen?

4. Op welke manier draagt de Commissie er toe bij om regulatoren te begeleiden bij het nemen van maatregelen die de concurrentie op de telecommarkten ten goede komen en welke specifieke aanbeveling heeft de Commissie ten aanzien van de Belgische regulator? Hoe kan er met name voor gezorgd worden dat de daling van de terminatietarieven ook doorberekend wordt aan de consument?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(6 juli 2012)

De Commissie blijft nauw samenwerken met de nationale regelgevende instanties om ervoor te zorgen dat de markten beter functioneren. In het raam van de jongste Europese raadpleging over de analyse van de markt voor mobiele gespreksafgifte in België ([1]) heeft de Commissie de Belgische nationale regelgevende instantie verzocht de tarieven voor mobiele gespreksafgifte vast te stellen op het niveau van de kosten van een efficiënte exploitant. Het doel daarvan is meer concurrentie en meer voordelen voor de eindgebruikers. Dit heeft geleid tot het besluit van 29 juni 2010 waarbij de afgiftetarieven aanzienlijk zijn verlaagd tot het niveau van 1,08 eurocent per minuut voor alle exploitanten vanaf 1 januari 2013, vergeleken met 7,20-11,43 eurocent per minuut in juni 2010.

De verstrengde Europese telecomregels inzake nummeroverdraagbaarheid, dit is de mogelijkheid om van telecomaanbieder te veranderen en daarbij hetzelfde telefoonnummer te behouden, is nog een instrument om de concurrentie aan te moedigen. In dit verband heeft de Commissie onlangs besloten België en vier andere lidstaten voor het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie te dagen wegens niet- mededeling van de nationale omzettingsmaatregelen.

Een ander belangrijk instrument om de concurrentie in de mobiele markten te versterken is een concurrentiebevorderend spectrumbeleid. Artikel 5 van het programma voor het radiospectrumbeleid (RSPP) versterkt de verplichting van de lidstaten om daadwerkelijke concurrentie met betrekking tot spectrumgebruiksrechten te bevorderen. Op de naleving van deze verplichting wordt nauwgezet toegezien door de Commissie.

([1]) BE/2010/1086.

Een verdere verbetering van het Belgische concurrentielandschap wordt verwacht na de recente veiling van een vierde 3G-licentie, waardoor een nieuwe speler Telenet de markt betreedt. Telenet is verplicht van start te gaan met de levering van diensten vanaf begin 2013. Daarnaast zijn er op de markt virtuele mobiele netwerkexploitanten (MVNO's) actief die marktaandeel winnen met hun innovatieve aanbiedingen. Ten slotte moet de recente liberalisering van de koppelverkoop, met mobiele toestellen, de concurrentie mee helpen aanzwengelen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005563/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: High rates for mobile telephony — major differences between Member States

Despite the decision of the Belgian regulator's decision to substantially reduce national termination tariffs in 2010, Belgian consumers have barely noticed any effect on their mobile phone bills. Apparently, competition on the Belgian mobile telephony market remains poor and the consumer is not able to extract the most advantageous offer from the tangle of non-transparent tariff structures.

A survey carried out by the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) in 2009 showed that there is a very large difference in charges for mobile telephony (and text messaging) in the various Member States. In some Member States, consumers pay more than four times as much for the same telephone use.

The Belgian Government has since announced that contract duration will be limited to six months, thus putting an end to cancellation fees with which customers are confronted when they wish to change operators. However, Belgium is certainly not the only Member State in which there is still a large margin for further price reductions.

1. Can the Commission indicate what initiatives it can take to further encourage competition so that consumers can get the best deals?

2. How can the major rate differences among Member States be reduced?

3. Has the Commission identified best practices that deserve to be applied more widely?

4. In what manner is the Commission contributing to guiding regulators in taking measures that will benefit competition in the telecom markets and what specific recommendations does the Commission have in relation to the Belgian regulator? In particular, how can it be ensured that the reduction of termination tariffs is also passed on to the consumer?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

The Commission continues to work closely together with the National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) to ensure that markets function better. In the context of the latest EU-level consultation on the review of the mobile termination market in Belgium ([1]), the Commission invited the Belgian NRA to set mobile termination rates at the level of costs of an efficient operator in order to foster competition and increase end-users' benefits. This resulted in the decision of 29 June 2010 which substantially reduced termination rates to the level of EUR 1.08 per minute for all players as of 1 January 2013, comparing to EUR 7.20 — 11.43 per minute in June 2010.

The reinforced EU telecom rules on number portability, i.e. the ability to change the telecom provider whilst keeping the same telephone number is a further instrument to enhance competition. In this regard, the Commission has recently decided to refer Belgium and four other Member States to the Court of Justice of the EU for non-communication of the national transposition measures.

Another key instrument to enhance competition in mobile markets is a pro-competitive spectrum policy. Article 5 of the Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP) reinforces the obligation on Member States to promote effective competition with regard to spectrum usage rights and the Commission is closely monitoring the compliance with this obligation.

Further progress in competition in Belgium is expected following the recent auction of a fourth 3G licence which resulted in a new player, Telenet, entering the market. Telenet is under the obligation to start delivering services from the beginning of 2013.Moreover, mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs) are active in the market and are gaining market share with their innovative offers. Finally, the recent liberalisation of tied offers, including devices, should further contribute to increasing competition.

([1]) BE/2010/1086.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-005564/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Inseguridad regulatoria en el sector fotovoltaico español

La entrada en vigor del RD 1565/2010 y RDL14/23010 está suponiendo en la actualidad el default de miles de proyectos de inversores españoles y del resto de la comunidad que no pueden hacer frente a los compromisos financieros adquiridos para el desarrollo de sus proyectos.

Asimismo, la referida normativa entra en evidente contravención con la directiva 2009/28/CE que exige a los Estados miembros la trasposición de normas que otorguen seguridad jurídica a la legislación de los estados dictadas para la implantación de instalaciones de producción de energía renovable. Prueba de ello, es la reclamación arbitral contra el Reino de España por un importante grupo de fondos de inversión (todos de la CEE), al amparo del Reglamento de Arbitraje de la Comisión de las Naciones Unidas para el Derecho Mercantil Internacional (Uncitral), en defensa del daño producido por las normas retroactivas aplicadas por España y por la flagrante infracción del Tratado de la Carta de la Energía.

Toda vez que en los últimos días se ha procedido a una reclamación de la Comisión Europea a la República Argentina ante la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC), exigiendo el mantenimiento de los acuerdos regulatorios con los estados miembros de la CEE (caso Repsol-YPF), circunstancia de evidente analogía, parece necesaria la actuación de la Comisión Europea requiriendo al Reino de España a la reposición de la seguridad jurídica violentada por el RD 1565/2010 y RDL 14/2010.

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Qué exigencias tiene previsto la UE realizar al Reino de España al efecto de evitar la inseguridad regulatoria en materia de energía, al respecto de las medidas retroactivas tomadas con el sector fotovoltaico, en concreto con la entrada en vigor del Real Decreto 1565/2010 y Real Decreto legislativo 14/2010?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de junio de 2012)

Aun cuando los regímenes de apoyo a las energías renovables sean competencia de los Estados miembros, la Comisión, según expuso en su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-001865/2011 del Sr. D. Oriol Junqueras Vies ([1]), vigila permanentemente la evolución de la política sobre energías renovables de los Estados miembros, incluida España, con vistas a estudiar nuevas medidas a nivel de la UE en caso necesario. Más recientemente, la Comisión ha manifestado su inquietud por la intermitencia en el apoyo a la energía renovable tanto en las recientes recomendaciones a España con motivo del Semestre de la UE ([2]) como en su Comunicación sobre la energía renovable ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/communication_2012_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005564/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Regulatory uncertainty in the Spanish photovoltaic sector

The entry into force of Royal Decree 1565/2010 and Royal Legislative Decree 14/23010 is currently leading to defaults on thousands of projects with investors from Spain and the rest of the EU, who are unable to meet the financial commitments they have made to develop their projects.

The legislation referred to also clearly contravenes Directive 2009/28/EC, which requires Member States to transpose standards that provide legal certainty to state legislation passed to establish renewable energy production facilities. Proof of this is seen in the arbitration claim made against the Kingdom of Spain by a large group of investment funds (all from the EU), under the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), for damages caused by the retroactive rules applied by Spain and by the flagrant violation of the Energy Charter Treaty.

In clearly analogous circumstances, the European Commission has recently made a complaint against the Republic of Argentina to the World Trade Organisation demanding the upholding of regulatory agreements made with EU Member States (the REPSOL-YPF case). Similarly, it seems necessary for the European Commission to act to require the Kingdom of Spain to re-establish the legal certainty violated by Royal Decree 1565/2010 and Royal Legislative Decree 14/2010.

In view of the above:

1. What demands does the EU intend to make of the Kingdom of Spain to prevent regulatory uncertainty in the energy field, with regard to the retroactive measures taken in the photovoltaic sector, particularly the entry into force of Royal Decree 1565/2010 and Royal Legislative Decree 14/2010?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(28 June 2012)

While support schemes for renewable energy fall within the competence of Member States, the Commission, as set out in its reply to the Written Question E-001865/2011 by Mr Junqueras Vies Oriol ([1]), is continuously monitoring renewable energy policy developments at Member States level, including in Spain, with a view to considering further action at EU level, if necessary. More recently, the Commission has stressed its concerns about stop- and-go approaches to renewable energy support both in the recent EU semester recommendations to Spain ([2]) and in its communication on renewable energy ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/communication_2012_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-005565/12
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(1 juni 2012)

Betreft: Verkiezingskandidatuur van commissaris De Gucht

De gedragscode voor commissarissen bepaalt dat commissarissen zich verkiesbaar mogen stellen en een actieve rol in een verkiezingscampagne mogen spelen op voorwaarde dat zij hun werkzaamheden voor de Commissie gedurende de hele periode dat zij actief betrokken zijn bij de campagne en ten minste voor de duur daarvan opschorten.

Op 31 mei 2012 heeft commissaris Karel De Gucht aangekondigd zich in de gemeente Berlare kandidaat te zullen stellen voor de Belgische gemeenteraadsverkiezingen van oktober 2012.

1. Beschouwt de Commissie de aankondiging van de kandidatuur van de commissaris als het begin van diens campagne? Zo ja, zal de commissaris zijn werkzaamheden voor de Commissie in overeenstemming met de gedragscode onmiddellijk opschorten? Zo niet, kan de Commissie dan aangeven waarom niet en wanneer de commissaris dergelijke werkzaamheden zal moeten opschorten?

2. Voorts bepaalt de gedragscode dat commissarissen geen enkele publieke functie mogen uitoefenen. Kan de Commissie bevestigen of dit betekent dat de heer De Gucht als commissaris moet aftreden indien hij in de gemeenteraad wordt gekozen en voor de keuze wordt gesteld om dat mandaat op te nemen?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(22 juni 2012)

Commissaris De Gucht is voornemens deel te nemen aan de komende Belgische gemeenteraadsverkiezingen die op 14 oktober 2012 zullen plaatsvinden. Commissaris De Gucht heeft Commissievoorzitter Barroso evenwel ervan in kennis gesteld dat hij voornemens is bij de aanvang van de verkiezingscampagne bekend te maken dat hij er niet naar streeft om herverkozen te worden als burgemeester van Berlare, dat hij geen actieve rol in de campagne zal spelen en dat hij voornemens is zijn mandaat als lid van Commissie te blijven vervullen.

Zoals het geachte Parlementslid terecht heeft opgemerkt, bepaalt de gedragscode voor de leden van de Commissie dat een lid van de Commissie voor de volledige periode waarin hij/zij actief deelneemt aan een verkiezingscampagne en ten minste voor de duur van de campagne zijn/haar werkzaamheden in de Commissie neerlegt. Zoals reeds is medegedeeld, is commissaris De Gucht niet voornemens om actief deel te nemen aan de campagne. In het kader van deze campagne mag hij geen gebruik maken van personele of andere middelen van de Commissie.

De Commissie bevestigt dat commissarissen geen openbare functie van welke aard ook mogen uitoefenen. De aandacht wordt evenwel erop gevestigd dat openbare functies waarvan de uitoefening formeel wordt gestaakt als gevolg van de rechtstreekse toepasselijkheid van de wet, kunnen worden gehandhaafd zolang de onafhankelijkheid van de commissaris gewaarborgd blijft ([1]). Volgens de toepasselijke wetgeving is dit het geval voor de functie van lid van de Gemeenteraad.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/pdf/code_conduct_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005565/12
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Commissioner De Gucht standing for election

The Code of conduct for Commissioners stipulates that a Commissioner is allowed to stand for election and to play an active role in an election campaign, on the condition that the person in question withdraws from the work of the Commission for the entire period of active implication and at least for the duration of the campaign.

On 31 May 2012, Commissioner Karel De Gucht announced that he would be a candidate in the Belgian local elections in October 2012, in the municipality of Berlare.

1. Does the Commission consider the announcement of the Commissioner's candidacy as the beginning of his campaign? If so, will the Commissioner withdraw from his Commission work immediately in line with the code of conduct? If not, can the Commission indicate why not, and at what point the Commissioner in question will be required to withdraw from such work?

2. Furthermore, the code of conduct stipulates that Commissioners may not exercise any public functions of any kind. Can the Commission confirm that this means that Mr De Gucht would need to resign as Commissioner if he were elected to the municipal council and were to decide to take up this mandate?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(22 June 2012)

Commissioner De Gucht intends to participate in the next Belgian local elections campaign which will take place on 14 October 2012. However, Commissioner de Gucht informed President Barroso that he intends to announce, as from the outset of the election campaign, that he is not seeking reelection as Mayor of Berlare, that he will not play an active role in the election campaign and that he intends to continue to fulfil his mandate as Member of the Commission.

As correctly stated by the Honourable Member, the Code of Conduct for Commissioners stipulates that a Member of the Commission must withdraw from the work of the Commission for the entire period of her/his active participation in an election campaign and at least for the duration of the campaign. As previously stated, Commissioner De Gucht does not intend to participate actively in the campaign. He may not use any human or other Commission resource in the framework of this campaign.

The Commission confirms that Commissioners may not exercise any public function of whatever kind. It must however be noted that public functions which are formally suspended by direct effect of law during the Commissioner's mandate may be maintained, as long as the independence of the Commissioner is guaranteed ([1]). This is the case for the function of member of the Municipal Council (Gemeenteraad) under the applicable law.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/pdf/code_conduct_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005567/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Καταδίκη του πρώην προέδρου της Λιβερίας

Η κυβέρνηση της Σιέρα Λεόνε ανακοίνωσε σήμερα ότι «αποδόθηκε δικαιοσύνη» με την καταδίκη του πρώην προέδρου της Λιβερίας Τσαρλς Τέιλορ σε ποινή κάθειρξης 50 ετών για εγκλήματα κατά της ανθρωπότητας και εγκλήματα πολέμου, που διαπράχθηκαν στη χώρα αυτή.

«Είναι μια καλή είδηση και για την κυβέρνηση και για τη χώρα. Είναι ένα βήμα προς τα μπρος, γιατί αποδόθηκε δικαιοσύνη», δήλωσε ο εκπρόσωπος της κυβέρνησης και υφυπουργός Πληροφόρησης Σέκου Ταραουάλι.

«Μολονότι η ποινή αυτή δεν είναι ισάξια του μεγέθους των θηριωδιών που διαπράχθηκαν και των βασάνων των θυμάτων, ελπίζω ότι αυτοί τους οποίους επηρεάζουν αυτά τα γεγονότα θα ανακουφιστούν», πρόσθεσε.

Ο πρώην πρόεδρος της Λιβερίας Τσαρλς Τέιλορ καταδικάστηκε σήμερα από τη διεθνή δικαιοσύνη σε κάθειρξη 50 ετών, καθώς κρίθηκε ένοχος ότι υποστήριξε τους αντάρτες με αντάλλαγμα διαμάντια κατά τον εμφύλιο πόλεμο στη Σιέρα Λεόνε.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιουλίου 2012)

Ο πρώην πρόεδρος της Λιβερίας Charles Taylor καταδικάστηκε στις 30 Μαΐου 2012 σε ποινή φυλάκισης 50 ετών για 11 κατηγορίες εγκλημάτων πολέμου και εγκλημάτων κατά της ανθρωπότητας στη Σιέρα Λεόνε.

Στις 26 Απριλίου 2012, το Ειδικό Δικαστήριο για τη Σιέρα Λεόνε έκρινε τον πρώην αρχηγό κράτους ένοχο για υποβοήθηση και υποκίνηση εγκλημάτων πολέμου και εγκλημάτων κατά της ανθρωπότητας με τη στήριξη που παρείχε στους αντάρτες στη Σιέρα Λεόνε.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, εξέδωσα μια έντονη δήλωση υποστήριξης αυτής της νομικής διαδικασίας, απόφασης και ποινής που αποδεικνύει ότι κανένας δεν είναι υπεράνω του νόμου. Όλοι όσοι διαπράττουν εγκλήματα κατά της ανθρωπότητας, είτε στη χώρα τους είτε σε άλλη χώρα, είτε βρίσκονται στην εξουσία είτε σε εξέγερση μπορούν να οδηγηθούν στη δικαιοσύνη. Αυτό είναι το ελάχιστο που αξίζουν τα θύματα τέτοιων εγκλημάτων.

Για ακόμα μια φορά, θα ήθελα να τονίσω ότι η ΕΕ είναι ιδιαιτέρως προσηλωμένη στη διεθνή δικαιοσύνη και στον αγώνα κατά της ατιμωρησίας. Η Επιτροπή υποστήριξε σθεναρά το Ειδικό Δικαστήριο για τη Σιέρα Λεόνε.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005567/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Sentencing of the former President of Liberia

The Sierra Leone Government announced today that 'justice has been done' with the sentencing of the former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, to 50 years' imprisonment for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in that country.

'It is good news both for the government and for the country. It is a step forward, for justice has been done,' declared the Government Representative and Deputy Information Minister Sheka Tarawalie.

'Although this penalty is not commensurate with the enormity of the atrocities committed and the sufferings of the victims, I hope that those who have been affected by these events will have found some relief,' he added.

The former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, was sentenced today by international justice to 50 years' imprisonment, having been found guilty of aiding and abetting the guerrillas in exchange for diamonds during the civil war in Sierra Leone.

Can the Commission clarify its official position?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 July 2012)

Liberian former President Charles Taylor was sentenced on 30 May 2012 to 50 years in prison for 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Sierra Leone.

On 26 April 2012, the Special Court for Sierra Leone had found the ex head of state guilty of aiding and abetting war crimes and crimes against humanity by supporting rebels in Sierra Leone.

In this context, I issued a strong Declaration of support for this legal process, judgment and sentence, which demonstrate that nobody is above the law. All those who commit crimes against humanity, whether in their own country or another, whether in power or in rebellion can and will be brought to justice. This is the least that the victims of such crimes deserve.

Once again, I would like to underline that the EU is firmly committed to international justice and the fight against impunity. It has been a strong supporter of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005569/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Φορολογικοί συντελεστές στην Ελλάδα

Αύξηση του ΦΠΑ το 2012, αλλά και σταδιακή αύξηση της φορολόγησης εισοδήματος και επιχειρήσεων παρατηρείται στην ΕΕ, σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Στατιστικής Υπηρεσίας που δόθηκαν στη δημοσιότητα. Σύμφωνα με τα ίδια στοιχεία, οι φορολογικοί συντελεστές εισοδήματος και επιχειρήσεων στην Ελλάδα είναι υψηλότεροι από το μέσο όρο στην ευρωζώνη και στην ΕΕ.

Ειδικότερα, όσον αφορά τον ΦΠΑ, το 2012 κυμαίνεται, στην ΕΕ, από 15 % στο Λουξεμβούργο και 17 % στην Κύπρο, έως 27 % στην Ουγγαρία, 25 % στη Δανία και τη Σουηδία, 24 % στη Ρουμανία και 23 % στην Ελλάδα, την Πορτογαλία, την Ιρλανδία, τη Φινλανδία και την Πολωνία. Κατά μέσο όρο, ο ΦΠΑ στην ΕΕ διαμορφώθηκε το 2012 στο 21 % και στην ευρωζώνη στο 20 %.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή πώς αναμένεται να ενισχυθεί η ανταγωνιστικότητα και οι επενδύσεις στην Ελλάδα εάν ισχύουν υψηλοί συντελεστές στη φορολογία;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Ιουλίου 2012)

Τα τελευταία χρόνια η Ελλάδα πραγματοποίησε ορισμένες φορολογικές μεταρρυθμίσεις για να ανταποκριθεί στις επιτακτικές ανάγκες εξυγίανσης της οικονομίας της. Ως αποτέλεσμα των κινήτρων για την αύξηση των εσόδων έγιναν πολλές αυξήσεις τόσο των κανονικών όσο και των μειωμένων συντελεστών ΦΠΑ σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ. Η οικονομική βιβλιογραφία αναγνωρίζει ότι οι φόροι επί της κατανάλωσης είναι λιγότερο επιζήμιοι για την ανάπτυξη από τους άμεσους φόρους.

Τα επίπεδα των επίσημων φορολογικών συντελεστών επί του εισοδήματος φυσικών προσώπων και εταιρειών επηρεάζονται από τις εισφορές αλληλεγγύης/κοινωνικής ευθύνης που καθιέρωσε η ελληνική κυβέρνηση σε προσωρινή βάση. Ειδικά όσον αφορά τον εταιρικό φόρο εισοδήματος, η έκτακτη εισφορά επιβάλλεται μεν στις μεγαλύτερες επιχειρήσεις αλλά ο ονομαστικός συντελεστής έχει μειωθεί στο 20 %. Συμπληρωματικά μέτρα για τη βελτίωση του επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος και των επενδύσεων προβλέπονται στο εθνικό πρόγραμμα μεταρρυθμίσεων που υπέβαλε η ελληνική κυβέρνηση.

Συνολικά, η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι η ανάγκη να τεθούν σε διατηρήσιμη πορεία τα δημόσια οικονομικά δεν έρχεται σε αντίθεση με τον μακροπρόθεσμο βασικό στόχο της αποκατάστασης της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της ανάπτυξης, πράγμα που αντικατοπτρίζεται στα είδη των φορολογικών μεταρρυθμίσεων που γίνονται τώρα στην Ελλάδα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005569/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Tax rates in Greece

According to data released by the European Statistical Service, 2012 saw an increase in VAT in the EU, as well as a gradual increase in income and corporate tax. The same data indicate that income and corporate tax rates in Greece are higher than average in the euro area and the EU.

In regards to VAT specifically, in 2012 it varied in the EU from 15% in Luxembourg and 17% in Cyprus to 27% in Hungary, 25% in Denmark and Sweden, 24% in Romania and 23% in Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Finland and Poland. The average VAT rate in the EU in 2012 came to 21% and in the euro area to 20%.

Can the Commission answer the following:

How does it expect competitiveness and investments in Greece to be strengthened when such high tax rates are in force?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

Greece has implemented a number of tax reforms in order to respond to its compelling consolidation needs in recent years. Following revenue-raising motivations, increases in both the standard and reduced VAT rates have been very frequent across EU Member States. The economic literature recognises that consumption taxes are less detrimental to growth than direct taxes.

The levels of the top statutory rates on personal and corporate income are affected by the solidarity/social responsibility contributions introduced by the Greek Government on a temporary basis. With specific regard to the corporate income tax, while the special contribution applies to the larger firms, the headline rate has been reduced to 20%. Complementary measures to enhance the business environment and investment are envisaged in the National Reform Programme submitted by the Greek Government.

Overall, the Commission considers that the need to put public finances on a sustainable path does not contradict the long term underlying objective of restoring competitiveness and growth, which is reflected in the types of tax reforms recently implemented in Greece.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005570/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόγραμμα δωρεάν διανομής τροφίμων

Την αύξηση στα 30 εκατ. ευρώ του συνολικού προϋπολογισμού του προγράμματος της δωρεάν διανομής τροφίμων σε απόρους για το 2013 ζητά από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή το Υπουργείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και Τροφίμων, λόγω της δύσκολης οικονομικής κατάστασης.

Στο κείμενο των προτάσεών του για το πρόγραμμα της δωρεάν διανομής τροφίμων την επόμενη χρονιά σε ευπαθείς ομάδες πολιτών, το υπουργείο ζητά να περιληφθούν τυριά, ζυμαρικά, ρύζι και ελαιόλαδο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-005309/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005570/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Free food distribution programme

The Ministry of Rural Development and Food requested the European Commission to increase the total 2013 budget for the free food distribution programme to the destitute to EUR 30 million, on account of the difficult economic situation.

In the text of its proposals for next year's free food distribution to vulnerable population groups, the Ministry requested inclusion of cheese, pasta, rice and olive oil.

Can the Commission indicate its official position on this request?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(29 June 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Written Question E-005309/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005571/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Evitar deficiencias que afectan a la competitividad de la economía Española y frenan el cumplimiento de los objetivos 20-20-20

Habida cuenta del continuo crecimiento del conocido como déficit de tarifa existente en el sector eléctrico español y ante la evidente existencia de ineficiencias en el referido mercado, que está llevando aparejada la imparable subida del precio de la luz, parece aconsejable desde la Comisión Europea fomentar la creación de mecanismos que auditen las inoperancias de los mismos, al objeto de evitar la acumulación del déficit y de optimizar la competitividad entre todos los sectores de producción.

En continuidad con los mensajes emitidos por la Comisión en los últimos días, parecería aconsejable la inmediata designación de una auditoría supervisada por la propia Comisión Europea para la evaluación de las ineficiencias del sector eléctrico, que en palabras de aquélla se producen por la escasa competitividad que subyace bajo el excesivo déficit tarifario, debido al empeño de España por favorecer en exceso las compensaciones a ciertas plantas, como las nucleares o las hidroeléctricas, y por mantener las ayudas a sectores muy ineficientes, como el del carbón, en claro perjuicio con las energías renovables a los que se les ha retirado el apoyo de forma retroactiva, desanimando las inversiones en el sector y haciendo difícil conseguir que España cumpla con sus objetivos climáticos y energéticos europeos para 2020.

Las conclusiones de la auditoría podrían convertirse en las pautas a seguir por el Reino de España para eliminar de forma definitiva un problema que no deja de crecer.

1. ¿Considera adecuada esta Comisión la exigencia al Reino de España de una auditoría de ineficiencias del sector eléctrico?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de julio de 2012)

En noviembre de 2011, la Comisión publicó su Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento relativo a 2012, que se centraba en las prioridades para la política económica. En este contexto, España presentó en abril de 2012 su programa nacional de reforma y su programa de estabilidad. La Comisión evaluó el estado de aplicación de las recomendaciones dirigidas a España en 2011, determinó los retos actuales de la política económica y adoptó una recomendación de recomendación del Consejo el 30 de mayo de 2012. En una de las recomendaciones se pedía a España «completar la interconexión de las infraestructuras eléctricas y gasísticas y abordar el déficit tarifario del sector eléctrico de forma global, particularmente mejorando la rentabilidad de la cadena de suministro de electricidad».

El documento de trabajo de los servicios de la Comisión publicado el 30 de mayo de 2012, que sostiene estas recomendaciones, pone de relieve y analiza los retos que afronta España. Entre dichos retos se incluyen los del sector energético, siendo uno de ellos relativo al déficit tarifario a que se hace referencia en la pregunta ([1]). No obstante, incumbe a España elegir las medidas para aplicar la recomendación.

Como punto de partida, el Gobierno español ha adoptado en marzo de 2012 medidas encaminadas a corregir el déficit tarifario, tales como un aumento de la tarifa de último recurso y medidas tendentes a reducir costes en las actividades de generación, distribución y transmisión. Estas medidas a corto plazo deberán ir seguidas de una reforma a fondo del sector eléctrico, que incluya la revisión del sistema de tarifas reguladas para que las tarifas reflejen los precios del mercado, y de una revisión del régimen de ayuda a las energías renovables.

La reforma del sector energético en España deberá orientarse a garantizar a largo plazo la viabilidad económica de las actividades eléctricas y un marco jurídico estable y seguro para los inversores.

([1]) Véase COM(2012) 310 final, pp. 23-24.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005571/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Avoiding weaknesses hampering the Spanish economy's competitiveness and slowing down implementation of the '20-20-20' targets

In view of the ever-increasing 'tariff deficit' in the Spanish electricity sector, and of the obvious market inefficiencies leading to unstoppable rises in electricity bills, it would be wise for the Commission to foster the establishment of mechanisms to audit such inefficiencies, with a view to halting the growth of this deficit and to optimising competitiveness across all production sectors.

In line with statements made by the Commission in recent days, it would be advisable to conduct an immediate audit of the electricity sector, overseen by the Commission, to ascertain where these inefficiencies lie. In the Commission's words, these inefficiencies result from weak competition in the energy sector, which has contributed to the excessive tariff deficit. This lack of competition is the result of Spain's excessive bias towards certain utilities, such as nuclear and large hydro-electric, and its continued subsidising of heavily inefficient sectors, such as coal, at the expense of renewable energy sources, from which subsidies have been retroactively removed, discouraging investment in the sector harming Spain's chances of meeting its '20-20-20' climate and energy targets.

The audit's findings could provide guidelines to help Spain solve once and for all a growing problem.

1. Does the Commission think that Spain should be required to audit its electricity sector to pinpoint inefficiencies?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2012)

In November 2011, the Commission published its Annual Growth Survey for 2012 focusing on priorities for economic policy. Against this background, Spain presented its national reform programme and stability programme in April 2012. The Commission assessed the state of implementation of the 2011 country-specific recommendations, identified current policy challenges and adopted a recommendation for Council recommendations on 30 May 2012. One of the recommendations asks Spain to 'complete the electricity and gas interconnections with neighbouring countries and to address the electricity tariff deficit in a comprehensive way, in particular by improving the cost efficiency of the electricity supply chain'.

The staff working document published on 30 May 2012 which underpins these recommendations provides an analysis and highlights the challenges that Spain faces, including those in the energy sector, one of them related to the tariff deficit referred to in the question ([1]). However, it is up to Spain to choose measures to implement the recommendation.

As starting point, the Spanish Government has adopted in March 2012 measures to tackle the tariff deficit including an increase of the regulated tariff of last resort and measures to reduce costs in activities of generation, distribution and transmission. These short term measures should be followed by an in-depth reform of the electricity sector including the revision of the regulated tariff system ensuring that tariffs reflect market prices and a review of the renewables support scheme.

The reform of energy sector in Spain should be oriented to ensure in the long run the economic feasibility of the electricity activities and a stable and certain legal framework for investors.

([1]) See COM(2012) 310 final, pp. 23-24 for details.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005572/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Prevención de discriminación entre los productores fotovoltaicos de los diferentes Estados Miembros

En respuesta a la Petición 0100/2011 realizada por la Asociación Nacional de Productores e Inversores en Energías Renovables del Reino de España, se establecía: La firme reacción pública contra los cambios normativos retrospectivos, la respuesta escrita y pública de la Comisión a este caso español (así como a otros similares en Italia y República Checa) y los distintos debates subsiguientes sobre estos asuntos entre la Comisión y los diferentes Estados Miembros es probable que desanimen que en el futuro se produzca de nuevo una acción así.

Desde entonces, dentro de la propia Comunidad Europea, la Royal Courts of Justice (Case No: C1/2012) del Reino Unido, falló: Diseñar un esquema retributivo para promover la generación de electricidad solar sin explicitar que puede ser cambiado a futuro pero que sea cambiado una vez que los propietarios de las instalaciones han realizado la inversión constituye un acto de retroactividad impropia que debe ser evitado.

El productor fotovoltaico que hizo una inversión amparándose en un esquema retributivo que prometía una tarifa tiene que tener asegurada la retribución de su inversión del mismo modo que un inversor que compra un bono de Reino Unido tiene que tener asegurada una tasa de retorno.

El artículo 1 de la Directiva 2009/208/CE establece la necesidad de un marco común para el fomento de la energía procedente de fuentes renovables en toda la Comunidad. Sin embargo, las medidas retroactivas adoptadas por el Reino de España la colocan en un claro agravio comparativo con el resto de países de la Comunidad donde no se han permitido tomar medidas retroactivas para los ciudadanos de la Unión.

Asimismo, la Directiva 2009/72/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de julio de 2009, sobre normas comunes para el mercado interior de la electricidad establece en su artículo 39 que la Comisión podrá solicitar un dictamen de la Agencia sobre la compatibilidad de cualquier decisión adoptada por una autoridad reguladora con las directrices mencionadas en la presente Directiva o en el Reglamento (CE) n° 714/2009.

1. ¿Qué medidas tiene previstas la Comisión para evitar nuevas normas retroactivas en el Reino de España contra los productores fotovoltaicos?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de julio de 2012)

Señoría: Hemos tenido la oportunidad de debatir bilateralmente este asunto. Según la Comisión, las medidas adoptadas en España en el ámbito de las ayudas a las energías renovables no constituyen un incumplimiento de la Directiva 2009/28/CE (Directiva sobre energías renovables ([1])).

Sin embargo, como señala Su Señoría, la Comisión ha manifestado su inquietud por los enfoques intermitentes y las medidas retroactivas que afectan a las ayudas a las energías renovables. Más recientemente, la Comisión, en su Comunicación titulada «Energías renovables: principales protagonistas en el mercado europeo de la energía» ([2]), ha anunciado que elaborará orientaciones sobre los regímenes de ayudas nacionales a las energías renovables y sobre las reformas de dichos regímenes, para garantizar que se envían señales positivas para fomentar las inversiones en energías renovables y el desarrollo rentable de tales energías.

([1]) Directiva 2009/28/CE del Parlamento y del Consejo, de 23 de abril de 2009, relativa al fomento del uso de energía procedente de fuentes renovables y por la que se modifican y se derogan las Directivas 2001/77/CE y 2003/30/CE, DO L 140 de 5.6.2009.
([2]) COM(2012)271 final, http://ec.europa.eu/energy/las energías renovables/communication_2012_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005572/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Prevention of discrimination among photovoltaic producers from different Member States

The response to Petition 0100/2011 by the Asociación Nacional de Productores e Inversores en Energías Renovables del Reino de España [National Association of Renewable Energy Producers and Investors of the Kingdom of Spain] established that the strong public reaction against retroactive rule changes, the Commission's written public response to this Spanish case (and to similar cases in Italy and the Czech Republic) and the various subsequent discussions on these matters between the Commission and individual Member States are all likely to discourage such action being taken again in future.

Since then, within the European Community itself, the Royal Courts of Justice (Case No: C1/2012) of the United Kingdom ruled that to design a remuneration scheme to promote solar power generation without specifying that it may change in the future, and then to change it once facilities' owners have made their investment, represents an improper act of retroactivity that must be avoided.

Photovoltaic producers who made an investment under a remuneration scheme that promised a tariff must have the return on their investment guaranteed, in the same way that an investor buying a bond from United Kingdom must have a guaranteed rate of return.

Article 1 of Directive 2009/28/EC establishes the need for a common framework for the promotion of energy from renewable sources across the EU. However, the retroactive measures taken by the Kingdom of Spain clearly give it an unfair advantage over the other EU countries, which have not allowed retroactive measures against EU citizens.

Furthermore, Article 39 of Directive 2009/72/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity, establishes that the Commission may request the opinion of the Agency on the compliance of a decision taken by a regulatory authority with the Guidelines referred to in this directive or in Regulation (EC) No 714/2009.

1. What measures does the Commission plan to take to prevent new retroactive rules being made in the Kingdom of Spain against photovoltaic producers?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(13 July 2012)

Honourable Member, we had the opportunity to discuss this issue bilaterally. According to the Commission, the measures adopted in Spain in the area of renewable energy support do not appear to constitute a breach of Directive 2009/28 (the Renewable Energy Directive ([1])).

However, as the Honourable Member notes, the Commission has stressed its concerns about stop- and-go approaches and retroactive measures affecting renewable energy support. Most recently, the Commission has announced in its communication titled 'Renewable Energy: a major player in the European energy market' ([2]) that it will produce guidance on national renewable energy support schemes and on support scheme reforms, to ensure that positive signals are sent to encourage investment in renewable energy and the cost effective development of renewable energy.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.
([2]) COM(2012) 271 final, http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/communication_2012_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005573/12
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(1 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Restauración forestal

El reciente incendio en las poblaciones de Rasquera, Perelló, Tivenys y Benifallet (en la provincia de Tarragona, Cataluña) ha quemado cerca de 3 000 hectáreas de superficie, la cual ya había sufrido un incendio similar en el año 1995 de más de 5 000 hectáreas. El arbolado de pino blanco ha sido la principal especie afectada, a una edad en la cual no puede garantizarse su regeneración natural. Para la regeneración de esta especie se requiere que el pino cuente con al menos 20 años de vida.

Dada la degradación actual del terreno y el elevado riesgo de erosión y de pérdidas del suelo superiores a las admisibles (más de 12 toneladas por año y hectárea), querríamos preguntarle a la Comisión Europea lo siguiente:

1. ¿Considera que la Unión Europea debería responder ante tal incendio y sus devastadoras consecuencias mediante la habilitación de fondos extraordinarios para la restauración hidrológico-forestal de los terrenos quemados anteriormente citados, valorados en 4 000 euros por hectárea?

2. ¿De qué modo podría el Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader) actuar a favor de la regeneración natural y restauración de la superficie dañada en la provincia de Tarragona?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de julio de 2012)

En aplicación del artículo 48 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1698/2005 del Consejo ([1]), el Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader) puede prestar apoyo para la recuperación del potencial forestal de los bosques dañados por catástrofes naturales o incendios. Ese apoyo cubre la plantación de nuevos árboles y la aplicación de medidas preventivas adecuadas (creación de cortafuegos, establecimiento de infraestructuras de protección y aplicación de prácticas forestales preventivas tales como el control de la vegetación, el aclareo o la diversificación de la estructura vegetal). El Programa de Desarrollo Rural de Cataluña prevé un gasto total de 32,29 millones EUR para la recuperación del potencial forestal y la implantación de medidas preventivas en bosques dañados por catástrofes naturales. De conformidad con el principio de subsidiariedad que regula la aplicación de los programas de desarrollo rural, la selección de los proyectos concretos que deban financiarse en el marco de esa medida es competencia de la autoridad de gestión del programa. Los datos de esa autoridad son los siguientes:

Direcció General de Desenvolupament Rural
Departament d'Agricultura, Ramaderia, Pesca, Alimentació i Medi Natural
Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 612-614
E-08007 Barcelona
Tel.: +34 93 304 67 00
dg02.daam@gencat.cat

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005573/12
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Forest restoration

The recent fire in the villages of Rasquera, El Perelló, Tivenys and Benifallet (in the province of Tarragona, Catalonia) has burned around 3 000 hectares of land. In 1995, this area suffered a similar fire which spread over 5 000 hectares. The white pine tree has been the main species affected since its young age means natural regeneration cannot be guaranteed. This species of pine must be at least 20 years old in order to regenerate.

Given the current land degradation, high risk of erosion and risk of soil losses greater than those permissible (over 12 tonnes per year and hectare), can the Commission say:

1. Does it believe that the EU should respond to such a fire and its devastating consequences by providing special funds for forest restoration in the affected area, the cost of which is valued at EUR 4 000 per hectare?

2. How could the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development aid natural regeneration and restoration of the damaged area in the province of Tarragona?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

According to Articles 48 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1]), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) could support the restoration of the forestry potential in forests damaged by natural disasters and fire. This support covers the planting of new trees and the introduction of appropriate prevention actions (creation of forest firebreaks; establishment of protective infrastructures; preventive forestry practices such as vegetation control, thinning and diversification of vegetative structure). The rural Development Programme of Cataluña forsees a total expenditure of EUR 32.29 million for restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions in forests damaged by natural disasters. The selection of the specific projects to be funded under this measure falls under the responsibility of the Managing Authority of the program, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity governing the implementation of Rural Development Programs. The contact details of the Managing Authority are the following:

Direcció General de Desenvolupament Rural
Departament d'Agricultura, Ramaderia, Pesca, Alimentació i Medi Natural
Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 612-614
E-08007 Barcelona
Tel.: +34 933046700
dg02.daam@gencat.cat

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 of 20 September 2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Developmen, OJ L 277, 21.10.2005, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005574/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Capitale europea dello sport

L'UE ogni anno assegna il titolo di Capitale europea dello sport. Il conferimento è un impegno etico consapevole della funzione sociale che lo sport ha come fattore di aggregazione tra il benessere fisico degli individui, il miglioramento generale della loro qualità di vita e l'integrazione armoniosa nella società.

Il premio di Capitale europea dello sport funge da stimolo, per le amministrazioni locali e le associazioni presenti sul territorio, a soddisfare una fondamentale e determinante realizzazione delle basi che contribuiscono a migliorare il livello generale di salute degli abitanti di un paese, attraverso la cultura del sano esercizio fisico.

I suoi compiti consistono nella creazione delle politiche dello sport per lo sviluppo delle infrastrutture e dei modelli di gestione che consentono allo sport di agevolare lo sviluppo sociale di processi di integrazione nelle aree sociali più svantaggiate della società: disabili, anziani, adolescenti in situazioni a rischio e immigrati.

Le città che acquisiscono il titolo di Capitale europea dello sport sono considerate positivi ed etici esempi di politica sociale che deve essere attuata in altri contesti: nelle strategie, nei concetti e nella distribuzione di programmi. Questa iniziativa deve essere vista dalle città europee come un progetto comune, assume i caratteri di un quadro istituzionale di responsabilità etica.

Alla luce di quanto sovraesposto, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali città italiane hanno ottenuto il riconoscimento in questione?

2. Può fornire maggiori informazioni circa le modalità di candidatura per le città?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(17 agosto 2012)

L'assegnazione del titolo di Capitale europea dello sport è un'iniziativa delle Associazioni delle capitali europee dello sport (ACES-Europe) che è un'associazione privata con sede a Bruxelles.

La Commissione europea ha riconosciuto l'importanza del titolo di Capitale europea dello sport nella sezione «Dialogo strutturato con le parti interessate del settore dello sport» nel Libro bianco sullo sport del 2007. La Commissione europea non partecipa però al processo di selezione e alla gestione dell'iniziativa «Capitale europea dello sport» e pertanto non è in condizione di fornire all'onorevole deputato l'informazione richiesta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005574/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: European Capitals of Sport

Each year, the EU selects a European Capital of Sport. In view of the role sport plays as a means of improving individuals' physical wellbeing and their overall quality of life, as well as promoting an inclusive society, an ethical commitment is required of cities awarded this title.

The European Capital of Sport award acts as an incentive for local authorities and their sports departments to play an instrumental role in improving their community's general level of health by promoting physical exercise as one of the basics of a healthy lifestyle.

European Capitals of Sport are responsible for developing the facilities and introducing the good practice models that will enable sport to foster the inclusion of society's more disadvantaged groups, such as disabled persons, older persons, young people in difficulties and migrants.

The cities that have been awarded the title of European Capital of Sport stand as positive examples of an ethical approach to social policy that should also be applied to strategies, programmes and measures in other areas. European cities should view this initiative as a common project providing a formal framework for promoting ethical values.

1. Can the Commission specify which Italian cities have been awarded this title?

2. Can it provide further information on how cities can apply to become a European Capital of Sport?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

The European Capital of Sport award is an initiative of the Federation for the Associations of the European Capitals and Cities of Sport (ACES-Europe), which is a private association established in Brussels.

The European Commission has recognised the significance of the European Capital of Sport award in the section 'Structured Dialogue with Sport Stakeholders' of the 2007 White Paper on Sport. However, the European Commission is not involved in the selection process and the management of the European Capital of sport initiative and therefore is not in a position to provide the Honourable Member with the requested information.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005575/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Cellule cardiache a misura di paziente

Dalle cellule della pelle si possono estrarre cellule cardiache sane: questa è l'ultima frontiera della ricerca sulle staminali, che regala nuove speranze a chi ha riportato danni al cuore. Uno studio israeliano sostiene infatti l'efficacia di una nuova tecnica, messa a punto nei laboratori. Non si tratta della prima terapia sperimentale volta a ricostruire le aree cardiache danneggiate da un infarto, ma la vera innovazione sta nel punto di partenza. I ricercatori, infatti, hanno utilizzato cellule epiteliali di due pazienti precedentemente colpiti da infarto per generare cellule cardiache compatibili con il cuore stesso dei donatori.

Gli scienziati hanno prelevato le cellule del tessuto epiteliale di due pazienti di 51 e 61 anni e le hanno riprogrammate per portarle a uno stato di immaturità, infettandole con un virus che portava con sé tre geni pluripotenti. Questi ultimi, come hanno chiaramente definito due studi del 2007, sono in grado di fatto di riportare indietro l'orologio biologico delle cellule umane, facendole regredire a uno stadio indifferenziato paragonabile a quello embrionale. Grazie a questo procedimento sono state ottenute delle cellule staminali indotte pluripotenti che sono state fatte differenziare poi in cellule cardiache vere e proprie. Queste ultime, una volta depurate dal virus, sono state iniettate nel cuore di alcuni topi da laboratorio, dove si sono immediatamente integrate adeguandosi al ritmo cardiaco e senza interferire con la funzionalità.

Molti sono gli ostacoli da superare: il primo è rappresentato dal fatto che le cellule staminali possono dare origine a tumori una volta iniettate in un organo specifico. Inoltre, lo sviluppo delle cellule cardiache partendo da quelle epiteliali richiede due settimane di tempo, impedendo un intervento immediatamente successivo all'infarto.

Alla luce di quanto sovraesposto, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza del nuovo studio sulle cellule cardiache ricavate dalla pelle?

2. Viste l'importanza della ricerca e la necessità di svilupparla, non ritiene che si debba ricorrere ai finanziamenti del Settimo programma quadro(7° PQ) oppure del Programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del recente studio sulle cellule cardiache ottenute dalla pelle.

Tale studio rientra nella categoria della medicina rigenerativa, che è finanziata nell'ambito del settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ 2007-2013). Tra le attività specifiche relative alla rigenerazione del cuore che sono state finanziate finora figurano i seguenti progetti:

— Cardiocell ([1]), che ha come obiettivo lo sviluppo di nuove terapie cardiomiocitiche di sostituzione per malattie cardiovascolari ischemiche;

— InfarctcellTherapy ([2]), che studia le possibilità di impiego della terapia delle cellule cardiache utilizzando diverseprocedure e fonti di cellule staminali e di cellule progenitrici;

— Care-MI ([3]), che ha come obiettivo lo sviluppo di terapie rigenerative miocardiche per la cura delle patologie ischemiche del cuore provocate da infarto acuto del miocardio;

— BAMI ([4]) che studia l'utilizzo delle cellule derivate dal midollo osseo per il ripristino della funzionalità cardiaca a seguito di infarto acuto del miocardio.

In linea con la decisione relativa al programma quadro «Competitività e innovazione» (CIP), tale tipo di ricerca non è invece sostenuta da questo programma.

([1]) www.cardiocell.org.
([2]) www.infartcelltherapy.eu.
([3]) www.caremiproject.eu.
([4]) www.bami-fp7.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005575/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Patient-friendly heart cells

Healthy heart cells can be extracted from skin cells. This is the latest frontier in stem cell research and gives new hope to people with heart damage. An Israeli study corroborates the new technique's effectiveness. This is not the first experimental treatment to be used to reconstruct sections of the heart damaged by a heart attack, but the real innovation is the starting point. The researchers used epithelial cells from two heart attack patients to generate heart cells compatible with their own hearts.

Scientists took epithelial tissue cells from two patients aged 51 and 61 and reprogrammed them to make them immature by infecting them with a virus containing three pluripotent genes. As was clearly established by two studies in 2007, these genes can actually reverse the biological clock of human cells, returning them to a state comparable to their embryonic state. As a result, pluripotent stem cells were obtained, which were then differentiated into proper heart cells. Once the latter were purged of the virus, they were injected into laboratory rats' hearts, where they were integrated immediately, adapting to the heart rate without interfering with its operation.

There are many obstacles to overcome. The first one is that stem cells may cause tumours once they have been injected into a specific organ. Furthermore, it takes two weeks to cultivate heart cells from epithelial cells, which prevents immediate action following a heart attack.

In view of this, could the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of the new study on the heart cells obtained from skin?

2. Given the importance of this research and the need to develop it, does it not agree that Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) or Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme funding should be made available?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the new study on heart cells obtained from skin.

This work falls into the category of regenerative medicine, which is well supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). Specific activities in heart regeneration that have been supported so far include the following projects:

— CardioCell ([1]) which aims to develop new cardiomyocyte replacement therapies for ischemic heart disease;

— InfarctCellTherapy ([2]) which explores possibilities for heart cell therapy using different procedures and sources of stem and progenitor cells;

— Care-MI ([3]) which aims to develop myocardial regenerative therapies against ischemic heart disease produced after acute myocardial infarction;

— BAMI ([4]) which explores the use of bone marrow derived cells to restore cardiac function following acute myocardial infarction.

In line with the decision on the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), this programme does not support this kind of research.

([1]) www.cardiocell.org.
([2]) www.infarctcelltherapy.eu.
([3]) www.caremiproject.eu.
([4]) www.bami-fp7.eu.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005576/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Patente di guida e conversione

La direttiva 2011/94/UE modifica la direttiva 2006/126/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio concernente la patente di guida. Entro il 30 giugno 2012, gli Stati membri devono adottare le disposizioni legislative, regolamentari e amministrative necessarie per conformarsi alla presente direttiva.

Per poter guidare all'estero, i cittadini europei sono oggi soggetti a regole differenti a seconda che si rechino, per periodi di breve soggiorno o per stabilirvi la propria residenza, in paesi membri o paesi extra UE.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali cambiamenti introduce la nuova direttiva?

2. Vi sono paesi non appartenenti all'UE firmatari di accordi di reciprocità con gli Stati membri in materia di conversione delle patenti di guida?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2012)

La direttiva 2011/94/UE ([1]) introdurrà il modello UE di patente di guida, ma ciò non modifica la situazione dei paesi terzi, che resta disciplinata dalla convenzione di Vienna sulla circolazione stradale ([2]).

Ai sensi dell'articolo 3, paragrafo 4, della suddetta convenzione, le parti contraenti possono concludere con paesi terzi accordi bilaterali in materia di riconoscimento della validità, nei loro territori, delle patenti di guida rielasciate da tali paesi.

([1]) Direttiva 2011/94/UE della Commissione, del 28 novembre 2011, recante modifica della direttiva 2006/126/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio concernente la patente di guida, GU L 314 del 29.11.2011, pag. 31.

([2]) Convenzione sul traffico stradale della Commissione economica delle Nazioni Unite per l' Europa dell'8 novembre 1968.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005576/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Conversion of driving licences

Directive 2011/94/EU amends Directive 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on driving licences. By 30 June 2012, Member States must adopt the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this directive.

In order to be able to drive abroad, European citizens are currently subject to different rules depending on whether they are going to Member States or to non-EU countries (either for short stays or to take up residence).

Given the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. What changes does the new directive introduce?

2. Have any non-EU countries signed reciprocal agreements with Member States on the conversion of driving licences?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

Directive 2011/94/EU ([1]) will introduce the European Union model driving licence. It does not change the situation of the non-EU countries, which remains governed by the Vienna Convention on road traffic ([2]).

According to Article 3 § 4 of this Convention, the Contracting parties may conclude bilateral agreements with third countries regarding the recognition of the validity in their territories of their driving licences.

([1]) Commission Directive 2011/94/EU of 28 November 2011 amending Directive 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on driving licences, OJ L 314, 29.11.2011, p. 31-34.
([2]) Convention on Road Traffic of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe of 8 November 1968.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005577/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Vaccinazione genetica per curare i tumori

Nuovi studi riguardanti terapie contro i tumori mediante la vaccinazione genetica antitumorale sono stati condotti da un laboratorio di Immunologia Molecolare di Trieste. È una sperimentazione clinica di vaccinazione a Dna per un tipo di linfoma dovuto alla trasformazione maligna dei linfociti B. Si chiama «vaccinazione» ma in realtà si tratta di una terapia dedicata a chi ha già un tumore.

Il gruppo di ricercatori ha iniziato a lavorare con uno dei modelli sui linfomi a cellule B che hanno una particolare caratteristica: tutte le cellule tumorali presentano una particolare proteina sulla superficie che è unica e caratteristica delle cellule tumorali. Quindi, se si riesce a conoscere qual è la struttura, la sequenza di questa proteina, la si può ingegnerizzare in laboratorio e, una volta somministrata al malato, il paziente può montare una risposta immunitaria alle cellule tumorali. Si tratta di vaccini che hanno l'obiettivo di essere curativi.

Questo approccio viene impiegato per il linfoma, ma può essere trasferito ad altri tipi di tumori perché comporta un lavoro di ingegneria in laboratorio che si può applicare ad altri tumori, per esempio a quello alla mammella.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza del nuovo studio sulla vaccinazione genetica per curare i tumori?

2. Vista l'importanza della ricerca e la necessità di svilupparla, non ritiene che la si debba finanziare tramite il Settimo programma quadro (7° PQ) oppure il programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio citato dall'onorevole parlamentare, coordinato dall'ICGEB (*International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology* — Centro internazionale di ingegneria genetica e biotecnologia) di Trieste ([1]).

Anche se la ricerca sulla vaccinazione a DNA per il linfoma non è stata finanziata, sono state finanziate ricerche relative ad altri approcci terapeutici per il linfoma attraverso il sesto e il settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (6° PQ, 2002-2006 e 7° PQ, 2007-2013). Alla ricerca di frontiera e traslazionale sulla comprensione diagnosi, prognosi, e trattamento di linfomi è stata finora destinata la somma di 26 milioni di euro. I settori terapeutici considerati comprendono la vaccinazione, la terapia basata sugli anticorpi e sulle cellule, la scoperta di farmaci e lo studio della loro resistenza, la chemioterapia e la radioterapia.

Conformemente alla decisione relativa al programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP), tale tipo di ricerca non è invece sostenuta da questo programma.

Maggiori possibilità di ricerca collaborativa sul linfoma possono essere reperite nel documento di orientamento ([2]) preparato per il programma di lavoro 2013 del 7° PQ nel campo della ricerca sulla salute, che sarà ufficialmente pubblicato nel luglio 2012 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.area.trieste.it/opencms/opencms/area/it/Press-Room/PressTour2009/anti-linfoma-ICGEB.html
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documentation.
([3]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/cooperation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005577/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Genetic vaccination to treat cancer

A molecular immunology laboratory in Trieste carried out a new study on treating tumours with an anti-cancer genetic vaccination. The study involved a DNA vaccination clinical trial for lymphoma caused by the malignant transformation of B lymphocytes. The technique is called a 'vaccination', but it is actually a therapy for patients with tumours.

The research group started working with a particular B-cell lymphoma model, where all the cancerous cells have a particular surface protein that is unique to, and characteristic of, cancerous cells. Consequently, once the protein's structure and sequence can be understood, it can be engineered in the laboratory, and when administered to the patient, the body will mount an immune response to the cancerous cells. These vaccines that aim to provide a cure.

This approach is being used for lymphoma, but can be transferred to other tumour types since it involves laboratory engineering that can be used for other cancers, for example breast cancer.

Given the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of the new study on genetic vaccination to treat tumours?

2. Given the importance of the research and the need to develop it, does it consider that the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme should give funding?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the publication mentioned by the Honourable Member, coordinated by the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) in Trieste ([1]).

Although research on DNA vaccination for lymphoma has not been supported, research on other therapeutic approaches for lymphoma have been funded under the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006; FP7, 2007-2013). So far, EUR 26 million have been devoted to frontier and translational research on the understanding, diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of lymphoma. Therapeutic areas addressed include vaccination, antibody and cell therapy, drug discovery and resistance, chemo and radiotherapy.

In line with the decision on the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), this programme does not support such kind of research.

Further opportunities for collaborative research on lymphoma may be found in the orientation paper ([2]) prepared in connection with the FP7 2013 Work Programme in the area of Health research, which will be officially published in July 2012 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.area.trieste.it/opencms/opencms/area/en/.
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documentation.
([3]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/cooperation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005578/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1º giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Il biometano

È possibile una produzione di otto miliardi di metri cubi di biometano entro il prossimo ventennio, utilizzando 400 000 ettari di colture dedicate, una quantità crescente di sottoprodotti e materie prime agricole di secondo raccolto. Il biometano è una fonte strategica grazie alla sua programmabilità, efficienza e flessibilità negli utilizzi: dalla produzione elettrica a quella termica fino all'autotrazione.

Si tratta di una fonte energetica capace di concorrere alla crescita di un paese. Entro il 2020, anno in cui dovranno essere centrati gli obiettivi UE sulle energie rinnovabili, sarebbe già possibile sviluppare il 60-65 % del potenziale complessivo del biometano, arrivando a circa cinque miliardi di metri cubi: per la metà utilizzabile direttamente per produrre elettricità e calore presso gli impianti a biogas e per il resto da immettere in rete e impiegare come combustibile per autotrazione, termica e cogenerazione ad alto rendimento.

Nel 2030, invece, si potrebbe arrivare a quota otto miliardi di metri cubi. Un risultato raggiungibile evitando la competizione food — no food e in grado di garantire un crescente utilizzo di biomasse d'integrazione, come sottoprodotti agricoli, colture di secondo raccolto (come triticale o mais di seconda semina), effluenti zootecnici, scarti agroindustriali, colture non alimentari.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Nella nuova PAC saranno inseriti provvedimenti per favorire la produzione di biometano?

2. L'UE ritiene fondamentale la bioeconomia per alimentare la crescita ma anche per migliorare la sostenibilità economica e ambientale della produzione primaria?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(18 luglio 2012)

Il biometano è un vettore energetico rinnovabile e versatile, che può essere utilizzato per la produzione di energia, per la generazione combinata di elettricità e calore, per la produzione di calore, come carburante da trasporto e per le potenzialità connesse alla produzione rinnovabile di idrogeno.

Alcuni Stati membri sovvenzionano la produzione di biometano per poter raggiungere i loro obiettivi in materia di energie rinnovabili per il 2020 stabiliti dalla direttiva sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili ([1]). Spetta quindi agli Stati membri stabilire quali colture possano essere destinate alla produzione di biometano per ricevere contributi pubblici. L'uso di colture alimentari e foraggere espressamente per la produzione di biometano può destare preoccupazioni in termini di sostenibilità, a differenza dell'utilizzo di residui e rifiuti, che può ritenersi la migliore pratica.

In base alla proposta di regolamento sul sostegno allo sviluppo rurale ([2]), presentata dalla Commissione e le cui specifiche disposizioni sono attualmente in fase di discussione al Consiglio e al Parlamento europeo, nell'ambito della politica di sviluppo rurale prevista dalla politica agricola comune (PAC) continueranno a essere concessi finanziamenti per gli investimenti che promuovono l'approvvigionamento e l'utilizzo di fonti di energia rinnovabili, ferme restando la competenza degli Stati membri nel gestire le rispettive politiche in materia di sviluppo rurale e la possibilità di applicare altri meccanismi di sostegno, quali le tariffe di riacquisto nazionali.

La bioeconomia è un elemento essenziale per una crescita intelligente e rispettosa dell'ambiente in Europa ([3]). Grazie alla bioeconomia sarà infatti possibile migliorare la gestione delle risorse biologiche rinnovabili presenti in Europa, mantenere e alimentare la crescita economica e l'occupazione e migliorare la sostenibilità economica e ambientale della produzione primaria.

([1]) 2009/28/CE.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/legal-proposals/com627/627_it.pdf
([3]) L'innovazione per una crescita sostenibile: una bioeconomia per l'Europa, COM(2012) 60 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005578/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 June 2012)

Subject: Biomethane

It is possible to produce 8 000 million m^3 of biomethane within the next 20 years, using 400 000 hectares of dedicated crops, an increasing quantity of by-products and second-crop agricultural raw materials. Biomethane is a strategic source thanks to its programmability, efficiency and multiple uses: from electricity and heat generation to vehicle fuel.

This is an energy source that can help a country to grow. By 2020, the year by EU targets for renewable energy must be achieved, it would already be possible to develop biomethane production to 60-65% of its full potential: reaching around 5 000 million m^3. Half of this could be used directly to produce electricity and heat in biogas plants, and the rest could be injected into the grid and used as fuel for transport, heating and high-yield cogeneration.

By 2030, the level of production could be as much as 8 000 million m^3. This result could be achieved by avoiding the food/no food competition, and could ensure greater integrated biomass use, such as agricultural by-products, resown crops (such as triticale or second-crop maize), livestock effluents, agrifood waste and non-food crops.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. Will provisions to encourage biomethane production be included in the new common agricultural policy?

2. Does the EU think that bioeconomy is essential for fuelling growth and improving economic and environmental sustainability in primary production?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

Biomethane is a versatile renewable energy carrier which can be used for power generation, combined heat and power generation, heat generation, as a transport fuel and potentially also for the production of renewable hydrogen.

The production of biomethane is supported by some Member States in order to achieve their respective renewable energy targets for 2020 as set by the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) ([1]). Accordingly, it is also regulated at the level of Member States which feedstocks are allowed for making biomethane in order to receive public support. Use of food and feed crops grown on purpose for biomethane may raise concerns about its sustainability, whereas the use of residues and waste can be considered to be best practice.

According to the Commission Proposal for a regulation on support for rural development ([2]), whose detailed provisions are currently under discussions in the Council and European Parliament, the Rural Development Policy of the common agricultural policy (CAP) would continue to offer financial support to investments facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, subject to Member States' management of their respective rural development policies and subject to applicability of other support instruments such as national feed-in tariffs.

The bioeconomy is a key element for smart and green growth in Europe ([3]). It will allow to improve the management of its renewable biological resources and it can maintain and create economic growth and jobs and improve the economic and environmental sustainability of primary production.

([1]) 2009/28/EC.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/legal-proposals/com627/627_en.pdf
([3]) Innovating for Sustainable Growth: A Bioeconomy for Europe, COM(2012) 60 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005579/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Construcción de un complejo hotelero y 350 viviendas en la playa de Valdevaqueros, Tarifa: Reserva Natural de la Bioesfera

El pasado 29 de mayo de 2012, el pleno del Ayuntamiento de Tarifa, con la única oposición de Izquierda Unida, aprobó un plan urbanístico para la zona de Valdevaqueros que contempla la construcción de 350 viviendas y un complejo hotelero de más de 1 400 plazas en este entorno natural virgen del litoral gaditano.

El proyecto, que recibe el nombre de «Plan Parcial Sector Litoral 1 Valdevaqueros», fue diseñado a principios de los años 90 y, tal y como han advertido numerosas asociaciones ecologistas y ciudadanas y los representantes de Izquierda Unida en Tarifa, supone continuar bajo un modelo insostenible, obsoleto y fracasado, muy agresivo con el medio ambiente, culpable en gran parte de la crisis económica que sufre España y que además pone en riesgo el actual turismo de la zona caracterizado por buscar playas salvajes.

Este plan de urbanización afecta a más de 700 000 metros cuadrados y tendrá consecuencias negativas para dos Parques Naturales incluidos dentro de la Red Natura 2000 y, por tanto, de especial protección: el Parque Natural del Estrecho (ES0000337) y el Parque Natural de los Alcornocales (ES0000049). Además, tal y como denuncia una plataforma ciudadana opuesta al desarrollo de este proyecto que cambiará para siempre una de las últimas playas vírgenes del litoral español, la zona de alto valor medioambiental afectada está declarada como Reserva de la Biosfera por la Unesco.

Teniendo en cuenta que varios parajes naturales afectados están protegidos por legislación europea medioambiental, como la Directiva de Hábitats o la relativa a Aves, que la aprobación del proyecto ha suscitado un importante rechazo ciudadano, que no han sido consultados ni han podido participar en esta decisión, tal y como establece el Acuerdo de Aarhus, y que se aleja de un modelo de crecimiento sostenible, responsable y respetuoso con el medio ambiente,

1. ¿Piensa la Comisión Europea exigir a las autoridades competentes el cumplimiento de las Directivas 2003/04/CE y 2003/35/CE y, por tanto, facilitar, promover y permitir la participación de la ciudadanía en la toma de decisión?

2. ¿No considera la Comisión Europea necesario investigar este proyecto para evitar que se incumpla la legislación europea medioambiental?

3. ¿Apoya la Comisión Europea un proyecto urbanístico que, además de estar basado en los mismos parámetros de desarrollo que han llevado España a la dramática actual situación económica, puede conllevar la destrucción de un paraje natural de gran valor medioambiental, considerado Reserva de la Biosfera por la Unesco, y afectará a dos Parques Naturales de la Red Natura 2000?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de julio de 2012)

La Comisión está al corriente de las cuestiones planteadas por Su Señoría, debido a una reciente queja relativa al plan urbanístico de Valdevaqueros.

La Comisión ha solicitado a las autoridades españolas competentes más información sobre la conformidad de dicho plan con las exigencias de la legislación medioambiental de la UE, y, en particular, con el Acuerdo de Aarhus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005579/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Hotel complex and 350 houses to be constructed on the beach at Valdevaqueros, Tarifa: a natural biosphere reserve

On 29 May 2012, an urbanisation plan for the Valdevaqueros zone was approved in a town council meeting in Tarifa, with only the United Left voting against it. The plan covers the construction of 350 homes and a complex with more than 1 400 hotel spaces in this unspoiled natural environment on the Cadiz coast.

The project, known as the Valdevaqueros Partial Plan for Coastal Sector 1, was planned at the beginning of the 1990s and, as many environmental and citizens' associations and members of the Tarifa United Left warned then, it represents the continuation of an unsustainable, obsolete and discredited model with no regard for the environment. This model was largely responsible for the economic crisis from which Spain is now suffering, and it also represents a threat to current tourism in the area's unspoiled beaches.

This urbanisation plan affects more than 700 000 square metres and will have damaging effects on two natural parks forming part of the Natura 2000 network and thus afforded special protection: the Estrecho Natural Park (ES0000337) and the Alcornocales Natural Park (ES0000049). Furthermore, the area of special environmental interest affected was declared a biosphere reserve by Unesco. A citizen's platform opposes this project which will irrevocably alter this rare, undeveloped beach on the Spanish coastline.

Some of the natural sites affected are protected by European environmental legislation, such as the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive. The project's approval has met with strong opposition from citizens, who were not consulted or involved in the decision-making process, as provided for in the Aarhus Convention. Moreover, the project does not fit within a model of sustainable, responsible and environmentally sensitive growth.

1. Will the Commission demand that the relevant authorities comply with Directives 2003/4/EC and 2003/35/EC, and thus promote and enable citizen participation in decision making?

2. Does the Commission not see a need to investigate this project to avoid breaches of EU environmental legislation?

3. Does the Commission support an urbanisation project that is not only based on the very same development model that has caused Spain's current economic plight, but may also bring about the destruction of a natural area of great environmental importance recognised as a biosphere reserve by Unesco, and affect two natural parks forming part of the Natura 2000 network?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the issues raised by the Honourable Member, due to a recent complaint on the Valdevaqueros urbanization plan in Spain.

The Commission has requested further information from the competent Spanish authorities concerning the compliance of this plan with the relevant requirements under EU environmental law, including the Aarhus Convention.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005581/12
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(4 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Cianobacterias en el Embalse de As Conchas

El pasado verano el embalse de As Conchas, situado en los municipios de Bande, Lobeira y Muiños (Ourense, Galicia, España), alcanzaba el nivel máximo de alerta al registrar en sus aguas concentraciones de cianobacterias tóxicas de más de 15 000 colonias por mililitro, según análisis del Laboratorio de Biotecnología y Toxicidad de la Facultad de Veterinaria de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid. La *Microcystis Aeruginosa* detectada produce la toxina denominada *Microcystina* que, en cantidades muy elevadas y exposición prolongada puede provocar serios problemas de salud e, incluso, destruir el hígado. En Sao Paulo (Brasil) fallecieron más de 200 personas a causa de la toxina.

Conforme a las directrices de la OMS, las aguas fueron declaradas como no aptas para ningún tipo de uso. Este *bloom* de cianobacterias parece motivado por la presencia de fosfatos y nitratos procedentes de fertilizantes destinados al cultivo de patatas arrastrados al cauce fluvial y por los purines y abonos químicos vertidos por las granjas al río.

A instancias de la Confederación Hidrográfica Miño-Sil, los alcaldes de los Ayuntamientos de las comarcas de A Limia y A Baixa Limia (Bande, Lobeira, Muiños, porqueira, Rairiz de Veiga, Sandiás, Sarreaus, Vilar de Santos, Trasmiras y Xinzo de Limia) previeron instalar experimentalmente suelos absorbentes de corteza de eucalipto en las zonas de baño de Porto Quintela (Bande) y O Corgo-A Rola (Muiños), del río Limia y del canal de A Lagoa de Antela, a fin de retener los nutrientes y disminuir su concentración en el agua. El resto de autoridades parecen hacer caso omiso y estos problemas pueden propagarse río abajo, afectando al embalse de Lindoso y al Parque Natural de Peneda Gerês ya en Portugal.

¿Ha sido la Comisión informada por las autoridades españolas acerca de este grave caso de contaminación? ¿Considera que se está infringiendo la Directiva Marco del Agua? ¿Se están adoptando las medidas necesarias para controlar la situación? ¿Deben adoptarse medidas urgentes?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de julio de 2011)

La Comisión no tiene noticias de este caso de contaminación al que hace referencia Su Señoría. Las autoridades españolas deben garantizar el cumplimiento de las obligaciones de la Directiva Marco del Agua (DMA, 2000/60/CE ([1])), incluida la obligación de prevenir el deterioro del estado de las masas de agua.

Actualmente, la Comisión no puede evaluar si los requisitos de la DMA están cumpliéndose, dado que España no ha presentado sus planes hidrológicos de cuenca (PHC). Según la información de que dispone la Comisión, el proyecto de PHC de la cuenca hidrográfica Miño-Sil se puso a disposición del público para su consulta entre diciembre de 2010 y junio de 2011, pero aún no ha sido aprobado.

Aún está en curso un asunto judicial contra España (C-403/11) por no haber adoptado ni comunicado sus planes hidrológicos de cuenca a la Comisión Europea.

([1]) DO L 327 de 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005581/12
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Cyanobacteria in the As Conchas Reservoir

Last summer, the As Conchas reservoir, situated in the municipal areas of Bande, Lobeira and Muiños (Ourense, Galicia, Spain), reached the maximum warning level for concentrations of toxic cyanobacteria in its water. According to analysis by the Biotechnology and Toxicity Laboratory at the Veterinary Science Faculty at the Complutense University of Madrid, more than 15 000 colonies per millilitre were found. The *Microcystis Aeruginosa* detected produces the *Microcystina* toxin, which can cause serious health problems in large quantities and after long exposure, including destroying the liver. In Sao Paulo (Brazil), more than 200 people have died as a result of the toxin.

According to the World Health Organisation directives, the water was declared unfit for any use. This cyanobacterial bloom seems to be caused by the presence of phosphates and nitrates from fertilisers used in potato cultivation entering the river and from slurry and chemical fertiliser runoff from farms.

The Miño-Sil Hydrographical Confederation urged the mayors of the Municipalities of A Limia and A Baixa Limia (Bande, Lobeira, Muiños, Porqueira, Rairiz de Veiga, Sandiás, Sarreaus, Vilar de Santos, Trasmiras and Xinzo de Limia) to install absorbent shredded eucalyptus bark areas in Porto Quintela (Bande) and O Corgo-A Rola (Muiños), the River Limia and the canal of A Lagoa de Antela, to retain the nutrients and reduce their concentration in the water for the bathers. Other authorities have not done this and the problems may spread downstream, affecting the Lindoso reservoir and even the Peneda Gerês Natural Park in Portugal.

Has the Commission been told about this serious case of pollution by the Spanish authorities? Does it think that this is contravening the Water Framework Directive? Is it taking appropriate measures to deal with the situation? Should urgent measures be taken?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the case of pollution referred to by the Honourable Member. The Spanish authorities should ensure compliance with the obligations of the Water Framework Directive (WFD 2000/60/EC ([1])) including the obligation to prevent deterioration of the status of water bodies.

At this stage, the Commission cannot assess whether the requirements of WFD are being complied with, given that Spain has not submitted its river basin management plans (RBMP). According to the information available to the Commission, the draft RBMP of the Miño-Sil river basin district was available for public consultation from December 2010 to June 2011, but it has not yet been adopted.

There is an ongoing Court Case C-403/11 against Spain for failing to adopt and report its RBMPs to the European Commission.

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005582/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Situación de emergencia de los caudales del Río Cinca (Aragón, España)

He sido informado de que en las últimas semanas el cauce del Río Cinca, el segundo más importante en lo que respecta a caudales de Aragón, se encuentra prácticamente seco en el tramo que discurre desde la Presa de El Grado hasta la desembocadura del Río Vero. Incluso autoridades españolas han reconocido que «la situación actual se puede clasificar como de emergencia, al tener la suma de aportaciones en los últimos tres meses un valor muy inferior al umbral de emergencia (61 hm^3 frente a los 105,9 hm^3), lo que obliga a mantener la decisión de soltar los caudales mínimos imprescindibles».

Esta situación de emergencia viene provocada por la sequía y los cortes de agua del pantano, pero también en gran medida por el aprovechamiento por parte de intereses económicos privados de un bien público como es el agua. La Asociación de Pesca y Caza Barbastrense ha alertado de la imposibilidad de pescar en el río esta temporada. Un tramo del cauce de gran valor ecológico está prácticamente seco, mientras se mantiene el suministro a los regadíos, centrales hidroeléctricas, piscifactorías y papeleras de la zona.

Cabe destacar que el Río Cinca está incluido en el Lugar de Importancia Comunitaria ES2410073 Ríos Cinca y Alcanadre, que abarca unas 6 200 hectáreas. Ambos ríos constituyen dos importantes arterias fluviales que actúan como corredor biológico de muchas especies de fauna y flora, a la vez que unen el Prepirineo con el fondo del Valle del Ebro, por lo que existe la obligación de adoptar medidas para su protección.

Teniendo en cuenta las disposiciones de la Directiva 2000/60/CE por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas, con el objetivo, entre otros de «promover un uso sostenible del agua basado en la protección a largo plazo de los recursos hídricos disponibles», ¿no considera la Comisión Europea que la emergencia ante la sequía y la sobreexplotación privada del caudal del Río Cinca requiere de actuaciones urgentes de protección del LIC ES2410073?

¿Qué acciones ha emprendido y va a emprender la Comisión para preservar esta zona de alto valor ecológico? En concreto, ¿piensa instar a las autoridades españolas a fijar de manera urgente un caudal ecológico de obligado cumplimiento para el Río Cinca?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de agosto de 2012)

La Comisión observa que el paraje constituido por los Ríos Cinca y Alcanadre (ES2410073) ha sido designado como Lugar de Importancia Comunitaria en virtud de la Directiva 92/43/CE, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (Directiva de Hábitats) ([1]).

De conformidad con lo dispuesto en el artículo 6, apartado 2, de la Directiva de Hábitats, España está obligada a adoptar «las medidas apropiadas para evitar (…) el deterioro de los hábitats naturales y de los hábitats de especies, así como las alteraciones que repercutan en las especies que hayan motivado la designación de las zonas, en la medida en que dichas alteraciones puedan tener un efecto apreciable en lo que respecta a los objetivos de la presente Directiva.».

Además, la Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas ([2]), dispone en su artículo 4, apartado 1, letra c), en su artículo 6 y en su artículo 8, apartado 1, que los Estados miembros cumplan los objetivos de las zonas protegidas en virtud de la normativa de la Unión y registren y sometan a seguimiento dichas zonas. Debe señalarse a este respecto la necesidad de un caudal ecológico mínimo para cumplir lo dispuesto en el artículo 4 de esa Directiva, que obliga a prevenir el deterioro de las masas de agua y la consecución para ellas de un buen estado.

La Directiva 2000/60/CE requiere, además, que los Estados miembros comuniquen a la Comisión sus planes hidrológicos de cuenca, (RBMPS), en los que deben incluirse medidas para evitar el deterioro de las aguas y lograr su buen estado.

([1]) DO L 206 de 22.7.1992.
([2]) DO L 327 de 22.12.2000.

Dado que España no ha notificado aún a la Comisión sus planes hidrológicos de cuenca, con excepción del de Cataluña, la Comisión ha iniciado un procedimiento de infracción contra el Estado miembro (asunto 2010/2083) por no haber adoptado ni comunicado a la Comisión esos planes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005582/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Emergency flow-rate situation in the River Cinca (Aragón, Spain)

I have been informed recently that the River Cinca channel, the second largest water source in Aragón, is practically dry between the El Grado dam and the mouth of River Vero. The Spanish authorities have recognised that 'the current situation could be considered an emergency, as the amount of total water input over the last three months has been far below the emergency threshold (61 hm^3 compared to 105.9 hm^3), which means maintaining the decision to release the minimum flow possible'.

This emergency situation is a result of the drought and reductions in water to the dam, but also due to appropriation of the public body of water for private economic interests. The local Barbastro Hunting and Fishing Association has warned that fishing in the river is impossible this season. One ecologically-valuable section of the river is practically dry, while supplies to local farm irrigation systems, hydropower plants, fish farms and paper factories have been maintained.

It should be emphasised that the River Cinca is included in the ES2410073 Cinca and Alcanadre Rivers site of Community importance, covering an area of some 6 200 hectares. Both rivers constitute important water arteries, acting as a biological corridor for many species of fauna and flora, while also linking the Pyrenean foothills to the floor of the Ebro River valley, which is why there is an obligation to take measures to protect it. Taking the provisions of Directive 2000/60/EC into account Directive 2000/60/EC's provisions, establishing a framework for EU action in the water policy field, with a view, among others, 'promotes sustainable water use based on a long-term protection of available water resources' does the European Commission consider that the emergency situation resulting from drought and private over-exploitation of water from the River Cinca requires immediate action to protect the SCI ES2410073?

What actions has the Commission taken or does it intend to take to preserve this important ecological area? In particular, is it thinking of urging the Spanish authorities to establish an obligatory minimum ecological flow for the River Cinca?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

The Commission notes that the site ES2410073 Ríos Cinca y Alcanadre has been designated as a site of Community importance under the provisions of Council Directive 92/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) ([1]).

In accordance with the provisions of Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive, Spain is therefore required to 'take appropriate steps to avoid (…) the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated, in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the directive.'

Moreover, Article 41(c), Article 6 and Article 8(1) of Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy ([2]) require Member States to comply with the objectives for protected areas established under EC law and to register and monitor such areas. A minimum ecological flow is necessary to comply with Article 4 of the directive which requires the prevention of the deterioration of water bodies, as well as the achievement of good status.

Directive 2000/60/EC requires Member States to report to the Commission their River Basin Management Plans (RBMPS), which should include measures aimed at preventing water status deterioration and at achieving good status.

Spain has not yet reported to the Commission its River Basin Management Plans with the exception of Catalonia. Therefore, the Commission has opened an infringement procedure against Spain (Case 2010/2083) for failing to adopt and report its RBMPs to the European Commission.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005585/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(4 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Υποβάθμιση ψυχιατρικών δομών στην Ελλάδα

Στην Ελλάδα, και κυρίως στην Αττική, οι αυτοκτονίες και οι απόπειρες αυτοκτονίας παρουσιάζουν σημαντική αύξηση σε σχέση με το 2009, ως αποτέλεσμα της μακρόχρονης ύφεσης και της ανεργίας που πλήττουν την χώρα. Παρόλο, όμως, που η αύξηση των αυτοχείρων αυξάνεται δραματικά, οι ψυχιατρικές υποδομές στην χώρα αντί να ενισχύονται, υφίστανται περικοπές. Ενδεικτικά, στο Λεκανοπέδιο Αττικής όπου καταγράφεται ο μεγαλύτερος αριθμός αυτοκτονιών, αλλά και ανέργων, οι περικοπές σε κλινικές που μπορούν να βοηθήσουν ώστε να μην πάρει το φαινόμενο διαστάσεις επιδημίας φτάνουν το 30 %.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει δεσμεύσει η Ελλάδα επαρκείς πόρους από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για την στήριξη του συγκεκριμένου τομέα;

2. Με ποιο τρόπο μπορεί η Επιτροπή να συνδράμει στην ανακοπή της υποβάθμισης και στην αναστροφή της εικόνας των ψυχιατρικών υποδομών στην χώρα;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Ιουλίου 2012)

1. Κατά την τρέχουσα προγραμματική περίοδο (2007-2013), το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) παρέχει υποστήριξη μέσω του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος για την ανάπτυξη του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού, για τη μεταρρύθμιση του τομέα της ψυχικής υγείας στην Ελλάδα. Οι ελληνικές αρχές έχουν δεσμεύσει συνολικά 241 186 513 ευρώ για τη μεταρρύθμιση του τομέα της ψυχικής υγείας, εκ των οποίων το 85 % χρηματοδοτείται από το ΕΚΤ και το υπόλοιπο προέρχεται από εθνικές πηγές. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή ανησυχεί για το χαμηλό επίπεδο υλοποίησης του σχεδίου στον εν λόγω τομέα, αφού, έως τα μέσα Απριλίου 2012, είχε απορροφηθεί μόνο το 3,3 % της συνολικής χρηματοδότησης.

2. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τις προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζουν οι ευάλωτες ομάδες του ελληνικού πληθυσμού. Το ΕΚΤ παρέχει αντίστοιχη βοήθεια για την προώθηση της κοινωνικής ένταξης και της απασχόλησης των ψυχικά σθενών, για την αποϊδρυματοποίησή τους μέσω της ανάπτυξης εξωνοσοκομειακών υπηρεσιών, για την αντιμετώπιση της διακριτικής μεταχείρισης και για την αναβάθμιση του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού στον τομέα της ψυχικής υγείας.

Αν και το ΕΚΤ διαθέτει συγχρηματοδότηση την οποία μπορεί να χρησιμοποιήσει η Ελλάδα, οι ελληνικές αρχές είναι αρμόδιες για την πλήρη αξιοποίησή της, με την αποτελεσματική υλοποίηση του προγράμματος, ειδικά στον τομέα της ψυχικής υγείας, ο οποίος επλήγη σοβαρά από την κρίση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005585/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Downgrading of psychiatric establishments in Greece

In 2009, Greece, and Attica in particular, saw a significant increase in the number of suicides and attempted suicides as a result of the country's protracted recession and unemployment. Nevertheless, although the suicide rate has dramatically increased, the country's psychiatric establishments are being subjected to cutbacks instead of being strengthened. For example, in the Attica Basin where the highest number of suicides and the highest rates of unemployment are being recorded, the number of clinics that might be able to help prevent the phenomenon from reaching epidemic proportions has been cut by 30%.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Has Greece set aside sufficient resources from the Structural Funds to sustain the sector in question?

2. In what way can the Commission help to halt the downgrading of psychiatric establishments and redeem the image of psychiatric establishments in Greece?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2012)

1. During the current programming period (2007-13), the European Social Fund (ESF) provides support through the Human Resources Development operational programme for the reform of the mental health sector in Greece. The Greek authorities have earmarked a total of EUR 241 186 513 for mental health reform, 85% of which is financed by the ESF with the rest coming from national resources. The Commission is concerned, however, at the low level of project implementation in the sector in question, where only 3.3% of the total funding had been absorbed by mid-April 2012.

2. The Commission is aware of the challenges facing vulnerable sections of the population in Greece. The ESF is accordingly providing assistance to promote the social inclusion and employment of mental patients, foster their deinstitutionalisation through the development of outpatient facilities, tackle discrimination and step up human resources in the mental health sector.

While the ESF co-financing is there for Greece to use, it is the Greek authorities' responsibility to use it fully by implementing the programme effectively, especially in the mental health sector, which has been severely affected during the crisis.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005586/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(4 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόοδος στο αίτημα βοήθειας της Ελλάδας για την γενική διαχείριση του Ταμείου Εξωτερικών Συνόρων και του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Επιστροφής

Η Ελλάδα ήδη από τις αρχές του 2012 ζήτησε τεχνική βοήθεια με στόχο να επιταχυνθεί η απορρόφηση κονδυλίων από το Ταμείο Εξωτερικών Συνόρων και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Επιστροφής. Τον Μάρτιο του 2012, η Ομάδα δράσης για την Ελλάδα, κάλεσε τα κράτη μέλη να προσφέρουν σχετική βοήθεια και να προτείνουν την διάθεση ειδικών εμπειρογνωμόνων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπήρξε πρόοδος στο αίτημα τεχνικής βοήθειας της Ελλάδας για την γενική διαχείριση του Ταμείου Εξωτερικών Συνόρων και του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Επιστροφής;

2. Σημειώνεται μέχρι σήμερα κάποιο θετικό αντίκτυπο σε ό,τι αφορά την πρόοδο των έργων που χρηματοδοτούνται από τα δύο αυτά Ταμεία; Υπάρχουν συγκεκριμένα αποτελέσματα;

Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Ιουλίου 2012)

Μέχρι το τέλος του Ιουλίου 2012, η Επιτροπή και η Ευρωπαϊκή υπηρεσία υποστήριξης για θέματα ασύλου σκοπεύουν να έχουν καταλήξει οριστικά στην επιλογή δύο εμπειρογνωμόνων για να στηρίξουν τις ελληνικές αρχές που ασχολούνται με το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο για τους Πρόσφυγες, το Ταμείο Εξωτερικών Συνόρων (ΤΕΣ) και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Επιστροφής. Οι εμπειρογνώμονες θα επιστρατευτούν από τον Σεπτέμβριο/Οκτώβριο 2012 και θα συνεργαστούν στενά με την Ομάδα δράσης της ΕΕ για την Ελλάδα σχετικά με τη βελτίωση των διοικητικών διαδικασιών που παρεμποδίζουν την απορρόφηση των κονδυλίων.

Όσον αφορά τον τομέα της επιστροφής, ο Frontex, από το 2009, διαχειρίζεται με επιτυχία το «σχέδιο Αττική» επιστρατεύοντας εμπειρογνώμονες που βοηθούν την Ελλάδα να αναπτύξει τις ικανότητες της και να βελτιώσει τη διαχείριση των επιστροφών. Αυτή η βοήθεια έχει θετικό αντίκτυπο στην εφαρμογή διαφόρων δράσεων που συγχρηματοδοτήθηκαν από το Ταμείο Επιστροφής.

Σχετικά με τα σύνορα, η εντολή του επιχειρησιακού γραφείου του Frontex στον Πειραιά διευρύνθηκε τον Μάρτιο 2012 ώστε να συμβάλει στην ανάπτυξη των ικανοτήτων των ελληνικών αρχών που ασχολούνται με τα εξωτερικά σύνορα. Στις ικανότητες αυτές περιλαμβάνεται η καλύτερη χρησιμοποίηση του ΤΕΣ. Συγκεκριμένα, ο Frontex αναμένεται να στηρίξει τις ελληνικές υπηρεσίες στην κατάρτιση των τεχνικών προδιαγραφών των δράσεων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται στο πλαίσιο του ΤΕΣ.

Στις 29 Ιουνίου 2012, η Επιτροπή οργάνωσε επιχειρησιακό εργαστήριο (operational workshop) σχετικά με την κατάσταση που επικρατεί στην Ελλάδα, γεγονός που έφερε σε επαφή τα κράτη μέλη και τους λοιπούς ενδιαφερόμενους. Ο βασικός στόχος του εργαστηρίου ήταν να εξακριβωθεί η διαθεσιμότητα των κρατών μελών να παρέχουν στήριξη των κρατών μελών σχετικά με συγκεκριμένες δράσεις στον τομέα του ασύλου, της μετανάστευσης και των συνόρων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005586/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Progress in Greece's request for assistance in the general management of the External Borders Fund and the European Return Fund

As early as the beginning of 2012, Greece requested technical assistance for the purpose of speeding up the absorption of funds from the External Borders Fund and the European Return Fund. In March 2012, the Action Group for Greece invited Member States to make available the relevant assistance and submit proposals for the provision of experts.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Has there been progress with Greece's request for technical assistance in the general management of the External Borders Fund and the European Return Fund?

2. Has any positive impact been noted on the progress of the projects financed by these two funds? Are there any concrete results to be reported?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

By the end of July 2012, the Commission and the European Asylum Support Office intend to finalise the selection of two experts to support the Greek authorities dealing with the European Refugee Fund, the External Borders Fund (EBF) and the European Return Fund. The experts will be deployed as of September/October 2012 and will work closely with the EU Task Force for Greece on the improvement of administrative processes hampering the implementation of the Funds.

As regards the area of return, since 2009 Frontex is successfully running the Attica project deploying experts assisting Greece in capacity building and improvement of return management. This assistance has positive impact on the implementation of different actions co-financed under the Return Fund.

As regards borders, the mandate of the Operational Office of Frontex in Piraeus has been expanded in March 2012 to assist capacity building for the Greek authorities dealing with external borders. This includes the better use of the EBF. In particular, Frontex is expected to support the Greek services in the preparation of technical specifications for actions co-financed under the EBF.

On 29 June 2012, the Commission organised an operational workshop dedicated to the situation in Greece bringing Member States and other stakeholders together. The main objective of the workshop was to verify the availability of Member States to provide support on various identified actions in the area of asylum, migration and borders.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005587/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(4 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Επιδείνωση των στοιχείων για την παιδική φτώχεια στην Ευρώπη

Από έκθεση που συντάχθηκε από το Κέντρο Ερευνών Innocenti της UNICEF και δόθηκε στη δημοσιότητα στις 29.05.2012, προκύπτει ότι η παιδική φτώχεια και τα παιδιά που ζουν με στερήσεις στις προηγμένες οικονομίες του κόσμου αυξάνονται συνεχώς. Όσον αφορά την ΕΕ, περίπου 13 εκατομμύρια παιδιά στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (συν Νορβηγία και Ισλανδία) στερούνται βασικά αγαθά απαραίτητα για την ανάπτυξή τους. Στην ίδια έκθεση παρουσιάζονται ιδιαίτερα αυξημένα ποσοστά παιδικής φτώχειας για τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ που βρίσκονται υπό δυσχερές οικονομικό περιβάλλον εξαιτίας της τρέχουσας οικονομικής κρίσης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για τον κίνδυνο που διατρέχουν παιδιά μονογονεϊκών οικογενειών να βρεθούν υπό συνθήκες φτώχειας;

2. Εξετάζει η Επιτροπή το ενδεχόμενο να προχωρήσει στην υιοθέτηση μιας στρατηγικής για την καταπολέμηση της παιδικής φτώχειας με συγκεκριμένους δείκτες στόχους και πρακτικές πολιτικές δράσεις, ανάλογες με εκείνες που πρότεινε για την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας των νέων;

3. Έχει προτείνει στα κράτη μέλη να αναλάβουν συγκεκριμένες δράσεις κοινωνικής προστασίας της συγκεκριμένης πληθυσμιακής ομάδας; Ανταποκρίθηκαν τα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Ιουλίου 2012)

1. Παιδιά που μεγαλώνουν στο πλαίσιο μονογονεϊκών οικογενειών αντιμετωπίζουν κίνδυνο φτώχειας σε ποσοστό 40,6 % στην ΕΕ σε σύγκριση με κίνδυνο σε ποσοστό 20,5 % του συνολικού πληθυσμού των παιδιών και 14,8 % για τα παιδιά που ζουν σε νοικοκυριό με δύο ενηλίκους και δύο εξαρτώμενα παιδιά ([1]).

2. Ένας από τους πέντε πρωταρχικούς στόχους της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020» για έξυπνη, βιώσιμη και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς ανάπτυξη είναι να μειωθεί ο αριθμός των φτωχών στην ΕΕ κατά 20 εκατ. άτομα. Το Συμβούλιο ενέκρινε πρόσφατα 19 ειδικές συστάσεις ανά χώρα σχετικά με τη φτώχεια και ευημερία των παιδιών. Η Επιτροπή επεξεργάζεται επί του παρόντος σύσταση για την παιδική φτώχεια. Η σύσταση αυτή αποτελεί μέρος του προγράμματος εργασιών του 2012 της Επιτροπής. Επίσης, η σύσταση θα προτείνει μια ολιστική προσέγγιση όσον αφορά την καταπολέμηση της παιδικής φτώχειας, κάνοντας έκκληση να βελτιωθούν η πρόσβαση σε στήριξη εισοδήματος και σε υπηρεσίες υγείας και κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες, καθώς και να αυξηθεί συμμετοχή των παιδιών σε κοινωνικές και μετασχολικές δραστηριότητες. Η παρακολούθηση και η αξιολόγηση της προσέγγισης θα διευκολυνθούν μέσω ενός συνόλου υφιστάμενων δεικτών και θα βασίζονται σε υφιστάμενους μηχανισμούς υποβολής εκθέσεων (Ευρώπη 2020, εθνικά προγράμματα μεταρρυθμίσεων, εθνικές κοινωνικές εκθέσεις).

3. Μια δεκαετία συνεργασίας για την παιδική φτώχεια μέσω της ανοικτής μεθόδου συντονισμού συνέβαλε στον προσδιορισμό κοινών προκλήσεων και ενός συνόλου δεικτών, όπως επισημάνθηκε στην κοινή έκθεση για την κοινωνική προστασία και την κοινωνική ένταξη του 2008. Επιπλέον, στην επικείμενη σύσταση θα προτείνονται κοινές αρχές για αποτελεσματική πολιτική δράση. Η Επιτροπή δεν πρότεινε κανένα ειδικό μέτρο κοινωνικής προστασίας, διότι αυτό αποτελεί αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών.

([1]) Πηγή: EU-SILC, στοιχεία του 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005587/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Data indicating a worsening of child poverty in Europe

According to a study compiled by Unicef's Innocenti Research Centre and published on 29 May 2012, child poverty and the number of children living in deprivation in the world's advanced economies are rising constantly. In the EU (plus Norway and Iceland), around 13 million children lack the basics for their development. Particularly high rates of child poverty are reported in countries where the economic environment is unfavourable owing to the current economic crisis.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Can it provide information on the danger of children from single-parent families ending up in poverty?

2. Is it considering a strategy for combating child poverty, with specific target indicators and practical political actions comparable to those proposed for combating youth unemployment?

3. Has it proposed specific social protection measures to the Member States for this population group? Has there been any response from Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

1. Children growing up in a single parent family face risk of poverty of 40.6% in the EU, compared to a risk of 20.5% for the total child population, and 14.8% for children living in a household with two adults and two dependent children ([1]).

2. One of the five headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive is to reduce the number of poor people in the EU with 20 million persons. The Council just adopted 19 Country Specific Recommendations related to child poverty and well-being. The Commission is working on a recommendation on child poverty. It is part of the Commission's 2012 workplan. The recommendation will propose a holistic approach to fight child poverty, pleading for improved access to income support, health and social services and better child participation in social and afterschool activities. Monitoring and evaluation will be facilitated through a set of existing indicators and based on existing reporting mechanisms (Europe2020, National Reform Programmes, National Social Reports).

3. A decade of cooperation on child poverty through the Open Method of Coordination has helped to identify common challenges and a set of indicators as was highlighted in the 2008 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion. Besides, the upcoming Recommendation will propose common principles for effective policy action. The Commission has not proposed any specific social protection measures because this is a Member State competence.

([1]) *Source:* EU-SILC, 2010 figures.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005588/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(4 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ευρωπαϊκό Σύμφωνο Εξόφλησης

Η εφημερίδα «Ντέιλι Τέλεγκραφ», επικαλούμενη έγκυρες πηγές, αναφέρει πως έχει κατατεθεί πρόταση για το θέμα της υπερχρέωσης των ευρωπαϊκών χωρών του νότου. Σύμφωνα με την πρόταση αυτή, εξετάζεται αντί των ευρωομολόγων, ένα σχέδιο για «Ευρωπαϊκό Σύμφωνο Εξόφλησης» που θα χρηματοδοτεί το χρέος χωρών έναντι των αποθεμάτων τους σε χρυσό ή άλλα περιουσιακά στοιχεία τους. Το Ταμείο Εξόφλησης που θα δημιουργηθεί θα αναλαμβάνει, σύμφωνα με το σχέδιο που περιγράφει η βρετανική εφημερίδα, να χρηματοδοτεί το μέρος του χρέους που ξεπερνά το 60 % του ΑΕΠ κάθε κράτους. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή την συγκεκριμένη πρόταση; Ποια είναι η θέση της και πως την αξιολογεί;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Αυγούστου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή αναφέρεται στην πρόταση του γερμανικού συμβουλίου οικονομικών εμπειρογνωμόνων για τη δημιουργία ενός ταμείου απόσβεσης χρέους στην Πράσινη Βίβλο σχετικά με τη σκοπιμότητα εισαγωγής ομολόγων σταθερότητας (COM(2011)818).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005588/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: European Redemption Pact

Citing reliable sources, the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper has reported on a proposal for dealing with Southern European countries' over-indebtedness. Under this proposal for a 'European Redemption Pact' the debt of the countries in question would be repaid out of their gold reserves or other assets, as an alternative to eurobonds. According to the plan described in the *Daily Telegraph*, the proposed Redemption Fund would finance the portion of the debt that exceeds 60% of each State's GDP. Is the Commission aware of this proposal? What is its position on and assessment of the proposal?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

The Commission discussed the proposal of the German Council of Economic Experts (GCEE) to introduce a debt redemption fund in its Green Paper on the feasibility of introducing Stability Bonds (COM(2011)818).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005589/12
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: VAT rate on e-books

In Ireland, a zero rate of VAT applies to printed books, but under the VAT directive all digitalised publications, regardless of the rate applying to the print versions, are subject to a VAT rate of 23%.

In relation to the EU's VAT directive, can the Commission clarify whether there are any plans to change the legislation regarding the VAT rate on e-books, given that a growing number of schools are favouring electronic textbooks over print versions?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

Zero rates constitute exceptions to the general rules on VAT rates. They form part of temporary derogations granted to certain Member States on the basis that such rates were in force before 1st January 1991 and continue to be limited to the goods to which they were applied at that time.

Electronically supplied services, such as e-books, are currently excluded from the scope of reduced VAT rates.

Concerning plans to change the legislation regarding the VAT rate on e-books, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-000468/2012 by Ms Stihler ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005591/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) y Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Los compromisos de las autoridades israelíes con respecto a los prisioneros palestinos

La huelga de hambre llevada a cabo por los prisioneros palestinos durante los últimos meses ha llegado a su fin efectivo después de que Israel se comprometiera a cumplir las normas básicas de derechos humanos en sus prisiones. Todavía siguen retenidos 5 000 presos civiles, entre ellos 30 miembros del Consejo Legislativo Palestino, y la situación de los presos es delicada hasta el punto de que podría provocar la desestabilización en la región.

¿Se propone la Alta Representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad hacer un seguimiento, a través de la Delegación de la Unión Europea en Cisjordania y Jerusalén, del compromiso de las autoridades israelíes con el fin de garantizar que se respeten las normas básicas relativas a las visitas de familiares, la asistencia sanitaria, el aislamiento y la duración de la detención administrativa?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de julio de 2012)

La UE sigue controlando las condiciones carcelarias de los presos palestinos y mantiene su compromiso en torno a esta cuestión, especialmente a través de la Oficina de la UE en Jerusalén.

Los Ministros de Asuntos Exteriores de la UE debatieron el tema de los presos y los detenidos palestinos en el Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores el 14 de mayo. También trataron el tema de la huelga de hambre de los presos palestinos.

La AR/VP insta a ambas partes a que, de buena fe, cumplan plenamente con los términos y condiciones del acuerdo alcanzado el 14 de mayo, sobre las condiciones de detención que pusieron fin a la huelga de hambre.

La gran cantidad de detenciones administrativas realizadas es una preocupación clave que planteamos siempre que surge la oportunidad.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005591/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) et Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 juin 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Engagement des autorités israéliennes envers les prisonniers palestiniens

La grève de la faim organisée par les prisonniers palestiniens au cours des derniers mois a effectivement pris fin après qu'Israël se soit engagé à respecter les Droits de l'homme fondamentaux dans ses prisons. Cinq mille prisonniers civils sont toujours en gardés en détention, dont 30 membres du Conseil législatif palestinien, et leur situation est sensible au point de pouvoir déclencher la déstabilisation dans la région.

À la lumière de ce qui précède, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de l'Union pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité envisage-t-elle de surveiller, par l'intermédiaire de la délégation de l'UE en Cisjordanie et à Jérusalem, l'engagement pris par les autorités israéliennes afin de garantir que les règles fondamentales relatives aux visites de la famille, aux soins médicaux, à l'isolement cellulaire et à la durée de la détention administratives soient respectées?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(11 juillet 2012)

L'Union européenne continue à surveiller les conditions de détention des prisonniers palestiniens et reste attentive à cette question, notamment au travers de son bureau à Jérusalem.

Les ministres des affaires étrangères des États membres de l'UE ont abordé la question des prisonniers et détenus palestiniens lors du Conseil «Affaires étrangères», le 14 mai. Les ministres se sont également penchés sur les grèves de la faim des prisonniers palestiniens.

Mme Ashton appelle les deux parties à respecter pleinement et de bonne foi les termes et conditions de l'accord trouvé le 14 mai concernant les conditions de détention et qui avait mis un terme aux grèves de la faim.

Le recours généralisé à la détention administrative est un sujet essentiel de préoccupation que nous soulevons chaque fois que l'occasion se présente.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005591/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) en Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 juni 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Verbintenissen van de Israëlische autoriteiten ten aanzien van Palestijnse gevangenen

Er is feitelijk een eind gekomen aan de hongerstaking van Palestijnse gevangenen van de afgelopen maanden nadat Israël zich ertoe verbonden heeft de fundamentele mensenrechten in zijn gevangenissen na te leven. 5 000 worden nog steeds gevangen gehouden, waaronder dertig leden van de Palestijnse Wetgevende Raad, en de situatie van de gevangenen ligt gevoelig omdat ze aanleiding zou kunnen geven tot destabilisatie in de regio.

Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger van de Unie voor buitenlandse zaken en veiligheidsbeleid gelet op het bovenstaande voornemens via de EU-delegatie op de Westelijke Jordaanoever en in Jeruzalem toezicht te houden op de naleving van de toezeggingen van de Israëlische autoriteiten om ervoor te zorgen dat de basisnormen voor familiebezoek, medische verzorging, eenzame opsluiting en de duur van administratieve detentie worden nageleefd?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(11 juli 2012)

De EU blijft de detentieomstandigheden van Palestijnse gevangenen op de voet volgen en blijft bij deze kwestie betrokken, onder meer via het kantoor van de EU in Jeruzalem.

Op de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken van 14 mei hebben de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken van de EU de kwestie besproken van Palestijnen die in detentie of in hechtenis zijn genomen. Hierbij hebben zij ook aandacht besteed aan de hongerstaking van Palestijnse gevangenen.

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter dringt er bij beide partijen op aan om volledig en te goeder trouw te voldoen aan de voorwaarden van de op 14 mei bereikte overeenkomst inzake detentieomstandigheden die een eind heeft gemaakt aan de hongerstaking.

Het grootschalige gebruik van administratieve detentie is een zorgenpunt dat wij bij elke gelegenheid aan de orde stellen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005591/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) and Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Israeli authorities' commitments on Palestinian prisoners

The hunger strike staged by Palestinian prisoners over the past months has effectively ended after Israel pledged to meet basic human rights standards in its prisons. 5 000 civilian prisoners still remain in detention, including 30 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and the prisoners' situation is sensitive to the extent that it could trigger destabilisation in the region.

In view of the above, does the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy intend to follow up, through the EU Delegation in the West Bank and Jerusalem, on the Israeli authorities' pledge in order to ensure that the basic standards relating to family visits, medical care, solitary confinement and the length of administrative detention are respected?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The EU continues to monitor the condition of detention of Palestinian prisoners and to remain engaged on this issue, inlcuding through the EU Office in Jerusalem.

EU Foreign ministers discussed the matter of Palestinian prisoners and detainees at the Foreign Affairs Council on 14 May. Ministers also looked at the hunger strike by Palestinian prisoners.

The HR/VP urges both sides to fully comply in good faith with the terms and conditions of the agreement reached on 14 May on conditions of detention which brought the hunger strike to an end.

The extensive use of administrative detentions is a key concern we raise at every opportunity.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005592/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) y Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Demolición por parte de las autoridades israelíes de proyectos de los Estados miembros de la UE

Según informaciones recogidas por la Comisión, las Naciones Unidas y activistas locales, las autoridades israelíes demolieron 22 cisternas de agua y 37 estructuras residenciales y agrícolas financiadas por los Estados miembros de la UE en 2011. Asimismo, dictaron órdenes de demolición y suspensión de obras contra una larga lista de otros programas financiados por la UE, que incluyen 14 cisternas, 34 instalaciones de saneamiento de agua, ocho programas de energía solar, dos escuelas y un centro médico.

La Comisión estima que en el período entre 2001 y 2011 Israel destruyó proyectos financiados por la UE con un valor total de 49 millones de euros.

¿Qué medidas ha adoptado la Alta Representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad para detener la política israelí de demoliciones en los territorios ocupados, en particular cuando afecta a proyectos financiados por la UE y sus Estados miembros y en vista del Acuerdo de asociación celebrado entre la UE e Israel y del Plan de acción UE-Israel? ¿Considera la Alta Representante que habría que adoptar medidas, como el bloqueo de las importaciones de productos de los colonos israelíes o una prohibición de conceder visados a colonos radicales, en particular dado que la ocupación y los asentamientos son ilegales de conformidad con el Derecho internacional?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de agosto de 2012)

En las conclusiones del Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de 14 de mayo de 2012, la UE instó a Israel a cumplir sus obligaciones en relación con las condiciones de vida de la población palestina en la zona C de Cisjordania, incluida la detención de las demoliciones de viviendas e infraestructuras. También declaró que espera que Israel proteja las inversiones de la UE en apoyo del desarrollo palestino en la zona C para el futuro. Estas cuestiones también las planteó la UE en su diálogo bilateral con Israel, utilizando los instrumentos creados de conformidad con el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta participa activamente en el diálogo con el Gobierno de Israel a fin de mejorar el actual sistema de planificación en la zona C.

Por lo que se refiere a los productos procedentes de los asentamientos, las conclusiones del Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de 14 de mayo de 2012 reafirman el compromiso de la UE y sus Estados miembros de aplicar plenamente y de manera efectiva la legislación vigente de la UE y los acuerdos bilaterales aplicables a los productos procedentes de los asentamientos. Este trabajo se está llevando a cabo conjuntamente con la Comisión. La aplicación de las medidas señaladas en la pregunta escrita a los productos procedentes de los asentamientos requiere el apoyo unánime de los Estados miembros de la UE.

La UE manifiesta su preocupación por el extremismo y la incitación por parte de los colonos en Cisjordania. Ha condenado la continua violencia de los colonos y las provocaciones deliberadas contra civiles palestinos, y ha pedido al Gobierno de Israel que lleve ante la justicia a los responsables y que cumpla con sus obligaciones en virtud del Derecho internacional. La aplicación de las acciones mencionadas en la pregunta escrita es un asunto de competencia nacional de los Estados miembros.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005592/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) et Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 juin 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — démolition par les autorités israéliennes de projets d'États membres de l'UE

D'après les données collectées par la Commission, l'ONU et des militants locaux, les autorités israéliennes ont démoli 22 citernes d'eau et 37 structures résidentielles et agricoles financées par des États membres de l'UE en 2011. Elles ont aussi délivré des ordres de démolition et des ordres d'arrêt des travaux pour une longue liste d'autres projets financés par l'UE, dont 14 citernes d'eau, 34 installations de purification d'eau, huit installations d'énergie solaire, deux écoles et un centre médical.

La Commission estime qu'entre 2001 et 2011, Israël a détruit des projets financés par l'UE pour une valeur totale de 49 millions d'euros.

Quelles mesures la haute représentante de l'Union pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité a-t-elle prises pour mettre un terme à la politique de démolition israélienne dans les territoires occupés, surtout en ce qui concerne les projets financés par l'UE et ses États membres et à la lumière de l'accord d'association conclu entre l'UE et Israël et du plan d'action UE-Israël? La haute représentante pense-t-elle que des mesures telles que le blocage des importations des produits fabriqués par les colons israéliens ou une interdiction de visa de l'UE pour les colons radicaux doivent être mises en place, d'autant plus que l'occupation et les colonies sont illégales en vertu du droit international?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(13 août 2012)

Dans les conclusions du Conseil «Affaires étrangères» (CAE) du 14 mai 2012, l'UE a appelé Israël à respecter les obligations qui lui incombent en ce qui concerne les conditions de vie de la population palestinienne dans la zone C de la Cisjordanie, notamment en mettant un terme à la démolition d'infrastructures et de logements palestiniens. Elle a également déclaré attendre d'Israël qu'il protège les investissements de l'UE visant à soutenir le développement palestinien dans la zone C en vue d'une utilisation ultérieure. Ces problématiques sont également abordées par l'UE dans le cadre de son dialogue bilatéral avec Israël au moyen des instruments institués en vertu de l'accord d'association UE-Israël. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton participe activement au dialogue avec le gouvernement israélien en vue d'améliorer le système de planification actuel dans la zone C.

En ce qui concerne les produits issus des colonies, les conclusions du CAE du 14 mai indiquent que l'UE et ses États membres réaffirment leur détermination à mettre en œuvre effectivement et pleinement la législation de l'UE en vigueur et les accords bilatéraux applicables aux produits issus des colonies. Ce travail est effectué en collaboration avec la Commission. La mise en œuvre des mesures évoquées dans la question écrite concernant les produits issus des colonies requiert le soutien unanime des États membres de l'UE.

L'UE est préoccupée par l'extrémisme des colons et les incitations à la violence de la part des colons de Cisjordanie. Elle a condamné les violences et les provocations délibérées incessantes auxquelles se livrent les colons contre les civils palestiniens et a appelé le gouvernement israélien à traduire en justice les auteurs de ces actes et à respecter les obligations qui lui incombent en vertu du droit international. La mise en œuvre des actions auxquelles il est fait référence dans la question écrite relève de la compétence nationale des États membres.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005592/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) en Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 juni 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — De vernieling door de Israëlische autoriteiten van projecten van EU-lidstaten

Volgens gegevens van de Commissie, de VN en plaatselijke activisten hebben de Israëlische autoriteiten in 2011 22 watertanks en 37 woon- en landbouweenheden vernield die door lidstaten van de EU zijn gefinancierd. Daarnaast hebben zij opdracht gegeven tot vernieling en bevelen tot stillegging van de werkzaamheden uitgevaardigd tegen een lange lijst van andere door de EU gefinancierde projecten, waaronder 14 watertanks, 34 afvalwater zuiveringsvoorzieningen, 8 zonne-energieprojecten, 2 scholen en een medisch centrum.

De Commissie schat dat Israël in de periode van 2001 tot 2011 in het totaal voor 49 miljoen EUR aan door de EU gefinancierde projecten heeft verwoest.

Welke maatregelen heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger van de Unie voor buitenlandse zaken en veiligheidsbeleid genomen om het Israëlische beleid van vernielingen in de bezette gebieden een halt toe te roepen, in het bijzonder als door de EU en haar lidstaten gefinancierde projecten worden getroffen, en in het licht van de associatieovereenkomst tussen de EU en Israël en het Actieplan EU-Israël? Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger van mening dat er maatregelen moeten worden genomen als het blokkeren van de invoer van door Israëlische kolonisten vervaardigde producten of een verbod op de afgifte van EU-visa aan radicale kolonisten, vooral aangezien de bezetting en de nederzettingen volgens het internationale recht onrechtmatig zijn?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(13 augustus 2012)

In de conclusies van de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken (RBZ) van 14 mei 2012 heeft de EU Israël opgeroepen zijn verplichtingen na te komen inzake de levensomstandigheden van de Palestijnse bevolking in zone C van de Westelijke Jordaanoever en dus onder meer te stoppen met de vernietiging van Palestijnse woningen en infrastructuur. De EU verwacht van Israël ook dat het ervoor zorgt dat de EU-investeringen voor de Palestijnse ontwikkeling in zone C ook in de toekomst kunnen worden gebruikt. De EU kaart deze kwesties ook aan in haar bilaterale dialoog met Israël via de instrumenten die in overeenstemming met de Associatieovereenkomst EU-Israël zijn uitgewerkt. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter voert een actieve dialoog met de Israëlische regering om het bestaande planningssysteem in zone C te verbeteren.

In de conclusies van de RBZ van 14 mei wordt duidelijk gesteld dat de EU en de lidstaten ernaar blijven streven dat de bestaande EU-wetgeving en bilaterale afspraken over producten uit de nederzettingen worden nagekomen. Daaraan wordt samen met de Commissie gewerkt. Voor de uitvoering van de in de schriftelijke vraag bedoelde maatregelen inzake producten uit nederzettingen, is de unanieme steun van de EU-lidstaten vereist.

De EU is bezorgd over het extremisme van kolonisten en over opruiing door kolonisten op de Westelijke Jordaanoever. De EU heeft het aanhoudende geweld van kolonisten en de opzettelijke provocaties jegens Palestijnse burgers veroordeeld en spoort de Israëlische regering aan de schuldigen voor de rechter te brengen en haar verplichtingen krachtens het internationale recht na te komen. De uitvoering van de in de schriftelijke vraag bedoelde maatregelen, is een nationale bevoegdheid van de lidstaten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005592/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) and Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Israeli authorities' demolition of EU Member State projects

According to data collected by the Commission, the UN and local activists, the Israeli authorities demolished 22 water cisterns and 37 residential and agricultural structures funded by EU Member States in 2011. They have also issued demolition orders and 'stop-work' orders against a long list of other EU-funded schemes, including 14 water cisterns, 34 water sanitation facilities, eight solar energy schemes, two schools and a medical centre.

In the period from 2001 to 2011, the Commission estimates that Israel destroyed EUR 49 million worth of EU-funded projects in total.

What action has the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy taken to stop the Israeli demolition policy in the occupied territories, especially when it affects projects funded by the EU and its Member States, and in the light of the association agreement concluded between the EU and Israel and of the EU-Israel Action Plan? Does the High Representative believe that measures such as blocking imports of products made by Israeli settlers or an EU visa ban on settler radicals should be implemented, especially given that the occupation and the settlements are illegal under international law?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2012)

In the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) conclusions of 14 May 2012, the EU called upon Israel to meet its obligations regarding the living conditions of the Palestinian population in Area C of the West Bank, including halting the demolition of Palestinian housing and infrastructure. It also stated that it expects Israel to protect EU investments in support of Palestinian development in Area C for future use. These issues are also raised by EU in its bilateral dialogue with Israel by using the instruments established in conformity with the EU-Israel Association Agreement. The HR/VP is actively engaged in dialogue with the Government of Israel in order to improve the current planning system in Area C.

As regards settlement products, the 14 May FAC conclusions stated that the EU and its Member States reaffirm their commitment to fully and effectively implement existing EU legislation and the bilateral arrangements applicable to settlement products. This work is being carried out jointly with the Commission. Implementation of measures outlined in the written question on settlement produce requires the unanimous backing of EU Member States.

The EU is concerned about settler extremism and incitement by settlers in the West Bank. It has condemned continuous settler violence and deliberate provocations against Palestinian civilians and called on the Government of Israel to bring the perpetrators to justice and to comply with its obligations under international law. Implementation of actions referred to in the written question is a matter of national competence of Member States.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-005593/12
till kommissionen
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(4 juni 2012)

Angående: Om bisfenol A i kontakt med mat

Den svenska morgontidningen *Svenska Dagbladet* har låtit fyra av sina reportrar gå på konservburksdiet för att undersöka om intag av mat från konservburkar påverkar halterna av det hormonstörande ämnet bisfenol A i kroppen. Resultaten är häpnadsväckande. Efter två dagars diet ökande halterna i testpersonernas urin med flera tusen procent.

Idag finns förbud mot bisfenol A i nappflaskor inom EU och i barnsmatsburkar i flera länder. Men det räcker inte.

Jag kräver att vi reglerar användningen bisfenol A och andra liknande ämnen i allt som kommer i kontakt med mat, alltså även i produkter som riktar sig mot vuxna. Till exempel konservburkar, matlådor, köksgeråd och tallrikar och annat i plast.

Även barn äter ju mat från konservburkar. Gravida kvinnor bör också skyddas från att få i sig bisfenol A. En reglering behövs inte minst för att skydda barn och foster.

— Överväger kommissionen att lägga fram förslag på förbud mot bisfenol A i konservburkar? När i så fall?

— Överväger kommissionen att lägga fram förslag på förbud mot bisfenol A i samtliga produkter som kommer i kontakt med mat? När i så fall?

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-005621/12
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(5 juni 2012)

Angående: Konserverad mat och bisfenol A

Svenska Dagbladet har i en artikel låtit fyra reportrar äta konserverad mat i två dagar och hos samtliga märktes en mycket kraftig ökning av bisfenol A på flera tusen procent i urinen. På denna korta tid ökade halterna snabbt. Halter upp till 86ng/ml uppmättes. Eftersom de åt en varierad kost går det ej att härleda exakt vilken burkmat som orsakat höjningen. I det pågående arbetet inom EFSA så har man ännu ej föreslagit ett utökat förbud till konservburkar. Även om bisfenol A har kort halveringstid i kroppen är detta mycket oroande och vi har dålig kunskap om hur snabba höjningar och sänkningar av värden kan påverka kroppen.

Jag varnade redan 2008 i en fråga till kommissionen (H-0770/08 ([1])) för att det finns en risk för att vi inte skulle reagera snabbt nog om problem med bisfenol A uppdagades.

— Jag vill nu veta vilka vetenskapliga fallstudier kommissionen planerar och vilka mätresultat från burkar som rapporterats in från medlemsstaterna de senaste åren. Ifall data är bristfälliga eller visar på risker för överskridna gränsvärden vilka åtgärder planerar ni att vidta?

— Anser ni att försiktighetsprincipen talar för förbud även om EFSA:s rekommendation inte entydigt kräver det?

Samlat svar från John Dalli på kommissionens vägnar
(21 juni 2012)

Europeiska myndigheten för livsmedelssäkerhet (EFSA) håller för närvarande på med en förnyad bedömning av bisfenol A och risken ämnet medför i material som har kontakt med mat. I detta sammanhang har EFSA efterlyst uppgifter om förekomst av bisfenol A i mat, dryck och material som kommer i kontakt med mat för att uppdatera exponeringsbedömningen ([2]). Riskbedömningen som ska publiceras 2013 kommer även att ompröva nya uppgifter och fokusera på eventuella verkningar av små doser.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=QT&reference=H-2008-0770&language=SV.
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/data/call/120514.htm

År 2010 ansåg kommissionen det lämpligt att tillämpa försiktighetsprincipen endast för spädbarn. Kommissionen kommer att vidta lämpliga åtgärder för burkar eller allt material som kommer i kontakt med mat om EFSA:s riskbedömning pekar mot att dagens användning av bisfenol A utgör en risk för människor. Kommissionen kommer att tillämpa försiktighetsprincipen om kriteriet för denna uppfylls.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005593/12
to the Commission
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: BPA in contact with food

The Swedish morning paper *Svenska Dagbladet* had four of its reporters put themselves on a diet of tinned food to investigate whether consuming food from tin cans would impact levels of the hormone-disrupting chemical bisphenol A (BPA) in the body. The results were astounding. After two days on this diet, the levels of BPA in the testers' urine had risen by several thousand per cent.

The use of BPA in plastic baby bottles is currently banned within the EU, while its use in baby food containers is banned in many countries. However, this is not enough.

I must insist that we regulate the use of BPA and other similar substances in everything that comes into contact with food — even in products intended for adults. This includes tin cans, lunch boxes, kitchen utensils, plates and other items made of plastic.

Children also eat food that comes from tin cans, while pregnant women should be protected from ingesting BPA. Regulation is therefore needed in particular to protect children and foetuses.

— Is the Commission considering presenting a proposal to ban BPA in tin cans? If so, when?

— Is the Commission considering presenting a proposal to ban BPA in all products that come into contact with food? If so, when?

Question for written answer P-005621/12
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Tinned food and BPA

An article in *Svenska Dagbladet* described how four of its reporters ate tinned food for two days and a very large increase in bisphenol A (BPA) of several thousand percent was observed in the urine of all four. In this brief time, levels of BPA in their urine rose rapidly. Concentrations of up to 86 ng/ml were measured. Since the food they ate was varied, it is not possible to deduce precisely which tinned food caused the rise. In the work being done within the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), as yet there has been no proposal to widen the ban on BPA to include food tins. Although BPA has a short half-life in the human body, this is of great concern, and our knowledge of the impact on the body of such rapid rises and falls in levels is poor.

As far back as 2008, I warned in a question to the Commission (H-0770/08 ([1])) that there was a risk that we would not react quickly enough if problems with BPA were to be discovered.

— I would now like to know what scientific case studies the Commission is planning and what measurement results from tin cans have been reported from Member States in recent years. Where the data are insufficient, or indicate a danger of safe limits being exceeded, what action do you plan to take?

— Do you agree that the precautionary principle argues for a ban even if EFSA's recommendations do not unequivocally require one?

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=QT&reference=H-2008-0770&language=EN

Joint answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is currently re-evaluating Bisphenol A and the risk of its use in food contact materials. In this context EFSA has launched a call for data on occurrence of Bisphenol A in food, beverages and food contact materials in order to update its exposure assessment ([2]) The risk assessment to be published in 2013 will also reconsider new data and will focus on possible low dose effects.

In 2010 the Commission considered it adequate to apply the precautionary principle in the case of infants only. The Commission will take adequate measures on cans or all food contact materials if EFSA's risk assessment indicates that the current use of Bisphenol A poses a risk to the population. The Commission will apply the precautionary principle if the criteria for its application are fulfilled.

([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/data/call/120514.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005596/12
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(4. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Großprojekte im Rahmen der TEN-T

Es wird um einzelne Beantwortung jeder Frage gebeten.

1. Mit welcher Begründung und seit wann genau wurde der sogenannte baltisch-adriatische Korridor, der wegen der Vorhaben des Koralm- sowie des Semmeringtunnels extrem kostenintensiv ist, als Kernnetzkorridor 5 in den Vorschlag der Kommission für die Revision der transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetze (TEN-T) sowie in die Connecting Europe Facility aufgenommen?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission die bestehende Alternativroute durch die Pannonische Tiefebene über die Slowakei, Ungarn und Slowenien?

3. Warum wurde diese Route nicht berücksichtigt, obwohl diese eine schnellere und kostengünstigere Streckenführung aufweist?

4. Welche Kofinanzierungsraten können nach Planung der Kommission für den baltisch-adriatischen Korridor abgerufen werden?

5. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Aussichten auf Realisierung des Brenner-Basistunnels sowie des Tunnels zwischen Lyon-Turin angesichts der angespannten Haushaltslage aller beteiligten Mitgliedstaaten, besonders vor dem Hintergrund der Maastricht-Kriterien und des neuen Schuldenpakts?

6. Was geschieht mit den von der EU vorgesehenen Mitteln für den baltisch-adriatischen Korridor, wenn die beteiligten Mitgliedstaaten ihre nationalen Kofinanzierungsanteile nicht im Haushalt verbindlich einplanen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(10. Juli 2012)

1.-3. Am 19. Oktober 2011 verabschiedete die Kommission ihre Vorschläge für die neuen TEN-V-Leitlinien ([1]) und die Fazilität „Connecting Europe“ ([2]). Die vorgeschlagenen Kernnetzkorridore folgen den Streckenführungen des Kernnetzes, das auf Grundlage einer systematischen und transparenten Planungsmethodik unter Berücksichtigung der direktesten Verbindungen und der derzeitigen und der potenziellen Verkehrsströme erarbeitet wurde. Der Ostsee-Adria-Korridor folgt den bestehenden prioritären Vorhaben 23, 25 und 27 und bindet in der Fortsetzung die wirtschaftlichen Zentren in Norditalien an.

Die Kommission teilt nicht die Auffassung des Herrn Abgeordneten, dass es schnellere und kostengünstigere Alternativen gibt. Aufgrund der Planungsmethodik ist die „pannonische“ Strecke nicht Teil des Kernnetzes. Diese Strecke ist erheblich länger, eingleisig und teilweise nicht elektrifiziert. Der Ausbau auf TEN-V-Standards würde auch neue Tunnel erfordern; entsprechende Maßnahmen werden von den Mitgliedstaaten voraussichtlich nicht vor 2030 umgesetzt.

4. Die Haushaltsmittel für bestimmte Korridore werden nicht im Voraus festgelegt. Die Kommission hat vorgeschlagen, dass 80 % bis 85 % der für den Verkehrsbereich vorgesehenen Haushaltsmittel gezielt für die Projekte in Anhang 1 der CEF-Verordnung eingesetzt werden.

5.-6. Die Kommission ist sich der schwierigen finanziellen Lage bewusst, durch die sich die Umsetzung der für die Verbindung Lyon-Turin, den Brenner oder den künftigen Ostsee-Adria- Korridor geplanten Maßnahmen verzögern könnte, und wird — zusammen mit den Mitgliedstaaten — nach der effektivsten Lösung für dieses Problem suchen. Österreich und Italien haben noch einmal bekräftigt, dass der Brenner-Basistunnel wie geplant im Jahr 2026 in Betrieb genommen wird. Die wenigen Lücken im Kernnetz werden nach der oben genannten Methodik geschlossen. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen sich daher verpflichten, das Kernnetz bis zum Jahr 2030 fertig zu stellen.

([1]) KOM(2011)0650 endg.
([2]) KOM(2011)0665.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005596/12
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Major projects as part of TEN-T

Please provide a separate answer to each of the following questions:

1. Why and since when has the Commission included the so-called Baltic-Adriatic corridor, which is extremely cost-intensive because of the Koralm and Semmering Tunnels, as core network corridor 5 in its proposal for the revised Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) and the Connecting Europe Facility?

2. How does the Commission assess the existing alternative route through the Pannonian lowlands via Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia?

3. Why was this route not considered, despite the fact that it is a faster and more cost-effective alternative?

4. According to the Commission's plans, what co-financing will be available for the Baltic-Adriatic corridor?

5. How does the Commission assess the prospects for the realisation of the Brenner base tunnel and the tunnel between Lyon and Turin in view of the budgetary difficulties of all the Member States involved, particularly in the context of the Maastricht criteria and the new debt pact?

6. What is to happen with the resources for the Baltic-Adriatic corridor earmarked by the European Union if the participating Member States do not commit to their co-financing share in their national budgets?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

1-3. The Commission adopted on 19 October 2011 proposals for new TEN-T guidelines ([1]) and the 'Connecting Europe Facility' ([2]). The proposed core network corridors follow the alignments of the core network which was developed on the basis of a rational and transparent methodology along their most direct alignment, following existing and potential traffic flows. The Baltic-Adriatic corridor follows the existing Priority Projects 23, 25 and 27 and continues to the economic centres of northern Italy.

The Commission does not share the opinion of the Honourable Member that there are faster and more cost-effective alternatives. Based on the methodology, the 'Pannonian' route is not part of the core network. It is considerably longer, single-track and partly non-electrified. Upgrading to TEN-T standards would also include new tunnels and is not considered to be implemented until 2030 by the Member States.

4. No budget is predetermined for certain corridors. The Commission proposed that 80-85% of the foreseen budget for transport be concentrated on the projects of Annex I of CEF Regulation.

5-6. The Commission is aware of the difficult financial situation which might delay the implementation of Lyon-Turin, Brenner or the future Baltic-Adriatic Corridor and will — together with the Member States — decide on the most effective ways to deal with this. Austria and Italy have re-assured that the Brenner Base tunnel will become operational as planned in 2026. The number of major missing links on the core network is limited and they have been taken on board because of the methodology referred to above. Member States are therefore to commit to the obligation of realising the core network until 2030.

([1]) (COM/2011/0650 final).
([2]) COM/2011/0665).

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005599/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Fastidju fuq ix-xogħol

F'rapport reċenti, l-Aġenzija Ewropea għas-Saħħa u s-Sigurtà fuq il-Post tax-Xogħol (EU-OSHA) tinnota li 5-20% tal-ħaddiema Ewropej huma vittmi ta' vjolenza u fastidju fuq ix-xogħol. Fil-Komunikazzjoni tagħha (COM (2002) 0118), il-Kummissjoni tindika li "mard bħall-istress, id-dipressjoni, l-ansjetà, il-vjolenza fuq ix-xogħol, il-fastidju u l-intimidazzjoni huma responsabbli għal 18% tal-problemi kollha assoċjati mas-saħħa fuq ix-xogħol" u tenfasizza l-bżonn għall-indirizzar ta' din il-kwistjoni f'kuntest globali.

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tispjega kienx hemm miżuri korrispondenti li kienu introdotti fil-frattemp biex tkun indirizzata l-kwistjoni tal-fastidju fuq ix-xogħol?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(16 ta' Lulju 2012)

Din is-sena l-Kummissjoni beħsiebha tippubblika sejħa għall-offerti dwar is-saħħa mentali fil-post tax-xogħol bil-għan li:

1. Tevalwa s-sitwazzjoni minn perspettiva legali dwar is-saħħa u s-sikurezza fil-post tax-xogħol,

2. Tiddefinixxi serje ta' xenarji għall-azzjoni, filwaqt li tqis ukoll kwalunkwe implikazzjoni ta' spiża

3. Tfassal dokument ta' gwida għall-haddiema u min iħaddem.

Ir-riżultati ta' dan l-istudju se jikkontribwixxu għal valutazzjoni aħjar tal-problema tas-saħħa mentali fil-post tax-xogħol fl-UE inkluża l-problema tal-fastidju fuq ix-xogħol.

Il-Kummissjoni tagħti wkoll ħafna importanza lill-involviment tal-inizjattivi tal-imsieħba soċjali fir-rigward tas-saħħa mentali kif ukoll fir-rigward tal-vjolenza u l-fastidju fil-post tax-xogħol. Hija appoġġat lin-negozjati tal-Imsieħba Soċjali Ewropej għal Ftehim Qafas dwar il-fastidju u l-vjolenza fuq ix-xogħol, li ġie ffirmat fl-2007 minn BusinessEurope, l-Assoċjazzjoni Ewropea tal-Artiġjanat u tal-Intrapriżi Żgħar u Medji (UEAPME), iċ-Ċentru Ewropew ta' Min Iħaddem u l-Intrapriżi (CEEP) u l-Konfederazzjoni Ewropea tat-Trejdjunjins (KETU).

Il-Kummissjoni beħsiebha twettaq evalwazzjoni tal-Ftehim Qafas. Din l-evalwazzjoni se tkun ibbażata fuq ir-rapport ta' implimentazzjoni tal-Imsieħba Soċjali Ewropej ([1]) u fuq studju speċifiku ieħor li se jiġi varat din is-sena. Din l-evalwazzjoni se tippermetti lill-Kummissjoni tikkunsidra jekk hemmx bżonn ta' inizjattivi oħra fil-livell tal-UE f'dan il-qasam u r-rilevanza għalihom.

([1]) http://www.etuc.org/a/4629.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005599/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Harassment at work

In a recent report, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) points to the fact that 5-20% of European workers are victims of violence and harassment at work. In its communication (COM(2002) 0118), the Commission indicates that 'illnesses such as stress, depression, anxiety, violence at work, harassment and intimidation are responsible for 18% of all problems associated with health at work' and highlights the need to address this issue in a global context.

Could the Commission explain whether any corresponding measures have been introduced in the meantime to address the issue of harassment at work?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2012)

The Commission intends to publish this year a call for tenders on mental health in the workplace with a view to:

1. Evaluate the situation from a health and safety at work legal standpoint;

2. Delineate a series of scenarios for action, taking also into account any cost implications;

3. Draft a guidance document for workers and employers.

The results of this study will contribute to a better assessment of the problem of mental health at the workplace in the EU including that of harassment at work.

The Commission attaches also great importance to involving the social partners' initiatives concerning mental health as well as violence and harassment in the workplace. It supported the European Social Partners negotiation of a Framework Agreement on harassment and violence at work, which was signed in 2007 by BusinessEurope, the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME), the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises (CEEP) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

The Commission plans to undertake an evaluation of the framework Agreement. This evaluation will be based on the European Social Partners' implementation report ([1]) and on another specific study to be launched this year. This evaluation will enable the Commission to consider whether there is a need and relevance to take further initiatives at the EU level in this field.

([1]) http://www.etuc.org/a/4629.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005602/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: L-Osservazzjoni tad-Dinja — ENVISAT

L-Aġenzija Ewropea tal-Ispazju reċentement ħabbret it-tmiem tal-missjoni tal-ENVISAT wara li tilfet il-kuntatt minn mal-ikbar satellita Ewropea tal-osservazzjoni tad-Dinja. Minħabba l-importanza tal-osservazzjoni tad-Dinja u l-kontribuzzjoni siewja tal-ENVISAT għall-Monitoraġġ Globali tal-Ambjent u s-Sigurtà tal-Ewropa (GMES), il-Kummissjoni għandha ħsieb li tintroduċi miżuri interim sabiex tiżgura l-kontinwità tad-dejta sat-tnedija tas-satelliti GMES tal-ġenerazzjoni li jmiss?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(11 ta' Lulju 2012)

It-telfa ta' ENVISAT thalli impatt fuq is-Servizzi tal-GMES, b'mod partikolari għall-ambjent marittimu (l-altimetrija, il-kulur tal-oċean, il-monitoraġġ tas-silġ) u għas-servizzi ta' monitoraġġ tal-atmosfera (il-kwalità tal-arja). Sostituzzjoni sħiħa tal-osservazzjonijiet tal-ENVISAT se tinkiseb biss bit-tnedija progressiva tas-satelliti Sentinel, li se tibda fit-tieni nofs tal-2013. Hemm spazju ta' żmien li jvarja minn 18-il xahar sa tliet snin, skont it-tip ta' osservazzjoni.

Il-Kummissjoni ħolqot mekkaniżmu tal-aċċess għad-dejta sabiex tiżgura aċċess għal missjonijiet li jagħtu kontribut, filwaqt li provdiet finanzjament sa EUR 96 miljun fil-qafas finanzjarju multiannwali attwali 2007-2013 sabiex tinkiseb dejta satellitari minn missjonijiet nazzjonali li josservaw id-dinja. F'dan il-qafas, il-Kummissjoni se ssaħħaħ l-aċċess għal dejta spazjali kumplementari, pereżempju billi jinxtraw liċenzji addizzjonali ħalli jiżdied l-aċċess għal dejta mir-radar minn fornituri oħra.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005602/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Earth Observation — ENVISAT

The European Space Agency recently announced the end of the ENVISAT mission after losing contact with Europe's largest Earth-observing satellite. Given the importance of Earth observation and ENVISAT's valuable contribution towards Europe's Global Monitoring for Environmental Security (GMES), does the Commission intend to introduce any interim measures to ensure the continuity of data until the launch of the next generation of GMES satellites?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The loss of Envisat has an impact on GMES Services, in particular for the marine environment (altimetry, ocean colour, ice monitoring) and atmosphere monitoring services (air quality). The full replacement of Envisat observations will only be achieved with the progressive launch of the Sentinel satellites, starting in the second half of 2013. Depending on the type of observation, there is a gap ranging from 18 months to 3 years.

The Commission has established a data access mechanism in order to ensure access to contributing missions, providing funding of up to EUR 96 million in the current multiannual financial framework 2007-2013 for the acquisition of satellite data from national earth observation missions. In this framework, the Commission will enhance access to complementary space data, e.g. by increasing access to radar data from other providers by purchasing additional licenses.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005603/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Il-Paċi fil-Lvant Nofsani

Aktar kmieni dan ix-xahar, il-Gvern Iżraeljan ħabbar l-approvazzjoni ta' ftehim ta' koalizzjoni bejn il-partit Likud immexxi mill-Prim Ministru Benjamin Netanyahu u l-partit Kadima mmexxi minn Shaul Mofaz. B'liema mod il-Kummissjoni tistenna li dan il-ftehim iħalli impatt fuq kif jaħdem il-proċess tal-paċi mal-Palestinjani u l-prospett ta' soluzzjoni ta' żewġ stati?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentanta Għolja/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(16 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Fis-17 ta' Lulju 2012 Kadima ħabbar l-irtirar tiegħu mill-gvern ta' koalizzjoni. Is-servizzi tagħna jkomplu jsegwu s-sitwazzjoni politika domestika mill-qrib u jivvalutaw ir-ramifikazzjonijiet possibbli tagħha għall-Proċess ta' Paċi fil-Lvant Nofsani.

L-UE tkompli taħdem mal-imsieħba f'dan ir-reġjun u fi ħdan il-Kwartett sabiex jinkisbu negozjati diretti u sostanzjali bejn l-Iżrael u l-Palestinjani li għandhom iwasslu għal ftehim komprensiv ibbażat fuq is-soluzzjoni ta' żewġ stati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005603/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Peace in the Middle East

Earlier this month, the Israeli Government announced the approval of a coalition deal between the Likud party led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Kadima party led by Shaul Mofaz. In what way does the Commission expect this deal to impact upon the dynamics of the peace process with the Palestinians and the prospect of a two-state solution?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

As of 17 July 2012 Kadima announced its withdrawl from the coalition government. Our services continue to follow the domestic political situation closely and asses its possible ramifications for the Middle East Peace Process.

The EU continues to work with partners in the region and within the Quartet to bring about direct and substantial negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians which should lead to a comprehensive agreement based on a two state solution.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005604/12
lill-Kummissjoni (Viċi President / Rappreżentant Għoli)
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: VP/HR — Il-ħarsien tal-libertà reliġjuża

F'Jannar 2011, il-Parlament Ewropew adotta r-Riżoluzzjoni tiegħu dwar is-sitwazzjoni tal-Insara fil-kuntest tal-libertà reliġjuża ([1]). Ir-Riżoluzzjoni tistieden lir-Rappreżentant Għoli tal-Unjoni għall-Affarijiet Barranin u l-Politika tas-Sigurtà "biex tiżviluppa strateġija tal-UE dwar l-infurzar tad-dritt tal-bniedem għal-libertà reliġjuża bħala kwistjoni ta' urġenza, inkluża lista ta' miżuri kontra l-istati li konxjament jonqsu milli jipproteġu d-denominazzjonijiet reliġjużi". Waqt li kienet qed tindirizza sessjoni plenarja fi Strasburgu, il-Viċi President/ir-Rappreżentant Għoli ġibdet l-attenzjoni lejn id-diffikultajiet li qed jikkonfrontaw il-komunitajiet Insara fil-Lvant Nofsani u wegħdet li d-delegazzjonijiet tal-UE madwar id-dinja se jagħtu iktar attenzjoni lill-każijiet tal-intolleranza f'dan ir-rigward.

Tnedew xi inizjattivi sadanittant li jiżguraw protezzjoni akbar tal-libertà reliġjuża u tad-drittijiet tal-komunitajiet Kristjani fuq skala globali?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(1 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Il-promozzjoni u l-protezzjoni tal-libertà tar-reliġjon jew tat-twemmin (FoRB) mingħajr ebda distinzjoni hija prijorità għolja fil-qafas tal-politika tal-UE għad-drittijiet tal-bniedem.

Fi Frar 2011, xahar wara l-adozzjoni mill-Parlament Ewropew tar-riżoluzzjoni li saret referenza għaliha, il-Kunsill għall-Affarijiet Barranin (KAB), fuq proposta tal-HR/VP, adotta konklużjonijiet dwar l-intolleranza, id-diskriminazzjoni u l-vjolenza abbażi tar-reliġjon jew it-twemmin. Huma jikkundannaw bil-qawwa l-vjolenza u l-atti ta' terroriżmu, f'diversi pajjiżi, kontra l-Kristjani u l-postijiet ta' qima tagħhom, il-pellegrini Musulmani u komunitajiet reliġjuži oħra. Imbagħad saret talba lid-Delegazzjonijiet kollha tal-UE biex isegwu l-evoluzzjoni tal-istat tal-FoRB u biex ikunu attivi dwar dawn il-kwistjonijiet meta jkun meħtieġ, sabiex dan id-dritt isir parti integrali mir-relazzjonijiet bilaterali tal-UE mal-pajjiż ospitanti tagħhom, u biex jirrappurtaw dwar l-azzjonijiet meħuda.

L-UE qed tuża l-firxa sħiħa tal-istrumenti tagħha biex tinteraġixxi mas-sħab internazzjonali fuq il-livelli bilaterali u multilaterali, permezz ta' djalogi dwar id-drittijiet tal-bniedem, demarches, riżoluzzjonijiet tan-NU jew assistenza finanzjarja, sabiex tindirizza dawn il-kwistjonijiet. Is-SEAE qed jaħdem mill-qrib ma' Membri tal-Parlament Ewropew u rappreżentanti tas-soċjetà ċivili biex jindirizza d-diversi kwistjonijiet tal-libertà tar-reliġjon jew tat-twemmin.

Sabiex issaħħaħ l-azzjoni tal-UE, l-HR/VP ipproponiet li tiżviluppa linji gwida pubbliċi ġodda dwar il-Libertà tar-Reliġjon jew tat-Twemmin, li se jkun fihom prijoritajiet u għodod definiti b'mod ċar għall-promozzjoni tal-FoRB madwar id-dinja. L-iżvilupp ta' dawn il-linji gwida huwa previst fil-pjan ta' azzjoni tal-UE dwar id-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem u d-Demokrazija li l-FAC għadha kif adottat fil-25 ta' Ġunju. Dawn il-linji gwida se jgħinu sabiex tittejjeb l-attività tal-UE f'dan il-qasam bl-aktar mod konkret possibbli.

Minn din is-sena, fuq talba tal-Parlament Ewropew, ir-rapport annwali tal-UE dwar id-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem jindirizza l-kwistjoni fil-fond.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+MOTION+B7-2011-0039+0+DOC+PDF+V0//MT).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005604/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Protection of religious freedom

In January 2011, the European Parliament adopted its Resolution on the situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion ([1]). The Resolution calls on the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy 'to develop as a matter of urgency an EU strategy on the enforcement of the human right to freedom of religion, including a list of measure against states who knowingly fail to protect religious denominations'. Addressing a plenary session in Strasbourg, the Vice-President/High Representative drew attention to the difficulties faced by Christian communities in the Middle East and pledged that EU delegations worldwide would pay greater attention to cases of intolerance in this respect.

Have any initiatives been launched in the intervening period that ensure greater protection of religious freedom and of the rights of Christian communities on a global scale?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2012)

The promotion and protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) without any distinction is a high priority under the EU's human rights policy.

In February 2011, one month after the adoption by the European Parliament of the resolution which is referred to, the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), on the HR/VP's proposal, adopted conlusions on intolerance, discrimination and violence on the basis of religion or belief. They firmly condemn violence and acts of terrorism, in various countries, against Christians and their places of worship, Muslim pilgrims and other religious communities. Request was then made to all EU Delegations to monitor the state of FoRB and to engage on such issues, whenever necessary, so to make this right an integral part of the EU's bilateral relations with their host country, and to report on actions taken.

The EU has been using the full range of its instruments to engage international partners at the bilateral and multilateral levels, through human rights dialogues, demarches, UN resolutions or financial assistance, to address these concerns. The EEAS is working closely with Members of the European Parliament and civil society representatives to address the various issues of freedom of religion or belief.

To strengthen EU action, the HR/VP proposed to develop new public guidelines on Freedom of Religion or Belief, which will contain clearly defined priorities and tools for the promotion of FoRB worlwide. The development of these guidelines is foreseen in the EU action plan on Human Rights and Democracy that the FAC has just adopted on 25th June. Such guidelines will help enhancing EU activity in this field in the most concrete way possible.

From this year, at the request of the European Parliament, the EU annual report on Human Rights addresses the issue in depth.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+MOTION+B7-2011-0039+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005606/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: l-Ukraina

Fil-"Pakkett tal-Viċinat" u r-Rapport tal-Progress Annwali tal-2012 dwar l-Ukraina, il-Kummissjoni tenfasizza t-tħassib tagħha dwar id-deterjorament tal-istat tad-dritt u l-proċess tar-riforma fil-pajjiż. Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni tiddeskrivi il-ġustizzja selettiva li hi applikata għall-figuri tal-oppożizzjoni, inkluż Yulia Tymoshenko, bħala ostaklu għall-iffirmar u r-ratifikazzjoni tal-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni bejn l-Ukraina u l-UE.

Il-Kummissjoni qiegħda tikkunsidra miżuri ulterjuri maħsuba biex iħaffu l-proċess ta' riforma u jittrattaw kwistjonijiet bħall-ġustizzja selettiva fil-pajjiż?

Tweġiba mogħtija minn Štefan Füle f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(9 ta' Lulju 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni u r-Rappreżentant Għoli kemm-il darba saħqu mal-awtoritajiet fi Kjiv li l-mod kif timxi l-Ukraina, notevolment fejn jidħol ir-rispett għall-valuri komuni u l-istat tad-dritt, se jkun fattur ta' importanza kruċjali li jiddetermina b'liema ħeffa jkun jista' jimxi l-proċess ta' assoċjazzjoni politika u ta' integrazzjoni mal-UE, inkluż fil-kuntest tal-konklużjoni tal-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni. Il-ġustizzja selettiva ġiet identifikata bħala ostakolu ċentrali għall-iżvilupp ulterjuri tar-relazzjonijiet.

Fil-Kunsill ta' Kooperazzjoni bejn l-UE u l-Ukraina f'Mejju, in-naħa tal-UE irriferiet b'mod speċifiku għall-ġustizzja selettiva u r-riforma tal-ġustizzja, flimkien ma' elezzjonijiet u l-implimentazzjoni tal-Aġenda ta' Assoċjazzjoni, bħala t-tliet oqsma li fihom l-Ukraina kienet mistennija tieħu azzjoni konkreta u verifikabbli biex tkun tista' tinfetaħ it-triq għall-iffirmar tal-Ftehim ta' Assoċjazzjoni. Il-każijiet ta' Tymoshenko, Lutsenko, Ivanschenko u Filipchuk ingħataw attenzjoni partikolari.

L-UE se tkompli tinsisti fuq miżuri speċifiċi biex jitnaqqas, u eventwalment jiġi eliminat, l-użu tal-ġustizzja selettiva fl-Ukraina, inkluża l-implimentazzjoni immedjata tal-Kodiċi ta' Proċedura Kriminali aġġornat, u r-reviżjoni tal-Kodiċi Kriminali. L-UE se ssegwi mill-qrib il-proċessi ta' appell u ta' kassazzjoni fil-każijiet ta' Tymoshenko u oħrajn, kif ukoll il-proċessi relevanti fil-Qorti Ewropea tad-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005606/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Ukraine

In its 2012 Annual 'Neighbourhood Package' and Progress Report on Ukraine, the Commission highlights its concerns over the deterioration of the rule of law and the reform process in the country. Furthermore, the Commission describes the selective justice applied to opposition figures, including Yulia Tymoshenko, as an obstacle to the signing and ratification of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU.

Is the Commission considering any further measures intended to hasten the reform process and tackle issues such as selective justice in the country?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

The Commission and the High Representative have repeatedly stressed to the authorities in Kyiv that Ukraine's performance, notably in relation to respect for common values and the rule of law, will be of crucial importance for the speed of its political association and economic integration with the EU, including in the context of concluding the Association Agreement. Selective justice has been identified as a key obstruction to the further development of relations.

At the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council in May, the EU side specifically referred to selective justice and justice reform, together with elections and the implementation of the Association Agenda, as the three areas where Ukraine was expected to take concrete and verifiable action if the road were to be opened to signature of the Association Agreement. The cases of Tymoshenko, Lutsenko, Ivaschenko and Filipchuk were given particular attention.

The EU will continue to insist on specific measures to curb, and ultimately eliminate, the use of selective justice in Ukraine, including immediate implementation of the updated Criminal Procedure Code and revision of the Criminal Code. The EU will follow closely appeal and cassation processes in the cases of Tymoshenko and others, as well as relevant processes of the European Court of Human Rights.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005608/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Desalinizzazzjoni

Bħala reazzjoni għar-riskji li qed jikbru tal-iskarsezza tal-ilma u bil-għan li tkun żgurata s-sigurtà tal-ilma fit-tul, il-forniturі tal-ilma f'pajjiżi Ewropej, inkluż Malta, qed jirrikorru iktar u iktar lejn id-desalinizzazzjoni biex ikopru l-bżonnijiet għall-ilma ħelu. Madankollu, ġie espress tħassib dwar l-intensità tal-enerġija f'din it-teknoloġija, li tista' tipperikola l-ksib tal-għanijiet tal-UE dwar it-tnaqqis tal-enerġija.

Il-Kummissjoni kkunsidrat xi investimenti f'teknoloġiji iktar effiċjenti fl-enerġija li jistgħu jagħmlu l-proċess tad-desalinizzazzjoni iktar tajjeb għall-ambjent?

Tweġiba mogħtija minn M. Oettinger f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Lulju 2012)

Fl-ambitu tal-ħames programm qafas tar-riċerka (1998-2002), il-Kummissjoni appoġġat diversi proġetti relatati mal-komunitajiet sostenibbli u l-lukandi ekoloġiċi. F'dawn il-proġetti, xi konsorzji rnexxilhom juru l-effett pożittiv tal-akkoppjar dirett tat-turbini tar-riħ mad-desalinizzazzjoni permezz ta' membrani (ideali għall-Mediterran minħabba s-salinità aktar baxxa tiegħu meta mqabbel mal-Atlantiku). L-ilma desalinat jinħażen f'boroż tal-plastik fil-baħar; volumi kbar ħafna jistgħu jinkisbu bi prezzijiet baxxi ferm. Il-pompi jistgħu jiġu operati f'modalità varjabbli u għalhekk jistgħu jsegwu r-riħ varjabbli. Dan ma jikkawża ebda stress fuq il-grilja tal-elettriku lokali.

Din it-teknoloġija ilha lesta għall-iskjerament sa mis-sena 2002; id-desalinizzazzjoni bbażata fuq l-użu tar-riħ hija sinifikament orħos mid-desalinizzazzjoni bbażata fuq il-fjuwils fossili.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005608/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Desalination

In reaction to growing risks of water scarcity and with the aim of ensuring water security in the long term, water providers in European countries, including Malta, are increasingly resorting to desalination to cover freshwater needs. However, concerns have been voiced over the energy intensity of this technology, which could jeopardise the EU's energy reduction targets.

Has the Commission considered any investments in more energy efficient technologies that could make desalination processes more environmentally friendly?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

Within the fifth research framework programme (1998-2002), the Commission supported several projects on sustainable communities and green hotels. Within these projects a few consortia have successfully demonstrated the positive direct coupling of wind turbines with membrane desalination (ideal for the Mediterranean because of its lower salinity compared to the Atlantic). The desalinated water is stored in plastic bags in the sea; very large volumes can be obtained at extremely low costs. The pumps can be operated in variable mode and can thus follow the variable wind. This causes zero stress on the local electricity grid.

Since the year 2002, this technology is ready for deployment; wind based desalination is significantly cheaper than fossil fuel based desalination.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005609/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Il-bilanċ tas-sessi fis-suq tax-xogħol

Fir-rapport tal-2009 tal-Kummissjoni lill-Kunsill, il-Parlament Ewropew, il-Kumitat Ekonomiku u Soċjali Ewropew u l-Kumitat tar-Reġjuni dwar l-ugwaljanza bejn in-nisa u l-irġiel (SEC(2009)0165), il-Kummissjoni tinnota s-segregazzjoni persistenti fl-oqsma okkupazzjonali u settorjali u tgħid illi "bilanċ tas-sessi aħjar fl-istudji u l-okkupazzjonijiet jista' jikkontribwixxi sabiex jintlaħqu ħiliet u bżonnijiet tas-suq tax-xogħol futuri".

Il-Kummissjoni rreġistrat xi titjib f'dan ir-rispett minn mindu kien ippublikat dan ir-rapport?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sra Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Lulju 2012)

Matul l-aħħar snin, il-Kummissjoni rreġistrat titjib modest fl-indirizzar tal-bqija tad-distakki bejn is-sessi fl-impjiegi, l-edukazzjoni u l-ekonomija. Ix-xejriet u informazzjoni komparattiva dwar l-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi huma deskritti u analizzati fir-rapport "Progress on equality between women and men in 2011" (l-SWD (2012) 85).

Differenzi fl-għażliet edukattivi, is-segregazzjoni settorjali u tal-impjieg jibqgħu importanti f'ħafna Stati Membri u fil-biċċa l-kbira jispjegaw id-differenza għolja fil-pagi bejn is-sessi. Din id-differenza naqset ftit madwar l-UE tul l-aħħar snin, iżda xorta tibqa' sinifikanti: fuq medja, in-nisa jaqilgħu 16.4% inqas mill-irġiel għal kull siegħa maħduma fl-2010 (imqabbla ma' 17.4% fl-2007). Progress fit-tnaqqis tad-differenza bejn is-sessi fil-boardrooms tad-diretturi kien ukoll bil-mod.

Barra minn hekk, filwaqt li r-rata tal-impjieg tal-irġiel (bejn 20-64) kienet ta' 75% fl-2011, dik tan-nisa' kienet biss 62.3%, li jfisser li n-nisa għadhom jirrappreżentaw potenzjal ta' ħaddiema mhux użat enormi. Skont l-istrateġija Ewropa2020, 75% tar-rata tal-impjiegi fil-mira tal-grupp ta'età 20-64 sas-sena 2020 għandhom jinkisbu permezz ta' involviment akbar tan-nisa. Skont dan, kemm fi tmiem l-ewwel u it-tieni Semestru Ewropew, ir-rakkomandazzjonijiet speċifiċi għall-pajjiż ġew maħruġa lil Stati Membri li jimmiraw il-kwistjonijiet tas-sessi. Ir-rakkomandazzjonijiet juru l-ħtieġa li jipprovdu faċilitajiet ta' kura aċċessibbli u li jistgħu jinkisbu, biex tnaqqas diżinċentivi finanzjarji li jiffaċċjaw dawk li jaqalgħu t-tieni dħul, biex jikkumbattu d-differenza fil-pagi bejn is-sessi u biex jippromwovu opportunitajiet flessibbli tax-xogħol għan-nisa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005609/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Gender balance on the labour market

In the 2009 report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on equality between men and women (SEC(2009) 0165), the Commission points to persisting occupational and sectoral segregation and states that a 'better gender balance across studies and occupations could contribute to meeting future skills and labour market needs'.

Has the Commission recorded any improvements in this respect since the publication of this report?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(13 July 2012)

Over the past years, the Commission has recorded modest improvement in tackling the remaining gender gaps in employment, education and the economy. The trends and comparative information on gender equality are described and analysed in the report 'Progress on equality between women and men in 2011' (SWD(2012)85).

Differences in educational choices, occupational and sectoral segregation remain important in many Member States and largely explain the high gender pay gap. This gap has narrowed slightly across the EU over the last years, but it still remains significant: on average, women earn 16.4% less than men for every hour worked in 2010 (compared to 17.4% in 2007). Progress in narrowing the gender gap in company boardrooms has also been slow.

Furthermore, while the employment rate of men (aged 20-64) has been 75% in 2011, that of women has been a sheer 62.3%, meaning that women still represent a huge untapped workforce potential. According to the Europe 2020 strategy, the 75% employment rate target of the age group 20-64 by the year 2020 should be achieved through the greater involvement of women. In line with this, both at the end of the first and second European Semester, country specific recommendations have been issued to Member States aiming at gender issues. The recommendations point to the need to provide achievable and affordable care facilities, to reduce financial disincentives faced by second earners, to combat the gender pay gap and to promote flexible working opportunities for women.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005610/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: L-edukazzjoni finanzjarja

Fl-2008 il-Kummissjoni adottat deċiżjoni dwar l-edukazzjoni finanzjarja (2008/365/KE), bil-għan li jinxtered għarfien finanzjarju ġenerali fost il-popolazzjoni Ewropea. Dan għamel l-edukazzjoni finanzjarja disponibbli għaċ-ċittadini mill-età tal-iskola, permezz ta' korsijiet u dejtabejżis fuq l-internet, pereżempju. L-anzjani, però, għandhom inqas aċċess għal dawn l-għodod, però għandhom l-istess bżonn għall-għarfien dwar finanzi personali. Ċerti problemi speċifiċi li jaffettwaw lill-anzjani, bħal nuqqas milli jaċċessaw il-benefiċċji jew li huma jkunu fil-mira tal-isfruttament finanzjarju, jitolbu għall-provvista ta' edukazzjoni finanzjarja aħjar.

X'qiegħda tagħmel il-Kummissjoni biex ixxerred l-għarfien finanzjarju fost l-anzjani, u kif tista' tindirizza l-bżonnijiet partikolari ta' dan il-grupp demografiku?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Dalli f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Lulju 2012)

L-attivitajiet tal-Kummissjoni fil-qasam tal-edukazzjoni finanzjarja huma indirizzati lil kulħadd, inlużi l-anzjani.

Riċentement, il-Kummissjoni wettqet studju ta' mmappjar tal-entitajiet mingħajr skop ta' qligħ li jipprovdu pariri finanzjarji ġenerali lill-konsumaturi ([1]). Bħala inizjattiva li ssegwi dan, il-Kummissjoni nediet proġett li għandu l-għan li jipprovdi lil dawn l-entitajiet mingħajr skop ta' qligħ fl-UE kollha b'korsijiet ta' taħriġ bil-lingwi kollha tal-UE, sabiex jibnu l-kapaċità tagħhom fil-qasam tal-pariri finanzjarji ([2]). L-anzjani ser ikunu jistgħu jibbenefikaw mis-servizzi mtejba li jipprovdulhom dawn l-entitajiet.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni qed topera għodda onlajn http://www.dolceta.eu/malta/index.php, għall-kwistjonijiet tal-konsumaturi, fil-lingwi kollha tal-UE. Din l-għodda tinkludi taqsima dwar l-informazzjoni għas-servizzi finanzjarji li tinsab disponibbli għall-konsumaturi kollha, inklużi l-anzjani.

Minbarra dan, ċerta leġiżlazzjoni Ewropea fil-qasam tas-servizzi finanzjarji bħal pereżempju d-Direttiva dwar is-Swieq fl-Istrumenti Finanzjarji (MiFID) tobbliga li ssir valutazzjoni dovuta mill-forniturі tal-profil tal-konsumaturi għas-sostenibbiltà tal-prodott ta' investiment li jiġi offrut. L-età tista' tkun fattur rilevanti f'din il-valutazzjoni.

([1]) Immappjar ta' Entitajiet Mingħajr Skop ta' Qligħ fl-UE li Jipprovdu Pariri Finanzjarji Ġenerali lill-Konsumaturi http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/rights/docs/mapping_nonprofit_entities_en.pdf

([2]) L-iżvilupp u l-organizzazzjon ta' korsijiet ta' taħriġ għall-entitajiet mingħajr skop ta' qligħ fl-UE, li jipprovdu pariri finanzjarji lill-konsumaturi. http://www.ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:85575-2012:TEXT:MT:HTML&tabId=1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005610/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Financial education

In 2008 the Commission adopted a decision on financial education (2008/365/EC), with a view to disseminating general financial knowledge among the European population. This has made financial education available to citizens starting at school age, through courses and web databases, for example. Elderly people, however, have less access to these tools, yet have just as much need of knowledge of personal finance. Certain specific problems which affect the elderly, such as failure to access benefits and being targeted for financial exploitation, call for the provision of better financial education.

What is the Commission doing to spread financial knowledge to the elderly, and how can it address this demographic group's particular needs?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

The Commission's activities in the area of financial education are addressed to all, including the elderly.

The Commission has recently carried out a mapping study of non-profit entities that provide general financial advice to consumers ([1]). As a follow-up initiative, the Commission has launched a project which aims at providing these non-profit entities across the EU in all EU languages with training courses, in order to build their capacity in the area of financial advice ([2]). Elderly people will be able to benefit by the improved services that such entities provide to them.

In addition, the Commission has been running an online tool for consumer issues, www.dolceta.eu, in all EU languages. This tool includes a section on financial services information which is available to all consumers, including the elderly.

Furthermore, some of the European legislation in the area of financial services such as for instance Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) obliges providers to make due assessment of the consumer's profile for the suitability of the investment product to be offered. The age could be a relevant factor in this assessment.

([1]) Mapping of Non-Profit Entities in the EU Providing General Financial Advice to Consumers, http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/rights/docs/mapping_nonprofit_entities_en.pdf

([2]) Development and organisation of training courses for non-profit entities in the EU, which provide financial advice to consumers, http://www.ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:85575-2012:TEXT:EN:HTML&src=0.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-005611/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προκλητικές δηλώσεις Λαγκάρντ και άλλων αξιωματούχων

Οι δηλώσεις της κυρίας Λαγκάρντ σχετικά με την Ελλάδα έχουν προκαλέσει ολόκληρο τον ελληνικό λαό. Γενικότερα, διαπιστώνεται ότι διάφοροι αξιωματούχοι, ειδικοί ή ανίδεοι, σχετικοί ή άσχετοι, προβαίνουν συνεχώς σε διάφορες δηλώσεις σχετικά με την Ελλάδα, που εξοργίζουν τον ελληνικό λαό ενόψει και της προεκλογικής περιόδου.

Οι δηλώσεις αυτές δημιουργούν εντονότερους προβληματισμούς στους έλληνες ψηφοφόρους, με κίνδυνο να εκτραπεί το εκλογικό σώμα σε ανεπανόρθωτες για την Ελλάδα καταστάσεις. Φτάσαμε στο σημείο αυτό να αναβιώσουμε στην Ελλάδα κομμουνιστικά φαντάσματα.

Έχοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Είναι διατεθειμένη να παρέμβει μέσω των επίσημων εκπροσώπων της ώστε να πάψουν να ασχολούνται με την Ελλάδα οι διάφοροι αξιωματούχοι, τουλάχιστον ενόψει της προεκλογικής περιόδου;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Ιουλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν σχολιάζει τις δηλώσεις ή τις ανακοινώσεις εκπροσώπων άλλων οργάνων ή διεθνών οργανισμών. Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει την ικανοποίησή της για το αποτέλεσμα των γενικών εκλογών στην Ελλάδα και παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην ανακοίνωση των προέδρων Barroso και Van Rompuy της 17ης Ιουνίου ([1]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/453&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005611/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Provocative statements by Christine Lagarde and other officials

The statements by Ms Lagarde about Greece have outraged the entire Greek people. A number of officials, some who are experts and some who are not, some whose functions are relevant to the issue in question and others whose functions are not, have repeatedly made statements about Greece that have infuriated the Greek people ahead of the elections.

These statements have put Greek voters in a terrible quandary, and risk deflecting the electorate from its course and creating an irreversible situation in Greece. We have now reached the point that the spectre of Communism is coming back to haunt us in Greece.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Will it intervene through its official representatives to stop various officials commenting on Greece, at least in the pre-electoral period?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

The Commission does not comment on declarations or statements made by representatives of other Institutions and International Organisations. The Commission welcomes the result of the general elections in Greece and would like to invite the Honourable Member to refer to the statement by Presidents Barroso and Van Rompuy on 17 June 2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/453&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-005612/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(4 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παραχώρηση ταξιδιωτικών εγγράφων σε μετανάστες

Εν όψει των εκλογών στις 17 Ιουνίου στην Ελλάδα, παρουσιάστηκαν διάφορες προτάσεις για την αντιμετώπιση των εξαιρετικά κρίσιμων στη χώρα αυτή ζητημάτων που άπτονται της μεταναστευτικής πολιτικής.

Μεταξύ άλλων, υποστηρίχθηκε η «σταδιακή παραχώρηση ταξιδιωτικών εγγράφων για το μεγάλο όγκο των μεταναστών που επιθυμούν να αποχωρήσουν από το ελληνικό έδαφος».

Η συγκεκριμένη πρόταση, μάλιστα, εξειδικεύθηκε ως εξής: «η μόνη ρεαλιστική και ανθρωπιστική λύση είναι να επιτραπεί (στους μετανάστες) να συνεχίσουν το ταξίδι τους όσοι το επιθυμούν».

— Πιστεύει η Επιτροπή ότι τυχόν εφαρμογή των ανωτέρω προτάσεων θα ήταν σύννομη με το κεκτημένο του Σένγκεν και το νομοθετικό πλαίσιο που το περιβάλλει, όπως για παράδειγμα με την απόφαση πλαίσιο 2002/946/ΔΕΥ για την ενίσχυση του ποινικού πλαισίου για την πρόληψη της υποβοήθησης της παράνομης εισόδου, διέλευσης και διαμονής (L 328 της 5.12.2002);

— Μπορεί να εφαρμόσει τέτοιες πολιτικές ένα κράτος μέλος της Συμφωνίας Σένγκεν; Αν ναι, θα υπήρχαν επιπτώσεις, και ποιες;

Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Ιουνίου 2012)

Αν και υπάγεται στην αρμοδιότητα κάθε κράτους μέλους να εκδίδει θεωρήσεις μακράς διαμονής, ταξιδιωτικά έγγραφα και τίτλους διαμονής σε υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών, οι αποφάσεις σχετικά με την έκδοση αυτών των εγγράφων συνδέεται άμεσα με το δικαίωμα μετακίνησης εντός του χώρου Σένγκεν. Πρόσφατα η Επιτροπή υπέβαλε την πρώτη εξαμηνιαία έκθεση για τη λειτουργία του χώρου Σένγκεν ([1]), στην οποία περιλαμβάνονται κατευθυντήριες γραμμές ώστε να διασφαλισθεί η συνεκτική εφαρμογή του κεκτημένου του Σένγκεν. Η απόφαση να εκδίδονται θεωρήσεις μακράς διαμονής, τίτλοι διαμονής και ταξιδιωτικά έγγραφα γισ υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών σε περιπτώσεις αιφνίδιας και μεγάλης κλίμακας εισροής μεταναστών δεν θα πρέπει να έχει αρνητικό αντίκτυπο στη λειτουργία του χώρου Σένγκεν. Οι αποφάσεις αυτές θα πρέπει να κοινοποιούνται εγκαίρως στο πλαίσιο του μηχανισμού αμοιβαίας πληροφόρησης ([2]). Τα κράτη μέλη καλούνται επίσης να επιλέγουν την έκδοση (προσωρινών) τίτλων διαμονής που δεν είναι ισοδύναμοι με θεώρηση συντόμου διαρκείας, εφόσον οι μετανάστες δεν πληρούν τους όρους μετακίνησης εντός του χώρου Σένγκεν ([3]).

Όσον αφορά την παράνομη μετανάστευση, η οδηγία σχετικά με τις επιστροφές ([4]) αναφέρει ότι τα κράτη μέλη είτε πρέπει να εκδίδουν απόφαση επιστροφής είτε να παρέχουν δικαίωμα παραμονής για λόγους φιλευσπλαχνίας, ανθρωπιστικούς ή άλλους λόγους, σύμφωνα με την οικεία νομοθεσία. Τα κράτη μέλη έχουν συμφωνήσει επίσης να περιορίζονται σε κατά περίπτωση ρυθμίσεις αντί να προβαίνουν σε γενικευμένες ρυθμίσεις ([5]). Εξάλλου, ένα ισχυρό νομικό πλαίσιο της ΕΕ αντιμετωπίζει το θέμα της υποβοήθησης της παράνομης εισόδου, διέλευσης και παραμονής ([6]) με την επιβολή της υποχρέωσης στα κράτη μέλη να προβλέπουν αποτελεσματικές, ανάλογες και αποτρεπτικές κυρώσεις σε διακινητές μεταναστών.

([1]) COM(2012)230 τελικό.
([2]) Απόφαση 2006/688/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου.
([3]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 562/2006.
([4]) Οδηγία 2008/115/ΕΚ.
([5]) Ευρωπαϊκό Σύμφωνο για τη μετανάστευση και το άσυλο της 24ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2008.
([6]) Οδηγία 2002/90/ΕΚ και απόφαση-πλαίσιο 2002/946/ΔΕΥ.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005612/12
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Issuing travel documents to migrants

In anticipation of the elections on 17 June 2012 in Greece, various proposals have been put forward on how to address the highly critical migration policy issues facing the country.

These proposals include the 'gradual issuing of travel documents to the great mass of migrants who wish to leave Greek territory'.

This specific proposal was explained as follows: 'the only realistic and humane solution is to allow those (migrants) who wish to continue their journey to do so'.

— Does the Commission believe that the application of these proposals would be compatible with the Schengen *acquis* and the relevant legislative framework, such as Framework Decision 2002/946/JHA on the strengthening of the penal framework to prevent the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence (OJ L 328, 5.12.2002)?

— Can Schengen states implement such policies? If so, would there be any consequences and what would they be?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2012)

Although it is a national competence to issue long stay visas, travel documents and residence permits to non-EU citizens, Member States' decisions on issuing such documents are directly linked to travel within the Schengen area. The Commission recently presented the first biannual report on the functioning of the Schengen area ([1]), including guidelines to ensure a coherent implementation of the Schengen *acquis*. The decision to issue long stay visas, residence permits and travel documents to non-EU citizens in cases of sudden large scale inflow of migrants should not have a negative impact on the functioning of the Schengen area. Such decisions should be timely circulated in the framework of the Mutual Information Mechanism (MIM) ([2]). The Member States are also invited to opt for issuing (provisional) residence permits that are not equivalent to a short stay visa if the migrants do not meet the conditions for travelling within the Schengen area ([3]).

As regards irregular migration, the Return Directive ([4]) states that Member States either have to issue a return decision or grant a right to stay for compassionate, humanitarian or other reasons, in accordance with their national legislation. Member States also agreed to restrict themselves to case-by-case regularisations rather than generalised ones ([5]). Moreover, a robust EU legal framework tackles the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit or stay ([6]) by imposing an obligation on Member States to provide for effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions against migrant smugglers.

([1]) COM(2012) 230 final.
([2]) Council Decision 2006/688/EC.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 562/2006.
([4]) Directive 2008/115/EC.
([5]) European Pact on Immigration and Asylum of 24 September 2008.
([6]) Directive 2002/90/EC and Framework Decision 2002/946/JHA.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005613/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(4 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Guantanamo, dieci anni di violazioni di diritti umani

L'11 gennaio 2002, 20 persone fecero ingresso in una prigione «off shore» allestita a Cuba su ordine dell'allora presidente degli USA, George W. Bush, per trattenervi i «combattenti nemici» catturati durante la «guerra al terrore», proclamata subito dopo gli attacchi dell'11 settembre 2001.

Un decennio dopo, 11 di quelle 20 persone si trovano ancora detenute a tempo indeterminato, senza accusa né processo, all'interno di quello che è diventato, per Amnesty International, il centro di detenzione di Guantánamo. Ci sono voluti sei anni e mezzo prima che la Corte suprema federale riconoscesse ai detenuti di Guantánamo il diritto di ricorrere contro la legittimità della loro detenzione presso le corti federali statunitensi.

Non c'è nessuno, in questi ultimi anni, che non abbia dichiarato pubblicamente di voler smantellare Guantánamo: lo hanno chiesto le organizzazioni non governative, le Nazioni Unite e i governi europei. Tuttavia, non solo Guantánamo non è stato chiuso, ma quello che lo stesso presidente Obama definì un «esperimento mal diretto» prosegue all'interno di un laboratorio ancora in funzione.

Tra le 779 persone finite a Guantánamo, vi sono sei condanne e sette procedimenti in corso. Seicento persone vi hanno trascorso anni prima di essere valutate innocenti e rilasciate, e decine degli attuali detenuti sono ancora dietro le sbarre perché le autorità statunitensi non ritengono che il paese di origine sia un luogo sicuro e non hanno trovato un paese terzo disposto ad accoglierli.

Questi provvedimenti negano giustizia non solo ai prigionieri di Guantánamo ma anche ai sopravvissuti e ai parenti delle vittime dell'11 settembre, che vorrebbero vedere i responsabili di quegli atroci crimini contro l'umanità portati di fronte a un tribunale con tutti i crismi di legalità.

Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza della grave situazione che si sta perpetuando da anni nel carcere di Guantanamo?

2. Quali misure intende adottare per garantire un efficace intervento volto a tutelare i diritti umani ripetutamente violati?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2012)

L'UE ha ripetutamente espresso la propria posizione secondo la quale la lotta al terrorismo deve essere portata avanti nel pieno rispetto delle norme internazionali in materia di diritti umani e dello Stato di diritto e continua a sollecitare la chiusura del centro di detenzione di Guantanamo Bay.

L'UE ha accolto favorevolmente la decisione del presidente Obama del 22 gennaio 2009 di chiudere la base di Guantanamo entro un anno. Al fine di facilitarne la chiusura, nel giugno 2009 il presidente del Consiglio dei ministri ha inviato una lettera al segretario di Stato e al segretario alla difesa statunitensi in cui osservava: «cooperando con gli Stati Uniti nei loro sforzi per la chiusura di Guantanamo, ci auguriamo di poter apportare un contributo positivo alla modifica di alcune politiche statunitensi». In tal senso e sulla base di un accordo quadro facilitato dall'UE, un certo numero di Stati membri ha accolto alcuni ex detenuti che erano stati rilasciati.

Tuttavia, il decreto del presidente Obama del 7 marzo 2011 ha stabilito che alcuni individui rimarranno detenuti a Guantanamo senza alcuna imputazione a loro carico e senza processo.

L'UE ha espresso le sue riserve in merito al Consigliere giuridico del Dipartimento di Stato USA, Harold Koh, in occasione degli incontri delle missioni dell'UE a Washington e del dialogo periodico sul diritto internazionale e la lotta al terrorismo del Gruppo di lavoro del Consiglio sul diritto internazionale pubblico (COJUR), tenutosi a Bruxelles il 16 marzo 2011. Il Gruppo di lavoro del Consiglio sul diritto internazionale pubblico continuerà ad affrontare tali questioni nel corso delle riunioni semestrali con il Consigliere giuridico del Dipartimento di Stato USA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005613/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Guantánamo: 10 years of human rights violations

On 11 January 2002, 20 people entered an 'off shore' prison set up in Cuba, under the orders of US President George W. Bush, to house 'enemy combatants' captured during the 'war on terror' which was proclaimed immediately after the attacks of 11 September 2001.

A decade on, 11 of those 20 people are still being held indefinitely, without charges being brought against them or a trial being held, within what Amnesty International describes as the Guantánamo detention centre. It took six and a half years for the Federal Supreme Court to recognise the right of those held in Guantánamo to appeal against the legitimacy of their imprisonment before the US federal courts.

In recent years, everyone has publicly said that they want to dismantle Guantánamo: non-governmental organisations, the United Nations and European governments have all requested it. However, not only has Guantánamo not been closed, but what President Obama described as a 'misguided experiment' continues to this day inside a fully-functioning laboratory.

Six of the 779 people who ended up in Guantánamo have been sentenced and seven are on trial. Six hundred people spent years there before being judged innocent and released, and dozens of the current prisoners are still behind bars because the American authorities do not consider their country of origin safe and have not found another country willing to accept them.

These provisions deny justice not only to the Guantánamo prisoners but also to the survivors and relatives of 11 September, who want to see the people responsible for those atrocious crimes against humanity brought before a proper court of law.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative reply to the following questions:

1. Is she aware of the serious situation which has been ongoing for several years in the Guantánamo prison?

2. What measures does she intend to take to guarantee effective action to safeguard the human rights that have been repeatedly violated?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2012)

The EU has repeatedly stated its position that the fight against terrorism must be conducted in full compliance with international human rights standards and the rule of law. The EU continues to call for the closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility.

The EU welcomed the decision by President Obama on 22 January 2009 to close Guantanamo Bay within a year. With a view to facilitating the closure of Guantanamo Bay, in June 2009 the President of the Council of Ministers sent a letter to the US Secretaries of State and of Defence which noted that 'by working with the US in its endeavours to close Guantanamo, we hope we can make a positive contribution to changing US policies'. With that objective in mind and on the basis of a framework agreement facilitated by the EU, a number of Member States accepted in the following months certain ex-detainees who had been released.

However, President Obama's Executive Order of 7 March 2011 established that a number of individuals will continue to be detained at Guantanamo Bay without charge or trial.

The EU has raised its concerns on these issues with the US State Department Legal Adviser, Harold Koh, in meetings with EU Missions in Washington and with the Council Working Group on Public International Law (COJUR) in their regular dialogue on international law and counter-terrorism in Brussels on 16 March 2011. The Council Working Group on Public International Law will continue to address these issues in their biannual meetings with the US State Department Legal Adviser.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005614/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Lapidazione in Sudan

A fine maggio 2012, Human Rights Watch ha riferito che il 22 aprile a Omdurman in Sudan una giovane donna è stata condannata alla lapidazione per aver commesso adulterio. Sembra che la giovane abbia meno di 18 anni e che sia tenuta incatenata, in carcere, assieme al figlio di cinque mesi. La condanna è stata emessa in base all'articolo 146 del codice penale sudanese del 1991 che prevede l'esecuzione mediante lapidazione in caso di adulterio commesso da una persona sposata e 100 frustate nel caso di persona non sposata. La giovane ha confessato dopo essere stata picchiata da un membro della famiglia. L'uomo accusato di aver commesso l'adulterio con la giovane donna ha respinto l'accusa e subito dopo è stato rilasciato. Benché la legge sudanese stabilisca il diritto all'assistenza giudiziaria per le persone incriminate di reati gravi, alla giovane non è stato concesso né un avvocato né un interprete durante l'udienza. La donna è tuttora in carcere, mentre avvocati volontari hanno interposto appello a suo nome.

Il Sudan ha sottoscritto la Convenzione sui diritti dell'infanzia che vieta di comminare la pena di morte o l'ergastolo a carattere perpetuo a persone minori di 18 anni ed è uno dei sette paesi che ammettono la condanna alla lapidazione. Secondo il «regime di ordine pubblico» del paese, le donne possono essere arrestate e fustigate se violano l'articolo 152 del codice penale che proibisce non meglio definiti «atti indecenti e immorali». E ciò si riferisce anche alle donne che indossano pantaloni e gonne al ginocchio. Molte pene sono giustificate come parte della Sharia.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza del fatto che in Sudan è comminata la pena della lapidazione in caso di adulterio?

2. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante disposto a chiedere alle autorità sudanesi di commutare la sentenza pronunciata contro la giovane donna?

3. Quali misure ha intrapreso l'UE in passato per esortare il Sudan a rivedere le proprie leggi al fine di conformarsi alle norme internazionali?

4. Hanno dato tali iniziative qualche esito? In caso affermativo, quali?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton è perfettamente a conoscenza del caso di Intisar Sharif Abdallah condannata a morte per lapidazione con l'accusa di adulterio. Il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna segue da vicino la questione, in stretta collaborazione con la delegazione dell'UE e con le ambasciate degli Stati membri a Khartoum.

L'UE è consapevole del fatto che Intisar Sharif Abdallah non è stata assistita adeguatamente durante il processo e che la sua condanna si basa esclusivamente su una confessione estorta con la forza.

Al momento, Intisar Sharif Abdallah è rappresentata da una équipe di avvocati che ha presentato appello contro la condanna a morte. Stando alle informazioni raccolte da varie fonti, comprese ONG, la sentenza ha creato imbarazzo fra le autorità sudanesi che stanno cercando di annullarla. Si spera che ciò comporti l'esame del ricorso in tempi brevi. L'UE segue da vicino il caso e valuterà tutte le possibili risposte in funzione dei suoi sviluppi.

In passato e in varie occasioni, sia bilateralmente che in sedi multilaterali, l'Unione europea ha invitato il Sudan ad abolire la pena di morte o almeno ad imporre una moratoria de jure. Essa ha altresì incoraggiato le autorità sudanesi a firmare e a ratificare tutti gli strumenti internazionali pertinenti relativi all'applicazione della pena di morte, compreso il secondo protocollo facoltativo al patto internazionale sui diritti civili e politici.

Nonostante tali sforzi, la pena di morte è ancora applicata in Sudan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005614/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Stoning in Sudan

In late May 2012, Human Rights Watch reported that on April 22 in Sudan a young woman, Intisar Sharif Abdallah, had been sentenced in the city of Omdurman to be stoned for committing adultery. She is believed to be under the age of 18 and is being held in prison with her five-month-old baby. Her legs are shackled. She was sentenced under Article 146 of Sudan's Criminal Act of 1991, which provides that the penalty for adultery by a married person is execution by stoning and the penalty for an unmarried person is 100 lashes. She confessed to the charge after being beaten by a family member. The man who was alleged to have committed adultery with her was released after denying the charges. Although Sudanese law stipulates that those accused of serious crimes have the right to legal representation, Intisar Sharif Abdallah was not given access to a lawyer or an interpreter in the court-room. She remains in prison, while *pro bono* lawyers have placed an appeal on her behalf.

Sudan itself is party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which prohibits imposing either capital punishment or a life sentence without the prospect of release on a person under the age of 18. Sudan is one of only seven countries that permit stoning as a form of punishment. Under the country's public order regime, women and girls may face arrest and flogging if they violate Article 152 of the Criminal Act prohibiting vaguely defined 'indecent and immoral acts'. This includes women who wear trousers and knee-length skirts. Many of the punishments are justified as part of Sharia law.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of Sudan's imposition of stoning as a punishment against adulterers?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask the Sudanese authorities to commute the sentence against Intisar Sharif Abdallah?

3. What steps has the EU taken in the past to urge Sudan to revise its laws in order to comply with international standards?

4. What, if any, has been the outcome?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The HR/VP is well aware of the case of Ms Intisar Sharif Abdallah who has been sentenced to death by stoning for committing adultery. The EEAS is closely monitoring the case in close cooperation with the EU Delegation and Member States Embassies in Khartoum.

The EU is aware of reports that Ms Abdallah was not effectively represented in her trial and that the sentence was based solely on the evidence of a forced confession.

At the moment, Ms Abdallah is represented by a legal team, which is appealing the death sentence. Information gathered by various sources, including NGOs, indicates that local Sudanese authorities are embarrassed by the ruling and have been trying to revert the verdict. It is hoped that this will lead to the imminent examination of her appeal. The EU closely monitors the evolution of Ms Abdallah's case and will examine all possible reactions according to developments.

In the past and on various occasions, either bilaterally or in the context of multilateral fora, the EU has called on Sudan to abolish the death penalty or at least impose a de jure moratorium. It has also encouraged the Sudanese authorities to sign and ratify all the relevant international instruments making references to the use of death penalty, including the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights.

Despite these efforts the death sentence is still applied in Sudan.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-005615/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(4 juni 2012)

Angående: Krav på öppenhet och insyn i villkor kopplade till IKT i avtal om ekonomiskt partnerskap med länder i östra och södra Afrika

Kommissionen ingick nyligen interimsavtal om ekonomiskt partnerskap med flera afrikanska stater söder om Sahara. Det är uppenbart att kommissionen har mött svårigheter i dessa förhandlingar, inte enbart på grund av att de afrikanska motparterna tidigare mycket ofta drog sig ur förhandlingarna, utan också på grund av den tidsåtgång som krävts för att nå de slutliga överenskommelserna.

Det är ytterst allvarligt att kommissionen, i artikel 48 ([1]) i det relevanta interimsavtalet om informations- och kommunikationsteknik, verkar ha frångått de tydliga mål om öppenhet, interoperabilitet och insyn som främjades i europeiska unionens och kommissionens egna digitala agenda ([2]), liksom de mål om ett öppet och enkelt medborgardeltagande som förespråkas i de mål om användning av forskningsresultat som föreslås i Horizon 2020 ([3]) samt syftet med det direktiv om standarder som nyligen lades fram av parlamentet, i vilket öppenhet och tillgänglighet i IKT betonas ([4]). Samtidigt som kommissionen fokuserar på öppenhet, tillgänglighet och opartiskhet i sina interna strategier har alla möjliga hänvisningar till dessa villkor utelämnats i artiklarna i avtalen om ekonomiskt partnerskap.

Hur motiverar kommissionen bristen på konsekvens mellan texterna i avtalen om ekonomiskt partnerskap och kraven på öppenhet och tillgänglighet?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(5 juli 2012)

Både länderna i östra och södra Afrika och EU betraktar informations- och kommunikationsteknik (IKT) som en förutsättning för utveckling, och har enats om klausuler om samarbete på detta område i 2007 års interimsavtal om ekonomiskt partnerskap. Artikel 48 i avtalet är utformat på ett generellt sätt för att tjäna som underlag för samarbete inom IKT nu och i framtiden. Tillämpningen av artikeln kommer att bygga på bästa praxis och erfarenheter av EU:s politiska insatser och regelverk. Eftersom de mål som frågeställaren nämner i sin fråga upptar en central ställning i dessa politiska insatser och regler, kommer de naturligtvis att inspirera EU:s samarbete och stå i centrum för framtidens initiativ.

Dessa principer tillämpas redan inom de viktigaste samarbetsinitiativen med Afrika. t.ex. Hipssa ([5]) till stöd för harmonisering av öppna, genomblickbara IKT-regelverk i Afrika söder om Sahara. I samma andra verkar projektet AfricaConnect ([6]) till stöd för uppbyggnad av regionala afrikanska forsknings- och utbildningsnätverk och anslutning av dem till det europeiska nätet Geant ([7]), som ska öppna möjligheter för afrikanska forskare att samarbeta internationellt.

Slutligen kan organisationer från utomeuropeiska länder, även från Afrika, delta i EU:s sjunde ramprogram för forskning och utveckling, och den principen förväntas fortsätta att gälla inom Horisont 2020 (2014-2020).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:111:0002:1172:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0245:FIN:EN:PDF.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/proposals/proposal_for_a_regulation_of_the_european_parliament_and_of_the_council_establishing_horizon_2020_-_the_framework_programme_for_research_and_innovation_(2014-2020).pdf (skäl 20, s. 8).
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-478.420+01+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN.
([5]) Projektet Harmonization of the ICT Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa: http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/projects/ITU_EC_ACP/hipssa/.
([6]) http://www.africaconnect.eu/pages/home.aspx.
([7]) GEANT = Gigabit European Advanced Network Technology.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005615/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Openness and transparency requirements in the ICT obligations of the ESA country EPAs

The Commission recently concluded interim Economic Partnership Agreements with several sub-Saharan African states. It is clear that the Commission has had difficulties with these negotiations, not only on account of the previously very frequent withdrawals from the negotiations by African counterparts, but also because of the amount of time it has taken to reach these final agreements.

It is a matter of grave concern that, in Article 48 ([1]) of the relevant interim agreement, relating to information and communications technology, the Commission seems to have abandoned the explicit goals of openness, interoperability and transparency promoted in the European Union's and the Commission's own Digital Agenda ([2]), as well as open and easy citizen participation targets, as advocated in the proposed Horizon 2020 goals for use of research results ([3]) and the aims of the Standards Directive recently drafted by Parliament, emphasising openness and accessibility in ICT ([4]). While the Commission focuses on openness, accessibility and fairness in its internal strategies, all possible references to these terms have been omitted from the EPA articles.

What is the Commission's justification for the EPA text's lack of consistency with openness and accessibility requirements?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

Both the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) and the EU consider information and communication technologies (ICT) essential for development and have agreed provisions on cooperation in this area in the 2007 Interim Economic Partnership Agreement. Article 48 of the Agreement is drafted in a comprehensive manner, to provide a basis for present and future ICT cooperation. Its implementation will rely on best practices and experience in EU policies and regulatory frameworks. Since the goals mentioned in the Honourable Member's question are at the heart of those policies and rules, they will certainly inspire the EU's cooperation and will be at the core of future initiatives.

These principles are already present in major cooperation initiatives with Africa, such as the HIPSSA project ([5]), supporting the harmonisation of open and transparent regional ICT regulatory frameworks in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the same spirit, the AfricaConnect project ([6]) supports the deployment of regional research and education networks in Africa and their interconnection with the European GEANT ([7]) network, which will allow African researchers access to international research collaboration possibilities.

Finally, the EU's Seventh Research and Development Framework Programme is open for the participation of organisations from third countries (including from Africa), and that this principle is expected to be continued under Horizon 2020 (2014-2020).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:111:0002:1172:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0245:FIN:EN:PDF.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/proposals/proposal_for_a_regulation_of_the_european_parliament_and_of_the_council_establishing_horizon_2020_-_the_framework_programme_for_research_and_innovation_(2014-2020).pdf (Recital 20, page 8).
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-478.420+01+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN.
([5]) Harmonisation of the ICT Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa: http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/projects/ITU_EC_ACP/hipssa/.
([6]) http://www.africaconnect.eu/pages/home.aspx.
([7]) GEANT = Gigabit European Advanced Network Technology.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-005616/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(4 juni 2012)

Angående: Effekten av gemenskapens växtförädlarrätt på skapandet av nya sorter

I en kommissionsstudie utförd i april 2011 av GHK Consulting och ADAS UK för DG SANCO, ”Evaluation of the Community Plant Variety Right *Acquis* – Final Report” ([1]), konstateras att växtförädlarrätt utvecklats för att stimulera skapande av nya sorter genom att främja innovationer inom växtförädling. I studien konstateras dock även att det inte finns några direkta bevis som styrker att bestämmelser i gemenskapens växtförädlarrätt stimulerar innovation och att det ännu inte har presenterats några kvantitativa uppgifter som kan användas för att visa att målet har uppnåtts.

Tänker kommissionen ta fram de kvantitativa uppgifter som behövs för att bedöma huruvida gemenskapens växtförädlarrätt fyller sitt syfte att stimulera skapande av nya sorter? Om inte, varför inte?

Svar från John Dalli på kommissionens vägnar
(17 augusti 2012)

Gemenskapens växtförädlarrättsordning baseras på förordning (EG) nr 2100/94 ([2]). Lagstiftningen går i linje med 1991 års konvention från internationella unionen för skydd av växtförädlingsprodukter (UPOV).

Denna konvention utgör grunden för att medlemmar ska kunna uppmuntra förädling genom att bevilja växtförädlare en immateriell äganderätt. Syftet är att tillhandahålla ett effektivt system för växtförädlingsskydd och främja utvecklingen av nya växtsorter. År 2005 kom en studie av konsekvenserna av växtförädlingsskyddet fram till att UPOV:s system ger ett effektivt incitament att förädla växter i olika situationer och att det resulterar i att nya förbättrade sorter utvecklas till nytta för jordbrukare, odlare och konsumenter.

Tillämpningen av lagstiftningen kring gemenskapens växtförädlarrättigheter utvärderades av en extern konsult under 2010/2011. Rådet noterade utvärderingens slutsatser och betonade att systemet fungerar väl och överlag skyddar växtförädlingsinnovation i unionen.

På grundval av rekommendationerna från utvärderingen och samråden med berörda parter kommer kommissionen noggrant att undersöka behovet av att producera mer detaljerade kvantitativa uppgifter om EU:s växtförädlarrättssystem och dess effekt på innovation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/propertyrights/docs/cpvr_evaluation_final_report.pdf
([2]) EUT L 227, 1.9.1994.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005616/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Effect of Community Plant Variety Rights (CPVR) on the creation of new varieties

A Commission study completed in April 2011 by GHK Consulting and ADAS UK for DG SANCO, entitled 'Evaluation of the Community Plant Variety Right *Acquis* — Final Report' ([1]), stated that 'plant variety protection was developed to stimulate creation of new varieties' by encouraging 'plant breeding innovation'. However, the same study also states that 'there is no direct evidence that the CPVR *acquis* stimulates innovation', and that 'no quantitative data' have been provided so far that could be used to show that the objective has been attained.

Does the Commission intend to produce the quantitative data needed in order to assess whether or not community plant variety protection is fulfilling its purpose of stimulating the creation of new varieties? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

The Community Plant Variety Rights (CPVR) regime is based on Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 ([2]). The legislation is in line with the 1991 Convention of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).

This Convention provides the basis for members to encourage breeding by granting breeders of new plant varieties an intellectual property right. The aim is to provide an effective system of plant variety protection, encouraging the development of new varieties of plants. In 2005, a study on the effects of plant variety protection concluded that the UPOV system provides an effective incentive for plant breeding in different situations and results in the development of new, improved varieties to the benefit of farmers, growers and consumers.

The implementation of the CPVR legislation was evaluated by an external consultant in 2010-2011. The Council took note of the conclusions of the evaluation and highlighted that the system is working well overall protecting plant breeding innovation in the Union.

Based on the recommendations of the evaluation report and the stakeholder consultations, the Commission will carefully examine the need to produce more detailed quantitative data on CPVR system and the impact on innovation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/propertyrights/docs/cpvr_evaluation_final_report.pdf
([2]) OJ L 227, 1.9.1994.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005618/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(4 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Επιβολή της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ σχετικά με τη μεταφορά ζώων στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με την απόφαση της 10ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2009 του Δικαστηρίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (Υπόθεση C-416/07), η Ελλάδα κρίθηκε ένοχη για την αδυναμία εκπλήρωσης των υποχρεώσεών της στον τομέα της προστασίας των ζώων κατά τη μεταφορά τους.

Στην αναφορά της πλέον πρόσφατης αποστολής του Γραφείου Τροφίμων και Κτηνιατρικών Θεμάτων (ΓΤΚΘ) στην Ελλάδα (DG(SANCO)2011-6212-MR), αναφέρονται τα εξής: «Όσον αφορά τη διενέργεια επίσημων ελέγχων διαπιστώνεται επιδείνωση των συνθηκών από την τελευταία επιθεώρηση, καθώς υπάρχουν λιγότεροι υπάλληλοι, επιπρόσθετοι περιορισμοί όσον αφορά την αποζημίωση για τη χρήση οχήματος, ενώ δεν έχει αρθεί η απαγόρευση των υπερωριών παρά τα επαναλαμβανόμενα αιτήματα της ΕΑΑ για πρόσθετη χρηματοδότηση» και ότι «(…) καθώς εξακολουθούν να πραγματοποιούνται εξαιρετικά λίγοι καθ' οδόν έλεγχοι, οι μεταφορείς μπορούν εύκολα να τους αποφύγουν».

Παραδείγματος χάριν: το 2010, πραγματοποιήθηκαν 467 μεταφορές ζώων στους βασικούς λιμένες της Ελλάδας (Ηγουμενίτσα και Πάτρα)· ωστόσο, ελέγχθηκαν μόνο έξι περιπτώσεις.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω:

1. Με ποιον τρόπο προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να διασφαλίσει ότι η Ελλάδα θα εκπληρώσει μελλοντικά τις υποχρεώσεις της όσον αφορά την επιβολή του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2005;

2. Ποιες είναι οι επιπτώσεις στα ζώα που μεταφέρονται και ποιοι οι πιθανοί κίνδυνοι για τους τελικούς καταναλωτές από την έλλειψη συμμόρφωσης με τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ σε σχέση με τη μεταφορά των ζώων;

3. Δεν θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η μεταφορά ζώντων ζώων σε μακρινές αποστάσεις είναι μη βιώσιμη εξαιτίας των εν λόγω διαρθρωτικών προβλημάτων;

4. Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι τα χρόνια προβλήματα που περιγράφονται ανωτέρω μπορούν να επιλυθούν χωρίς να πραγματοποιηθεί αναθεώρηση του σχετικού κανονισμού με σκοπό την κατάργηση των μακράς διαρκείας μεταφορών ζώων και την αντικατάστασή τους με τη μεταφορά κρεάτων και σφαγίων;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Αυγούστου 2012)

1. Με βάση την απόφαση που εξέδωσε το Δικαστήριο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για την υπόθεση C-416/07 ([1]) και την έκθεση του Γραφείου Τροφίμων και Κτηνιατρικών Θεμάτων για την αποστολή στην Ελλάδα τον Φεβρουάριο του 2011 ([2]), η Επιτροπή ξεκίνησε διάλογο με τις ελληνικές αρμόδιες αρχές σχετικά με τα μέτρα που προτίθενται να λάβουν για να συμμορφωθούν με την εν λόγω απόφαση. Η Επιτροπή αξιολογεί επί του παρόντος τα μέτρα που σχεδιάζουν να λάβουν ή έχουν ήδη λάβει οι ελληνικές αρχές.

2. Η μη συμμόρφωση με τους κανόνες για την καλή μεταχείριση των ζώων οδηγεί στις περισσότερες περιπτώσεις σε κακές συνθήκες διαβίωσης των ζώων. Οι κανόνες για την ασφάλεια των τροφίμων έχουν θεμελιώδη σημασία στην ΕΕ και οι έλεγχοι που διενεργούνται στο συγκεκριμένο νομοθετικό πλαίσιο ([3]) έχουν θεσμοθετηθεί για να εξασφαλίζουν ότι η ασφάλεια των καταναλωτών δεν θα τεθεί σε κίνδυνο λόγω πλημμελούς συμμόρφωσης με τη νομοθεσία για την καλή μεταχείριση των ζώων κατά τη μεταφορά.

3 και 4. Το Δικαστήριο αποφάνθηκε ότι η Ελλάδα παρέβη τις υποχρεώσεις που υπέχει δυνάμει της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ. Συνεπώς, τα εν λόγω προβλήματα σαφώς συνδέονται με την πλημμελή επιβολή των κανόνων. Το συμπέρασμα αυτό ενισχύει την άποψη της Επιτροπής ότι η επιβολή των κανόνων πρέπει να εξακολουθήσει να είναι προτεραιότητα για την Επιτροπή και για τα κράτη μέλη.

([1]) Υπόθεση C-416/07, Συλλογή 2009, σ. I-7883.
([2]) Λεπτομέρειες της έκθεσης βρίσκονται στην εξής διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2753.
([3]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 854/2004 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 29ης Απριλίου 2004, για τον καθορισμό ειδικών διατάξεων για την οργάνωση των επίσημων ελέγχων στα προϊόντα ζωικής προέλευσης που προορίζονται για κατανάλωση από τον άνθρωπο· ΕΕ L 139 της 30.4.2004, σ. 206-320.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005618/12
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Enforcement of EU legislation on animal transport in Greece

The European Court of Justice found Greece guilty in its judgment of 10 September 2009 (Case C-416/07) for failing to fulfil its obligations concerning the protection of animals during transport.

The report on the most recent FVO (Food and Veterinary Office) mission to Greece (DG(SANCO)2011-6212-MR) states: 'The constraints on carrying out official controls have worsened since the last inspection, with fewer staff, additional restrictions on reimbursement for the use of vehicles, and no lifting of the overtime ban despite repeated requests from the CCA for additional funding', adding that '(…) as level of roadside checks remain extremely low, it remains easy for the transporters to avoid being checked'.

To give an example: 467 animal transports arrived at the main Greek ports (Igoumenitsa and Patras) in 2010; however, only six transports were checked.

On the basis of the above:

1. How does the Commission intend to guarantee that Greece will fulfil its obligation to enforce Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 in the future?

2. What are the consequences for the transported animals and the potential dangers for the end-consumers arising from the lack of compliance with the EU legislation covering animal transport?

3. Does the Commission not think that the option of transporting live animals over long distances is unsustainable in the presence of such structural problems?

4. Does the Commission think that the chronic problems described above can be solved without a review of the regulation, aimed at ending long-distance transport and at replacing it with the transport of meat and carcasses?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

1. In view of the ruling of the European Court of Justice in Case C-416/07 ([1]) and the report of the Food and Veterinary Office from the audit to Greece in February 2011 ([2]), the Commission has started a structured dialogue with the Greek competent authorities on which actions are envisaged in order to comply with the judgment. The Commission is currently assessing actions planned or being taken by the Greek authorities.

2. Non-compliance of the rules on animal welfare would in most cases lead to poor animal welfare. The rules on food safety are paramount to the EU and the controls performed under this legislative framework ([3]) are in place to ensure that the safety of the consumer would not be at risk due to poor compliance with the legislation on animal welfare during transport.

3 and 4. It has been concluded by the European Court of Justice that Greece has failed to fulfil its obligations under the EU legislation. Hence the described problems are clearly related to poor enforcement of the rules. This conclusion supports the view of the Commission that enforcement must remain the first priority for the Commission and for the Member States.

([1]) C-416/07, ECR 2009, p. I-7883.
([2]) Details of the report can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2753.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption; OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 206-320.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005619/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(4 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Nuovi Cantieri Apuania S.p.A. di Marina di Carrara: possibile violazione delle norme a tutela dei lavoratori e dei livelli occupazionali in caso di dismissioni

Nelle scorse settimane i vertici dei Nuovi Cantieri Apuania S.p.A. di Marina di Carrara hanno annunciato la volontà di porre fina all'attività produttiva del cantiere navale entro la fine dell'anno, licenziando così 170 lavoratori diretti e 500 facenti parte di tutto l'indotto, e incidendo su una Provincia che già presenta il più alto tasso di disoccupazione del Centro-Nord.

Eppure, tale realtà industriale rappresenta un polo d'eccellenza in termini economici, sociali e occupazionali per tutto il territorio della Provincia di Massa-Carrara: basti pensare che ad oggi è prevista l'ultimazione di un traghetto *ro-ro passenger ship* che opererà nel tragitto dello Stretto di Messina e che sarà adibito al trasporto di carrozze e carri ferroviari, passeggeri e autovetture; inoltre, è prevista la costruzione di un secondo traghetto porta vagoni per il Gruppo Ferrovie dello Stato italiane e la partecipazione a una gara internazionale per la realizzazione di un traghetto in Quebec. Infatti, dal punto di vista degli asset strategici la società NCA S.p.A. è riuscita in questi anni a detenere un patrimonio in termini di know-how, tecniche e professionalità di altissimo livello, anche grazie alla realizzazione, in passato, di traghetti della GNV e della Grimaldi Holding, che oggi però rischiano di scomparire.

Eppure, la società navale NCA S.p.A. è di proprietà al 100 % della società Invitalia, l'Agenzia nazionale italiana per l'attrazione degli investimenti e lo sviluppo d'impresa, che agisce su mandato del Governo proprio per accrescere la competitività e per sostenere i settori strategici per lo sviluppo attraverso l'attrazione di investimenti esteri e la valorizzazione dei territori.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. La NCA S.p.A. ha rispettato le disposizioni della direttiva 98/59/CE in materia di licenziamenti collettivi e in particolare l'articolo 2?

2. Sono state rispettate le disposizioni della direttiva 94/45/CE, modificata dalla direttiva 2009/38/CE, la direttiva 2002/14/CE, la direttiva 2001/23/CE e la direttiva 2008/94/CE?

3. La NCA S.p.A. ha rispettato le disposizioni della direttiva 2006/54/CE che vieta, tra le altre misure, le discriminazioni dirette e indirette tra uomini e donne per quanto riguarda le condizioni di licenziamento?

4. Quali azioni possono essere intraprese a tutela e salvaguardia dei posti di lavoro oggi in pericolo?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(26 luglio 2012)

La Commissione non ha modo di valutare i fatti, né di stabilire se effettivamente una società privata abbia rispettato o meno una disposizione di applicazione della legislazione dell'UE. Spetta alle competenti autorità nazionali, come i tribunali, vigilare sulla corretta ed effettiva applicazione della legislazione nazionale di recepimento delle direttive comunitarie menzionate dall'onorevole parlamentare da parte del datore di lavoro interessato, considerate le circostanze specifiche di ogni caso.

La Commissione non ha allo studio l'adozione di alcuna nuova iniziativa in materia di tutela del posto di lavoro per i motivi indicati nelle risposte alle interrogazioni E-5126/2012 ed E-5243/2012. Come già spiegato nella risposta data all'interrogazione E-4567/2012 ([1]), la Commissione ribadisce la necessità di programmare eventuali ristrutturazioni e svolgere per tempo il lavoro preparatorio.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005619/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(4 June 2012)

Subject: Nuovi Cantieri Apuania S.p.A. of Marina di Carrara: potential violation of the laws protecting workers and employment levels in case of dismissals

In recent weeks, the management of Nuovi Cantieri Apuania S.p.A. of Marina di Carrara announced its intention to cease production at the shipyard by the end of the year, thereby dismissing 170 employees and 500 people in associated industries and impacting a province which already has the highest unemployment rate in northern central Italy.

The company is a centre of excellence in economic, social and employment terms for the whole of the Province of Massa-Carrara. It is currently finalising a roll-on, roll-off ferry that will operate in the Strait of Messina and be equipped to transport railway carriages, vehicles and passengers. There are also plans for a second railway carriage ferry to be built for the Italian State Railways Group and for the company to take part in an international tender for the construction of a ferry in Quebec. In fact, in terms of strategic assets, NCA S.p.A. has accumulated a wealth of know-how, cutting-edge technical skills and highly qualified staff in recent years, particularly thanks to its construction of ferries for GNV and Grimaldi Holding, all of which is now at risk of disappearing.

NCA S.p.A. is 100% owned by Invitalia, the Italian inward investment and business development agency, which is appointed by the Italian Government to increase competitiveness and support the development of strategic industries by attracting foreign investment and promoting local areas.

Given the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Has NCA S.p.A. complied with the provisions of Directive 98/59/EC on collective dismissals and, in particular, Article 2 thereof?

2. Has there been full compliance with the provisions of Directive 94/45/EC, as modified by Directive 2009/38/EC, Directive 2002/14/EC, Directive 2001/23/EC and Directive 2008/94/EC?

3. Has NCA S.p.A. respected the provisions of Directive 2006/54/EC, which forbids, among other measures, direct and indirect discrimination between men and women in terms of dismissal conditions?

4. What initiatives can be undertaken to protect and safeguard the jobs which are currently at risk?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

The Commission is not in a position to assess the facts or state whether a private company has or has not complied with any provisions implementing EU legislation. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directives referred to by the Honourable Member is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

The Commission is not considering taking any new initiatives in the area of job protection for the reasons set out in its answer to questions E-5126/2012 and E-5243/2012. As it explained in its answer to Question E-4567/2012 ([1]), the Commission stresses the need to anticipate restructuring operations and prepare them in advance.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-005622/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(5 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κατάλογος χωρών με εμπορεύσιμους κινδύνους

Επικαλούμενη τη δεινή οικονομική κατάσταση της Ελλάδος, σε συνδυασμό με τη περιορισμένη παροχή ιδιωτικής ασφαλιστικής κάλυψης για εξαγωγές προς την Ελλάδα, η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε στις 20 Απριλίου 2012 Ανακοίνωση «*για την τροποποίηση της ανακοίνωσης προς τα κράτη μέλη, βάσει του άρθρου 93 παράγραφος 1 της Συνθήκης, για την εφαρμογή των άρθρων 92 και 93 της Συνθήκης στην βραχυπρόθεσμη ασφάλιση εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων*» (2012/C 117/01) ([1]). Σύμφωνα με την ανακοίνωση αυτή η Ελλάς εξαιρείται από τον κατάλογο των χωρών με εμπορεύσιμους κινδύνους («*non marketable risk country*»).

Ήδη δύο εκ των μεγαλυτέρων φορέων ασφάλισης εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων παγκοσμίως αποφάσισαν την εξαίρεση της Ελλάδος από τις εν λόγω καλύψεις. Όπως γίνεται αντιληπτό, η ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής συμβάλλει στην περαιτέρω επιδείνωση του οικονομικού κλίματος στην Ελλάδα, καθώς προλειαίνει το έδαφος για την περαιτέρω εξαίρεση της Ελλάδας από τις ασφαλίσεις βραχυπρόθεσμων εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων. Η απόφαση της Κομισιόν καταφέρνει διπλό κτύπημα στην εμπορική δραστηριότητα της Ελλάδος: πλήττονται βαρύτατα τόσο οι εισαγωγές προϊόντων και πρώτων υλών, ενώ περιορίζονται και οι εξαγωγές προϊόντων από ελληνικές εξαγωγικές επιχειρήσεις, αφού αυτές θα έχουν περιορισμένη πρόσβαση σε πρώτες ύλες για την παρασκευή των προϊόντων τους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με ποιο σκεπτικό προέβη στην έκδοση της ανωτέρω τροποποιητικής Ανακοίνωσης;

2. Πριν προβεί στην ενέργεια αυτή, εκτίμησε τον αντίκτυπο που θα είχε στις ελληνικές εισαγωγές και εξαγωγές σε μια ιδιαιτέρως δυσχερή συγκυρία για την εθνική οικονομία;

3. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει για την άρση των δυσμενέστατων συνεπειών της εν λόγω ενέργειάς της σε βάρος των ελληνικών εξαγωγών και εισαγωγών;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουλίου 2012)

Βάσει των κανόνων της ΕΕ για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις ([2]), τα κράτη μέλη δεν μπορούν να παρέχουν ασφάλιση εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων για εμπορεύσιμους κινδύνους ([3]), εκτός αν υποβάλουν μεμονωμένες κοινοποιήσεις που αποδεικνύουν ότι οι εξαγωγείς δεν έχουν προσωρινά στο εκάστοτε κράτος μέλος πρόσβαση σε ασφαλίσεις αυτού του τύπου από ιδιώτες ασφαλιστές. Η ιδιαίτερη κατάσταση της ελληνικής οικονομίας έχει οδηγήσει σε έλλειψη ιδιωτικής ασφαλιστικής κάλυψης για εξαγωγές προς την Ελλάδα. Οι εξαγωγές προς την Ελλάδα δεν αποτελούν πλέον εμπορεύσιμο κίνδυνο. Υπό τις συνθήκες αυτές, η Επιτροπή αντί να απαιτεί μεμονωμένες κοινοποιήσεις, αποφάσισε να αφαιρέσει, προσωρινά, την Ελλάδα από τον κατάλογο των χωρών που αποτελούν εμπορεύσιμους κινδύνους. Αυτό επιτρέπει στα κράτη μέλη να στηρίξουν, υπό ορισμένες συνθήκες, την ασφάλιση εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων για εξαγωγές προς την Ελλάδα χωρίς να είναι υποχρεωμένα να υποβάλλουν μεμονωμένες κοινοποιήσεις.

Αυτό θα βοηθήσει επιχειρήσεις σε άλλα κράτη μέλη που επιθυμούν να εξάγουν προς την Ελλάδα και υπό άλλες συνθήκες δεν θα ήταν σε θέση να εξεύρουν ασφάλιση εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων στην αγορά, καθώς και τις επιχειρήσεις στην Ελλάδα που έχουν ανάγκη αυτές τις εξαγωγές.

Ως αποτέλεσμα αυτού, ασφαλιστές εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων σε πολλά κράτη μέλη οι οποίοι δρουν για λογαριασμό ή με την εγγύηση του κράτους τώρα παρέχουν κάλυψη για την Ελλάδα και έχουν λάβει πολλές αιτήσεις. Τούτο αποδεικνύει την αναγκαιότητα και τη χρησιμότητα αυτής της αλλαγής.

([1]) (ΕΕ C 117 της 21.4.2012, σ. 1).
([2]) Ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής προς τα κράτη μέλη σχετικά με το άρθρο 93 παράγραφος 1 της συνθήκης ΕΚ για την εφαρμογή των άρθρων 92 και 93 της συνθήκης στη βραχυπρόθεσμη ασφάλιση εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων (ΕΕ C 281 της 17.9.1997, σ. 4).
([3]) Οι εμπορεύσιμοι κίνδυνοι είναι εμπορικοί και πολιτικοί κίνδυνοι σχετικά με κρατικούς και μη κρατικούς οφειλέτες που είναι εγκατεστημένοι στην ΕΕ και σε ορισμένες χώρες υψηλού εισοδήματος του ΟΟΣΑ, με μέγιστη περίοδο κινδύνου μικρότερη των δύο ετών.

Η απόφαση της προσωρινής αφαίρεσης της Ελλάδας από τον κατάλογο των χωρών που αποτελούν εμπορεύσιμους κινδύνους ελήφθη μετά από διαβούλευση όλων των κρατών μελών. συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Ελλάδας. Αυτή η τροποποίηση θα λήξει στο τέλος του 2012 όταν προβλέπεται να τεθεί σε ισχύ η υπό κατάρτιση νέα ανακοίνωση σχετικά με τη βραχυπρόθεσμη ασφάλιση εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005622/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: List of marketable risk countries

Referring to the terrible economic situation in Greece and the reduced availability of private insurance cover for exports to Greece, on 20 April 2012 the Commission published a communication amending the communication of the Commission to the Member States pursuant to Article 93(1) of the EC Treaty applying Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty to short-term export-credit insurance ([1]). According to this communication, Greece has been excluded from the list of marketable risk countries.

Two of the largest global export-credit insurers have already decided to exclude Greece from this insurance cover. As perceived, the Commission communication further aggravates the economic climate in Greece as it paves the way for Greece's increased exclusion from short-term export-credit insurance. The Commission's decision is double blow to Greek commercial activity: imports and raw materials are seriously affected while Greek exports are also reduced as export companies will have restricted access to raw materials for manufacturing.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. On what grounds was the aforementioned amended communication adopted?

2. Before adopting this communication, did the Commission assess the impact it would have on Greek imports and exports at a particularly difficult time for the national economy?

3. What measures does it intend to take to remove the damaging effects of this communication on Greek exports and imports?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

Under EU state aid rules ([2]), Member States cannot provide export-credit insurance for marketable risks ([3]), unless they submit individual notifications demonstrating that insurance for exporters in that Member State is temporarily unavailable on the market from private insurers.

The exceptional state of the Greek economy led to a scarcity of private insurance cover for exports to Greece: exports to Greece were no longer a marketable risk. On that basis, and rather than requiring individual notifications, the Commission decided to remove Greece temporarily from the list of countries which were marketable risks countries. This allows Member States to support, under certain conditions, export-credit insurance for exports to Greece, without the need to provide individual notifications.

This will help companies in other Member States who wish to export to Greece and would otherwise be unable to find export-credit insurance on the market, as well as companies in Greece who need those imports.

As a result of this, export credit insurers in many Member States operating for the account of or guaranteed by the State are now offering cover for Greece and have received many applications. This shows the need for and benefits of this change.

The decision to temporarily remove Greece from the list of marketable countries was made following a consultation of all Member States, including Greece. This amendment will expire at the end of 2012 when the new Communication on short-term export-credit insurance, which is currently being prepared, should enter into force.

([1]) OJ C 117, 21.4.2012, p. 1.
([2]) Communication from the Commission to the Member States pursuant to Article 93(1) of the EC Treaty applying Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty to short-term export-credit insurance, OJ C 281, 17.9.1997, p. 4.
([3]) Marketable risks are commercial and political risks on public and private debtors established in the EU and some high income OECD countries, with a maximum risk period of less than two years.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005626/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(5. juni 2012)

Om: Indførelse af »Ja tak« til reklamer i Danmark — lempning af handelspraksis

Den danske regering og flere miljøorganisationer ønsker at indføre en »ja tak«-ordning til reklamer i Danmark. Ordningen vil angiveligt medføre store ressourcebesparelser, komme forbrugerne til gode, samt skabe innovation af den nuværende markedsføringsform i dagligvarebranchen.

Det danske forbrugerråd har understreget, at en sådan ordning ikke er mulig, da den vil stride imod et totalharmoniseringsdirektiv, der bestemmer hvilke former for handelspraksisser, der kan godkendes, og hvilke der ikke kan.

Mit spørgsmål til Kommissionen er:

Vil indførelsen af et nationalt system med »ja tak« til reklamer, hvor forbrugeren får et reelt valg, virkelig være i modstrid med EU's direktiv om urimelig handelspraksis?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(20. juli 2012)

Kommissionen er opmærksom på det omtalte udkast til lovgivning og har allerede mødtes med Forbrugerrådet for at drøfte sagen.

Direktivet om urimelig handelspraksis ([1]), særlig bilag I, beskytter allerede forbrugerne mod vedholdende og uønskede henvendelser. Kommissionen er imidlertid af den opfattelse, at den nye danske lovgivning, såfremt den vedtages, vil gå et skridt videre ved at forbyde enhver form for trykt, uadresseret reklame.

Da direktivet om urimelig handelspraksis kræver fuld harmonisering, kan et sådant forbud kun tillades, hvis det ligger uden for direktivets anvendelsesområde, dvs. hvis det ikke har til formål at beskytte forbrugernes økonomiske interesser, men har et andet formål som f.eks. miljøbeskyttelse.

Det ærede medlem vil være bekendt med, at selv nationale forbud, der har som formål eller konsekvens at kategorisere en handelspraksis som urimelig, og hvor forbrugerbeskyttelse kun er et sekundært mål i sammenligning med forbuddets primære mål, efter Domstolen dom i Mediaprint-sagen alligevel skal evalueres i henhold til direktivet om urimelig handelspraksis ([2]).

([1]) Direktiv 2005/29/EF om virksomheders urimelige handelspraksis (EUT L 149 af 11.6.2005).
([2]) Sag C-540/08, Mediaprint, 9. november 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005626/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Introduction of the 'Yes, please' scheme for advertising in Denmark — restriction of commercial practices

The Danish Government and several environmental organisations want to introduce a 'Yes, please' scheme for advertising in Denmark. The scheme would achieve significant savings of resources, benefit consumers and create innovation in terms of current marketing strategies for the consumer staples sector.

The Danish Consumer Council has stated emphatically that such a scheme is not possible, as it would contravene a total harmonisation directive that determines which types of commercial practice can be approved and which cannot.

My question to the Commission is:

Would the introduction of a national system for saying 'Yes, please' to advertisements, thus giving the consumer a real choice, be inconsistent with the EU Directive on unreasonable commercial practices?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of this draft legislation and already met the Danish Consumer Council to discuss the issue.

The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([1]) (the 'UCPD'), in particular its Annex I, already protects consumers against persistent and unwanted solicitations. It is the Commissions understanding that, if adopted, the new Danish law would however go farther by prohibiting all kinds of unaddressed printed advertising.

Due to the full harmonisation character of the UCPD, such prohibition would be allowed only if it falls outside the scope of the directive, i.e. if it does not have the objective of protecting the economic interest of consumers but follows a different aim such as for example the protection of the environment.

The Honourable Member should be aware that, following the judgment of the Court of Justice in the Mediaprint case ([2]), even national prohibitions which have as their aim or effect the classification of a commercial practice as unfair and where the aim to protect consumers is just secondary compared to a different primary aim they pursue, would still have to be assessed under the UCPD.

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([2]) Case C-540/08, Mediaprint, 9 November 2010.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005627/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(5. juni 2012)

Om: Fælles europæisk mobilnet med femtocell-teknologi

I arbejdet for bedre kommunikationsmuligheder inden for det indre marked er mobiltelefoni et vigtigt område. Jeg har modtaget en henvendelse fra en borger, som foreslår en alternativ løsning, der sigter efter et fælles europæisk mobilnet. Ideen går på at reservere nogle frekvenser til femtocell-teknologi. Da det er knapt med europæiske frekvenser, foreslås det, at man i stedet bruger amerikanske UMTS frekvenser. Der er tre frekvenser tilgængelige: Èn UMTS 850 samt to UMTS 1900. Næsten alle 3G-mobiltelefoner, som sælges i dag, understøtter disse frekvenser. Ved at dedikere frekvenserne til femtocell-teknologi, vil det eksempelvis være muligt at opsætte en dansk femtocell-boks i England, uden at det vil genere de britiske teleselskaber.

For at undgå roaming må femtocell-boksen kun tage imod kunder fra sit eget hjemmemobilnet. Hvis man opsætter en dansk TDC-boks i Frankrig, må boksen kun tage imod SIM-kort, som normalt kører på TDC's danske mobilnet. På den måde ender franskmanden ikke med at få en regning for roaming på TDC's mobilnet.

Femtocell-boksen må kun lave handover til eget netværk, herunder andre femtocell-bokse. Den må ikke lave handover til et fremmed netværk. Det er for at forhindre uheldig roaming, hvor man starter en samtale på femtocell-boksen, men hvor der er risiko for, at man kommer til at forlade dækningen fra den.

En løsning kunne være, at alle de femtocell-boks, som godkendes, skal kunne udsende op til tre frekvenser på samme tid. Det ene kan være EU-net, og de to andre kan være valgfrie for de teleselskaber, som ønsker at deltage.

— Finder Kommissionen overstående ide, om et fælles europæisk mobilnet med femtocell-teknologi, mulig? I så fald, hvordan kan vi fra EU's side gøre noget?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Neelie Kroes
(4. juli 2012)

Kommissionen er i gang med at undersøge mulighederne for at udbrede adgangen til og brugen af picoceller og femtoceller og tager derfor fuldt ud højde for potentialet i disse mobilbasestationer og delt og afgiftsfri anvendelse af frekvensressourcer. I den forbindelse har Kommissionen offentliggjort et udbud om en undersøgelse vedrørende »Indvirkningen af trafikaflastning og beslægtede teknologiske tendenser på efterspørgslen efter frekvenser til trådløst bredbånd« (SMART 2012/0015). Undersøgelsen vil bl.a. fokusere på, hvad det kræver at etablere et konkurrencedygtigt marked for trådløst bredbånd baseret på femtocell-teknologi og andre små celleteknologier, som kan levere mobile og/eller lokale bredbåndstjenester.

Med hensyn til forslaget om en særlig frekvens for femtoceller arbejder Kommissionen sammen med medlemsstaterne for at sikre, at der er tilstrækkelige frekvenser til rådighed for trådløs bredbåndskommunikation i overensstemmelse med artikel 6 i radiofrekvenspolitikprogrammet. I henhold til rammebestemmelserne for elektronisk kommunikation bør tildelingen af brugsrettigheder til frekvenser dog følge princippet om teknologi- og tjenesteneutralitet, så frekvensbrugerne selv kan vælge de bedste teknologier og tjenester til udnyttelse af et frekvensbånd, der er erklæret tilgængeligt for elektroniske kommunikationstjenester.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005627/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Common European mobile network using Femtocell technology

Mobile telephony is an important aspect of efforts to improve communications in the internal market. I have been contacted by a member of the public who proposes an alternative solution that aims to set up a common European mobile network. The idea is based on setting aside certain frequencies for Femtocell technology. As there are very few European frequencies available, the proposal suggests using American UMTS frequencies. Three frequencies are available: one UMTS 850 and two UMTS 1900. Almost all 3G mobile telephones on sale today support these frequencies. By dedicating frequencies to Femtocell technology it would, for example, be possible to set up a Danish Femtocell box in the UK without causing a nuisance to UK mobile operators.

To prevent unintended roaming, the Femtocell box would only accept customers from its own home mobile network. For example, when setting up a Danish TDC box in France, the box would only accept SIM cards that normally operate on TDC's Danish mobile network. This would ensure that French people would not be billed for roaming on the TDC network.

The Femtocell box would only be allowed to perform a handover to its own network, including other Femtocell boxes. It could not hand over to a foreign network. This would prevent unintentional roaming when there is a risk of leaving the coverage area after starting a conversation using the Femtocell box

A solution to encourage the approval of Femtocell boxes might be that the boxes must be able to transmit up to three frequencies simultaneously. One frequency could be the EU network and the other two could be freely chosen by the participating operators.

— Does the Commission think the overall idea of a common European mobile network using Femtocell technology would be possible? If so, how can the EU take steps to facilitate its implementation?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2012)

The Commission is examining the possibility of spreading the availability and use of picocells and femtocells and thereby takes full account of the potential of those cellular base stations and of the shared and unlicensed use of spectrum. In this regard, the Commission has issued a tender for a study on the 'Impact of traffic off-loading and related technological trends on the demand for wireless broadband spectrum' (SMART 2012/0015). This study will *inter alia* address the question under which conditions a competitive wireless broadband market could emerge based on femtocells and other small cell infrastructures which would provide nomadic and/or local broadband services.

As regards the proposed femtocell solution for specific frequency, the Commission is working with Member States in order to ensure that sufficient spectrum is available for wireless broadband services in accordance with Article 6 of the Radio Spectrum Policy Programme. However, according to the regulatory framework for electronic communications, authorisation of spectrum usage rights should follow the principle of technology and service neutrality to allow spectrum users to choose the best technologies and services to apply in frequency bands declared available for electronic communications services.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005628/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Illegal crossings at the Greek-Turkish border

It is estimated that, in the last three months of 2011, over 30 000 immigrants were able to illegally enter the Schengen area. Given that around 75% of these illegal crossings occurred at the Greek-Turkish border, what additional assistance can the EU provide to Greece through the External Borders Fund and other sources of support at a time of ongoing austerity in the country?

What support has the EU given Turkey through its generous pre-accession instruments? Is it the Commission's understanding that Turkey is meeting all its obligations to secure its side of the border?

If not, what sanctions is the EU imposing on Ankara as part of its accession negotiations with Turkey?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The EU is very concerned about irregular migration flows across the EU's external EU borders between Greece and Turkey. The Commission has developed several initiatives to reinforce the capacity of Greek authorities to deal with these flows. Simultaneously, it has developed initiatives to strengthen efforts by the Turkish authorities to prevent irregular migration.

For information on the assistance to Greece under the External Borders Fund and other relevant instruments, the Commission refers to its written replies to questions 10318/10, 003814/11, 002742/12, 003504/2012 ([1]).

Concerning projects aimed at strengthening the capacity of Turkey to manage its borders, migration and asylum systems, detailed information on the assistance offered by the EU can be found by consulting the Commission's website at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/turkey/financial-assistance/index_en.htm.

In response to the last question of the Honourable Member, the Commission draws attention to the fact that, as a candidate country for EU accession, Turkey is expected to fully align its legislation and administrative capacities to the EU *acquis* upon its accession. The Commission is monitoring the progress made by Turkey and, within the framework of the EU-Turkey Association Committee and through its Progress reports, highlights progress which is still to be made.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005629/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Incumprimento dos empréstimos à banca das famílias em Portugal

Diariamente, em Portugal, 306 famílias entram em incumprimento no pagamento dos empréstimos à banca. Nos três primeiros meses do ano, 27 822 famílias entraram para a lista de incumpridores.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta realidade?

2. Apesar da inevitabilidade do essencial das medidas implementadas, que medidas específicas pondera a Comissão para fazer face a este impacto tão negativo, e socialmente injusto, dos programas de austeridade?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(18 de julho de 2012)

A Comissão está ciente de que muitos agregados familiares enfrentam graves perturbações financeiras.

Os dados pormenorizados são recolhidos sobretudo a nível nacional. No entanto, alguma investigação europeia, especialmente as EU-SILC ([1]), confirma, por exemplo, que os incumprimentos nos pagamentos dos empréstimos dos cidadãos em Portugal aumentaram de 6,4 % da população em 2008, para 8,6 % em 2010.

No que se refere à prevenção, a diretiva relativa ao crédito aos consumidores ([2]) estabelece que o mutuante deve efetuar uma verificação da fiabilidade creditícia do mutuário e deve prestar-lhe informações pré-contratuais compreensíveis, num formato normalizado, incluindo dados sobre encargos/juros e avisos específicos de riscos financeiros. Em relação aos créditos hipotecários, a proposta de diretiva da Comissão ([3]) inclui disposições semelhantes e a obrigação de não conceder o empréstimo se a avaliação da fiabilidade creditícia for negativa. A proposta foi acompanhada de um documento de trabalho dos serviços da Comissão sobre medidas nacionais e práticas para evitar procedimentos de execução hipotecária.

Além disso, a Comissão está a realizar um estudo relativo ao sobre-endividamento das famílias, que visa encontrar informações atualizadas, analisar as suas causas e consequências financeiras e listar ações para atenuar o seu impacto. Em finais de 2012, será lançada uma consulta pública com base nos resultados preliminares, enquanto os resultados finais estarão disponíveis em 2013.

A Comissão encoraja os Estados-Membros, em tempos de austeridade, sempre que possível, a procurar primeiramente ganhos de eficiência, antes de cortar em matéria de proteção social, e simultaneamente, quando inevitável, limitar o impacto negativo sobre a formação de capital humano. O programa de ajustamento para Portugal prevê, nomeadamente, um regime-quadro para as instituições financeiras procederem à reestruturação extrajudicial de dívidas de agregados familiares, que deve ajudar as famílias em dificuldades financeiras.

([1]) Estatísticas da UE sobre o Rendimento e as Condições de Vida.
([2]) Diretiva 2008/48/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 23 de abril de 2008, relativa a contratos de crédito aos consumidores e que revoga a Diretiva 87/102/CEE do Conselho JO L 133 de 22.5.2008.
([3]) Proposta de diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa aos contratos de crédito para imóveis de habitação, de 31.3.2011, 2011/0062 (COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005629/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Portuguese families in arrears with bank loan repayments

Every day, 306 Portuguese families fall behind with their bank loan repayments. In the first quarter of 2012, 27 822 families joined those already in arrears.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Although the basic terms of the measures being implemented are unavoidable, what specific action is the Commission considering with which to address this deeply negative and socially unjust consequence of the austerity programmes?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

The Commission is aware that many households are hit by serious financial troubles.

Detailed data are mainly collected at national level. However, some European research, in particular the EU-SILC ([1]), confirms, for example, that citizens' arrears in Portugal increased from 6.4% of the population in 2008 to 8.6% in 2010.

On the prevention side, the Consumer Credit Directive ([2]) states that the lender must carry out a creditworthiness check of the borrower and provide him with easy-to-understand pre-contractual information, in a standardised format, including data on fees/interests and specific warnings for financial risks. For mortgages, the Commission's proposal for a directive ([3]) includes similar provisions and an obligation not to provide the loan if the creditworthiness assessment is negative. The proposal was accompanied by a Staff Working Document r on national measures and practices to avoid foreclosure procedures.

Moreover, a study on households' over-indebtedness, aimed at finding updated information, analysing its causes and financial consequences and listing actions for alleviating its impact, is being carried out by the Commission. A public consultation based on the preliminary results will be launched by end 2012, while the final results will be available in 2013.

The Commission encourages Member States, in times of austerity, where possible to look for efficiency gains first, before cutting on social protection, while, when unavoidable, limiting negative impact on human capital formation. The Adjustment Programme for Portugal foresees, *inter alia*, a framework regime for financial institutions to engage in out-of-court debt restructuring for households, which should help the families in financial difficulty.

([1]) European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.
([2]) Directive 2008/48/EC of the E.P. and the Council of 23 April 2008 on credit agreements for consumers and repealing Directive 87/102/EEC — OJ, 22.5.2008.
([3]) Proposal for a directive of the E.P. and the Council on credit agreements relating to residential property of 31.3.2011, 2011/0062 (COD).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005630/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Incumprimento do défice de 2012 por Portugal

Considerando que:

— O governo Português tem vindo a cumprir o acordo assinado com a troika;

— «O Governo está a fazer tudo bem do ponto de vista orçamental e de implementação de reformas estruturais, pelo que, se violar o limite de 7 600 milhões de euros de défice público deste ano, não será penalizado por isso. O mesmo raciocínio aplica-se aos limites de 2013. A troika está disposta a continuar a dar apoio financeiro a Portugal caso o país falhe a meta do défice prevista no programa de ajustamento (7 600 milhões de euros em 2012) e, em simultâneo, não consiga regressar aos mercados em 2013», cenário que obviamente não se deseja;

Pergunto à Comissão: considera provável tal cenário?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(24 de agosto de 2012)

Na sua terceira avaliação do programa de assistência financeira a Portugal, a Comissão concluiu que o programa continua no bom caminho e que o Governo português aplica as políticas acordadas da maneira prevista. A Comissão assinalou também que a meta do défice de 4,5 % do PIB para 2012 se mantém válida, sublinhando ao mesmo tempo a existência de certos riscos à sua consecução. A Comissão considera, portanto, realista a possibilidade de cumprimento da meta do défice para 2012.

A quarta avaliação técnica, que se realizou no final de maio de 2012, confirmou plenamente esta posição (ver a declaração conjunta da Comissão Europeia, do BCE e do FMI no final da missão ([1])).

Aquela declaração conjunta lembra igualmente o compromisso assumido pelos Estados membros da zona euro de apoiarem Portugal até ao regresso aos mercados, desde que as autoridades continuem a implementar rigorosamente o programa.

([1]) (http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/financial_operations/2012-06-04-portugal_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005630/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Portugal's failure to meet its 2012 deficit target

The Portuguese Government is complying with the agreement signed with the troika.

The Government is 'doing everything well' in terms of the budget and implementing structural reforms, which means that if it fails to meet this year's public deficit target of EUR 7.6 billion, it will not be penalised for doing so. The same logic applies to the 2013 targets. The troika is willing to continue providing financial support to Portugal if the country fails to meet the deficit targets set by the adjustment programme (EUR 7.6 billion in 2012) and if it is also unable to return to the markets in 2013, although this scenario is obviously undesirable.

Does the Commission consider this scenario to be likely?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 August 2012)

In its third review of the financial assistance programme for Portugal the Commission concluded that the programme remains on track and that the Portuguese Government implements the agreed policies as envisaged. The Commission also noted that the deficit target of 4.5% of GDP for 2012 remains valid while underlining at the same time certain risks to the achievement of this target. The Commission thus believes that the deficit target for 2012 can realistically be achieved.

The fourth review at staff level, which took place at the end of May 2012, broadly confirmed this position (see the joint statement of the European Commission, the ECB and the IMF at the end of this mission ([1])).

This joint statement also recalls the commitment by euro area Member States to support Portugal until market access is regained, provided that the authorities persevere with the strict implementation of the programme.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/financial_operations/2012-06-04-portugal_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005631/12
to the Commission
Roger Helmer (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: French law regarding visible clothing for motorcyclists

The Commission is no doubt aware of a piece of legislation proposed by the French Government (Article R431-1-2 of the *Code de la Route*) that will introduce mandatory wearing of high-visibility clothing for motorcyclists from 1 January 2013.

Do you consider that this will infringe:

1. freedom of movement, since it will create a barrier for motorcyclists travelling through France?

2. single market rules, since it will probably mean that jackets made elsewhere in the EU do not meet French requirements?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

The use of clothing incorporating a high-visibility or reflective area for motorcyclists is not regulated under EC law.

The Commission considers that in the absence of EU legislation, Member States authorities are entitled to adopt measures aiming at enhancing road safety provided that these measures do not constitute a disproportionate limitation of the freedom of movement for persons.

High visibility clothing is subject to the requirements of the PPE Directive ([1]). The amended French rules require the clothing to comply with the relevant regulations and also specify certain of its characteristics: the clothing must include retroreflective material according to French standards or other equivalent standards with a minimum area of 150 $cm^{2.}$

The Commission notes that, in the framework of the PPE Directive, high visibility clothing is subject to harmonised standards NF EN 471 (for professional use) and NF EN 1150 (for non-professional use). The lowest class foreseen by NF EN 471 (or the largest size foreseen by NF EN 1150) shall have a minimum area of retroreflective material of 0.10 m^2 (or 1 000 cm^2) which is over six times more than the area required by the French rule. It thus appears that the French rule is based on a mistaken reference to the requirements of the relevant harmonised standards. The Commission will contact the French authorities with a view to correcting this mistake.

([1]) Council Directive 89/686/EEC of 21 December 1989 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to personal protective equipment.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005632/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(5 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προσαρμογή των όρων του Μνημονίου στο ευρωπαϊκό περιβαλλοντικό κεκτημένο

Σε απάντηση της Επιτροπής ([1]) σε επιστολή του WWF ([2]) σχετικά με τις περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις των μέτρων που λαμβάνονται για την αντιμετώπιση της οικονομικής κρίσης στην Ελλάδα, οι Επίτροποι Ρεν και Ποτόσνικ δεσμεύονται ότι κανένα μέτρο που θα ληφθεί στο πλαίσιο της δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής δεν θα αντίκειται στο ευρωπαϊκό περιβαλλοντικό κεκτημένο. Εντούτοις, ήδη οι εφαρμοζόμενες πολιτικές του προγράμματος δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής έχουν άμεσες και έμμεσες επιπτώσεις στο περιβάλλον. Χαρακτηριστικά αναφέρονται η απορρόφηση του Πράσινου Ταμείου από τον κεντρικό προϋπολογισμό, η δέσμευση των πόρων του Ταμείου Αποκατάστασης Πυρόπληκτων Περιοχών (που τα έσοδά του προέρχονταν από εισφορές και δωρεές πολιτών) για δημοσιονομικούς σκοπούς, η νομιμοποίηση αυθαιρέτων σε προστατευόμενες περιοχές, η προσπάθεια παράκαμψης της τήρησης περιβαλλοντικών όρων σε επενδύσεις, η μείωση της περιβαλλοντικής στελέχωσης των δημοσίων υπηρεσιών και η στήριξη στο άνοιγμα της αγοράς λιγνίτη.

Δεδομένης της δέσμευσης της Επιτροπής για διαφύλαξη του ευρωπαϊκού περιβαλλοντικού κεκτημένου και του γεγονότος ότι συγχρηματοδοτεί το πρόγραμμα δημοσιονομικής σταθερότητας, ερωτάται:

1. Ποια μεθοδολογία ακολουθεί για την παρακολούθηση και αξιολόγηση των περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων του προγράμματος δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής;

2. Είναι πρόθυμη να συντάξει και καταθέσει στο Ευρωκοινοβούλιο έκθεση για την προσαρμογή των όρων του Μνημονίου στο ευρωπαϊκό περιβαλλοντικό κεκτημένο, ώστε να μην αντίκειται η δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση στην ευρωπαϊκή περιβαλλοντική πολιτική, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η συνήθης τοποθέτηση ότι τα μέτρα εγκρίθηκαν από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση, δεν αρκεί;

3. Εκτιμά ότι το πρόγραμμα δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής υπάγεται στην εφαρμογή της Οδηγίας SEA 2001/42/ΕΚ; Αν ναι, σχεδιάζει να συνεργαστεί με τις ελληνικές αρχές στην εκπόνηση Στρατηγικής Περιβαλλοντικής Εκτίμησης του προγράμματος δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής συνολικά;

4. Εξετάζει το ενδεχόμενο να εντάξει δείκτες αειφορίας στα πακέτα οικονομικής στήριξης που διαμορφώνονται για οικονομικά προβληματικές χώρες, όπως η Ελλάδα, η Ιρλανδία και η Πορτογαλία;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Ιουλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή έχει συμβουλευτικό και εποπτικό ρόλο όσον αφορά το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής και διαρθρωτικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα. Στα πλαίσια αυτού του ρόλου η Επιτροπή εξετάζει κατά πόσον τα συγκεκριμένα μέτρα που προβλέπει το πρόγραμμα αντιστοιχούν στις υποχρεώσεις που απορρέουν από το δίκαιο της ΕΕ, αλλά δεν προτείνει αλλαγές σε αυτό. Το πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής συμμορφούται προς το περιβαλλοντικό κεκτημένο της ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή, εξετάζοντας την πρόοδο που έχει επιτευχθεί μέχρι στιγμής με την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος προσαρμογής, επεσήμανε την ανάγκη για την προώθηση της αειφόρου ανάπτυξης και των επενδύσεων σε περιβαλλοντικά έργα με στόχο την εξασφάλιση της συμμόρφωσης με το περιβαλλοντικό κεκτημένο της ΕΕ σε τομείς προτεραιότητας, τα οποία μπορούν να συμβάλουν επίσης σημαντικά στην ανάπτυξη και την απασχόληση ([3]).

Η Ελλάδα παρακολουθεί και υποβάλλει εκθέσεις για το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής και διαρθρωτικής προσαρμογής βάσει των κατάλληλων δεικτών που αντιστοιχούν στους στόχους του προγράμματος. Το πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής δεν αποτελεί σχέδιο ή πρόγραμμα κατά την έννοια της οδηγίας 2001/42/ΕΚ ([4]), αλλά μέσο άσκησης πολιτικής που αντικατοπτρίζει την πολιτική βούληση της Ελληνικής Κυβέρνησης να εφαρμόσει ένα σύνολο πολιτικών και μέτρων. Επιπρόσθετα, εφόσον το πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής έχει χρηματοπιστωτικό και δημοσιονομικό χαρακτήρα, βάσει του άρθρου 3 παράγραφος 7 της οδηγίας ΣΠΑ, δεν υπόκειται στις απαιτήσεις της.

([1]) http://www.wwf.gr/images/pdfs/EC-reply-to-WWF-%20OlliRehn&JanezPotocnik.pdf
([2]) http://www.wwf.gr/images/pdfs/J-M-Barroso-EC6-jan2012GR.pdf
([3]) Αυτό επαναβεβαιώθηκε και με την πρόσφατη ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής της 18/04/2012 «Ανάπτυξη για την Ελλάδα», COM(2012)183.
([4]) Οδηγία 2001/42/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 27ης Ιουνίου 2001, σχετικά με την εκτίμηση των περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων ορισμένων σχεδίων και προγραμμάτων (οδηγία ΣΠΑ). ΕΕ L 197 της 21.7.2001.

Όλα τα ειδικά προγράμματα προσαρμογής και στήριξης που έχουν εγκριθεί για άλλες χώρες περιέχουν ήδη σύνολα κατάλληλων ειδικών δεικτών που έχουν προσαρμοστεί στου στόχους και τις ιδιαιτερότητες του καθενός από αυτά τα προγράμματα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005632/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Adapting the terms of the Memorandum to the EU environmental *acquis*

In the Commission's response ([1]) to a letter from the WWF ([2]) concerning the environmental impact of the measures adopted in Greece to tackle the economic crisis, Commissioners Rehn and Potočnik have pledged that no measure taken in the context of the economic adjustment programme can go against the EU environmental *acquis*. However, the policies of the economic adjustment programme which have already been implemented have direct and indirect consequences for the environment. These include the absorption of the Green Fund by the general budget, the earmarking of resources from the Restoration Fund for Fire-Damaged Areas (financed by contributions and donations from citizens) for budgeting purposes, the legalisation of illegal developments in protected areas, investments with questionable environmental scrutiny, the downsizing of environmental staff in public authorities and the support given to the opening of the lignite market.

Given the Commission's commitment to safeguard the environmental *acquis* and the fact that it is co-financing the financial stability programme:

1. What methodology is it using to monitor and assess the environmental impact of the economic adjustment programme?

2. Is it prepared to draw up and submit a report to the European Parliament on adapting the terms of the Memorandum to the EU environmental *acquis* so that economic consolidation does not go against EU environmental policy? In drafting this report, will it consider that the conclusion which is usually reached, i.e. that these measures had been approved by the Greek Government, is not sufficient?

3. Does the Commission believe that the economic adjustment programme is subject to the application of Directive 2001/42/EC? If so, does it intend to work with the Greek authorities on a strategic environmental assessment of the economic adjustment programme?

4. Is it examining the possibility of integrating sustainability indicators into the economic support packages for countries with financial difficulties such as Greece, Ireland and Portugal?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2012)

The Commission plays advisory, monitoring and surveillance roles in regard to the economic and structural adjustment programme for Greece. Within these roles, the Commission examines whether the specific measures within the programme comply with the obligations resulting from EC law, but has no role in proposing changes to it. The adjustment programme is compatible with the fulfilment of the EU environmental *acquis*. The Commission, addressing the progress made so far with the implementation of the adjustment programme, has pointed to the further need for promoting sustainable growth and investing in environmental projects to ensure compliance with the EU environmental *acquis* in priority areas, which can also make an important contribution to growth and employment ([3]).

Greece monitors and reports on its economic and structural adjustment programme based on appropriate indicators corresponding to the objectives of the programme. The adjustment programme is not a plan or programme in the sense of Directive 2001/42/EC ([4]), but a policy instrument reflecting the political will of the Greek Government to implement a set of policies and measures. Furthermore, as the adjustment programme has a financial and budgetary nature, based on Article 3§8 of the SEA Directive, it is not subject to its requirements.

([1]) http://www.wwf.gr/images/pdfs/EC-reply-to-WWF-%20OlliRehn&JanezPotočnik.pdf
([2]) http://www.wwf.gr/images/pdfs/J-M-Barroso-EC6-jan2012GR.pdf
([3]) This has been reconfirmed at the latest Communication of 18-04-2012 'Growth for Greece', COM(2012) 183.
([4]) Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA Directive). OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.

All the special adjustment and support programmes approved for other countries already contain already sets of appropriate, specific indicators that have been adapted to the objectives and the specificities of each of these programmes.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005633/12
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(5 czerwca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Raport Europejskiego Urzędu ds. Zwalczania Nadużyć Finansowych z kontroli wdrażania PO KL na Dolnym Śląsku

W dniu 1 czerwca 2012 r. Europejski Urząd ds. Zwalczania Nadużyć Finansowych (OLAF) przedstawił raport z kontroli wdrażania funduszy UE w ramach Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki na Dolnym Śląsku. Według doniesień medialnych OLAF po wykazaniu nieprawidłowości zarekomendował Komisji Europejskiej zażądanie zwrotu od Polski kwoty 47 mln euro. Nieprawidłowości dotyczą roku 2008.

W związku z powyższym proszę o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Jakie działania powinien podjąć Rząd Polski i Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Dolnośląskiego, aby uniknąć zwrotu do budżetu UE dotacji w kwocie 47 mln euro?

2. Kto wg raportu Europejskiego Urzędu ds. Zwalczania Nadużyć Finansowych winny jest zaniedbań?

3. Jakie są główne przyczyny powstałych nieprawidłowości wskazanych w raporcie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(19 lipca 2012 r.)

Ad 1. Komisja analizuje sprawozdanie przygotowane przez OLAF, aby na podstawie zawartych w nim ustaleń podjąć decyzję w sprawie stosownych finansowych działań następczych. Ponadto Komisja zaleciła już władzom Polski, by przeanalizowały ustalenia OLAF i podjęły działania następcze, w tym poprzez dodatkowe działania audytowe oraz środki naprawcze dotyczące stwierdzonych nieprawidłowości.

Ad 2. i 3. Informacje uzyskane w toku prowadzonego przez OLAF dochodzenia zewnętrznego nie mogą być przekazywane osobom innym niż te, których funkcje w instytucjach UE lub państw członkowskich wymagają ich znajomości ([1]).

Z należytym poszanowaniem ochrony poufności działań prowadzonych przez OLAF, można stwierdzić, że głównymi możliwymi przyczynami stwierdzonych nieprawidłowości są uchybienia w systemie wyboru operacji, które zostały już stwierdzone w poprzednich audytach Komisji i były już przedmiotem korekt finansowych ze strony władz Polski, a także niedociągnięcia w systemie kontroli.

([1]) Artykuł 8 rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1073/1999 Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 25 maja 1999 r. dotyczącego dochodzeń prowadzonych przez Europejski Urząd ds. Zwalczania Nadużyć Finansowych (OLAF).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005633/12
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Inspection report from the European Anti-Fraud Office on the implementation of the Human Capital Operational Programme in Lower Silesia

On 1 June 2012, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) submitted an inspection report on the use of EU funds in the Human Capital Operational Programme in Lower Silesia. According to media reports, OLAF has recommended — after first providing a list of irregularities — that the European Commission demand a refund of EUR 47 million from Poland. The irregularities relate to 2008.

In connection with the above, I would like to ask the following:

1. What actions should the Polish Government and the Office of the Marshal of Lower Silesia undertake in order to avoid having to refund the EUR 47 million subsidy to the EU?

2. According to the report from OLAF, who was guilty of negligence?

3. What are the principal causes of the irregularities highlighted in the report?

Answer given by M Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

1. The Commission is assessing OLAF's report in order to decide on the appropriate financial follow-up to be given to its findings. The Commission also already advised the Polish authorities to assess and follow-up on OLAF findings, including through additional audit activities and corrective measures related to irregularities identified.

2 and 3. Information obtained in the course of an OLAF external investigation may not be communicated to persons other than those within the institutions or in the Member States whose functions require them to know ([1]).

With due respect to the protection of the confidentiality of OLAF work, it can be said that weaknesses in the system of selection of operations which were already identified by previous Commission audits and were already subject to financial corrections by the Polish authorities and shortcomings in the control system are the main possible causes of the identified irregularities.

([1]) Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005634/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Additivi a base di alluminio nei deodoranti

L'Agenzia francese per la sicurezza dei prodotti sanitari (AFSSAPS) ha lanciato un nuovo allarme circa la pericolosità degli additivi a base di alluminio contenuti nei prodotti antitraspiranti per l'igiene intima, responsabili, nel caso di somministrazioni ripetute, di neuropatie, danni allo sviluppo del sistema nervoso, danni al sistema osseo e anemie.

I derivati dell'alluminio utilizzati in tali prodotti svolgono la funzione di inibire la traspirazione cutanea e quindi la sudorazione, e vengono assorbiti dal corpo umano attraverso la pelle.

Secondo l'AFSSAPS la percentuale di alluminio che consentirebbe di dichiarare sicuri tali prodotti dovrebbe essere dello 0,6 %; invece, su 14 prodotti testati dall'Agenzia ben sei hanno percentuali superiori, fino all'1,2 %.

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza di questo studio?

2. Ha intenzione la Commissione di richiedere uno studio più approfondito sui rischi connessi alla presenza di queste componenti a base di alluminio nei prodotti per l'igiene intima?

3. Come intende muoversi per tutelare maggiormente la salute dei cittadini?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(17 agosto 2012)

La Commissione europea ha ricevuto la relazione presentata dalle autorità francesi (AFSSAPS) che esprime preoccupazioni quanto all'uso di alluminio negli antitraspiranti e nei deodoranti. Altri Stati membri hanno attirato l'attenzione anche sull'alluminio presente in altri prodotti cosmetici, come ad esempio i rossetti e i dentifrici. Al fine di preparare una richiesta di parere scientifico al Comitato scientifico della sicurezza dei consumatori (CSSC) la Commissione europea ha indetto un invito a presentare dati ([1]) con scadenza al 15 luglio 2012. Tutte le parti interessate sono invitate a presentare tutte le pertinenti informazioni scientifiche sulla sicurezza dell'alluminio in questi prodotti cosmetici e, in particolare, dati in merito agli end-point tossicologici per l'uso di ioni e sali d'alluminio oltre a un'indicazione sulla concentrazione limite di sicurezza suggerita per tale ingrediente.

La Commissione chiederà al Comitato scientifico della sicurezza dei consumatori (CSSC) di esprimere un parere scientifico sulla sicurezza dell'alluminio nei cosmetici in base ai dati ricevuti. Sulla base di questo parere scientifico la Commissione prenderà le necessarie misure regolamentari.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/files/pdf/aluminium_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005634/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Aluminium-based additives in deodorants

The French health products safety agency (Afssaps) has issued a new warning about the danger of aluminium-based additives contained in deodorants for personal hygiene, which, if used repeatedly, damage nerves, the development of the nervous system and the bone structure, in addition to causing anaemia.

The aluminium derivates used in these products act to inhibit perspiration and are absorbed by the human body through the skin.

According to Afssaps, the percentage of aluminium which would allow these products to be declared safe is 0.6%. However, of the 14 products tested by it, as many as six had higher percentages (up to 1.2%).

1. Is the Commission aware of this study?

2. Will the Commission further study the risks of aluminium-based components in personal hygiene products?

3. How does it intend to act to further protect citizens' health?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

The European Commission has received the report submitted by the French authorities (AFSSAPS) which raises concerns about the use of aluminium in antiperspirants and deodorants. Other Member States also drew attention to aluminium present in other cosmetic products, such as lipsticks and toothpastes. In order to prepare a request for a scientific opinion to the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) the European Commission has launched a call for data ([1]) with a deadline on 15 July 2012. All interested parties are invited to submit any relevant scientific information on the safety of aluminium in these cosmetic products and, in particular, data regarding all toxicological end-points for the use of related aluminium ion and salts and an indication on the suggested concentration safe limit for this ingredient.

The Commission will ask the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) to provide a scientific opinion on the safety of aluminium in cosmetic products based on all the data received. On the basis of this scientific opinion, the Commission will take the appropriate regulatory measures.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/files/pdf/aluminium_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005635/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Nuovo attacco suicida contro una chiesa cristiana in Nigeria

Il 3 giugno 2012 un ennesimo attacco estremista è stato portato a termine nello Stato di Bauchi, in Nigeria, contro la comunità cristiana presente nel paese.

L'attacco suicida è stato condotto con un'autobomba scagliata contro una chiesa pentecostale, con un bilancio di 15 morti e almeno 35 feriti, bilancio che sarebbe stato ben maggiore se l'auto non fosse stata intercettata da un vicino posto di blocco.

Monsignor Kaigama, a capo della Conferenza episcopale della Nigeria, sostiene che questo attacco, pur non rivendicato, sia opera del gruppo terrorista di Boko Haram e faccia parte di una nuova strategia di accanimento verso obiettivi sensibili della cristianità più efficaci nel fungere da cassa di risonanza mediatica per queste azioni.

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza di questo attentato?

2. Come intende supportare la comunità cristiana ed eventualmente il Paese nella lotta al terrorismo contro di essa?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue da vicino gli eventi in Nigeria e condanna quest'ultimo deplorevole attentato esprimendo la propria solidarietà alle vittime e ai loro familiari.

Gli attentati da parte del gruppo Boko Haram hanno come obiettivo lo Stato laico e mirano a destabilizzare lo Stato di diritto e a diffondere il terrore.

L'Unione europea e la Nigeria intrattengono un continuo dialogo in materia di diritti umani, nel quale vengono trattate le questioni relative alla libertà di religione e di credo.

L'UE sta inoltre esaminando assieme alla Nigeria il modo migliore per sostenere il paese nell'affrontare tali difficoltà. L'Unione ha già reindirizzato parte dei suoi programmi di cooperazione con la Nigeria verso il nord del paese, dove opera il gruppo Boko Haram, e sta concentrando in tale regione anche i nuovi interventi, in particolare attraverso il programma sulla giustizia recentemente lanciato in collaborazione con l'Ufficio delle Nazioni Unite contro la droga e il crimine (UNODC), e un nuovo programma di assistenza alla maternità in collaborazione con l'UNICEF, per due Stati del nord e uno del sud. I programmi mirano a fornire alla popolazione servizi sociali di base e a contribuire a dimostrare che le autorità s'interessano alle necessità dei cittadini.

Inoltre, l'UE fornirà lo sviluppo di capacità nell'ambito della mediazione attraverso un progetto pilota varato dal Parlamento europeo.

Negli ultimi cinque mesi la cooperazione tra la Nigeria e l'Unione europea è stata ampliata e comprende ora, in aggiunta alla cooperazione allo sviluppo, un dialogo formale sulla sicurezza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005635/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Fresh suicide attack on a Christian church in Nigeria

On 3 June 2012, yet another extremist attack against Nigeria's Christian community was carried out in the State of Bauchi.

The suicide attack, in which a car containing explosives was driven at speed towards a Pentecostal church, caused 15 deaths and left at least 35 people injured, a toll which would have been much higher had the car not been intercepted at a nearby road block.

Although no one has claimed responsibility, Monsignor Kaigama, the head of the Episcopal Conference in Nigeria, maintains that the attack was the work of the terrorist group Boko Haram and is part of a new strategy of focusing on sensitive Christian targets which attract more media coverage.

1. Is the Commission aware of this attack?

2. How does it intend to support the Christian community and, possibly, Nigeria in combating terrorist attacks?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

The High Representative/Vice-President follows closely events in Nigeria, deplores this new and despicable attack and expresses her sympathy with the victims and their families.

The attacks by Boko Haram target the secular state and aim at undermining the rule of law and spreading terror.

There is a continuing human rights dialogue between the EU and Nigeria, which includes the issues related to freedom of religion and belief.

The EU is also examining with Nigeria, how best to support it in facing these difficulties. The EU has already reoriented parts of its ongoing cooperation programme with Nigeria to the North of the country where Boko Haram operates, and is focusing new interventions there also, notably via the just-launched Justice Programme with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and a new Maternal Health programme for two Northern and one Southern State with the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef). They will focus on improving delivery of key social services to the population and help demonstrate that the authorities care about their needs.

In addition, the EU shall provide capacity building for mediation, via a pilot project established by Parliament.

Moreover, the cooperation between Nigeria and the EU has in the past five months been expanded to include a formalised security dialogue, in addition to development cooperation.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005636/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE) και Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προστασία του καταναλωτή και εφαρμογή του δικαίου του ανταγωνισμού σε φαινόμενα υπερτιμολόγησης προϊόντων ομίλων πολυεθνικών εταιρειών

Παρά τη βαθύτατη κρίση και τους υψηλούς δείκτες ύφεσης της ελληνικής οικονομίας, επώνυμα προϊόντα πολυεθνικών ομίλων εξακολουθούν να πωλούνται κατά πολύ ακριβότερα στην ελληνική αγορά σε σύγκριση με άλλα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ. Σύμφωνα με τις αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες του ελληνικού Υπουργείου Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης, το φαινόμενο αυτό αποδίδεται στη διαφορετική τιμολογιακή πολιτική που εφαρμόζουν, ανά χώρα, όμιλοι πολυεθνικών εταιρειών. Κατανέμοντας τα κέρδη τους μεταξύ των πολυεθνικών εταιρειών τους, οι επιχειρηματικοί όμιλοι αυξάνουν με τεχνητό τρόπο τη φορολογητέα βάση τους σε ένα κράτος μέλος και την μειώνουν σε άλλο. Η μέθοδος που χρησιμοποιείται εν προκειμένω είναι η υπερτιμολόγηση των προσφερομένων αγαθών τα οποία διακινούνται μεταξύ των εταιρειών των ίδιων ομίλων. Ενδεικτικώς αναφέρεται ότι οι τιμές δημοφιλών προϊόντων πολυεθνικού κολοσσού που δραστηριοποιείται στην επιπλοποιία και στον οικιακό εξοπλισμό είναι από 30 έως και 300 % περισσότερο ακριβές στην Ελλάδα από ό,τι σε άλλα κράτη μέλη.

Όπως προκύπτει από επίσημα στοιχεία του ΟΟΣΑ, η Ελλάδα δεν έχει προβεί ακόμη στις απαραίτητες ενέργειες σχετικά με την εναρμόνιση του εθνικού νομοθετικού πλαισίου με τα διεθνή πρότυπα ελέγχου των ενδοομιλικών συναλλαγών (κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για τις τιμές μεταβίβασης, μεθοδολογία ελέγχου κ.α.).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει για το συντονισμό σε κοινοτικό επίπεδο της μεθοδολογίας ελέγχου των ενδοομιλικών συναλλαγών και των κανόνων τεκμηρίωσης για τον καθορισμό των τιμών μεταβίβασης των συνδεδεμένων επιχειρήσεων στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση;

2. Εκτιμά ότι οι ανωτέρω πρακτικές των πολυεθνικών ομίλων εγείρουν ζητήματα παραβίασης των κανόνων του ελεύθερου ανταγωνισμού, δεδομένου ότι πολλές από τις εν λόγω συνδεδεμένες επιχειρήσεις διαθέτουν δεσπόζουσα θέση στην ελληνική αγορά; Σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί, προκειμένου να διασφαλιστούν συνθήκες υγιούς ανταγωνισμού στην εσωτερική αγορά;

3. Διαθέτει στοιχεία που επιβεβαιώνουν τις τιμολογιακές διαφορές που παρατηρούνται σε πολλές χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης σχετικά με βασικά καταναλωτικά αγαθά (δημητριακά, είδη ατομικής υγιεινής, αναψυκτικά αλλά και η ενδεικτικώς αναφερθείσα περίπτωση των επίπλων) που διαθέτουν στην αγορά οι πολυεθνικοί όμιλοι;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Αυγούστου 2012)

1. Οι πολιτικές για τον καθορισμό των τιμών μεταβίβασης συνδέονται με τη φορολογία και εξετάζονται από τις εθνικές φορολογικές αρχές των χωρών στις οποίες δραστηριοποιούνται οι πολυεθνικές εταιρείες. Η ισχύουσα οδηγία για τον υποχρεωτικό έλεγχο ([1]) και οι προτάσεις για τον υποχρεωτικό έλεγχο της ΕΕ ([2]) δεν ασχολούνται άμεσα με το ζήτημα των τιμών μεταβίβασης. Οι νόμιμοι ελεγκτές οφείλουν να εξετάζουν τις συναλλαγές των συνδεδεμένων μερών και να προσδιορίζουν κατά πόσον αυτές έχουν δηλωθεί σωστά σύμφωνα με τα εθνικά ή τα διεθνή πρότυπα χρηματοοικονομικής πληροφόρησης. Οι λογιστικές οδηγίες της ΕΕ ([3]) απαιτούν από τις εταιρείες να αποκαλύπτουν σημαντικές συναλλαγές που δεν έχουν συναφθεί με τους συνήθεις όρους της αγοράς, ακόμα και στο εσωτερικό ομίλου.

Το κοινό φόρουμ σχετικά με τις τιμές μεταβίβασης (ΚΦΤΜ) ανέπτυξε «τεκμηρίωση για τον καθορισμό των τιμών μεταβίβασης στην ΕΕ». Ο αντίστοιχος κώδικας δεοντολογίας εγκρίθηκε από το Συμβούλιο τον Ιούνιο του 2006. Το ΚΦΤΜ εργάζεται σήμερα για τη διαμόρφωση κοινών προσεγγίσεων για την αντιμετώπιση των φορολογικών κινδύνων που σχετίζονται με τον καθορισμό των τιμών μεταβίβασης.

([1]) Οδηγία 2006/43/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 17ης Μαΐου 2006, για τον υποχρεωτικό έλεγχο των ετήσιων και των ενοποιημένων λογαριασμών.

([2]) Πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με ειδικές απαιτήσεις όσον αφορά τον υποχρεωτικό έλεγχο οντοτήτων δημοσίου συμφέροντος [COM(2011)779] και πρόταση οδηγίας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας 2006/43/ΕΚ για τον υποχρεωτικό έλεγχο των ετήσιων και των ενοποιημένων λογαριασμών [COM(2011)778].

([3]) Τέταρτη οδηγία του Συμβουλίου, της 25ης Ιουλίου 1978, βασιζομένη στο άρθρο 54 παράγραφος 3 περίπτωση ζ) της συνθήκης περί των ετησίων λογαριασμών εταιρειών ορισμένων μορφών (78/660/ΕΟΚ) και έβδομη οδηγία του Συμβουλίου, της 13ης Ιουνίου 1983, βασιζόμενη στο άρθρο 54 παράγραφος 3 περίπτωση ζ) της συνθήκης για τους ενοποιημένους λογαριασμούς (83/349/ΕΟΚ).

2. Δεν είναι δυνατόν να εξαχθεί συμπέρασμα για το κατά πόσον οι πρακτικές παραβιάζουν τους κανόνες ανταγωνισμού της ΕΕ. Η απαγόρευση των περιοριστικών συμφωνιών που προβλέπεται στο άρθρο 101 της ΣΛΕΕ δεν εφαρμόζεται για τις ρυθμίσεις στο πλαίσιο του ίδιου ομίλου. Όσον αφορά το άρθρο 102 της ΣΛΕΕ σχετικά με την κατάχρηση δεσπόζουσας θέσης, κάθε περίπτωση πρέπει να αξιολογείται με βάση τα δικά της πραγματικά περιστατικά. Για παράδειγμα, πολλές εθνικές αρχές ανταγωνισμού έχουν καταλήξει στο συμπέρασμα ότι οι διαφορές των τιμών των τροφίμων μεταξύ των κρατών μελών είναι δυνατόν να βασίζονται στα φορολογικά καθεστώτα, στην κοινωνική νομοθεσία και σε άλλες κανονιστικές ρυθμίσεις, και όχι σε αντιανταγωνιστική συμπεριφορά.

3. Η Επιτροπή (Eurostat) δημοσιεύει τακτικά δεδομένα σχετικά με την εξέλιξη των τιμών των αγαθών και υπηρεσιών στην ΕΕ και στα κράτη μέλη· ωστόσο, στα δεδομένα αυτά δεν γίνεται διάκριση μεταξύ των προϊόντων πολυεθνικών εταιρειών και των λοιπών προϊόντων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005636/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE) and Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Consumer protection and enforcement of competition law in the overpricing of products from multinational corporations

Despite the severe crisis and the Greek economy's high recession indicators, branded products from multinational groups continue to be sold at much higher prices on the Greek market than in other EU Member States. According to the competent services of the Greek Ministry of Rural Development, this phenomenon is attributed to the different pricing policies implemented in each country by multinational corporations. The entrepreneurial groups artificially increase their tax base in one Member State and reduce it in another by dividing their profits among their multinational companies. The method used is the overpricing of goods which are traded between companies of the same group. For example, the prices of popular products manufactured by a multinational furnishings and home equipment giant are 30 to 300% more expensive in Greece than they are in other Member States.

According to official data from the OECD, Greece has not yet carried out the actions required to bring the national legislative framework in line with international accounting standards for intra-group transactions (transfer pricing guidelines, audit methodology, etc.).

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. What measures does it intend to take on an EU level to align the audit methodology for intra-group transactions and the rules of transfer pricing documentation for affiliated undertakings in the European Union?

2. Does it consider that these multinational groups' practices violate the rules of free competition given that many of these affiliated undertakings have a leading position on the Greek market? What actions does it intend to take in order to guarantee healthy competition on the internal market?

3. Does the Commission have any data to confirm the pricing differences which can be seen in many EU countries with regard to basic consumer goods (cereals, sanitary items, soft drinks and the abovementioned furniture category) placed on the market by multinational groups?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

1. Transfer pricing policies are related to taxation and examined by national tax authorities of the countries in which multinational companies operate. The current statutory audit directive ([1]) and EU statutory audit proposals ([2]) do not deal directly with the issue of transfer pricing. Statutory auditors are required to examine related party transactions and identify whether these have been correctly reported under national or international reporting standards. EU accounting directives ([3]) require companies to disclose material transactions that have not been concluded at normal market conditions, including within a group.

The Joint Transfer Pricing Forum (JTPF) developed 'EU Transfer Pricing Documentation'. The respective Code of Conduct was agreed by the Council in June 2006. The JTPF is currently working on common approaches for addressing tax risks related to transfer pricing.

2. It is not possible to conclude whether the practices infringe EU competition rules. The prohibition on restrictive agreements in Article 101 TFEU does not apply to intra-group arrangements. As regards Article 102 TFEU concerning the abuse of a dominant position, each case must be assessed on its own facts. For example, several national competition authorities concluded that differences in food prices between Member States may be based on tax regimes, social legislation and other regulation, rather than anti-competitive behaviour.

([1]) Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts.

([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on specific requirements regarding statutory audit of public-interest-entities [COM(2011)779] and Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2006/43/EC on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts [COM(2011)778].

([3]) Fourth Council Directive of 25 July 1978 based on Article 54 (3) (g) of the Treaty on the annual accounts of certain types of companies (78/660/EEC) and Seventh Council Directive of 13 June 1983 based on the article 54(3)(g) of the Treaty on consolidated accounts (83/349/EEC).

3. Data on price development of goods and services in the EU and in Member States is regularly published by the Commission (Eurostat); however, these do not make distinctions between products of multinational companies and other products.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005637/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Occupazione armata dell'aeroporto di Tripoli

Una brigata armata di miliziani ha circondato l'aeroporto Qaser Ben Ghashir di Tripoli, in Libia, costringendo le autorità a cancellare tutti voli in partenza. Gli aerei in arrivo, secondo quanto riporta Al-Jazeera, farebbero ora scalo all'aeroporto di Mitiga, poco lontano. Il sito ufficiale dell'aeroporto non annuncia, però, variazioni, tranne la cancellazione di un volo in ingresso da Istanbul.

La brigata, probabilmente chiamata «Al-Awfia», è originaria della città di Tarhuna, a circa 60 km a est di Tripoli. La richiesta è quella del rilascio di uno dei suoi leader, Abu Ujeila Al Habashi, «scomparso» due notti fa. Secondo l'emittente araba, si era recato nella capitale per consegnare alcuni carri armati all'esercito regolare e non avrebbe più dato notizie di sé.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può l'Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È informata sull'occupazione armata dell'aeroporto di Tripoli in Libia?

2. Può fornire altre informazioni dettagliate sui fatti?

3. Come intende intervenire per riportare alla normalità la situazione?

4. Come intende garantire l'incolumità dei tanti cittadini europei che stanno tornando a casa da Tripoli?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 agosto 2012)

L'AR/VP è al corrente dell'accaduto e si compiace del fatto che il caso sia stato risolto pacificamente grazie all'intervento del governo libico. L'UE invita tutti i libici a sostenere l'accordo costituzionale e ad appianare i disaccordi mediante negoziati pacifici e avviando un processo democratico. Il modo migliore in cui l'UE può contribuire a ridurre tali incidenti in futuro è fornire un cospicuo sostegno a questo processo di lungo termine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005637/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Tripoli airport: armed occupation

An armed militia has surrounded Qaser Ben Ghashir airport in Tripoli, Libya, forcing the authorities to cancel all outbound flights. According to Al-Jazeera, incoming planes are now landing at the nearby Mitiga airport. However, the airport's official website has not announced any changes other than the cancellation of one inbound flight from Istanbul.

The militia, thought to be the Al-Awfia brigade, originates from the town of Tarhuna, some 60 km east of Tripoli. It is demanding the release of one of its leaders, Abu Ujeila Al-Habashi, who 'disappeared' two nights ago. According to Al-Jazeera, he went to the capital to hand over some tanks to the regular army and has not been seen since.

In view of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following:

1. Is she aware of the armed occupation of Tripoli airport in Libya?

2. Can she provide any other detailed information about what happened?

3. What action will she take to ensure the situation is restored to normal?

4. How will she ensure the safety of the many European citizens returning from Tripoli?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2012)

The HR/VP is aware of the incident and welcomes the fact that the incident has been resolved peacefully with the intervention of the Libyan Government. The EU calls on all Libyans to support the constitutional agreement and to settle their differences through peaceful negotiation and democratic process. Extensive EU support to these long term processes is the best way for the EU to contribute to the reduction in such incidents in the future.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005638/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Erosione della costa ionica lucana

È stato nuovamente lanciato oggi l'appello d'intervento, da parte di un'associazione ambientalista, per la grave erosione costiera nella zona di Scanzano Jonico, dovuta alla realizzazione di porti turistici sulla sponda del fiume Agri. Ogni anno lo Ionio divora 30 metri di arenile: finora ha inghiottito già 160 metri. Restandone solo 60, se l'avanzamento dovesse progredire in modo regolare, tra due anni, nel 2014, molti lidi non esisteranno più. Inoltre, in alcune zone, si è verificato come la pineta costiera risulti già essere a ridosso della battigia. A Scanzano, gli operatori turistici sottolineano l'incuria e il disinteresse delle istituzioni rinnovando la loro richiesta di supporto per tamponare il fenomeno prima che non vi sia più possibilità di azione.

Essendo noto l'impegno dell'Unione europea volto a proteggere gli ecosistemi comuni dell'Europa da inquinamento, cambiamenti climatici e rifiuti marini, si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Come intende essa intervenire? Esistono studi finanziati dall'UE sulle cause dell'erosione delle coste?

2. Sono previsti finanziamenti per favorire la ridistribuzione della popolazione costiera esposta a un imminente rischio derivante dall'erosione della costa?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2012)

1. La Commissione è preoccupata per l'aumento delle pressioni ambientali sulle coste del Mediterraneo, compresa le costa ionica della Basilicata. Gli effetti dei cambiamenti climatici e le attività umane, come lo sviluppo costiero, provocano considerevoli e gravi ripercussioni sui litorali, tra cui l'erosione costiera.

Data l'importanza delle zone costiere come risorse ecologiche, economiche e sociali, nonché al fine di sostenere una risposta integrata, nel 2002 l'Unione europea ha adottato la raccomandazione sulla gestione integrata delle zone costiere ([1]) (ICZM) e nel 2010 ha ratificato il protocollo ICZM ([2]) alla convenzione di Barcellona per il Mar Mediterraneo. Entrambi gli strumenti considerano l'erosione costiera una grave minaccia per le zone litoranee. Il protocollo comprende un obbligo specifico per le Parti, inclusa l'Italia, di adottare misure volte a ridurre al minimo gli effetti sull'erosione di attività e opere realizzate nelle zone costiere.

La Commissione ha finanziato uno studio sulla gestione sostenibile dell'erosione costiera in Europa denominato «Eurosion». I risultati sono stati pubblicati sul sito web http://www.eurosion.org/.

La Commissione ha inoltre finanziato il progetto «Ourcoast», che ha istituito una piattaforma web sulla gestione delle coste, comprendente una banca dati delle migliori pratiche per la gestione dei litorali in cui figurano numerosi casi di prevenzione e attenuazione. La base dati può essere consultata al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/ourcoast/.

2. L'articolo 4, paragrafo 5, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([3]) prevede la possibilità per il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale di sostenere azioni volte alla prevenzione dei rischi e alla protezione dell'ambiente. Tra gli interventi ammissibili non figura il trasferimento della popolazione locale.

([1]) Raccomandazione 2002/413/CE.
([2]) Decisione 2009/89/CE del Consiglio.
([3]) GU L 210 del 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005638/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Erosion of Basilicata's Ionian coast

An environmental organisation recently renewed the call for action on the serious coastal erosion caused by the construction of marinas on the banks of the Agri river in Scanzano Jonico. Every year, the Ionian Sea swallows up another 30 metres of shoreline: to date, 160 metres have already been lost to the sea. Since only 60 metres remain, if the erosion continues at a constant pace, by 2014 many beaches will no longer exist. Furthermore, in some areas, the coastal pine forest is already close to the waterline. In Scanzano, tourist industry stakeholders are highlighting the EU's lack of care and indifference, and renewing their call for help to halt the erosion before it is too late.

Since the European Union's commitment to protecting Europe's shared ecosystems from pollution, climate change and marine waste is well-known,

1. What action does the Commission intend to take? Do any EU-funded studies on the causes of this coastal erosion exist?

2. Is any funding available to help relocate the local population, which is currently at imminent risk from coastal erosion?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2012)

1. The Commission is concerned about the increase in environmental pressures on the Mediterranean Sea Coast, including Basilicata's Ionian coast. Climate change effects and human activities, such as coastal development, cause large and severe impacts on the coastlines, including coastal erosion.

Given the importance of coastal zones as ecological, economic and social resources, and in order to support an integrated response, the European Union adopted the recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management ([1]) (ICZM) in 2002, and ratified the ICZM Protocol ([2]) to the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean in 2010. Both instruments refer to coastal erosion as an important threat for coastal areas. The Protocol includes a specific obligation to the Parties, including Italy, to adopt measures to minimise effects on coastal erosion of activities and works in coastal zones.

The Commission funded a study on sustainable coastal erosion management in Europe called 'Eurosion'. The results are published on http://www.eurosion.org/

Furthermore, the Commission funded the 'Ourcoast' project, which established a web-based platform on coastal management that includes a database of best practices for coastal management, including several cases on erosion prevention and mitigation. The database can be consulted at http://ec.europa.eu/ourcoast/

2. Article 4.5 of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([3]) foresees the possibility for the European Regional development Fund to support actions for the prevention of risks and for environmental protection. The eligible interventions do not include the relocation of local population.

([1]) Recommendation 2002/413/EC.
([2]) Council 2009/89/EC.
([3]) OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005639/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Pannello solare riciclabile al 100 %

Dalla cooperazione italo-svedese nasce il modulo fotovoltaico al 100 % riciclabile. Il nuovo prodotto nasce dalla collaborazione di un'azienda italiana di automazione industriale nel settore fotovoltaico, che da dieci anni è specializzata nella fornitura di impianti completi per la produzione di pannelli solari, con una start-up svedese specializzata nello sviluppo di tecnologie per la deposizione film sottile.

L'idea è basata sul deposito di un sottile strato di film Cigs (Copper indium gallium selenide) su celle di acciaio. Il Cigs è una tecnologia già impiegata per pannelli a film sottile e l'innovazione consiste nell'utilizzare una superficie inferiore rispetto a una cella fotovoltaica standard (156 x 156mm) per i costosi processi di deposizione. Il cuore dell'innovazione sta nel processo di assemblaggio. Per comporre il pannello, infatti, è stato sviluppato un nuovo macchinario per la saldatura delle celle Cigs, mentre per la laminazione del vetro ultrasottile è stato inventato un nuovo processo di laminazione «inverso».

Le celle in Cigs sono incapsulate in un film termoplastico che assicura l'adesione al vetro e l'isolamento dagli agenti atmosferici per trent'anni. Questo materiale non solo garantisce una migliore performance rispetto a quella standard ma, soprattutto, è privo di acidi acetici e permette la reversibilità del processo ad alte temperature. Questo significa che, a fine vita del pannello, è possibile riaprirlo e riutilizzare tutti i materiali (vetro, alluminio, metalli, celle etc.) con un impatto ambientale in sostanza nullo.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È essa a conoscenza del nuovo modulo fotovoltaico riciclabile al 100 %?

2. Esistono norme approvate dal Parlamento europeo che impongono obiettivi per la raccolta differenziata e il riciclo dei pannelli solari?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(11 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è al corrente della molteplicità di tecnologie applicate nel settore dei moduli fotovoltaici. Le questioni relative al riciclo di tali tecnologie sono state affrontate nello studio «*Study on photovoltaic panels supplementing the impact assessment for a review of the WEEE Directive*» (Studio sui pannelli fotovoltaici che integra la valutazione di impatto ai fini di una revisione della direttiva RAEE), realizzato per la Commissione nel 2011 ([1]). La Commissione non è a conoscenza delle caratteristiche specifiche di ogni singola tecnologia presente sul mercato e non ha studiato nei dettagli il prodotto menzionato dall'onorevole parlamentare, che si basa sulla tecnologia CIGS.

Il 19 gennaio 2012 il Parlamento europeo ha adottato una risoluzione legislativa contenente gli emendamenti a una nuova direttiva sui rifiuti di apparecchiature elettriche ed elettroniche (RAEE); il 7 giugno 2012 il Consiglio ha accolto tali emendamenti ([2]). La nuova direttiva RAEE, che sarà pubblicata a breve nella Gazzetta ufficiale, disciplina la raccolta differenziata e il riciclaggio dei RAEE, inclusi i pannelli fotovoltaici.

([1]) Consultare http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/pdf/Study%20on%20PVs%20Bio%20final.pdf
([2]) Per entrambi i documenti, e per i successivi, consultare la pagina web: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005639/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: 100% recyclable solar panels

Italian-Swedish collaboration has produced a 100% recyclable photovoltaic module. The new product is the result of a partnership between an Italian photovoltaics manufacturing company, which has 10 years' experience in the supply of complete solar panel systems, and a Swedish start-up that specialises in developing thin-film deposition technologies.

The idea is based on depositing a thin layer of CIGS (copper indium gallium selenide) film on steel cells. CIGS technology is already used for thin-film panels, and the innovation lies in using a surface smaller than a standard photovoltaic cell (156 x 156 mm) for the expensive deposition process. The heart of the innovation is the assembly process. A new machine has been developed to weld the CIGS cells to make the panels, and a new 'inverse' lamination process has been invented for manufacturing the ultra-thin glass.

The CIGS cells are sealed in a thermoplastic film that adheres to the glass and provides insulation from atmospheric agents for 30 years. This material not only ensures performance above the current standard, but, most importantly, is free from acetic acids and enables the process to be reversed at high temperatures. Hence, when a panel has reached the end of its life, it can be opened and all the materials inside (glass, aluminium, metals, etc.) can be reused, with essentially no environmental impact.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission know about the new 100% recyclable photovoltaic module?

2. Has Parliament approved any regulations on separate waste collection and recycling as regards solar panels?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the variety of technologies applied in photovoltaic modules. Recycling aspects of different technologies applied in photovoltaic modules have been addressed in the study 'Study on photovoltaic panels supplementing the impact assessment for a review of the WEEE Directive', carried out for the Commission in 2011 ([1]). The Commission is not aware of the specific characteristics of each single technology on the market, and has not studied in detail the product mentioned by the honourable MEP and based on the CIGS technology.

On 19 January 2012 the European Parliament adopted a legislative resolution with its amendments for a new Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), and on 07 June 2012 the Council has accepted those amendments ([2]). The new WEEE Directive, to be published soon in the Official Journal, regulates the separate collection and recycling of WEEE including Photovoltaic panels.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/pdf/Study%20on%20PVs%20Bio%20final.pdf
([2]) See for both, as well as further, documents: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005640/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Residui chimici nel tè cinese

Il tè cinese contiene troppi residui chimici. È questa la sintesi di un recente studio sui pesticidi come ingredienti nascosti nel tè che ha verificato la presenza di sostanze chimiche in foglie di tè acquistato direttamente in loco. La Cina, oltre a essere tra i paesi che consumano maggiormente tè, è anche il maggiore produttore mondiale con oltre otto milioni di coltivatori.

Nel periodo compreso tra il dicembre 2011 e il gennaio 2012 sono stati prelevati diciotto campioni di tè di differenti varietà (verde, oolong, al gelsomino) di nove aziende molto note sul mercato cinese e inviati i prodotti in laboratorio perché fossero esaminati. I risultati hanno mostrato che la totalità dei campioni conteneva in qualche misura pesticidi (ne sono state rilevate ben 29 tipologie differenti). Il problema è che nel 60 % dei casi si trattava di pesticidi vietati. Se si considera la normativa europea la percentuale di tè irregolare supera il 70 %.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. È a conoscenza della ricerca effettuata sul prodotto in questione?

2. Ci sono Stati membri che importano dalla Cina il prodotto summenzionato e, in caso di risposta affermativa, come intende intervenire l'UE al fine di tutelare i consumatori europei?

3. Le autorità competenti dell'UE hanno eseguito esami sul tè cinese?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(17 agosto 2012)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio relativo ai campioni prelevati sul mercato cinese. Lo studio avverte le autorità cinesi delle possibili conseguenze di un uso eccessivo dei pesticidi sul tè per quanto concerne la salute degli agricoltori e dei consumatori e gli scambi. In particolare è criticato l'uso di pesticidi non autorizzati e vietati.

I livelli segnalati indicano che il 22 % dei campioni supererebbero i livelli massimi di residui (LMR) dell'UE. Nessuno però dei livelli segnalati supera la dose acuta di riferimento (DAR), ragion per cui non si prevede nessun rischio grave immediato per i consumatori.

2. Le importazioni di tè cinese sono oggetto di controlli ufficiali presso i laboratori ufficiali di controllo dell'UE. In seguito all'individuazione di violazioni degli LMR il tè cinese è elencato nel regolamento 669/2009 dall'ottobre 2011 ed è soggetto a un test obbligatorio alla frontiera per il 10 % delle partite. Nel caso di violazione del LMR dell'UE la partita di tè non può entrare nel territorio unionale. I risultati dello studio menzionato confermano i reperti dei laboratori UE, sia per quanto concerne il numero di violazioni del LMR sia per la gamma di pesticidi reperiti.

3. Prima che fosse adottata la misura relativa a test obbligatori, i laboratori dell'UE avevano riscontrato un 21 % di casi di non conformità. Dall'entrata in vigore della misura UE il tasso di non conformità è sceso al 5 %. La Commissione segue da vicino questi risultati ed è pronta a reagire ove necessario.

I laboratori di riferimento dell'UE hanno sviluppato un metodo d'analisi migliorato per l'individuazione dei pesticidi nel tè e hanno organizzato un test d'efficacia all'indirizzo dei laboratori ufficiali dell'UE per assicurare che tali laboratori possano eseguire l'analisi sul tè allo stesso livello elevato di precisione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005640/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Chemical residues in Chinese tea

A recent study on pesticides as hidden ingredients in tea concludes, having detected chemicals in tea leaves bought directly in China, that Chinese tea contains too many chemical residues. Besides having one of the highest tea-consumption rates, China is also the world's biggest producer, with over 8 million tea growers.

Between December 2011 and January 2012, 18 tea samples of different varieties (green, oolong, jasmine) were taken from nine companies that are very well known on the Chinese market and were sent for laboratory testing. The results showed that all the samples contained pesticides to some extent (29 different types were found); the problem is that the pesticides involved in 60% of cases are banned. Under the terms of European law, the proportion of illegal tea exceeds 70%.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the research on tea?

2. Are there Member States which import the aforementioned product from China and, if so, how does the EU intend to intervene in order to protect European consumers?

3. Have the relevant EU authorities carried out tests on Chinese tea?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the study, which was about samples taken on the Chinese market. The study warns the Chinese authorities about the possible consequences of excessive pesticides use on tea for the health of farmers and consumers and for trade. In particular the use of unauthorised and banned pesticides is criticised.

The reported levels show that 22% of samples would exceed EU Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs). However, none of the reported levels exceed the Acute Reference Dose (ARfD), so no immediate serious risk for consumers is expected.

2. Imports of Chinese tea are subject to official controls in the EU official control laboratories. Due to findings of MRL violations Chinese tea is listed in Regulation 669/2009 for 10% obligatory testing at the border since October 2011. In case of violation of the EU MRL, the consignment of tea is not authorised to enter the EU. The findings of the cited study confirm the findings of the EU laboratories, both in the number of MRL violations and the range of pesticides found.

3. Before the measure on obligatory testing was taken the EU laboratories found 21% non-compliance. Since the EU measure entered into force the violation rate dropped to 5%. The Commission closely monitors these results and will react if required.

The EU Reference Laboratories have developed an improved method of analysis for pesticides in tea and organised a proficiency test for EU official laboratories to ensure that these laboratories can perform the analysis on tea at the same high level of precision.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005641/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Rigenerazione cardiaca dopo l'infarto

Un laboratorio di medicina molecolare di Trieste sta tentando di indurre la rigenerazione cardiaca dopo l'infarto grazie a un virus buono. Può essere modificato, grazie all'ingegneria genetica, e utilizzato come vettore per diffondere nell'organismo un gene con funzione terapeutica. Il laboratorio ha inoltre identificato una serie di microRNA che, veicolati nel cuore utilizzando questi vettori, sono in grado di indurre la rigenerazione cardiaca dopo l'infarto. Il problema, infatti, è che il cuore, come anche i neuroni, la vista e l'udito, non si rigenera, causando l'invecchiamento e la morte. L'idea è di trovare nuove terapie che rigenerino i tessuti, grazie a dei geni oppure alla coltivazione di cellule staminali.

Il progetto per la rigenerazione del cuore è partito nel 2003-2004 e ora si sono individuati un paio di fattori che funzionano intervenendo dopo l'infarto. Il cuore adulto non si rigenera, ma c'è una finestra di tempo dopo la nascita in cui c'è una capacità residua di proliferazione; nel topo sono circa due settimane, poi le cellule del cuore si bloccano. Dunque, se si fa un danno in un embrione questo viene rigenerato. Proprio su questa strada procede la ricerca e lavorando su cellule prese dai topi subito dopo la nascita si è visto che esistono piccoli RNA capaci di rigenerare il processo. In particolare, ci sono una quarantina di microRNA che, una volta introdotti nel cuore, lo fanno diventare straordinariamente grande. Sono proprio questi microRNA che iniettati dopo l'infarto riparano il cuore.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza del nuovo studio sulla rigenerazione cardiaca dopo l'infarto?

2. Viste l'importanza della ricerca e la necessità di svilupparla, non ritiene che si debbano prevedere finanziamenti a titolo del Settimo programma quadro(7° PQ) oppure del Programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(10 luglio 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della ricerca intrapresa dal gruppo di medicina molecolare presso il Centro internazionale di ingegneria genetica e biotecnologia di Trieste, nel settore della rigenerazione cardiaca.

La ricerca sulla rigenerazione cardiaca è un settore che viene attivamente sostenuto dal Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e di sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013). Per i dettagli dei progetti specifici interessati, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-05575/2012 ([1]).

In linea con la decisione relativa al programma quadro «Competitività e innovazione» (CIP), il programma non sostiene questo tipo di ricerca.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005641/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Cardiac regeneration after heart attack

A molecular medical laboratory in Trieste is attempting to bring about cardiac regeneration after a heart attack using a 'good' virus. This virus can be genetically modified and used as a carrier to spread a therapeutic gene throughout the body. The laboratory has also identified a series of microRNAs which, when conveyed into the heart by these carriers, can bring about cardiac regeneration after a heart attack. The problem is that the heart — like neurons, sight and hearing — does not regenerate itself, causing ageing and death. The idea is to find new therapies that regenerate the tissues using genes or by cultivating stem cells.

The heart regeneration project began in 2003-2004, and a pair of factors have now been identified that work by intervening after a heart attack. The adult heart does not regenerate itself, but there is a window of time after birth in which there is a residual capacity for proliferation; in mice, this window is around two weeks, and then the cells of the heart stall. So if there is damage to the embryo's heart, the cells regenerate. The research follows this path, and by working on cells taken from mice immediately after birth, it has found that that there are microRNAs capable of regenerating. In particular, there are around 40 microRNAs which, once introduced into the heart, cause it to become extraordinarily large. These microRNAs repair the heart when injected after an attack.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of the new study on cardiac regeneration after heart attack?

2. Given the importance of the research and the need to develop it, does it not consider that funding should be provided under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of research undertaken by the molecular medicine group at the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, Trieste, in the field of cardiac regeneration.

Cardiac regeneration research is a field that is being actively supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). For details of the specific projects involved, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-05575/2012 ([1]).

In line with the decision on the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), this programme does not support this kind of research.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005642/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Studi sui mangimi

Da un rapporto sulla produzione ittica è emerso che l'acquacoltura mondiale cresce dagli anni Settanta del 7 % ogni anno, fornendo oggi il 46 % della produzione totale. Lo spirito con cui allevatori, ditte mangimistiche e ricerca stanno andando avanti è quello della sostenibilità ambientale ed economica. In particolare, sono allo studio ingredienti alternativi alla farina e all'olio di pesce. Al momento, la loro presenza nei mangimi si è ridotta a percentuali difficilmente ipotizzabili fino a qualche anno fa. Recenti studi su fonti proteiche vegetali utilizzate nel branzino e nell'orata hanno dimostrato come queste specie sono le più adatte all'utilizzo di ingredienti vegetali, per esempio i sottoprodotti della soia.

È vero che in natura le specie carnivore difficilmente consumano vegetali, ma dal punto di vista nutrizionale il concetto di proteina animale o vegetale è stato superato da quelle che sono le esigenze in aminoacidi. Perciò si pensa che l'aggiunta di ingredienti vegetali nella dieta di specie prevalentemente carnivore possa essere un valido strumento per la sostenibilità del settore.

Sul problema delle farine è fondamentale rispettare le esigenze alimentari dei pesci: nutrire un carnivoro come un erbivoro non corrisponde al benessere del pesce e ne altererebbe le qualità (come la quota di omega 3). Bisognerebbe lavorare a un'acquacoltura legata al territorio e alle tradizioni locali: per esempio, investendo nell'allevamento del muggine da bottarga, mentre oggi il 90 % della bottarga è prodotto da muggini che provengono dal Brasile o dall'Australia.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. L'UE ha commissionato studi esterni sui mangimi?

2. Come interviene l'UE per garantire un elevato livello di sostenibilità, in particolare per il benessere animale?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(2 agosto 2012)

Nell'ambito del 5°, 6° e 7° programma quadro di ricerca sono stati finanziati numerosi progetti, tra cui il progetto AQUAMAX ([1]). Al momento nell'ambito del 7° programma quadro è finanziato il progetto ARRAINA ([2]). Questo progetto mira a definire e a fornire dati completi in merito alle esigenze nutrizionali quantitative delle cinque principali specie ittiche dell'UE e mettere a punto mangimi alternativi sostenibili per l'acquacoltura su misura per queste specie, incorporandovi livelli ridotti di farina e olio di pesce.

Il benessere del pesce d'allevamento rientra nell'ambito d'applicazione della vigente legislazione unionale sul benessere animale ([3]) e sulla produzione biologica ([4]). Negli ultimi anni l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare ha pubblicato pareri scientifici indipendenti sul benessere delle principali specie di pesci d'allevamento. L'attuale riforma della politica comune della pesca mira a promuovere lo sviluppo sostenibile dell'acquacoltura.

La Commissione continuerà ad attuare la nuova strategia per il benessere animale (2012-2015) ([5]) che prevede una valutazione del benessere dei pesci d'allevamento. I risultati di questa valutazione contribuiranno a identificare le scelte strategiche più adeguate per quanto riguarda le questioni relative al benessere dei pesci nel settore dell'acquacoltura.

([1]) «Sustainable Aquafeeds to Maximise the Health Benefits of Farmed Fish for Consumers project». AQUAMAX è stato finanziato nell'ambito del 6° programma quadro e ha sviluppato mangimi alternative per l'acquacoltura, in cui sia l'olio di pesce, sia le farine di pesce sono stati ampiamente sostituiti con ingredienti di origine vegetale, sottoponendoli a test con esito positivo a livello di prove di alimentazione e di dimostrazioni in siti di acquacoltura con salmoni, trote salmonate, orate di mare e carpe. www.aquamaxip.eu.

([2]) «Advanced Research Initiatives for Nutrition & Aquaculture».

([3]) Direttiva 98/58/CE del Consiglio, del 20 luglio 1998, riguardante la protezione degli animali negli allevamenti. Regolamento (CE) n. 1099/2009 del Consiglio, del 24 settembre 2009, relativo alla protezione degli animali durante l'abbattimento. Regolamento (CE) n. 1/2005 del Consiglio sulla protezione degli animali durante il trasporto e le operazioni correlate che modifica le direttive 64/432/CEE e 93/119/CE e il regolamento (CE) n. 1255/97.

([4]) Regolamento (CE) n. 834/2007 del Consiglio, regolamento (CE) n. 710/2009 della Commissione, .

([5]) COM(2012)6 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005642/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Studies on animal feed

A report on fish production has revealed that global aquaculture has grown by 7% annually since the 1970s and currently accounts for 46% of total production. Fish breeders, animal feed companies and research studies are focusing on environmental and economic sustainability. In particular, alternative ingredients to meal and fish oil are being studied. Their presence in animal feed has fallen to levels that were hard to imagine just a few years ago. Recent studies on vegetable protein sources used in sea bass and bream have shown that these species are the most suitable for the use of vegetable ingredients, including soya by-products.

In nature it is unusual for carnivorous species to eat plants, but from a nutritional viewpoint the concept of animal or vegetal protein has been overtaken by that of amino acid requirements. The addition of vegetable ingredients to the diet of primarily carnivorous species can therefore be a useful means of helping to ensure the sustainability of the sector.

As regards the issue of meal, it is essential to ensure that the dietary needs of fish are met: feeding carnivores as if they were herbivores will not ensure the wellbeing of fish and will affect their intrinsic qualities (such as the level of omega 3). Aquaculture should be developed in a way that reflects the local context and traditions: for example, by investing in the production of salted mullet roe, given that 90% of roe is currently produced from mullet originating from Brazil or Australia.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. Whether the EU has commissioned external studies on animal feed?

2. What steps the EU is taking to guarantee a high level of sustainability, in particular in relation to animal wellbeing?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2012)

Several projects have been funded under the 5th, 6th and 7th EU Framework Research Programme, among which the project Aquamax ([1]). Currently, a project Arraina ([2]) is being funded under the 7th Framework Programme. That aims to define and provide complete data on the quantitative nutrient requirements of the five major fish species in the EU and develop sustainable alternative aquaculture feeds tailored to the requirements of these species with reduced levels of fish meal and fish oil.

The welfare of farmed fish is covered by the scope of existing EU legislation on animal welfare ([3]) and on organic production ([4]). The European Food Safety Agency published independent scientific opinions on the welfare of the most important farmed fish species in the last years. The current reform of the common fisheries policy aims to promote the sustainable development of aquaculture.

The Commission will continue implementing the new animal welfare strategy (2012-2015) ([5]), which includes an evaluation of fish welfare in aquaculture. The outcomes of this evaluation will contribute to identify the most appropriate policy choices on fish welfare issues in aquaculture.

([1]) 'Sustainable Aquafeeds to Maximise the Health Benefits of Farmed Fish for Consumers project'. Aquamax was financed under the 6th Framework Programme and has developed alternative aquaculture feeds with both fish oil and fish meal largely replaced with ingredients from vegetable materials and has tested these new feeds successfully in feeding trials and at farm level demonstrations with salmon, rainbow trout, sea bream and carps. www.aquamaxip.eu.

([2]) 'Advanced Research Initiatives for Nutrition & Aquaculture'.

([3]) Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes. Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing. 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.

([4]) Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007; Commission Regulation (EC) No 710/2009.

([5]) COM(2012)6.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005643/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti, città di Crotone

Gli enti territoriali, quali Comuni e Province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei fondi diretti programmati ed erogati da parte delle direzioni generali della Commissione europea. Tra i fondi disponibili ci sono, ad esempio, il programma Cultura, il programma per l'occupazione e la solidarietà sociale Progress, il programma per la cittadinanza «Europa per i cittadini», il programma per l'ambiente Life+, il programma «Gestione di flussi migratori», il programma dedicato alle risorse umane «Investire nelle persone» e tanti altri.

1. In merito a questo e ad altri programmi disponibili, può la Commissione far sapere se ci sono programmi per i quali la città di Crotone ha fatto richiesta?

2. In caso affermativo, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati i suddetti programmi sono stati portati a termine?

Risposta di Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(18 luglio 2012)

Le richieste di finanziamenti diretti presentate dalla città di Crotone alla Commissione figurano nell'allegato.

La Commissione nota che l'onorevole parlamentare è interessato ai finanziamenti concessi direttamente alle città italiane nel quadro di specifici programmi UE gestiti dalla Commissione. Se l'onorevole parlamentare lo desidera, la Commissione è disposta a fornirgli una tabella contenente queste informazioni per le principali città italiane che probabilmente partecipano ai programmi in questione; ciò darebbe all'onorevole parlamentare un unico insieme esauriente di dati, evitando alla Commissione di dover rispondere a ogni singola domanda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005643/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Direct funding programmes: Crotone

Local authorities, such as city and provincial councils, are among the first potential beneficiaries of direct funding planned and allocated by Commission directorates-general. Funding is available under the Culture Programme; the PROGRESS Programme for employment and social solidarity; the Citizenship Programme: Europe for Citizens; the Life+ Programme for the environment; the Solidarity and the Management of Migration Flows Programme; the Investing in People Programme which focuses on human resources; and many others.

1. Can the Commission state whether the city of Crotone has submitted applications for funding under any of the above programmes or under any others?

2. If yes, which projects were awarded European funding and what were the results?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

The requests for direct funding submitted by the City of Crotone to the Commission are presented in Annex.

The Commission notes that the Honourable Member is interested in the funding granted directly to Italian cities from specific EU programmes managed by the Commission. Should the Honourable Member so wish, the Commission could prepare a table providing this information for the major Italian cities likely to take part in these programmes. This would save the Commission time needed to reply to each individual question and provide the Honourable Member with one single set of comprehensive data.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005645/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Declarações de Jean-Claude Trichet

Citado pela agência de notícias financeira Bloomberg, em Washington, o antigo presidente do Banco Central Europeu, Jean-Claude Trichet, sugere a perda de soberania económica para os países que ponham em risco outras nações da zona euro devido à incapacidade de aplicar recomendações das autoridades europeias.

Ainda nas palavras de Trichet, quando esses países não conseguem ou não querem implementar as orientações da Comissão Europeia ou do Conselho Europeu «deve ser ativado excecionalmente um governo federal».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Como qualifica as declarações de Jean Claude Trichet?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(3 de agosto de 2012)

A Comissão não comenta as declarações à imprensa de outras pessoas. O fundamento para a coordenação da política económica na UE são os efeitos de contágio que existem entre os Estados-Membros. O facto de as políticas prosseguidas num Estado-Membro poderem ter efeitos significativos na situação económica de outros Estados-Membros justifica as avaliações inter-pares, que fazem parte da vigilância económica no quadro do Semestre Europeu. As recentes reformas da legislação sobre governação económica (o chamado «*six-pack*» — pacote de seis medidas legislativas) reforçaram os instrumentos de vigilância, estando prevista a possibilidade de sanções mais pesadas para os Estados-Membros que tenham como moeda o euro. A chamada proposta «*two-pack*» vai mais longe nessa direção. A razão prende-se com o facto de os efeitos de contágio de um dado Estado-Membro para o seguinte tenderem a ser significativamente mais fortes numa união monetária, como já foi amplamente demonstrado pela crise da dívida soberana. No entanto, a coordenação da política económica nos termos do TFUE não permite a interferência direta da UE enquanto tal nas decisões orçamentais e económicas de um Estado-Membro. O Conselho Europeu de junho de 2012 acordou em estabelecer um roteiro para uma maior integração nos domínios da política económica e orçamental, também para quebrar o risco de contágio entre bancos e dívidas soberanas e para se avançar no sentido de uma autêntica união económica e monetária.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005645/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Comments by Jean-Claude Trichet

The former European Central Bank President, Jean-Claude Trichet, was quoted by the financial news agency *Bloomberg*, in Washington, as suggesting that countries should be stripped of their economic sovereignty when their inability to implement measures recommended by European authorities put other nations in the euro region at risk.

According to Trichet, 'federation by exception' should occur when countries are unable or unwilling to implement guidance from the Commission and the European Council.

How does the Commission view Jean-Claude Trichet's comments?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 August 2012)

The Commission does not comment on press reports on views expressed by others. The rationale for economic policy coordination in the EU is the spill over effects that exist between Member States. The fact that policies pursued in one Member State can have significant effects on the economic situation in other Member States justifies peer reviews that are part of economic surveillance under the European Semester. Recent reforms of economic governance ('Six-Pack') legislation have strengthened the instruments for this surveillance, including the possibility of stronger sanctions for Member States whose currency is the Euro. The so-called 'Two-Pack' proposal goes further in this direction. This is justified by the fact that spill over effects from one Member State to the next tend to be significantly stronger in a currency union, as has been amply demonstrated in the sovereign debt crisis. However, the economic policy coordination under the TFEU does not permit the EU-level to directly interfere into the budgetary and economic decisions of a Member State. The European Council of June 2012 has agreed to set out a roadmap towards closer integration in the fields of economic and budgetary policies, also to break the link of contagion between banks and sovereigns and to move towards a genuine economic and monetary union.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005646/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Perigo de overdose de paracetamol

Um grupo de investigadores da Universidade de Edimburgo alertou, recentemente, para o perigo do paracetamol, usado como analgésico e antipirético para adultos e crianças, quando se verificam casos repetidos de pequena sobredosagem.

Considerando que:

— são sobretudo os doentes crónicos que correm maiores riscos;

— produtos disponíveis no mercado para aliviar os sintomas de gripes e resfriados contêm paracetamol;

— estes medicamentos são de fácil acesso, sem necessidade de receita médica e, portanto, o risco de sobredosagem é maior;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que avaliação faz da situação descrita?

2. Possui a Comissão dados que permitam confirmar o estudo em causa?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2012)

Na UE, o paracetamol está autorizado através de autorizações nacionais de Estados-Membros que são responsáveis pelo acompanhamento de questões surgidas durante a vigilância pós-comercialização do medicamento. Após a comercialização do medicamento, existem sistemas para a vigilância e a notificação de reações adversas. Estes sistemas foram reforçados, nomeadamente através da legislação adotada em 2010 ([1]), que cria, no âmbito da Agência Europeia de Medicamentos, um novo comité para a determinação dos riscos em matéria de farmacovigilância, cuja reunião inaugural se realizou em julho de 2012.

Até ao momento, o grupo de trabalho sobre farmacovigilância da Agência Europeia de Medicamentos presta aconselhamento sobre a segurança dos medicamentos e a investigação de reações adversas, para permitir a identificação, avaliação e gestão eficazes dos riscos nas fases de pré e pós-autorização de um medicamento. No caso de medicamentos autorizados nacionalmente, o grupo de trabalho pode apresentar recomendações sobre ações harmonizadas e sincronizadas a pedido das Autoridades Competentes dos Estados-Membros envolvidos. O grupo de trabalho debateu várias vezes múltiplos aspetos da overdose de paracetamol mas o estudo específico mencionado pelo Senhor Deputado não foi enviado ao grupo de trabalho por nenhum Estado-Membro envolvido.

([1]) Diretiva 2010/84/UE (JO L 348 de 31.12.2010, p. 74) e Regulamento (UE) n.° 1235/2010 (JO L 348 de 31.12.2010, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005646/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Paracetamol overdose warning

A research team from Edinburgh University recently warned of dangers associated with paracetamol, an analgesic and antipyretic used by both adults and children, when slightly too much is taken repeatedly over time.

People suffering from chronic illnesses are most at risk. Cold and flu remedies sold on the market contain paracetamol, and these medicines are readily available without a prescription, which increases the risk of overdose.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of this situation?

2. Does it have data to substantiate the study in question?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2012)

In the EU paracetamol is authorised through national authorisations of Member States who are responsible for following issues that arise during post-market monitoring of the medicine. Once a medicine is marketed, there are systems for monitoring and reporting adverse reactions. These systems have been strengthened, in particular through the legislation adopted in 2010 ([1]) which establishes within the European Medicines Agency a new Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee, which will hold its inaugural meeting in July 2012.

Up to now, the Pharmacovigilance Working Party within the European Medicines Agency provides advice on the safety of medicinal products and the investigation of adverse reactions, in order to enable effective risk identification, assessment and management, in the pre- and post-authorisation phases of a product. In the case of nationally authorised products, the Working Party can make recommendations on harmonised and synchronised action at the request of the Competent Authorities of relevant Member States. On several occasions the Working Party has discussed various aspects of paracetamol overdose but the specific study mentioned by the Honourable Member has not been addressed to the Working Party by a relevant Member State.

([1]) Directive 2010/84/EU (OJ L 348, 31.12.2010, p. 74) and Regulation (EU) No 1235/2010 (OJ L 348, 31.12.2010, p. 1).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005647/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(5 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σχέδια κατασκευής μεγάλων υδροηλεκτρικών φραγμάτων απειλούν τα ποτάμια των Βαλκανίων

Σύμφωνα με δύο πρόσφατες μελέτες που πραγματοποιήθηκαν για την οργάνωση EuroNatur και την Αυστριακή Ένωση Προστασίας της Φύσης ECA Watch, τεκμηριώνεται η πολύ μεγάλη οικολογική αξία των ποτάμιων οικοσυστημάτων των Βαλκανίων, ιδιαίτερα αυτών των δυτικών Βαλκανίων και του τριγώνου Βουλγαρίας — Ελλάδας — Τουρκίας. Περίπου το ένα τρίτο αυτών διατηρείται σχεδόν ανέγγιχτο από ανθρώπινες δραστηριότητες. Πρόκειται για περιοχές αυξημένης βιοποικιλότητας (hotspots), ιδιαίτερα όσον αφορά τους υδρόβιους οργανισμούς ([1]). Σχέδια για συνολικά 573 υδροηλεκτρικά φράγματα ισχύος άνω του 1 MW, συμπεριλαμβανομένων 73 φραγμάτων ισχύος άνω των 50 MW, έχουν καταγραφεί σε αυτή την περιοχή ([2]), ενώ ακόμη και κάποιες από τις σημαντικότερες προστατευόμενες περιοχές δεν θα ξεφύγουν από τις επιπτώσεις, όπως το Εθνικό Πάρκο του Mavrovo στην ΠΓΔΜ ή ο γνωστός ποταμός Σάβα ([3]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ενημέρωση από τα κράτη μέλη της περιοχής ή από τα υπό ένταξη κράτη για τα σχέδια ανάπτυξης υδροηλεκτρικών φραγμάτων σε ποτάμια συστήματα;

2. Η παραγόμενη ενέργεια πόσων από αυτά θεωρείται ανανεώσιμη; Ποια κριτήρια έχει η Επιτροπή για να κατατάσσει την παραγόμενη υδροηλεκτρική ενέργεια σε ανανεώσιμη ή μη;

3. Συμφωνεί πως τα Σχέδια Διαχείρισης Λεκανών Απορροής, στο πλαίσιο εφαρμογής της Οδηγίας Πλαίσιο για τα Νερά 2000/60/ΕΕ, θα πρέπει να αντιμετωπίζουν τα μεγάλα φράγματα ως μη βιώσιμα ([4]) καθώς καταστρέφουν ανεπανόρθωτα τους φυσικούς πόρους που χρησιμοποιούν και εντάσσουν φυσικά ποτάμια συστήματα σε βαρέως τροποποιημένα;

4. Σχεδιάζει κάποια Στρατηγική Μελέτη Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων για όλη την περιοχή;

5. Συμφωνεί ότι η ελλιπής προστασία αυτών των περιοχών, όσον αφορά τα κράτη μέλη, παραβιάζει την Οδηγία των Οικοτόπων 92/43/ΕΟΚ και αντίκειται στις κατευθύνσεις της πρόσφατα υιοθετηθείσας Ευρωπαϊκής Στρατηγικής για τη Βιοποικιλότητα έως το 2020;

6. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε να στηρίξει τα κράτη μέλη της περιοχής, αλλά και τα υπό ένταξη κράτη, με στόχο την προστασία των ποτάμιων συστημάτων τους από την κατασκευή μεγάλων υδροηλεκτρικών φραγμάτων;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Αυγούστου 2012)

1. Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με την απόφαση για την κατασκευή υδροηλεκτρικών σταθμών στις χώρες των δυτικών Βαλκανίων και την Τουρκία. Η Επιτροπή έχει υπογραμμίσει κατ' επανάληψη την ανάγκη να συμμορφωθούν οι χώρες αυτές πλήρως προς το περιβαλλοντικό κεκτημένο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

2. Η υδροηλεκτρική ενέργεια είναι ανανεώσιμη πηγή ενέργειας η οποία δεδομένου ότι βασίζεται στην αξιοποίηση του φυσικού κύκλου του νερού δεν θα εξαντληθεί ποτέ σε αντίθεση με τις μη ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας. Ως εκ τούτου, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 2 εδάφιο α) ([5]) της οδηγίας για τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας, το σύνολο της ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας που παράγεται από αυτές τις πηγές θεωρείται ως ανανεώσιμη μορφή ενέργειας.

3. Η οδηγία πλαίσιο για το νερό 2000/60/ΕΚ ([6]) υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να εφαρμόζουν τα αναγκαία μέτρα για την πρόληψη της υποβάθμισης της ποιότητας των υδάτων. Το άρθρο 4 παράγραφος 7 της οδηγίας καθορίζει τις προϋποθέσεις υπό τις οποίες μπορεί να επιτραπεί η υποβάθμιση μιας υδάτινης μάζας, π.χ. λόγω της κατασκευής φράγματος.

([1]) Threatened freshwater molluscs of the Balkan — Potential impacts of hydropower projects.
([2]) Balkan Rivers — The Blue Heart of Europe. Hydromorphological Status and Dam Projects/Long version.
([3]) http://www.euronatur.org/EuroNatur-News.english+M5af78696ddf.0.html?&cHash=13f04cc8a895b092feb2a6c560363e74.
([4]) World Water Forum MARSEILLE, France, Mar. 19, 2012, http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=107128.
([5]) ΕΕ L 140 της 5.6.2009.
([6]) ΕΕ L 327 της 22.12.2000.

4. Η υποχρέωση εκτέλεση στρατηγικής εκτίμησης περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των αντιστοίχων εθνικών αρχών (όπως ορίζεται στην οδηγία 2001/42/ΕΚ ([7])).

5. Όσον αφορά τις ενδεχόμενες επιπτώσεις σε τόπους του Natura 2000, εναπόκειται στις αρμόδιες αρχές των κρατών μελών να εξασφαλίσουν ότι η αξιολόγηση και η αδειοδότηση των σχεδιαζόμενων φραγμάτων ανταποκρίνεται στις απαιτήσεις του άρθρου 6 της οδηγίας 92/43/ΕΟΚ για τα οικολογικά ενδιαιτήματα ([8]). Εν προκειμένω πρέπει να λαμβάνονται δεόντως υπόψη και οι σωρευτικές επιπτώσεις των φραγμάτων.

6. Όλα τα κράτη μέλη έχουν νομική υποχρέωση να εφαρμόζουν το ανωτέρω περιβαλλοντικό κεκτημένο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης το οποίο μπορεί να επιβάλει η Επιτροπή. Όσον αφορά τις υποψήφιες χώρες, η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί τη διαδικασία εναρμόνισης τους με το κεκτημένο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, που αποτελεί προϋπόθεση για την προσχώρησή τους. Η χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή της ΕΕ για την ανάπτυξη των υποδομών εξαρτάται από την ορθή εφαρμογή του κοινοτικού περιβαλλοντικού κεκτημένο.

([7]) ΕΕ L 197 της 21.7.2001.
([8]) ΕΕ L 206 της 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005647/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Plans to construct large hydro-electric dams threaten the Balkan rivers

Two recent studies carried out by the EuroNatur organisation and the Austrian Conservation Association ECA Watch have provided evidence of the ecological significance of the Balkan rivers' ecosystems, particularly those in the western Balkans and the triangle between Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey. Nearly one third of these rivers remains almost untouched by human activities. This is a biodiversity hotspot, particularly for aquatic organisms ([1]). A total of 573 hydro-electric dams with a generating capacity of more than 1 MW, including 73 dams with a generating capacity of more than 50 MW have been planned in this area ([2]). Even some of the most highly ranked protected areas will be affected, such as the Mavrovo National Park in FYROM or the renowned river Sava ([3]).

In view of this:

1. Has the Commission been informed by the Member States or the accession countries in this area about the plans to construct hydro-electric dams on river systems?

2. How much of the energy produced by them is considered renewable? What criteria does the Commission have to determine whether the hydro-electric energy produced is renewable or not?

3. Does the Commission agree that the River Basin Management Plans, in the context of the application of the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EU, should view the large dams as unsustainable ([4]) as they irreparably damage natural resources and can seriously alter natural river systems?

4. Does the Commission intend to carry out a Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment for the whole area?

5. Does the Commission agree that the lack of protection of these areas, with regard to the Member States, is in breach of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and contrary to the guidelines of the recently adopted EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020?

6. What will it do to support the Member States and the accession countries in this area in order to protect their river systems from the construction of large hydro-electric dams?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the decision to construct hydropower plants in the western Balkans countries and Turkey. It has regularly underlined the necessity for these countries to fully comply with the EU environmental *acquis*.

2. Hydropower is a renewable energy source, since it is the natural water cycle that is utilised, which will never be depleted as is the case for non-renewable energy sources. Therefore in line with the Renewable Energy Directive Article 2(a) ([5]), all electricity produced from these sources are considered to be renewable energy.

3. The Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC ([6]) requires Member States to implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration in status of all water bodies. Article 4.7 of the directive sets out the conditions under which deterioration of a water body, e.g. due to a dam, may be allowed.

4. The obligation to carry out a Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment falls within the remit of competent national authorities (as set out in Directive 2001/42/EC ([7])).

([1]) Threatened freshwater molluscs of the Balkan — Potential impacts of hydropower projects.
([2]) Balkan Rivers — The Blue Heart of Europe. Hydromorphological Status and Dam Projects/ Long version.
([3]) http://www.euronatur.org/EuroNatur-News.english+M5af78696ddf.0.html?&cHash=13f04cc8a895b092feb2a6c560363e74.
([4]) World Water Forum MARSEILLE, France, 19 March 2012, http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=107128.
([5]) OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.
([6]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([7]) OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.

5. As regards potential effects on Natura 2000 areas, it is the responsibility of Member States' competent authorities to ensure that the assessment and authorisation of the planned dams fulfils the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([8]). In that regard, cumulative effects of dams need to be properly considered.

6. All Member States have a legal obligation to apply the abovementioned EU environmental *acquis* which the Commission can enforce. For the candidate countries, the Commission is monitoring the alignment process with the EU acquis, a pre-condition for accession. EU financial assistance for infrastructure development is conditional upon the proper application of the EU environmental *acquis*.

([8]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005648/12
à la Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(5 juin 2012)

Objet: Demandes de paiement trompeuses émises par des sociétés annuaires fallacieuses

Les déposants de marques, dessins ou modèles reçoivent de plus en plus de lettres ayant l'apparence d'une facture officielle les invitant à remplir un ordre de virement en paiement de services sans aucune valeur juridique ni aucune valeur ajoutée, tels que l'inscription dans des annuaires privés.

Sans que cela constitue à chaque fois une escroquerie au sens juridique du terme, cette tentative de faire payer, via des courriers parfois ornés de l'emblème de l'Union Européenne, des services farfelus à des coûts prohibitifs est proche de la «tromperie».

Dans sa résolution du 16 décembre 2008 sur les «sociétés annuaires fallacieuses» (P6_TA(2008)0608), le Parlement européen a lancé un appel aux États membres pour qu'ils mettent un terme à la publicité mensongère des éditeurs d'annuaires professionnels, suite à 400 pétitions émanant de petites entreprises de toute l'Europe se plaignant d'avoir été victimes de publicité trompeuse de la part d'éditeurs d'annuaires professionnels. Le Parlement a également déploré que les États membres semblent réticents à étendre la portée de la directive sur les pratiques commerciales déloyales aux transactions interentreprises, et il a demandé à la Commission de présenter un rapport sur la faisabilité de cette mesure.

Les directives européennes actuellement en vigueur ne sanctionnent que les pratiques commerciales trompeuses et déloyales des entreprises vis-à-vis des consommateurs et renforcent les droits de ceux-ci, mais les petites entreprises et les professions libérales victimes de telles tromperies ne s'y retrouvent pas devant les conflits de juridiction et de loi applicable.

La Commission a lancé une consultation publique sur la directive 2006/114/CE en matière de publicité trompeuse et de publicité comparative et sur les pratiques commerciales déloyales affectant les entreprises, entre le 21 octobre et le 16 décembre 2011, par le biais d'un questionnaire disponible uniquement en anglais.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer quels sont les résultats des réponses à la consultation publique?

La Commission peut-elle indiquer quelles conclusions ont pu être tirées de la consultation publique?

La Commission peut-elle indiquer quelles suites elle entend donner à ce dossier et dans quel délai?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(5 juillet 2012)

La Commission est consciente du problème des formulaires de paiement trompeurs dans les relations interentreprises auxquels se réfère l'Honorable Parlementaire. Ces méthodes font partie d'un ensemble plus large de pratiques commerciales déloyales, affectant un certain nombre d'entreprises en Europe.

La directive 2006/114/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 12 décembre 2006 en matière de publicité trompeuse et de publicité comparative interdit déjà ces types de pratiques. Toutefois, les résultats de la consultation publique et les informations fournies par les États membres permettent de recenser plusieurs lacunes, tant au niveau de l'application des règles qu'au niveau de certaines règles de fond du cadre législatif actuellement en vigueur dans l'UE.

La Commission prépare actuellement une communication qui doit être adoptée après l'été 2012. Elle sera axé sur les problèmes auxquels les entreprises européennes doivent faire face lorsqu'elles sont confrontées à ce type de pratiques commerciales trompeuses, et présentera des propositions concrètes pour y mettre fin, tant au niveau national que transfrontière.

Dans un même temps, la Commission a l'intention de promouvoir une application plus stricte de la législation en la matière, en coordonnant les activités des États membres. Dans ce cadre, des réunions avec les autorités des États membres seront organisées dans le courant de l'année 2012, afin de coordonner les actions de mise en œuvre dans les dossiers transfrontières de pratiques trompeuses interentreprises et afin d'échanger des informations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005648/12
to the Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Misleading payment demands from fraudulent directory companies

Trademark and design applicants receive an increasing volume of letters in the form of official invoices requesting payment by bank transfer for non-value-added services with no legal value, such as registration in private directories.

Although this does not legally constitute fraud in every instance, attempting to extract payment -– sometimes using mail that bears an EU symbol — for unneeded services at prohibitive costs borders on 'misrepresentation'.

In its resolution of 16 December 2008 on 'misleading directory companies' (P6_TA(2008)0608), the European Parliament appealed to Member States to end misleading advertising by business-directory companies following 400 petitions from small EU businesses, all victims of misleading advertising by business-directory companies. The Parliament also expressed regret at Member States' reluctance to extend the scope of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive to business-to-business transactions and asked the Commission to present a feasibility report.

Current Directives only punish misleading and unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices and reinforce consumer rights. However, small enterprises and professionals that fall victim to unfair commercial practices face major problems with jurisdiction and applicable laws.

Between 21 October and 16 December 2011, the Commission launched a public consultation, via an English-only questionnaire, on Directive 2006/114/EC concerning misleading and comparative advertising and unfair commercial practices affecting enterprises.

Can the Commission provide the public consultation results?

What does the Commission conclude from the public consultation?

How will the Commission follow up on this document, and within what time frame?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the problem of misleading payment forms in business-to-business relations as referred by the Honourable Member. These schemes constitute part of a wider issue of misleading marketing practices affecting several businesses in Europe.

Directive 2006/114/EC already prohibits these kinds of practices. However, the results of the public consultation and information from the Member States point to several deficiencies both as regards the enforcement and some of the substantive rules of the current EU legislative framework.

The Commission is preparing a communication, scheduled to be adopted after summer 2012. It will focus on the problems which European businesses face when confronted with such misleading marketing practices and present concrete proposals to address them, both at national and cross-border level.

At the same time, the Commission will promote better enforcement by coordinating the activities of the Member States. In this context, meetings with the Member States' authorities will be organised in the course of 2012 to coordinate enforcement actions in cross-border cases of business-to-business misleading schemes and to exchange information.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005649/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Rischi ambientali nell'attività di perforazione per la ricerca di petrolio a Carpignano Sesia (NO)

La proposta formulata da Eni S.p.A. di installare a Carpignano Sesia un pozzo esplorativo per la ricerca di petrolio ha destato vivo allarme nella popolazione per i gravi rischi ambientali che potrebbero derivare da tale attività.

In particolare, il pozzo che si intenderebbe scavare potrebbe dar luogo a eventi rilevanti di inquinamento delle falde acquifere e a fenomeni di particolare pericolosità per la possibile fuoriuscita di greggio in caso di mancata o parziale chiusura del foro di scavo, come è già purtroppo avvenuto nel 1994 a Trecate.

Si temono inoltre le conseguenze della perforazione del terreno a causa di prevedibili movimenti ondulatori sotterranei, particolarmente temuti dalla popolazione anche a seguito degli attuali eventi sismici in Val Padana.

Il prevedibile diffondersi di polveri sottili, fumi e gas conseguenti ai lavori di pulitura e lavaggio di materiale dal sottosuolo potrebbe determinare anche conseguenze gravi per la salute degli abitanti, oltre ai danni alle coltivazioni di pregio di una zona a forte insediamento agricolo.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se intende attivare adeguati interventi di prevenzione in merito a tale progetto che, comprensibilmente, suscita enorme allarme fra la popolazione, anche a causa dei recenti eventi sismici padani?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(26 luglio 2012)

Gli impianti per l'estrazione del petrolio rientrano nel campo di applicazione della direttiva 2011/92/UE (nota come direttiva sulla valutazione dell'impatto ambientale o direttiva VIA ([1])). Gli impianti proposti in cui il quantitativo estratto a fini commerciali eccede le 500 tonnellate al giorno necessitano di una valutazione di impatto ambientale obbligatoria (progetti di cui all'allegato I); tutti i progetti che non superano tale soglia devono essere sottoposti ad una procedura denominata screening per determinare se una valutazione dell'impatto ambientale è necessaria (progetti di cui all'allegato II). Una caratteristica fondamentale delle procedure di valutazione dell'impatto ambientale è la consultazione del pubblico e delle autorità ambientali competenti. La Commissione desidera sottolineare che la direttiva sulla valutazione dell'impatto ambientale non richiede alcuna valutazione dei rischi, neanche quelli sismici.

Gli impianti per l'estrazione del petrolio ricadono inoltre nel campo di applicazione della direttiva 96/82/CE (nota come direttiva Seveso II ([2])) sul controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti connessi con determinate sostanze pericolose. Tale direttiva stabilisce norme per gli operatori e le autorità competenti degli Stati membri in relazione agli impianti in cui la presenza di sostanze pericolose è superiore ad una certa soglia; tali impianti sono elencati nell'allegato I della direttiva. Per i prodotti petroliferi la soglia minima per l'applicazione della direttiva è 2 500 tonnellate. Le norme sono relative alla gestione della sicurezza, l'informazione al pubblico, gli interventi di emergenza, l'ispezione, la pianificazione del territorio e la consultazione adeguata in relazione alle decisioni di tale pianificazione.

Infine, la direttiva 2010/75/CE sulle emissioni industriali ([3]) non si applica alle attività di estrazione.

([1]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.
([2]) GU L 10 del 14.1.1997.
([3]) GU L 334 del 17.12.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005649/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Environmental risks from exploratory drilling for oil in Carpignano Sesia (Province of Novara)

Eni S.p.A.'s proposal to install an oil exploration well in Carpignano Sesia has caused alarm among the local population, on account of the serious environmental risks to which this might give rise.

The planned well could significantly pollute groundwater and create considerable risks, owing to the possibility of crude oil being released in the event of a partial or total failure to close the borehole, as occurred at Trecate in 1994.

Local people are also particularly concerned about the underground tremors that the drilling is likely to cause, not least because of the recent earthquakes in the Po Valley.

The fine dust particles, fumes and gas emissions that are likely to be spread as a result of cleaning and washing of subsoil materials could also have a serious impact on local residents' health and could cause damage to valuable crops in what is a strongly agricultural area.

In view of this, can the Commission say whether it will take appropriate preventive action in relation to this project, which is understandably causing great alarm among the local population, particularly because of the recent earthquakes in the Po Valley?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

Facilities for the extraction of petroleum fall under Directive 2011/92/EU (known as the Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA Directive ([1])). Those proposed facilities where the amount extracted for commercial purposes exceeds 500 tonnes/day require a mandatory EIA (Annex I projects); all others falling under this threshold must undergo a procedure known as screening to see if an EIA is required (Annex II projects). A key feature of EIA procedures is consultation with the public and the competent environmental authorities. The Commission would like to underline that the EIA Directive does not require that any risk assessment be undertaken including the analysis of seismic risks.

Facilities for the extraction of petroleum also fall under Directive 96/82/EC (known as the Seveso II Directive ([2])) on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances. This directive sets requirements for the operators and competent authorities of the Member States with regard to establishments where dangerous substances are present above certain thresholds as listed in its Annex I. For petroleum products, the minimum threshold for applying the directive is 2 500 tonnes. The requirements concern safety management, information to the public, emergency response, inspections, land use planning and appropriate consultation in relation to land-use planning decisions.

Finally, Directive 2010/75/EC on industrial emissions ([3]) does not apply to extraction activities.

([1]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) OJ L 10, 14.1.1997.
([3]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005650/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Sostenibilità dell'agricoltura biologica

In un momento in cui i prodotti biologici si stanno diffondendo sempre di più in tutta Europa, molti si domandano se sia possibile ipotizzare un futuro in cui la produzione agricola sia esclusivamente biologica.

In particolare, uno studio della rivista Nature solleva questa tematica affermando che, poiché queste tecniche di coltivazione riducono la resa del terreno, l'agricoltura biologica potrebbe avere conseguenze ecologiche gravissime, come la necessità di estesi disboscamenti di foreste: secondo gli studi, infatti, una coltivazione biologica rende il 20 % in meno di una convenzionale, richiedendo quindi il 20 % in più di terreno per mantenere costante la quantità delle derrate prodotte.

Sempre secondo questo studio, la coltivazione del grano biologico renderebbe il 30 % in meno, mentre quella dei legumi risulterebbe alla pari con quella tradizionale.

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza di questo studio?

2. Qual è la posizione ufficiale della Commissione europea circa la sostenibilità dell'agricoltura biologica e la praticabilità di una produzione di prodotti vegetali al 100 % biologici?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(19 luglio 2012)

Per quanto concerne il primo quesito, la Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio menzionato dall'onorevole parlamentare. Tuttavia, la Commissione ritiene che i risultati di tale studio non possano essere generalizzati, in quanto esistono anche altri studi e ricerche sulla resa dell'agricoltura biologica che giungono a conclusioni diverse.

Quanto al secondo quesito, la Commissione ritiene che l'agricoltura biologica sia un sistema agricolo sostenibile che contribuisce inoltre ad aumentare la competitività dell'agricoltura europea. Per tale ragione essa promuove attivamente il suo sostegno, in particolare nell'ambito dei programmi di sviluppo rurale presenti e futuri, una volta conclusa l'attuale riforma della PAC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005650/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Sustainability of organic agriculture

At a time when organic products are spreading across Europe, many people are wondering if there can be a future in which agricultural production is entirely organic.

In particular, a study in the journal *Nature* raises this issue, stating that since these farming techniques provide lower yields from the land, organic agriculture could have extremely serious ecological consequences, including the need for large-scale deforestation. According to studies, organic farming provides yields that are 20% lower than the conventional approach and therefore requires 20% more land to maintain the same level of output.

According to the same study, organic wheat cultivation delivers 30% lower yields, while organic vegetable yields are comparable with those produced by traditional methods.

1. Is the Commission aware of this study?

2. What is the Commission's official position on the sustainability of organic agriculture and the feasibility of 100% organic crop production?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

As regards the first question, the Commission is aware of the study mentioned by the Honourable Member. However, the Commission considers that the results quoted of this study cannot be generalised as there are also studies and research results on the issue of organic yields arriving at different results.

As regards the second question, the Commission considers organic farming as a sustainable farming system which, in addition, helps to increase the competitiveness of European agriculture. Therefore it actively promotes its support, notably in the context of present and also future Rural Development programmes after the ongoing CAP reform.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005651/12
to the Commission
Roger Helmer (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Aarhus Convention

1. Is the Commission aware of the recent draft findings of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) concerning violations of the Aarhus Convention with regard to the determination of EU renewable energy policies?

2. Since the Aarhus Convention has been incorporated into EC law, does the Commission agree that EC law is now being breached?

3. Will the Commission now call on the Member States to suspend their renewable energy programmes until the situation is rectified?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the draft findings of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee (ACCC) concerning compliance by the European Union with provisions of the Convention in connection with the renewable energy programme in Ireland (Ref. ACCC/C/2010/54).

These findings are still provisional; they do not constitute the final findings of the ACCC, let alone have the Parties to the Aarhus Convention endorsed them. The Commission has provided the ACCC with comments and further information which might lead the ACCC to reassess the case ([1]). It is therefore premature to indicate any consequences of the draft findings.

([1]) The Commission's comments on the draft findings of the ACCC are available at: http://www.unece.org/env/pp/compliance/Compliancecommittee/54TableEU.html.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005652/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(5 czerwca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Zatrzymanie działaczy ZPB w Grodnie

1 czerwca 2012 r. w Grodnie miała miejsce pikieta zorganizowana przez Związek Polaków na Białorusi przeciwko wprowadzeniu klas rosyjskojęzycznych do polskiej szkoły średniej w tym mieście. Odbywała się ona bez zgody władz, o którą organizatorzy starali się bezskutecznie od 2 tygodni. Milicja zatrzymała 21 osób, w tym wiceprezesów ZPB: Renatę Dziemiańczuk i Mieczysława Jaśkiewicza, Jana Romana (dziennikarza TV Bielsat), Giennadija Pickę (prezesa oddziału ZPB w Wiercieliszkach) oraz znanego działacza Związku Igora Bancera. Andrzeja Poczobuta (prezesa Rady Naczelnej ZPB) przetrzymywano w podlegającym MSW inspektoracie wykonywania wyroków. Z relacji prezes ZPB Andżeliki Orechwo wynika, że ludzi zabierano do autokarów, wynoszono trzymając za ręce i za nogi, rwano ubranie. Było sporo osób starszych w wieku 60-70 lat.

Większość zatrzymanych zwolniono po kilku godzinach, jednak ośmiu osobom grożą procesy sądowe za udział w nielegalnych manifestacjach. Sąd w Grodnie skazał na 13 dni aresztu polskiego działacza Igora Bancera, który został pobity przez milicję, choć nie stawiał oporu przy zatrzymaniu.

Protesty przed placówką były wynikiem obawy przed stopniową rusyfikacją szkoły, która jest wybudowana w całości za polskie pieniądze. Władze Grodna zdecydowały, iż w związku z przepełnieniem klas w innej szkole w tej samej dzielnicy dołożą, dwie klasy rosyjskojęzyczne do polskiej szkoły. Klas rosyjskojęzycznych nie można w szkole umieścić bez zgody właściciela budynku, czyli uznawanego przez władze w Mińsku (konkurencyjnego, reżimowego) Związku Polaków na Białorusi, który jeszcze nie podjął decyzji w tej sprawie.

— Unia Europejska powinna wyrazić zdecydowany sprzeciw wobec łamania praw obywatelskich – także praw mniejszości narodowych. W związku z tym zwracam się do Komisji z zapytaniem, czy ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie brutalnego zatrzymania działaczy Związku Polaków na Białorusi, protestujących w obronie polskiej szkoły oraz w kwestii respektowania przez władze Białorusi praw mniejszości narodowych – w tym prawa do nauki języka ojczystego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(13 lipca 2012 r.)

Komisja Europejska i Wysoka Przedstawiciel wiedzą o incydentach, do których odnosi się Szanowny Pan Poseł i które wpisują się w szerszą perspektywę ponownej eskalacji szykan wobec przedstawicieli społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i opozycji politycznej.

Komisja i Wysoka Przedstawiciel wydali liczne oświadczenia i deklaracje w sprawie ciągłego braku poszanowania praw człowieka oraz praworządności na Białorusi, i nadal będą otwarcie dawali wyraz swojemu zaniepokojeniu, a także korzystali z każdej nadarzającej się okazji do podnoszenia tych kwestii w kontaktach z władzami Białorusi, w tym także w odniesieniu do praw mniejszości i wolności prasy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005652/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Arrest in Grodno of activists from the Union of Poles in Belarus

On 1 June 2012, a picket organised by the Union of Poles in Belarus (ZPB) took place in Grodno, protesting against the introduction of Russian-language classes in a Polish secondary school in the city. The picket took place without consent from the authorities, which the organisers had attempted unsuccessfully to obtain for two weeks. The militia arrested 21 people, including Renata Dziemiańczuk and Mieczysław Jaśkiewicz, vice-chairs of the ZPB, Jan Roman, a journalist for TV Bielsat, Giennadij Picka, chair of the Grodno branch of the ZPB and Igor Bancer, a well-known ZPB activist. Andrzej Poczobut, head of the ZPB's Supreme Council, was detained in the Inspectorate for the Execution of Judgments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. According to Andżelika Orechwo, head of the ZPB, people were herded onto buses or carried away by their arms and legs, and some had their clothes torn. Many elderly people, aged between 60 and 70, were also involved.

The majority of those arrested were released after a few hours, but eight may have to face trial for participating in an illegal demonstration. The court in Grodno handed down a sentence of 13 days' imprisonment to the Polish activist Igor Bancer, who was beaten by the militia although he put up no resistance to his arrest.

The protests arose from fears concerning gradual Russification of the school, which has been built entirely with Polish money. Since classes in the other school in the same district are overcrowded, the authorities in Grodno have decided that two Russian-language classes will be added to the Polish school. This cannot happen without the agreement of the school's owner, which is the rival, regime-endorsed Union of Poles in Belarus, an organisation recognised by the authorities in Minsk. The latter has not yet made a decision on the matter.

— The European Union should voice its resolute opposition to the violation of civil liberties and the rights of national minorities. As regards the brutal arrest of ZPB activists protesting in defence of a Polish school, I would like to ask the European Commission whether it intends to intervene to ensure the Belarusian authorities respect the rights of national minorities, including the right to study one's mother tongue.

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(13 July 2012)

The European Commission and the High Representative are aware of the incidents referred to by the Honourable Member, which fit into a broader picture of a renewed increase of the harassment of representatives of civil society and the political opposition.

The Commission and the High Representative have issued numerous statements and declarations about the continued lack of respect for human rights and the rule of law in Belarus, and will continue to be vocal about its concerns and use all available opportunities to raise them, including as regards the rights of minorities and freedom of the press, with the Belarusian authorities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005654/12
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(5. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Armutsbekämpfung in der EU

In die Strategie Europa 2020 wurde das Ziel der Armutsbekämpfung aufgenommen, und gleichzeitig wurde eine konkrete Zielvorgabe festgelegt. Jetzt muss dafür gesorgt werden, dass auch Deutschland seinen Beitrag zur Umsetzung dieses und der anderen Ziele der Strategie Europa 2020 leistet. Dies ist auch in Bezug auf die neue Förderperiode der EU-Strukturfonds (2014-2020) von großer Bedeutung, denn nur die Handlungsfelder, die im NRP genannt werden, können später auch durch Mittel des Europäischen Sozialfonds gefördert werden.

Leider hat sich die deutsche Bundesregierung bei der Umsetzung des Ziels der Armutsbekämpfung auf das Ziel einer Reduzierung der Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit in Deutschland beschränkt. Dadurch bleiben wesentliche Themen wie Armut trotz Erwerbstätigkeit, Kinderarmut oder Prävention von Altersarmut außer Acht. Dies führt zudem dazu, dass der Beitrag Deutschlands zu dem angestrebten Gesamtziel einer Verringerung der Zahl der von Armut gefährdeten Menschen in der EU bis 2020 um 20 Millionen Personen in 330 000 Haushalten (in diesem Jahr sogar nur noch 320 000) äußerst bescheiden ausfällt und das Ziel schon wegen solch niedriger Umsetzungszielsetzungen aus den Mitgliedstaaten gar nicht erfüllt werden kann. So hat denn auch die EU-Kommission im Fortschrittsbericht über die Strategie Europa 2020 und im Jahreswachstumsbericht vom November vergangenen Jahres darauf hingewiesen, dass hier höhere Zielvorgaben der Mitgliedstaaten notwendig sein werden.

Im Arbeitsdokument zu den von ihr am 30. Mai 2012 verabschiedeten länderspezifischen Empfehlungen an Deutschland erwähnt die Kommission zwar das Problem der Armut trotz Erwerbstätigkeit, sie kommentiert jedoch die Beschränkung der im deutschen NRP genannten Maßnahmen zur Armutsbekämpfung auf das Problem der Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit nicht weiter, und in den Empfehlungen selbst findet sich das Thema Armutsbekämpfung überhaupt nicht.

1. Wir beurteilt die Kommission das NRP der deutschen Bundesregierung in Bezug auf die dort verringerte Zielvorgabe der Armutsbekämpfung?

2. Wie wird die Kommission sicherstellen, dass die von ihr selbst gesetzten Zielvorgaben der Armutsbekämpfung und die Entschließung des Europäischen Parlaments vom 15. Februar 2012 zum Jahreswachstumsbericht 2012 auch national umgesetzt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(26. Juli 2012)

1. In seinem nationalen Reformprogramm (NRP) für 2012 hat sich Deutschland das Ziel gesetzt, die Anzahl der Langzeitarbeitslosen um 20 %, also um 320 000 Personen, zu senken. Die Herabsetzung dieser Zielvorgabe um 20 000 Personen im Verhältnis zum NRP 2011 wurde mit statistischen Angleichungen begründet. Deutschland hat sein nationales Ziel bereits zu 75 % erreicht. Dieses nationale Ziel beschränkt sich jedoch auf die Messung eines einzigen Indikators, während sich das europäische Ziel auf drei Dimensionen der Armut bezieht.

2. Die Kommission hat die NRP der Mitgliedstaaten und die Umsetzung der NRP und der länderspezifischen Empfehlungen von 2011 geprüft. Das Maß der von den Mitgliedstaaten eingegangenen Selbstverpflichtung reicht nicht aus, damit die EU ihr Ziel erreicht, bis 2020 mindestens 20 Millionen Menschen aus Armut und sozialer Ausgrenzung zu befreien.

Durch die Vorschläge, die die Kommission in ihrer Mitteilung vom 30. Mai über Maßnahmen für Stabilität, Wachstum und Beschäftigung und in ihren länderspezifischen Empfehlungen macht, regt sie konkrete Maßnahmen zur Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen an, die zur Hebung des Lebensstandards, zur Milderung der Armut und zur Gewährleistung eines nachhaltigeren Wachstums für die Zukunft beitragen können.

Insgesamt sieben Mitgliedstaaten (BG, CY, LV, LT, PL, ES und UK ([1])) erhielten länderspezifische Empfehlungen zu den Aspekten Armut und soziale Ausgrenzung. Spanien beispielsweise wurde empfohlen, die Beschäftigungsfähigkeit besonders gefährdeter Gruppierungen zu verbessern, indem es effiziente Unterstützung für Kinder und Familien anbietet, um die Situation von Menschen mit Armutsrisiko oder dem Risiko sozialer Ausgrenzung zu verbessern und das Wohlergehen der Kinder zu sichern; Litauen erhielt die Empfehlung, die hohen Armuts- und Ausgrenzungszahlen dadurch zu bekämpfen, dass es sein Sozialleistungssystem reformiert und wirkungsvoller gestaltet.

Die Kommission wird alle Instrumente des neuen Verwaltungsrahmens nutzen, um die Umsetzung und die Fortschritte bei den Zielen im kommenden Jahr zu überwachen und zu bewerten.

([1]) Bulgarien, Lettland, Litauen, Polen, Spanien, das Vereinigte Königreich und Zypern.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005654/12
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Combating poverty in the European Union

Combating poverty was included in the Europe 2020 strategy and, at the same time, a specific target was set. It is now necessary to ensure that Germany too makes its contribution to implementing this and the other objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy. This is also very important in the context of the new funding period for EU Structural Funds (2014-20), as only those action areas specified in the National Indicative Programme (NIP) can subsequently receive funding from the European Social Fund.

Unfortunately, in implementing the objective of combating poverty, the German Government has limited its activities to reducing long-term unemployment in Germany. This does not take into account significant issues such as poverty among employed people, child poverty or the prevention of poverty among the elderly, and also means that Germany's contribution to the overall target identified of reducing by 20 million the number of people threatened by poverty in the European Union by 2020 is extremely small, at 330 000 households (this year's figure is in fact only 320 000), so that the target cannot be met because of such low implementation objectives in the Member States. Thus, in its progress report on the Europe 2020 strategy and in the November 2011 Annual Growth Survey, the European Commission pointed out that it would be necessary for Member States to set higher targets.

Although the Commission mentions the problem of poverty among employed people in the working document adopted on 30 May 2012, relating to the individual recommendations to Germany, it fails to further discuss the fact that the measures to combat poverty outlined in the German NIP are confined to the problem of long-term unemployment, and makes no mention of the subject of combating poverty in the recommendations themselves.

1. How does the Commission assess the German Government's NIP in relation to its reduced targets for combating poverty?

2. How does the Commission intend to ensure that the targets it has set for combating poverty, and the resolution of the European Parliament of 15 February 2012 on the Annual Growth Survey 2012, are also implemented at national level?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

1. In its 2012 national reform programme (NRP) Germany has set the target to reduce the number of long-term unemployed by 20%, i.e. 320 000 persons, justifying the drop of 20 000 persons against the NRP of 2011 with subsequent statistical adjustments. Germany has already achieved 75% of its national target. The national target is however limited to the measurement of one indicator whereas the European headline target refers to three dimensions of poverty.

2. The Commission has reviewed the Member States' NRPs and the implementation of the 2011 NRPs and country specific recommendations (CSRs). The level of commitments taken by the member states would not allow the EU to meet its target of lifting at least 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion by 2020.

Through the proposals contained in the 30 May Communication on Action for Stability, Growth and Jobs, and in its CSRs, the Commission is proposing concrete measures that can help to create jobs that will help to raise living standards, alleviate poverty and ensure more sustainable growth for the future.

In total, seven Member States (BG, CY, LV, LT, PL, ES and UK ([1])) received CSRs targeting poverty and social exclusion. For example Spain received a CSR on improving the employability of vulnerable groups, combining effective child and family support services in order to improve the situation of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion to achieve the well-being of children, and Lithuania received a CSR on tackling high rates of poverty and social exclusion by reforming the social assistance system to make it more efficient.

The Commission will use all the instruments of the new governance framework to monitor and assess implementation and progress towards the targets in the coming year.

([1]) Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005655/12
to the Commission
Nigel Farage (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Disappearance of pornographic images

Is the Commission aware that pornographic images which were posted on a public web profile by a head of cabinet and placed on file as exonerating evidence in criminal proceedings went missing during investigations carried out by the Belgian judicial authorities as part of the criminal proceedings, which were brought by the head of cabinet in 2007 and in which a member of the Commission President's Cabinet is a witness for the prosecution?

Did a member of the Commission President's Cabinet play a part in the disappearance of the pornographic images?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(13 July 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the mentioned criminal proceedings and is therefore not in a position to comment on this issue.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005657/12
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: The necessity of updating the EU's LIFE Instrument to cover EU Member States' overseas countries and territories

The Commission is probably aware that the EU Member States' 21 Overseas Countries and Territories, along with France's four Outermost Regions, hold many more threatened species of wildlife than the 27 Member States themselves. Five of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots are found in these territories, yet this environment remains relatively unprotected and poorly financed. The territories are ineligible for most EU funds yet, conversely, they remain ineligible for global funding instruments owing to their association with the EU and its Member States, and as they are not sovereign states in their own right.

Does the Commission accept that there is now an opportunity to help rebalance this situation through the updating of the EU's LIFE instrument? It is clear that the benefits of updating LIFE would outweigh the financial outlay of this action. From a cost-effectiveness perspective, estimates from British Overseas Territories such as St Helena show that single LIFE projects would be able to save numerous species from extinction, as relatively small amounts of money can have a disproportionately large impact. This would be of positive significance for the EU's environmental record, not just for the UK's. Does the Commission agree, therefore, that LIFE should now be opened to the Overseas Countries and Territories?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission acknowledges that Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) are biodiversity-rich hotspots and as such they play a significant role in the EU's global commitment in relation to biodiversity.

LIFE is not the most adequate instrument to fund activities in OCTs. Its main objective is the implementation of EU environmental and climate-related legislation, where Habitats and Birds directives only refer to European territory of the EU, and consequently OCTs are not covered by these two directives.

The Commission approach to funding environment and climate-related activities should be seen as a whole, and in view of ensuring the coherence of the EU's intervention. Other funds linked to external dimension of the EU are better suited for funding activities in the OCTs. To complement national funding, financial support from the EU is provided through the European Development Fund (EDF). For the new programming period 2014-2020, the EDF has earmarked funds for OCTs. Environment and Climate remain areas for cooperation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-005658/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Revisão dos plafonds máximos de tributação no CINM

Tendo em conta que:

— No passado dia 30 de dezembro de 2011, Portugal notificou Bruxelas de que pretendia alterar o regime de auxílios de Estado atualmente em vigor no Centro Internacional de Negócios da Madeira (CINM);

— Fruto da inércia e da demora do Governo de Portugal em proceder à citada notificação, no ano de 2011 saíram da praça madeirense cerca de 520 empresas, e no ano de 2012, até ao final de abril, já saíram mais 270 empresas, que se deslocalizaram para praças concorrentes, como Chipre, Malta, Luxemburgo, mas também Macau ou Ilhas Caimão;

— O Governo da Região Autónoma da Madeira assinou um Plano de Ajustamento Económico e Financeiro com a República Portuguesa, que foi negociado sob os auspícios e supervisão da equipa da troika baseada em Lisboa, estando obrigada a implementar um forte programa de austeridade, com forte subida da carga fiscal, em troca de assistência financeira.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Sabe que o volume de receita fiscal previsto arrecadar na Madeira com o plano de assistência financeira para o ano de 2012 é de euros 126,8 milhões de euros? E que no ano de 2013 é de euros 89,9 milhões de euros?

2. Sabe que o valor de receitas fiscais, só em sede de imposto sobre o rendimento de pessoas coletivas — não considerando impostos indiretos, como o do valor acrescentado — perdidas pela Região Autónoma da Madeira por força da saída das empresas até então instaladas no CINM, é superior à soma destes dois valores?

3. Considera racional que, por um lado, se imponham medidas drásticas de forte austeridade e aumento da carga fiscal, que destroem a economia local e geram o aumento brutal do desemprego, e por outro, se prescinda de receitas fiscais tão relevantes por pura inércia administrativa, por ausência de autorização que crie as condições necessárias à manutenção da competitividade da praça madeirense?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(9 de julho de 2012)

A Comissão está plenamente consciente das dificuldades económicas e orçamentais que a Região Autónoma da Madeira enfrenta. Contudo, a Comissão não vai comentar questões relacionadas com os assuntos internos do Estado português. De facto, a *troika* não esteve envolvida nas negociações sobre o programa de ajustamento económico e financeiro entre o Governo da Região Autónoma da Madeira e a República Portuguesa, tendo apenas tido um papel de supervisão.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005658/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Changes to maximum tax ceilings in the Madeira International Business Centre (MIBC)

Given that:

— On 30 December 2011, Portugal informed Brussels of its intention to change the state aid regime currently in force in the MIBC;

— Due to the Portuguese Government's inertia and the delay in announcing this intention, around 520 companies left the Madeira centre in 2011. By the end of April 2012, a further 270 companies had left for competing markets such as Cyprus, Malta and Luxembourg, and also Macau and the Cayman Islands;

— The Government of the Autonomous Region of Madeira signed an economic and financial adjustment programme with the Portuguese Republic that was negotiated in Lisbon, under the supervision of the Troika. This obliges it to implement harsh austerity measures and a sharp increase in tax, in exchange for financial assistance.

I ask the Commission:

1. Is it aware that the tax revenue forecast in Madeira under the programme for 2012 is EUR 126.9 million, and that in 2013 it is EUR 89.9 million?

2. Is it aware that the corporate income tax revenue value (disregarding indirect taxes, such as VAT) lost by the Autonomous Region of Madeira due to the exit of companies that were based in the MIBC is greater than the sum of these two amounts?

3. Does it think it reasonable to impose such harsh austerity measures and tax burden increases, which destroy the local economy and lead to a sharp rise in unemployment, while losing critical tax revenue through sheer administrative inertia and the lack of will to create the required conditions to maintain the Madeira market's competitiveness?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2012)

The Commission is fully aware of the economic and budgetary difficulties faced by the autonomous region of Madeira. The Commission will not, however, comment on issues relating to the internal affairs of the Portuguese state. As a matter of fact the Troika was not involved in the negotiations between the Government of the Autonomous Region of Madeira and the Portuguese Republic on the economic and financial adjustment programme, let alone had a supervisory role.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005660/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: The EU and obesity

How much does the Commission spend combating obesity?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

In 2007, the EU adopted the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]). Several EU policies in the area of education, sport and agriculture contribute to the strategy's implementation:

— the EU School Fruit Scheme ([2]) provides fruit and vegetables to school children, and requires participating Member States to set up educational measures to teach children the importance of healthy eating. The Commission has proposed to increase the EU annual budget from EUR 90 million to EUR 150 million;

— the EU School Milk Scheme ([3]) supplies milk and milk products to pupils and incorporates nutritional and educational elements ([4]). The annual EU expenditure for 2010-11 was EUR 65 million;

— the Preparatory Actions for the future Sport Chapter of the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport, spent EUR 2.6 million in 2010 in nine projects intended to promote health-enhancing physical activity.

In addition, the EU Health Programme and the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development have funded projects related to the strategy's implementation:

— the Health Programme with EUR 29 million spent so far on projects ([5]);

— Research Framework programme with EUR 192 million from the HEALTH programme ([6]) and 68 million from the Knowledge-based Bio Economy programme ([7]) spent so far on various projects ([8]). Examples include the PAPA ([9]) and META-PREDICT ([10])projects aiming at enhancing the health of young people via physical activity promotion and the BETA-JUDO ([11])project on the treatment of insulin hyper secretion in the young suffering from obesity.

([1]) COM(2007) 279 final, 30.5.2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/milk/schoolmilk/index_en.htm
([4]) Regulation (EC) No 657/2008.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/projects/index_en.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/index_en.html#.
([7]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/about-kbbe_en.html
([8]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/about-kbbe_en.html
([9]) http://www.projectpapa.org.
([10]) http://metapredict.eu/.
([11]) http://betajudo.org/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005661/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Effectiveness of the EU fight against narcotics in Dushanbe, Tajikistan

It has been widely reported that the EU, via its European External Action Service (EEAS), provides regional and thematic funding in areas such as border management and drug control to support the much-needed fight against narcotics — primarily heroin — through an ongoing presence in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

In the light of this presence, could the EEAS provide a numerical breakdown of the level of EU funding allocated to fighting the illegal narcotics trade in Tajikistan? Furthermore, would it not agree that EU action to date has proved futile, especially when one considers that heroin is now more widely available, easier to acquire and of higher quality, due in part to the alleged widespread corruption amongst local law enforcement officials?

Could the EEAS please outline what benchmarks and measurements of success it has in place to ensure that EU taxpayers' money is not being wasted unnecessarily on unsuccessful narcotics eradication programmes in Tajikistan?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

The EU is supporting Central Asian countries in their efforts to improve their border management systems and to deal with challenges of drug trafficking and to strengthen their national policies to address issues of drug demand reduction and drug supply through different assistance programmes, such as Border Management Programme (BOMCA) and Drug Action Programme (CADAP). Approximately 40% of the EUR 34 mln for BOMCA' s budget in the past decade were allocated for Tajikistan. However, border management is not only about stopping drug trafficking, but rather to promote integrated border management. The only real trafficking related assistance is provided through support for the drug profiling units. The EUR 23 mln allocated for CADAP for the five Central Asian countries are difficult to split per country. The programme monitors drug comsumption and the development and implementation of sustainable drug policies; strengthens the implementation of modern treatment methodologies for drug addicts and supports drug-realted national information and prevention campaigns but is not directly addressing issues of drug trafficking. The EU also holds regular meetings with all Central Asian partners in the framework of the EU-Central Asia Action Plan on Drugs and the region is also a beneficiary of the EU Heroin Route Project.

It is difficult to establish a connecting link between EU-specific activities from one side and trends and indicators on drug consumption in Tajikistan on the other as our intervention cannot be untied from measures taken by the government and other donors. Nevertheless, the methodology of these projects complies with that of all EU assistance which has strict rules on how aid is delivered and its impact measured. Corruption is indeed a challenge, but is being addressed through entirely different programmes, such as the Rule of Law initiative and programmes targeting poverty reduction.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005663/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 juni 2012)

Betreft: Windenergie

In een artikel van de Frankfurter Allgemeine wordt melding gemaakt van het voornemen van de Europese Commissie om het stimuleringsprogramma voor zon- en windenergie zo snel mogelijk af te bouwen ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het artikel?

2. Is de Commissie het eens met de stelling in het artikel dat vooral de opwekking van zonne-energie in de noordelijke Europese landen relatief hoge kosten met zich meebrengt?

3. Acht de Commissie het reëel om te veronderstellen dat zonne-energie in de noordelijke Europese landen in de voorzienbare toekomst commercieel zal worden geëxploiteerd?

4. Is de Commissie van plan het stimuleringsprogramma voor het gebruik van zonne- en windenergie af te bouwen of te korten?

5. Op welke termijn zal het programma worden afgebouwd of gekort?

6. Met welk percentage wordt het programma eventueel gekort?

7. Wat betekent het afbouwen of korten van het stimuleringprogramma voor de 2020-doelstelling van de Commissie?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(11 juli 2012)

De Commissie kent het door het geachte Parlementslid vermelde artikel. Het standpunt van de Commissie ter zake is uiteengezet in de op 6 juni 2012 goedgekeurde mededeling „Hernieuwbare energie: een belangrijke speler op de Europese energiemarkt" ([2]).

De algemene kosten in verband met de ondersteuning van hernieuwbare energie zijn toegenomen omdat het gebruik van zonne-energie, met name van fotovoltaïsche energie, in bepaalde EU-landen hoger uitviel dan verwacht. Dit heeft op zijn beurt geleid tot lagere productiekosten. In het licht van deze ontwikkelingen beveelt de Commissie flexibele nationale ondersteuningsmechanismen aan, zodat die kunnen worden aangepast aan de zich ontwikkelende kosten van de technologie.

Aangezien het ontwerp en de toepassing van de steunregelingen voor hernieuwbare energie onder de verantwoordelijkheid van de lidstaten vallen, is de Commissie van plan met de lidstaten samen te werken aan een hervorming van de nationale steunregelingen om de doeltreffendheid ervan te vergroten en om beproefde technologieën op de markt te brengen. De belangrijkste reden daarvoor is investeerders in duurzame energie zekerheid en voorspelbaarheid te bieden, hetgeen van essentieel belang is voor de verwezenlijking van de klimaat- en energiedoelstellingen van de EU.

([1]) http://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/wirtschaftspolitik/strategiepapier-die-eu-will-den-oekostrom-nicht-mehr-foerdern-11756020.html
([2]) COM(2012) 271 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005663/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Wind power

The *Frankfurter Allgemeine* reports that the European Commission intends to scale back the incentives programme for solar and wind power as quickly as possible ([1]).

1. Is the Commission familiar with the article?

2. Does the Commission agree with the opinion expressed in the article that solar power generation entails relatively high costs, particularly in Northern European countries?

3. Does the Commission consider it realistic to expect that solar power will be commercially exploited in Northern European countries in the foreseeable future?

4. Does the Commission plan to scale back or curtail the incentive programme for the use of solar and wind power?

5. What is the timeframe for scaling back or cutting the programme?

6. By what percentage is the programme likely to be cut?

7. What does the scaling back or cutting of the incentives programme mean for the Commission's 2020 target?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of the article referred to by the Honourable Member. The Commission's views on the matter are set out in the communication 'Renewable Energy — a major player in the EU energy market' adopted on 6 June 2012 ([2]).

Overall costs related to the support of renewable energy have increased due to the higher than expected uptake of solar energy, notably PV, in certain EU countries. This, in turn, has led to lower production costs. In the light of these developments, the Commission recommends that national support mechanisms are flexible to adapt to the evolving technology cost.

As the operation and design of support schemes for renewable energy are the responsibility of Member States, the Commission plans to work with Member States on reforming national support schemes to make them more effective and bring mature technologies into the market. The most important element of this is to ensure certainty and predictability for investors in this area, which is of critical importance for meeting the EU's climate and energy objectives.

([1]) http://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/wirtschaftspolitik/strategiepapier-die-eu-will-den-oekostrom-nicht-mehr-foerdern-11756020.html
([2]) COM(2012) 271 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005664/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Carne separata meccanicamente

Sulle etichette delle confezioni dei würstel di pollo spesso si legge la dicitura «carne separata meccanicamente», e non sempre chiaramente dato che alcuni produttori utilizzano rimandi che rendono più difficile la consultazione.

Il metodo di produzione di questo sottoprodotto della macellazione è per lo più sconosciuto ai consumatori: prevede la separazione dall'animale di petto e cosce, l'eliminazione di pelle, testa, zampe e infine l'avvio di quel che resta della carcassa in presse dove avviene una vera e propria spremitura e un successivo filtraggio per separare le ossa dal resto. Il risultato finale è la così definita «poltiglia rosa» poi passata fra addensanti e aromatizzanti per darle sapore.

La carne separata meccanicamente è la componente principale di tali prodotti (anche l'80/90 %) e le aziende ne fanno uso in quanto massimizzano la produzione abbattendone i costi.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dei fatti esposti? Reputa che la salute dei consumatori possa essere messa a rischio da questi prodotti?

2. Ritiene la Commissione che debba essere fissato un limite alla percentuale di carne separata meccanicamente nei prodotti alimentari messi in vendita?

3. La Commissione valuta necessario informare maggiormente i cittadini circa la composizione dei prodotti confezionati con tali carni richiedendo anche una maggiore chiarezza ai produttori sulle etichette?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(17 agosto 2012)

Nel dicembre 2010 la Commissione ha adottato una comunicazione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio sulla necessità e l'uso futuri di carne separata meccanicamente nell'Unione europea, comprendente anche la politica d'informazione dei consumatori ([1]). In tale comunicazione la Commissione concludeva che il consumo di carne meccanicamente separata proveniente da suini, pollame e conigli ([2]) prodotta applicando le regole d'igiene vigenti non solleva preoccupazioni in tema di sicurezza. Pertanto la Commissione non vede nessun motivo per limitare la quantità di carni separate meccanicamente usate nei prodotti alimentari.

Il neoadottato regolamento relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori ([3]) mantiene gli attuali requisiti in tema di etichettatura applicabili alle carni separate meccanicamente. Pertanto, tutti i tipi di prodotti che rientrano nella definizione di carni separate meccanicamente, come da legislazione in tema ([4]), devono essere indicati nell'elenco degli ingredienti dell'alimento finale quali «carni separate meccanicamente» cui fa seguito l'indicazione della specie animale da cui proviene.

La Commissione ritiene che le regole vigenti in tema di etichettatura delle carni separate meccanicamente siano appropriate e non richiedano modifica.

([1]) COM(2010)704 definitivo.
([2]) La produzione di carni separate meccanicamente a partire da ossa di bovini, ovini e caprini è vietata nell'UE.
([3]) GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag. 18.
([4]) GU L 226 del 25.6.2004, pag. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005664/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Mechanically separated meat

Labels on packets of chicken frankfurters often state that they contain 'mechanically separated meat'. The meaning of this wording is not always clear, as certain manufacturers use terms which make cross-referencing more difficult.

Most consumers do not know how this abattoir by-product is produced. The technique involves separating the breast and thighs from the carcass and removing the skin, head and feet. Lastly, what remains of the carcass is forced through a sieve under high pressure, then filtered to separate out the bones. The end result is known as 'pink slime'; thickeners and seasonings are then added to give it flavour.

Mechanically separated meat is the main ingredient of these products (as much as 80 or 90%); companies use it to maximise production and reduce costs.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation? Does it believe that these products could put the health of consumers at risk?

2. Does the Commission agree that a percentage limit for mechanically separated meat should be set for food products placed on the market?

3. Does the Commission consider it necessary to give people more information about the composition of products made with this kind of meat, not least by requiring manufacturers to label them more clearly?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

In December 2010 the Commission adopted a communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the future necessity and use of mechanically separated meat in the European Union, including the information policy towards consumers ([1]). In this communication the Commission concluded that the consumption of mechanically separated meat (MSM) from pigs, poultry and rabbits ([2]) produced under existing hygiene rules does not raise safety concerns. Therefore the Commission sees no reason to limit the quantity of MSM used in food products.

The newly adopted Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers ([3]) maintains the current labelling requirements applicable to the MSM. Thus, all types of products covered by the definition of MSM, as laid down in the hygiene legislation ([4]) , must be indicated in the list of ingredients of the final food as 'mechanically separated meat' and followed by the name of the animal species from which it comes.

The Commission considers the existing rules on labelling of MSM are appropriate and do not need to be changed.

([1]) COM(2010)704 final.
([2]) The production of MSM from bones from cattle, sheep and goats is prohibited in the EU.
([3]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([4]) OJ L 226, 25.6.2004, p. 22.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005665/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Atraso no pagamento das verbas do POSEI / Madeira

Tendo em conta que:

— Na resposta E-004638/2012 dada pelo Comissário para a Agricultura, Dacian Ciolos, a Comissão confirma a receção de comunicações das autoridades regionais da Madeira, a propósito da questão dos atrasos nos pagamentos pelo organismo pagador português aos operadores POSEI;

— A Comissão afirma que o governo português será contactado, a fim de determinar as razões de tais atrasos;

— A Comissão confirma que o prazo de pagamento de 90 dias é obrigatório, confirmada que seja a elegibilidade da ajuda e não esteja em curso uma investigação de fraude relativa ao operador e/ou ao pedido de ajuda em causa;

— A Comissão afirma que, se o apuramento de contas ou os procedimentos oficiais de reclamação confirmarem que houve efetivamente atrasos de pagamento, podem ser incorridas correções financeiras;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Pode a Comissão confirmar se o governo português já foi notificado para prestar esclarecimentos a este propósito? Em caso afirmativo, que prazo lhe foi concedido para o efeito? Pode a Comissão dar conhecimento da resposta do governo português, assim que a receba?

2. O que entende a Comissão por «incorrer em correções financeiras»? Quer com isso significar que o governo português poderá ser responsabilizado pelos atrasos no pagamento? E que tal responsabilização gerará, consequentemente, o direito de os beneficiários das ajudas serem compensados pelos prejuízos causados pelos atrasos?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(2 de agosto de 2012)

A Comissão foi contactada pelas autoridades regionais da Madeira relativamente aos atrasos nos pagamentos pelo organismo pagador português aos operadores no âmbito do regime de medidas específicas de apoio à Madeira. Esta reclamação está registada no sistema de tratamento das reclamações (CHAP) e será investigada pela Comissão. No âmbito do processo, o Governo português será contactado para mais informações e o autor da denúncia será informado acerca dos resultados do inquérito.

A Comissão recebeu igualmente informações de que os pagamentos acima referidos foram recentemente pagos aos operadores. A Comissão pretende verificar se esta informação está correta.

No contexto do procedimento de apuramento de contas, a Comissão pode impor correções financeiras aos Estados-Membros se tiverem ocorrido atrasos injustificados nos pagamentos. Estas correções financeiras podem assumir a forma de despesas não autorizadas, ou seja, o Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Garantia (FEAGA) poderá não reembolsar o Estado-Membro em causa por atrasos de pagamentos.

De acordo com a jurisprudência do Tribunal de Justiça, os Estados-Membros são obrigados a compensar, sob determinadas condições, pessoas singulares ou coletivas por danos sofridos em consequência de uma violação do direito da União pelo Estado-Membro em causa.

Além disso, no futuro, no que se refere especificamente a questão dos atrasos nos pagamentos efetuados aos beneficiários das ajudas diretas, a proposta da Comissão de outubro de 2011, do novo regulamento relativo ao financiamento, à gestão e à vigilância da política agrícola comum (COM(2011)628 final) prevê que, caso não respeitem o último prazo possível de pagamento, os Estados-Membros devem pagar aos beneficiários juros de mora, a cargo dos orçamentos nacionais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005665/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: POSEI funds: payment delays — Madeira

Replying on behalf of the Commission to Question E-004638/2012, the Agriculture Commissioner, Dacian Cioloș, confirmed that Madeira's regional authorities had contacted the Commission about late payments to POSEI operators by the Portuguese paying agency. The Commission undertook to approach the Portuguese Government in order to find out the reasons for the delays. According to the Commission, the 90-day payment deadline is binding, provided that the aid is eligible and there is no ongoing investigation — for fraud — of the operator and/or the aid application concerned. The Commission stated that: 'If Clearance of Accounts or official complaints procedures confirm that unjustified payment delays have occurred, financial corrections may be incurred'.

1. Can the Commission confirm that the Portuguese Government has been asked for an explanation? If so, how much time has it been allowed? Can the Commission give details of the Portuguese Government's reply as soon as it arrives?

2. What does the Commission mean by 'financial corrections may be incurred'? Does this mean that the Portuguese Government could be held accountable for the delayed payments? If that were the case, would the aid recipients be entitled to compensation for the damage caused by the delays?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2012)

The Commission has been contacted by the Madeira regional authorities concerning delays in payments made by the Portuguese Paying Agency to operators under the Specific Support Arrangements for Madeira. This complaint is registered in the Complaints Handling system (CHAP) and it will be investigated by the Commission. This process will involve contacting the Portuguese Government for further information, and the complainant will be informed about results of the investigation.

The Commission has also received information that the above payments have recently been paid to the operators. The Commission intends to verify whether this information is correct.

In the context of the Clearance of Accounts procedure, the Commission can impose financial corrections on Member States if unjustified payment delays have occurred. These financial corrections may take the form of disallowances, i.e. the European Agriculture Guarantee Fund (EAGF) not reimbursing the Member State concerned for late payments.

According to the case-law of the Court of Justice, Member States are under certain conditions required to compensate natural or legal persons for any damage suffered as a result of an infringement of Union law by the Member State concerned.

Moreover, in the future, as regards specifically the question of late payments made to beneficiaries of direct aid, the Commission's proposal of October 2011 for the new regulation on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy (COM(2011) 628 final) provides that where the latest possible date of payment is not respected by Member States, they shall pay the beneficiaries default interests, supported from the national budget.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005666/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 juni 2012)

Betreft: Nederland overspoeld met valse paspoorten

Nederland wordt overspoeld met valse paspoorten. De Koninklijke Marechaussee onderschepte vorig jaar, vooral op Schiphol, bijna 40 % meer valse reisdocumenten dan in 2010.

In 2011 werden 47 522 documenten aan een extra controle onderworpen door experts, waarna bleek dat er met 1 137 daarvan ook echt fraude was gepleegd. Dat waren er 239 meer dan in het jaar daarvoor. De meeste vervalste documenten kwamen uit Spanje, Groot-Brittannië, Italië, Frankrijk, Turkije, Nigeria en Bulgarije.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Valse paspoorten schering en inslag" ([1])?

2. Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat er klaarblijkelijk steeds meer valse paspoorten in omloop zijn — komen? Wat gaat de Commissie daaraan doen?

3. Beschikt de Commissie over cijfers met betrekking tot valse reisdocumenten? In welke lidstaat — lidstaten zijn de meeste valse reisdocumenten in omloop? Hoe kan dat? Waar worden deze documenten geproduceerd?

4. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat het in dit kader verstandiger is de beperkingen op controle aan de binnengrenzen op te heffen en het aan de lidstaten over te laten of zij al dan niet grens- — personencontroles willen uitvoeren om zo onder andere valse reisdocumenten te kunnen onderscheppen? Zo neen, waarom niet, en, welke alternatieven — opties stelt de Commissie dan voor?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(11 juli 2012)

De Commissie is niet geïnformeerd over het genoemde rapport noch over een uitzonderlijke stijging van het aantal valse documenten dat in Nederland wordt ontdekt.

Frontex ziet toe op de maandelijkse uitwisseling tussen de lidstaten van gegevens over fraude met betrekking tot documenten. Er worden op dit gebied regelmatig risicoanalyses uitgevoerd op grond waarvan de behoefte aan opleiding en onderzoek wordt bepaald.

Volgens de risicoanalyse van Frontex, die was gebaseerd op uitgewisselde gegevens van 21 lidstaten en geassocieerde Schengenlanden, was er een toename in het aantal valse documenten dat werd ontdekt bij binnenkomst in de EU vanuit derde landen, van 20 % (van 7 841 ontdekte documenten in 2010 tot 9 334 in 2011). Bijna de helft daarvan betrof paspoorten. Italië en Spanje ontdekken de meeste valse reisdocumenten (paspoorten) aan de buitengrenzen. Als ook naar het verkeer binnen het Schengengebied wordt gekeken, is het Duitsland dat een erg groot aantal valse documenten ontdekt. Het hogere aantal ontdekte valse documenten zou het gevolg kunnen zijn van de veiligheidsmaatregelen die de EU heeft ingevoerd om de vervalsing van paspoorten te bemoeilijken en om door middel van de invoering van biometrie een betrouwbare koppeling tot stand te brengen tussen het document en de houder daarvan.

Met betrekking tot het onderscheppen van valse reisdocumenten door het controleren van personen wil de Commissie erop wijzen dat de EU-wetgeving — en meer specifiek de Schengengrenscode --- de lidstaten niet belet om deze controles, onder meer in grensgebieden, uit te voeren in het kader van de normale uitoefening van politiebevoegdheden, mits de uitoefening van deze bevoegdheden niet dezelfde werking heeft als grenscontroles. Dit betekent in het algemeen dat dergelijk controles niet systematisch mogen zijn en dat de wijze waarop zij worden uitgevoerd, gebaseerd moet zijn op informatie over de betrokken dreiging.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/12284686/__Valse_paspoorten_schering_en_inslag__.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005666/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: The Netherlands inundated with false passports

The Netherlands is inundated with false passports. Last year the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee intercepted, mainly at Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, almost 40% more false travel documents compared to 2010.

In 2011, 47 522 documents were subjected to an extra check by experts, after which it turned out that 1 137 of these documents were fraudulent. This was an increase of 239 compared to the previous year. Most false documents came from Spain, Great Britain, Italy, France, Turkey, Bulgaria and Nigeria.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'False passports are order of the day'? ([1])

2. What does the Commission think about the fact that there is evidently an ever-increasing number of false passports in circulation? What does the Commission intend to do about this?

3. Does the Commission have access to figures in relation to false travel documents? In which Member State(s) is the highest number of false travel documents in circulation? How can that be? Where are these documents produced?

4. Does the Commission share the PVV's view that, within this framework, it is more practical to remove the internal border control restrictions and leave it to the Member States whether or not they wish to carry out border checks and/or checks on individuals to intercept false travel documents? If not, why not, and what alternatives does the Commission then propose?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission has neither been informed of the report mentioned nor of an unusual rise in the detection of false documents in the Netherlands.

Frontex oversees the monthly exchange of document fraud data between Member States. Regular risk analyses on this matter are used to drive training and research needs.

According to the Frontex risk analysis, based on data exchanged by 21 Member States and Schengen Associated Countries, there was a 20% increase in the detections of fraudulent documents on entry into the EU from third countries (from 7 841 detections in 2010 to 9 334 detections in 2011), of which nearly half were of passports. Italy and Spain detect the most fraudulent travel documents (passports) at the external borders. If intra-Schengen travel is also considered, then Germany detects a very large number of documents. The higher number of false documents detected could be a result of the security measures introduced by the EU to render the falsification of passports more difficult and to establish a reliable link between the document and its holder through the introduction of biometrics.

With regard to carrying out checks on individuals for the purposes of intercepting false travel documents, the Commission would point out that EC law — and, more specifically, the Schengen Borders Code — does not prevent Member States from doing so as part of the normal exercise of police powers, including in border areas, provided that the exercise of these powers does not have an equivalent effect to border checks. As a general rule, this means that such checks should not be systematic and that the manner in which they are conducted should be based on information related to the threat in question.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/12284686/__Valse_paspoorten_schering_en_inslag__.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005667/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 juni 2012)

Betreft: Leers wil expertgroep om fraude en misbruik met gezinsmigratie te onderzoeken

De Nederlandse minister Leers van Immigratie en Asiel heeft Eurocommissaris Malmström een brief gestuurd waarin hij aandringt op de oprichting van een expertgroep: internationale experts zouden de fraude en het misbruik met gezinsmigratie in de volle omvang aan het licht moeten brengen. De brief is mede ondertekend door Spanje, Frankrijk, Duitsland, Oostenrijk, Finland en Engeland.

De expertgroep zou onafhankelijk cijfermateriaal moeten brengen.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Minister Leers wil internationale experts inzetten" ([1])?

2. Wat vindt de Commissie van het voorstel van Leers om een expertgroep op te zetten?

3. Als gesteld wordt dat er behoefte is aan „onafhankelijk" cijfermateriaal, impliceert dat dat de huidige cijfers niet betrouwbaar zijn? Hoe is dat te verklaren? Hoe kan de Commissie zich met een dergelijk onderwerp bezighouden als er thans geen (betrouwbare) cijfers zijn?

4. Hoe verkrijgt de Commissie momenteel dergelijk cijfermateriaal? Wat is haar werkwijze in dezen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(19 juli 2012)

De Commissie heeft de door de ministers van zeven lidstaten ondertekende brief ontvangen en commissaris Malmström heeft in haar antwoord daarop het standpunt van de Commissie uiteengezet.

De Commissie staat achter het idee om deskundigen bijeen te brengen en met de lidstaten samen te werken teneinde beproefde methoden vast te stellen en uit te wisselen en de praktische samenwerking te intensiveren. De Commissie is het eens met het standpunt dat intensievere samenwerking op Europees niveau zal bijdragen tot een betere toepassing van de Gezinsherenigingsrichtlijn (Richtlijn 2003/86/EG). De deskundigengroep inzake gezinshereniging is het geschikte forum om alle aangelegenheden met betrekking tot de uitvoering van het EU-recht betreffende gezinshereniging voor onderdanen van derde landen te bespreken, waaronder het eventuele misbruik van het recht op gezinshereniging en de wijze waarop dat recht doeltreffender kan worden gemaakt.

Het Europees migratienetwerk (EMN) ([2]) heeft onlangs een studie ([3]) uitgevoerd, die onder meer tot doel had bewijsmateriaal te presenteren over het misbruik van het recht op gezinshereniging. Op basis van door 23 lidstaten en Noorwegen verstrekte informatie bevat de studie statistische gegevens over bijvoorbeeld schijnhuwelijken en over de mate waarin die in de Unie voorkomen.

([1]) De Telegraaf, 4 juni 2012.
([2]) Het EMN is een netwerk dat ter ondersteuning van de beleidsvorming objectieve, betrouwbare en vergelijkbare informatie over migratie en asiel verstrekt. Het netwerk bestaat uit door de lidstaten aangewezen nationale contactpunten en wordt gecoördineerd door de Commissie.
([3]) http://www.emn.europa.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005667/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Leers wants expert group to investigate fraud and abuse of family migration

Dutch Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum Affairs Leers has sent EU Commissioner Malmström a letter in which he urges that an expert group of international experts be set up to expose the full scale of fraud and abuse of family migration. The letter has also been signed by Spain, France, Germany, Austria, Finland and Britain.

The expert group would present independent statistics.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'Minister Leers wants to deploy international experts'? ([1])

2. What does the Commission think of Leers' proposal to appoint an expert group?

3. If a need for 'independent' statistics has been expressed, does this imply that the current figures are not reliable? How can this be explained? How can the Commission deal with such an issue if there are currently no (reliable) figures?

4. How does the Commission currently acquire such figures? What is its methodology?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

The Commission has received the letter signed by the Ministers of seven Member States and Commissioner Malmström has responded setting out the Commission's position.

The Commission is open to the idea of gathering experts and working with Member States to identify and exchange best practice and step up practical cooperation. The Commission shares their view that increased cooperation at the European level will improve the application of the Family Reunification Directive (2003/86/EC). The group of experts on Family reunification is the appropriate forum to discuss all issues pertaining to the implementation of the EC law on family reunification of third-country nationals, including the possible abuse of the right to family reunification and ways and means to render this right more effective.

The European Migration Network (EMN) ([2]) has recently conducted a study ([3]), which among other things aimed to provide evidence on misuse of the right of family reunification. On the basis of information provided by 23 Member States and Norway, the study provides statistics on for instance marriages of convenience and to what extent they do occur in the Union.

([1]) *De Telegraaf*, 04 June 2012.
([2]) The EMN is a network providing objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum to supporting policymaking, made up of National Contact Points appointed by Member States and coordinated by the Commission.
([3]) http://www.emn.europa.eu.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005668/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 juni 2012)

Betreft: Onnodig veel papierwerk bij politie door Europese regelgeving

Nederlandse politierechercheurs die onderzoek zouden moeten doen naar zware en georganiseerde misdaad zijn vooral druk met overbodig administratief werk. De rechercheurs moeten eindeloos formulieren invullen, rapportages schrijven en werken met inefficiënte computersystemen. Dat blijkt uit een studie van de Politieacademie in opdracht van minister Opstelten van Veiligheid en Justitie.

Voor een doorsnee onderzoek naar zware en georganiseerde misdaad, bijvoorbeeld een moordzaak, zijn rechercheurs naar eigen zeggen alleen al 5000 uur bezig met het aanvragen van Bijzondere Opsporingsbevoegdheden (BOB). Het aanvragen van bijvoorbeeld een telefoontap en het schaduwen van een verdachte — een dagelijkse praktijk — levert een papierberg op.

Ook Europese regelgeving zorgt bij de recherchediensten voor veel administratieve rompslomp en ergernis. De rechercheurs schatten in dat in totaal 70 % van hun werktijd opgaat aan administratieve handelingen en zien dat aandeel alleen nog maar verder toenemen.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „750 rechercheurs druk met onnodig papierwerk” ([1])?

2. Is het de Commissie bekend dat politierechercheurs te kampen hebben met onnodig veel papierwerk, dat maar liefst 70 % van hun werktijd bestrijkt, en dat Europese regelgeving daar (deels) de oorzaak van is? Wat vindt de Commissie daarvan?

3. Kan de Commissie verklaren welke Europese regelgeving aan het onnodig vele papierwerk ten grondslag ligt? Hoe verantwoordt de Commissie deze regelgeving die ervoor zorgt dat politierechercheurs niet meer aan hun eigenlijke werk, zoals onderzoek doen naar zware en georganiseerde misdaad, toekomen?

4. Is de Commissie bereid de Europese regelgeving in dezen aan te passen resp. af te schaffen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

5. Zijn de Commissie, naast Nederland, meer lidstaten bekend waar politierechercheurs met onnodig veel papierwerk te kampen hebben? Zo ja, welke?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(11 juli 2012)

De Commissie is niet volledig op de hoogte van het door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde rapport. De Commissie is niet bekend met het bestaan van soortgelijke rapporten uit andere lidstaten. Wanneer de Commissie bewijs zou ontvangen dat specifieke EU-wetgeving inderdaad onnodig papierwerk veroorzaakte, dan zou zij dat natuurlijk nauwkeurig onderzoeken en nagaan of het nodig zou zijn om een wijziging van die wetgeving voor te stellen. Zelfs wanneer er geen sprake van wetgevingswijziging is, kan er gelegenheid zijn om de organisatie van werkzaamheden en procedures te wijzigen.

([1]) http://www.rtl.nl/components/actueel/rtlnieuws/2012/06_juni/02/binnenland/750-rechercheurs-fulltime-bezig-met-papierwerk.xml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005668/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Too much unnecessary paperwork for police because of European regulations

Dutch detectives, who should be investigating serious organised crime, are mainly occupied with superfluous administrative work. Detectives are required to fill in endless forms, write reports and work with inefficient computer systems, according to a study from the Police Academy commissioned by Minister Opstelten of Security and Justice.

In their own words, for an average investigation into serious organised crime, for example a murder, detectives spend 5 000 hours just applying for Special Investigative Powers. For example, requesting a telephone tap or permission to tail a suspect -a daily practice-generates a mountain of paper.

European regulations also cause considerable bureaucratic fuss and irritation for detectives: They estimate that a total of 70% of their working time is spent on administrative work and believe this amount will only increase further.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report '750 detectives dealing with unnecessary paperwork'? ([1])

2. Is the Commission aware that detectives have to cope with too much unnecessary paperwork that takes up as much as 70% of their working time, and that European regulations are (partly) the cause of this? What is the Commission's view of this?

3. Can the Commission explain what European rules are the cause of this excess of unnecessary paperwork? How does the Commission justify these rules which have created a situation in which detectives can no longer get around to doing their actual work, such as investigating serious and organised crime?

4. Is the Commission prepared to amend or even repeal the European rules in question? If not, why not?

5. Other than the Netherlands, is the Commission aware of any other Member States where detectives have to cope with too much unnecessary paperwork? If so, which ones?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Commission is not fully familiar with the report referred to by the Honourable Member. The Commission is not aware of similar reports from other Member States. If the Commission were to receive evidence that specific EU legislation was indeed creating unnecessary paperwork, then of course it would look at that carefully and consider whether it should propose changes to that legislation. Even in the absence of legislative change, there may be scope for improving work organisation and processes.

([1]) http://www.rtl.nl/components/actueel/rtlnieuws/2012/06_juni/02/binnenland/750-rechercheurs-fulltime-bezig-met-papierwerk.xml.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005669/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 juni 2012)

Betreft: Vingerafdruk in paspoort

1. Kan de Commissie nadere informatie verschaffen over de (Europese) verplichting van vingerafdrukken in paspoorten en de achtergrond daarvan?

2. Momenteel wordt er in Nederland een politieke discussie over vingerafdrukken in paspoorten, meer bepaald over de noodzaak en de privacygevoeligheid daarvan, gevoerd ([1]). Worden dergelijke politieke discussies ook in andere lidstaten gevoerd? Wat vindt de Commissie daarvan?

3. Kan de Commissie verklaren hoe vingerafdrukken in paspoorten in de praktijk werken? Heeft het een positief — negatief resultaat? Gaat het fraude met paspoorten tegen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(10 augustus 2012)

De Europese Raad van Thessaloniki heeft opgeroepen tot „een coherente aanpak […] inzake biometrische identificatiemiddelen of biometrische gegevens, om te komen tot geharmoniseerde oplossingen voor documenten ten behoeve van onderdanen van derde landen, paspoorten voor EU-burgers, en voor informatiesystemen (VIS en SIS II)" en de Commissie verzocht „passende voorstellen op te stellen, in de eerste plaats op visumgebied".

Naar aanleiding van dit verzoek is de beveiliging van de door EU-lidstaten afgegeven paspoorten sterk verbeterd, door middel van Verordening (EG) nr. 2252/2004 van de Raad en de beschikkingen en besluiten van de Commissie ter uitvoering daarvan, namelijk door de toepassing van biometrische identificatiemiddelen die aan de aanbevelingen van de ICAO voldoen (gezichtsfoto en vingerafdrukken in het paspoort) en een hoog niveau van gegevensbescherming. De uiterste termijn voor de uitvoering van de desbetreffende bepalingen door de lidstaten was 28 augustus 2006 voor de gezichtsfoto en 28 juni 2009 voor de vingerafdrukken. Deze verordening is verbindend voor alle lidstaten en met Schengen geassocieerde landen, met uitzondering van het Verenigd Koninkrijk en Ierland.

Deze twee elementen zijn opgeslagen op een chip die in het reisdocument is aangebracht. Daardoor wordt een betrouwbare koppeling tot stand gebracht tussen de houder en het document, mits de inhoud en de authenticiteit van de chip worden gecontroleerd door een bevoegde autoriteit, met name bij het overschrijden van de grens. Paspoortfraude zou daardoor bij het controleren van het document gemakkelijker detecteerbaar moeten zijn.

In het licht van de huidige EU-wetgeving, die in overeenstemming is met de aanbevelingen van de ICAO, doet de Commissie geen uitspraken over de binnenlandse politieke discussie die momenteel in de lidstaten over deze aangelegenheden wordt gevoerd.

([1]) http://www.nu.nl/algemeen/2827509/pvda-wil-vingerafdruk-paspoort.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005669/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 June 2012)

Subject: Fingerprints in passports

1. Can the Commission provide more detailed information regarding the (European) legal obligation to have fingerprints in passports and on the background to this?

2. A political debate on fingerprints in passports is currently taking place in the Netherlands, specifically regarding the need for it and related privacy issues ([1]). Are similar political debates taking place in other Member States? What is the Commission's view of this?

3. Can the Commission explain how fingerprints in passports works in practice? Does it have a positive/negative result? Does it combat passport fraud?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 August 2012)

The Thessaloniki European Council called for a 'coherent approach in the EU on biometric identifiers or biometric data which would result in harmonised solutions for documents for third-country nationals, EU citizens' passports and information systems (VIS and SIS II)', and invited the Commission 'to prepare the appropriate proposals, starting with the visa'.

Following this request, the security of the passports issued by EU Member States has been highly improved by Council Regulation (EC) 2252/2004 and the decisions taken by the Commission for its implementation by integrating biometric identifiers in line with ICAO recommendations (the facial image and the fingerprints in the passport) while providing a high level of data protection. They had to be implemented by EU Member States at the latest on 28 August 2006 for the facial image and on 28 June 2009 for the fingerprints. All Member States and the Schengen associated countries are bound by this regulation except the United Kingdom and Ireland.

These two elements are stored in a chip embedded in the document. A reliable link between the holder and the document is therefore established in so far as the content and the authenticity of the chip are checked by competent authorities in particular at the time the borders are crossed. Therefore, passport fraud should be more easily detected while checking the document.

In light of the existing EU legislation, which is in line with ICAO recommendations, the Commission does not comment on the current internal political discussions in Member States on these issues.

([1]) http://www.nu.nl/algemeen/2827509/pvda-wil-vingerafdruk-paspoort.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005670/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Parejas de hecho

Considerando la Directiva 2004/38 CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo relativa al derecho de los ciudadanos de la UE y de los miembros de sus familias a circular y residir libremente en el territorio de los Estados miembros. La misma contempla como familiar reagrupable en su artículo 2, apartado 2, letra b), a la pareja con la que el ciudadano de la Unión ha celebrado una unión registrada, con arreglo a la legislación de un Éstado miembro, si la legislación del Estado miembro de acogida otorga a las uniones registradas un trato equivalente a los matrimonios y de conformidad con las condiciones establecidos en la legislación aplicable del Estado miembro de acogida.

El Real Decreto 240/07 que traspone la Directiva al Derecho interno español, en su artículo 2 b) establece que para aplicar sus normas a la pareja de hecho, ésta deberá estar inscrita en un registro público. El registro puede estar establecido en un Estado miembro de la UE o del Espacio Económico Europeo, pero se impide la posibilidad de dos registros simultáneos en dicho Estado. Las situaciones de matrimonio e inscripción como pareja registrada se considerarán, en todo caso, incompatibles entre sí.

En el Estado español no existe una regulación estatal común de las uniones de hecho. Depende de la legislación de cada Comunidad. Al no existir obligación de registro en algunas CCAA, el Estado Español no está documentando a esas parejas a pesar de estar constituidas, hecho que podría considerarse un incumplimiento de la mencionada Directiva, perjudicando a estos ciudadanos y ciudadanas.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que España está incumpliendo la Directiva 2004/38CE?

2. ¿Prevé la Comisión recomendar la creación de un registro estatal de parejas de hecho?

3. ¿Qué mecanismos de reconocimiento de las actuales parejas de hecho no registradas en aquellas CCAA propone la Comisión?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2012)

En el artículo 2, apartado 2, letra b), de la Directiva 2004/38/CE se obliga a los Estados miembros a conceder a las uniones registradas de los ciudadanos de la Unión los mismos derechos concedidos a los matrimonios, si la legislación del Estado miembro de acogida otorga a la unión registrada un trato equivalente al matrimonio. La Comisión entiende que la normativa del Reino de España no otorga un trato equivalente a las uniones registradas y al matrimonio. Por consiguiente, el artículo 2, apartado 2, letra b), de la Directiva no impone ninguna obligación a España.

Los miembros de la familia de ciudadanos de la Unión que no entren en el ámbito de aplicación personal del artículo 2, apartado 2, de la Directiva 2004/38/CE, pueden tener derecho a que se les facilite la entrada y la residencia si entran dentro del ámbito de aplicación personal del artículo 3, apartado 2, de la Directiva. Esta disposición incluye a las parejas con las que los ciudadanos de la Unión mantienen una relación estable, independientemente de si están o no registradas.

El Reino de España incorporó la Directiva 2004/38/CE de forma más favorable, ya que incorporó el artículo 2, apartado 2, letra b), de la Directiva 2004/38/CE, a través del artículo 2, letra b), del Real Decreto 240/2007, de 16 de febrero de 2007, a pesar de que la legislación nacional española no otorga un trato equivalente a las uniones registradas y a los matrimonios. Cuando una pareja registrada de un ciudadano de la UE no cumpla las condiciones establecidas en el artículo 2, letra b), del Real Decreto 240/2007, esta deberá ser tratada como un miembro de una familia ampliada, en virtud del artículo 3, apartado 2, de la Directiva 2004/38/CE, que se incorporó al Derecho español.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005670/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Cohabiting partners

Directive 2004/38 EC of the European Parliament and the Council governs the right of EU citizens and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States. According to Article 2(2b) of this directive, family members include the partner with whom the EU citizen has contracted a registered partnership, on the basis of the legislation of a Member State, if the legislation of the host Member State treats registered partnerships as equivalent to marriage and in accordance with the conditions laid down in the relevant legislation of the host Member State.

Article 2b of Royal Decree 240/07, which transposes the directive into Spanish law, states that for its rules to apply to an unmarried couple, the partnership must be recorded in a public register. Registration can be in a Member State or in a state in the European Economic Area, but two simultaneous registrations are not allowed in that State. Simultaneous marriage and registered partnership are incompatible in all cases.

Spain has no general state regulations on non-marital cohabitation. This depends on the legislation in each autonomous region. As some of the autonomous regions have no registration requirement, the Spanish State does not document these couples even though they are together. This could be seen as a failure to comply with the abovementioned Directive, in detriment to the citizens concerned.

1. Does the Commission consider that Spain is failing to comply with Directive 2004/38 EC?

2. Does the Commission recommend the creation of a state registry of cohabiting partners?

3. What mechanisms does the Commission propose for recognising existing unregistered cohabiting partners in these autonomous regions?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2012)

Article 2(2)(b) of Directive 2004/38/EC obliges Member States to confer registered partners of Union citizens the same rights granted to spouses if the legislation of the host Member State treats registered partnerships as equivalent to marriage. According to the Commission's understanding, the legislation of the Kingdom of Spain does not treat registered partnerships as equivalent to marriage. Therefore, Article 2(2)(b) of the directive does not impose any obligation on Spain.

Family members of Union citizens who do not fall within the personal scope of Article 2(2) of Directive 2004/38/EC may have the right to have their entry and residence facilitated if they fall within the personal scope of Article 3(2) of the directive. This provision includes partners with whom Union citizens have a durable relationship, regardless whether they are registered or not.

The Kingdom of Spain transposed Directive 2004/38/EC more favourably as it transposed Article 2(2)(b) of Directive 2004/38/EC through Article 2(b) of Royal Decree 240/2007, of February 16, 2007, although Spanish national legislation does not treat registered partnerships as equivalent to marriage. Where a registered partner of an EU citizen does not comply with the conditions set out at Article 2(b) of Royal Decree 240/2007 he/she will be treated as an extended family member under Article 3(2) of Directive 2004/38/EC which was transposed into Spanish law.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005672/12
ao Conselho
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Medidas específicas nas RUP no âmbito do Programa Horizonte 2020

Considerando que:

— As regiões ultraperiféricas constituem um conjunto de regiões, cuja situação social e económica estrutural é agravada pelas suas características e dificuldades permanentes, como o seu grande afastamento, a insularidade, a pequena superfície, o relevo e o clima difíceis, a par da dependência económica em relação a um pequeno número de produtos, fatores que prejudicam gravemente o seu desenvolvimento, nos termos do artigo 349.° do TFUE;

— O estatuto de região ultraperiférica justifica a adoção de medidas específicas por parte do Conselho destinadas a estabelecer as condições de aplicação dos Tratados nestas regiões, as quais incluem, nos termos do artigo 349.° do TFUE, designadamente «as condições de acesso aos fundos estruturais e aos programas horizontais da União», tendo em conta as suas características e os seus condicionalismos especiais;

— Nas propostas legislativas e programáticas da Comissão Europeia relativas ao Programa--Quadro de Investigação e Inovação Horizonte 2020, publicado a 30 de novembro de 2011, a única referência que se faz às regiões ultraperiféricas é na comunicação geral (COM(2011)808 final), quando se declara que, quanto ao aumento da atratividade internacional das regiões em desenvolvimento e ao seu papel enquanto pontos focais para o seu maior progresso, «devem ser tidas em conta as circunstâncias específicas das regiões ultraperiféricas»;

Pergunta-se ao Conselho:

1. Como podem as circunstâncias específicas das regiões ultraperiféricas ser tidas em conta no âmbito do Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020? Em que medidas concretas e em que oportunidades se traduzirão?

2. Tenciona o Conselho avançar com propostas que visem a adoção de medidas específicas para as regiões ultraperiféricas no quadro do Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020, uma vez que as mesmas não constam da proposta da Comissão?

Resposta
(12 de setembro de 2012)

Na sua abordagem geral parcial de31de maio de2012 sobre o Regulamento-Quadro «Horizonte 2020» o Conselho reconheceu que o potencial de investigação e inovação continua a ser muito diferente de Estado-Membro para Estado-Membro e reiterou que as atividades devem contribuir para eliminar a clivagem no domínio da investigação e inovação na Europa, e que devem ser tomadas medidas específicas para despoletar a excelência nas regiões com fracos resultados em matéria de investigação, desenvolvimento e inovação, alargando assim a participação no Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020 e contribuindo para a realização do Espaço Europeu de Investigação.

Todos os eventuais futuros debates que visem medidas específicas destinadas a promover a participação de países ou regiões sub-representados deverão decorrer no quadro das próximas negociações sobre o Programa Específico, e nomeadamente no âmbito da rubrica «Eliminar a clivagem no domínio da investigação e inovação na Europa» (Parte III, secção 6.1.4, do Anexo da proposta da Comissão).

Nas negociações sobre o Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020 o Conselho não debateu as circunstâncias particulares das regiões ultraperiféricas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005672/12
to the Council
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Specific measures for the Horizon 2020 programme's outermost regions

The outermost regions comprise several regions whose structural social and economic situation is compounded by their remoteness, insularity, small size, difficult topography and climate, economic dependence on a few products, the permanence and combination of which severely restrain their development under the terms of Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Outermost region status allows the Council to adopt specific measures to determine how the Treaties are applied in these regions, including, under Article 349 of the TFEU, 'conditions of access to structural funds and horizontal Union programmes', taking into account their special characteristics and constraints. In the European Commission's legislative and programme proposals for the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme Framework, published on 30 November 2011, the only reference to the outermost regions is in the final communication (COM/2011/808final), which states that, in terms of increasing developing regions' international attractiveness and acting as focal points for further progress, 'the specific circumstances of the Outermost Regions should also be taken into account'.

I therefore ask the Council:

1. How can the outermost regions' specific circumstances be taken into account within the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme? How will this be translated into concrete measures and opportunities?

2. Will the Council continue with proposals for specific measures for the outermost regions in the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme, given that such measures do not feature in the Commission's proposal?

Reply
(12 September 2012)

In its partial general approach of 31 May 2012 on the Horizon 2020 Framework Regulation, the Council acknowledged that the research and innovation potential of the Member States remains very different, and reiterated that activities should help close the research and innovation divide in Europe and specific measures should be taken to unlock excellence in low performing Research, Development and Innovation regions, thereby widening participation in Horizon 2020 and contributing to the realisation of the European Research Area.

Any further discussions on specific measures to facilitate participation of underrepresented countries or regions will be addressed within the forthcoming negotiations on the Specific Programme, namely under the heading 'Closing the research and innovation divide in Europe' (Part III, Section 6.1.4, of the annex to the Commission proposal).

The Council has not discussed the outermost regions' specific circumstances during the negotiations on the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005673/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Medidas específicas para as RUP na área da investigação e da inovação

Considerando que:

— As RUP constituem um conjunto de regiões, cuja situação social e económica estrutural é agravada pelas suas características e dificuldades permanentes, como o seu grande afastamento, a insularidade, a pequena superfície, o relevo e o clima difíceis, a par da dependência económica em relação a um pequeno número de produtos, fatores que prejudicam gravemente o seu desenvolvimento;

— O estatuto de RUP justifica a adoção de medidas específicas por parte do Conselho, sob proposta da Comissão, destinadas a estabelecer as condições de aplicação dos Tratados nestas regiões, as quais incluem, nos termos do art. 349.° do TFUE, designadamente «as condições de acesso aos fundos estruturais e aos programas horizontais da União», tendo em conta as suas características e condicionalismos especiais;

— No seu relatório sobre as RUP, Pedro Solbes realçou a necessidade de assegurar uma melhor tomada em consideração das especificidades das RUP no futuro quadro estratégico comum para a investigação e a inovação, devendo os objetivos estratégicos de financiamento e os projetos de concursos ter mais em conta as potencialidades de investigação destas regiões e as especificidades destas economias;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como justifica a Comissão que esta seja a única referência às RUP e que não haja uma única proposta de medidas específicas para estas regiões?

2. Como podem, assim, as circunstâncias específicas destas regiões ser tidas em conta no âmbito do Programa-Quadro Horizonte 2020? Em que medidas concretas e em que oportunidades se traduzirão?

3. Como justifica a Comissão a ausência de qualquer referência a este ponto, identificado como uma das principais prioridades precisamente num estudo encomendado por um dos seus Membros e com vista a contribuir para uma melhor integração das RUP no mercado interno?

4. Tenciona a Comissão apresentar algumas propostas de medidas específicas complementares quanto a estas regiões, que, no âmbito das propostas do Horizonte 2020, são inexistentes?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(24 de julho de 2012)

1) A Comissão tem conhecimento da situação que atinge as RUP, tendo adotado recentemente uma comunicação ([1]) sobre o assunto. Tendo em vista a criação de sinergias entre os fundos estruturais e o programa Horizonte 2020, prevê-se que as RUP procedam à análise do seu potencial e assegurem a atribuição de uma parte importante do financiamento do FEDER ([2]) à inovação e investigação ([3]). O FSE ([4]) pode ser utilizado para melhorar a qualidade, eficiência e abertura do ensino superior, melhorar as capacidades e a especialização da investigação ou a formação de investigadores.

2) Contributos e incentivos do programa Horizonte 2020: simplificação; regime de financiamento das PME; melhor acesso ao financiamento; infraestruturas regionais de investigação; projetos mais pequenos e atividade de índole ascendente. As necessidades específicas de investigação das RUP serão tidas em consideração em áreas temáticas diferentes (por exemplo, nos setores agrícola e florestal). A produção de resultados de investigação será facilitada por PEI ([5]), consoante os casos (por exemplo, PEI «Produtividade agrícola e sustentabilidade»).

([1]) ««As regiões ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: estratégia para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo» — COM(2012)287 de 20.6.2012».
([2]) Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional.
([3]) COM(2012)287 final; capítulo 4.2 Dimensão externa; p. 8ff.
([4]) Fundo Social Europeu.
([5]) Parcerias Europeias de Inovação.

3) No período 2014/2020, os organismos de investigação RUP terão a possibilidade de usufruir da política de coesão, que impulsionará o conceito de especialização inteligente. O documento de trabalho dos serviços da Comissão sobre elementos de um quadro estratégico comum ([6]) salienta formas de organização de sinergias com o programa Horizonte 2020, através da criação de capacidades, concebendo uma «escala de excelência».

4) Embora o programa Horizonte 2020 vise a excelência sem definição de critérios geográficos específicos, irá contribuir para colmatar o fosso investigação/inovação com uma gama de medidas como cooperação/geminação, cátedras do Conselho Europeu de Investigação, criação de redes interfronteiriças (através da COST ([7])), intercâmbio de informação e apoio a políticas. Será ainda facilitada a investigação tecnológica e empresarial.

([6]) SWD(2012)61, 14.3.2012.
([7]) Cooperação Europeia em Ciência e Tecnologia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005673/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Specific measures for the outermost regions in the area of research and innovation

Given that:

— The outermost regions (ORs) comprise a number of regions whose structural social and economic situation is compounded by their remoteness, insularity, small size, difficult topography and climate, economic dependence on a few products, the permanence and combination of which severely restrains their development;

— OR status qualifies a region for special measures to be taken by the Council, following recommendation by the Commission, aimed at establishing the conditions for implementing and applying certain Treaties in these regions, in accordance with Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, namely 'conditions of access to structural funds and to horizontal Union programmes' taking into account their special characteristics and constraints;

— In his report on the ORs, Pedro Solbes noted the need to more adequately take into account the unique properties of the ORs in the future common strategic framework for research and innovation, and for the strategic objectives of financing and calls for tenders to take greater account of the research potential of the ORs and the specific features of these economies;

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. How can the Commission justify the fact that this is the only reference to ORs and there is not a single proposal for specific measures for these regions?

2. How can the specific circumstances of the outermost regions be accounted for within the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme? How will this be translated into concrete measures and opportunities?

3. How does the Commission account for the lack of any reference to this issue, which was identified as one of the main priorities in a study commissioned by one of its own Members with a view to promoting better integration of the ORs within the internal market?

4. Does the Commission intend to put forward any concrete proposals for additional specific measures for these regions, for which there are currently none in Horizon 2020?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the specific situation the Outermost Regions (OR) are facing and has recently adopted a related Communication ([1]). With a view to synergies between the Structural Funds and Horizon 2020, it is envisaged that 'ORs analyse their potential and ensure a critical mass of the ERDF ([2]) is allocated to research and innovation' ([3]). The ESF ([4]) can be used for improving the quality, efficiency and openness of tertiary education, improvement of research capacities and skills or training of researchers.

2. Horizon 2020 will introduce and promote: simplification; a funding scheme for SMEs; improved access to finance; regional research infrastructures; smaller projects and bottom-up activities. Within different thematic areas (e.g. the agriculture and forestry sector) the specific research needs of the ORs will be taken into consideration. The delivery of research results will be facilitated by EIP ([5]) as appropriate (e.g. EIP 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability').

([1]) 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', COM(2012) 287, 20.6.2012.
([2]) European Regional Development Fund.
([3]) COM(2012) 287 final; Chapter 4.1 Internationalisation; page 8ff.
([4]) European Social Fund.
([5]) European Innovation Partnerships.

3. For the period 2014-2020, OR research organisations will also have the potential to benefit from Cohesion policy, which will take forward the concept of smart specialisation. The Commission Staff Working Document on elements for a Common Strategic Framework ([6]) highlights how synergies with Horizon 2020 could be organised through capacity building, setting-up a 'staircase to excellence'.

4. While Horizon 2020 will focus on excellence and no specific geographical criteria are intended, it will contribute to closing the research/innovation divide through a range of measures such as teaming/twinning, ERA Chairs, cross-border networking (via COST ([7])), information exchange and policy support. Also technological and business innovation will be facilitated.

([6]) SWD(2012)61, 14.3.2012.
([7]) European Cooperation in Science and Technology.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005674/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Dotação específica adicional para as RUP: cálculo e critério de repartição

Considerando que:

— Às regiões ultraperiféricas e às regiões nórdicas de baixa densidade populacional é atribuída uma dotação adicional no âmbito do próximo quadro financeiro plurianual que, nos termos da proposta da Comissão Europeia, de 29 de junho de 2011, ronda os 926 milhões de euros, a preços de 2011;

— Esta dotação específica adicional será para partilhar entre as várias regiões ultraperiféricas e as regiões nórdicas de baixa densidade populacional e que o critério de repartição do seu respetivo valor não consta das propostas da Comissão Europeia relativas aos fundos estruturais;

— No período de programação em curso, o Conselho, na sua decisão de 19 de dezembro de 2005, determinou o valor total desta dotação adicional através do cálculo de 35 euros por habitante destas regiões, o que totalizou, a preços de 2004, um valor de 1513 milhões de euros a atribuir no âmbito desta dotação adicional;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como chegou, nas suas propostas, a Comissão a um valor de 926 milhões de euros a preços de 2011? Baseou-se no critério por habitante utilizado para o período anterior?

2. Qual o critério a seguir para a repartição da dotação específica adicional? Apoia a Comissão a manutenção do critério atual baseado numa distribuição por habitante?

3. Qual o critério ou quais os critérios alternativos que proporia, tendo em conta as especificidades e os condicionalismos distintos destes dois grupos de regiões e o facto de o valor proposto para o período de 2014 a 2020 diminuir de forma abrupta? Deverão ser estes critérios os mesmos para ambos os grupos e dentro de cada um?

4. Qual a razão que a Comissão apresenta para não fazer constar esse critério ou qualquer outro critério de repartição das suas propostas legislativas e financeiras?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(19 de julho de 2012)

1. Como proposto pela Comissão, relativamente ao período de 2014/2020, o montante total da dotação especial para as regiões ultraperiféricas e as regiões pouco povoadas dos países nórdicos é obtido pela aplicação de uma intensidade de auxílio de 20 euros/habitante/ano para o total da população destas regiões. Para o período de 2007/2013, a dotação especial foi calculada com base numa intensidade uniforme de auxílio por habitante, de 35 euros.

2. A dotação específica adicional é distribuída pelas regiões de acordo com o seu total populacional.

3. A Comissão não prevê a utilização de critérios alternativos para a distribuição da dotação adicional.

4. Os princípios gerais de distribuição da dotação propostos pela Comissão estão em conformidade com os métodos previstos no anexo II do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1083/2006 do Conselho. A metodologia pormenorizada de distribuição da dotação para o período de 2014/2020 será determinada no decurso das negociações sobre o quadro financeiro plurianual.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005674/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Specific additional budgetary allocation for the outermost regions: calculation and criteria for apportionment

Given that:

— Low-population outermost and Nordic regions have been allocated additional funding under the next Multiannual Financial Framework. In the European Commission's 29 June 2011 draft the amount totals approximately EUR 979 million at 2011 rates.

— This additional allocation will be shared between the low-population-density outermost and Nordic regions; however the criterion for the allocations is not in the European Commission's proposals for structural funds.

— In the current programming period, following the Council's 19 December 2005 decision, it set the total amount of this additional allocation for these regions by calculating EUR 35 per inhabitant, which at 2004 prices, came to a total of EUR 1 513 million;

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. How did the Commission arrive at EUR 926 million at 2011 prices? Was this based on the same calculation per inhabitant as in the previous period?

2. What are the criteria to apportion the specific additional allocation? Does the Commission favour retaining the existing criterion based on amount per inhabitant?

3. What alternative criterion or criteria might it adopt, taking into account the distinct features and constraints of the two regional groups, and that the amount proposed for the 2014 to 2020 period has dropped sharply? Should these criteria be the same for and within both groups?

4. Why does the Commission not make public criterion governing how its legislative and financial proposals are apportioned?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

1 As proposed by the Commission for the 2014-2020 period, the total amount of the special allocation for the outermost regions and for the sparsely-populated Nordic regions is obtained by applying an aid intensity of 20 EUR/inhabitant/year to the total population of these regions. For the 2007-13 period, the special allocation was calculated on the basis of a uniform aid intensity per inhabitant as well, at a level of 35 EUR.

2. The specific additional allocation is distributed over the regions according to the total population of the regions.

3. The Commission does not envisage the use of alternative criteria for the distribution of the additional allocation.

4. The general principles of the allocation distribution proposed by the Commission are in line with the methods set out in Annex II of Council Regulation EC (No) 1083/2006. The detailed methodology of the allocation distribution for the 2014-2020 period will be determined in the course of the negotiations on the multiannual financial framework.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005675/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Estado atual da realização do mercado interno europeu

Considerando que:

— A União tem como objetivo estabelecer um mercado interno, nos termos do artigo 3.° do TUE, e que, a este respeito, a União adota as medidas destinadas a estabelecer o mercado interno ou a assegurar o seu funcionamento, de acordo com o artigo 26.° do TFUE;

— O mercado interno compreende um espaço sem fronteiras internas, no qual é assegurada a livre circulação de mercadorias, de pessoas, de serviços e de capitais, em conformidade com as disposições do Tratado;

— No que respeita à livre circulação de serviços, e apesar de alguns progressos conseguidos, o mercado interno ainda não está totalmente realizado; e que o mesmo acontece na área do mercado digital, sendo necessário eliminar todos os obstáculos restantes ainda existentes, de forma a tornar o mercado interno uma realidade;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quais as futuras medidas e iniciativas legislativas que a Comissão tenciona adotar para promover a realização do mercado interno dos serviços?

2. Para quando prevê a Comissão um pacote de medidas para efetivar e solidificar as doze alavancas para estimular o crescimento e reforçar a confiança mútua prevista no Ato para o Mercado Único e qual o relevo que aí será atribuído ao mercado interno dos serviços?

3. Considera a Comissão que a realização do mercado interno de mercadorias, de pessoas, de serviços e de capitais é satisfatória até à data? E como vê a sua realização face às exigências e ao plano do Ato para o Mercado Único de 2011?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2012)

1. A Comissão acaba de adotar o «pacote de serviços», onde avalia a aplicação da diretiva serviços, que é o principal instrumento para suprimir barreiras e avançar para um mercado interno de serviços verdadeiramente integrado. A comunicação da Comissão intitulada «Uma parceria para um novo crescimento no setor dos serviços 2012/2015», que faz parte do «pacote de serviços», define as ações para concretizar o potencial do setor dos serviços (ver http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/services-dir/implementation_report_en.htm).

2. A Comissão planeia apresentar uma segunda fase do Ato para o Mercado Único no princípio do outono, antes da Semana do Mercado Único para o Novo Crescimento que começa dia 15 de outubro de 2012. A Comissão não decidiu ainda que ações serão apresentadas neste «Ato para o Mercado Único II». O mercado interno para os serviços, no entanto, serviu de alavanca para fomentar o desenvolvimento do Ato para o Mercado Único I e voltará a sê-lo no quadro do Ato para o Mercado Único II.

3. Muito já foi realizado desde a criação do mercado único, em 1992: a livre circulação de mercadorias, de pessoas, de serviços e de capitais tem sido facilitada de forma significativa. No entanto, há ainda muito a fazer. O Ato para o Mercado Único, apresentado em abril de 2011, identificou 12 ações chave e 50 ações adicionais para desenvolver o mercado único. Até à data, a Comissão apresentou propostas para todas as 12 ações chave e para 32 das 50 ações adicionais. A Comissão apela a que o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho considerem estas propostas como prioritárias para permitir que os cidadãos e as empresas tirem pleno partido das vantagens do mercado único.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005675/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Current status of the European internal market

Whereas:

— The aim of the European Union is to set up an internal market in accordance with Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, and it has taken measures to establish the internal market and organise its operations in accordance with Article 26 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;

— The internal market comprises an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty;

— Despite some progress with regard to the free movement of services, neither the internal nor digital markets are fully operational and, in order to make the internal market a reality, it is necessary to eliminate all remaining obstacles;

I ask the Commission:

1. What future legislative measures and initiatives does the Commission plan to promote the development of the internal market in services?

2. When does the Commission foresee a package of measures to implement and reinforce the 12 levers to boost growth and strengthen the confidence provided for in the Single Market Act? What importance will it be given in the internal market in services?

3. Does the Commission think that the state of the internal market in goods, people, services and capital is currently satisfactory? How does it see its progress in the light of the demands and plans set out in the 2011 Single Market Act?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

1. The Commission has just adopted the 'services package' taking stock of the implementation of the Services Directive, which is the main instrument for removing barriers and moving toward a truly integrated internal market for services. The Commission's Communication 'A Partnership for new Growth in Services 2012-2015', which forms part of the 'services package' sets the actions to release the potential of the services sector (see http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/services-dir/implementation_report_en.htm).

2. The Commission is planning to present a second-phase Single Market Act in early autumn, ahead of the single market Week for New Growth commencing on 15 October 2012. The Commission has not yet decided which actions are to feature in this 'Single Market Act 2'. The internal market for services, however, was a lever of the single market Act 1 and will again be a lever in the SMA 2.

3. Much has been achieved since the inception of the single market in 1992: the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital has been facilitated significantly. Nevertheless, more remains to be done. The Single Market Act presented in April 2011 identified 12 key actions and 50 additional actions to develop further the single market. To date, the Commission has presented proposals for all 12 key actions and 32 of the 50 aditional actions. The Commission calls on the European Parliament and on the Council to treat these proposals as priorities to enable citizens and businesses to reap the full benefits of the single market.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005676/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Gewalt gegen Frauen in der Türkei

Nach Angaben eines UN-Berichts leben 603 Millionen Frauen in Ländern, in denen häusliche Gewalt nicht als Verbrechen angesehen wird. In der Türkei ist, trotz erheblicher Fortschritte in der Gesetzgebung, das Maß an Gewalt gegen Frauen höher als irgendwo sonst in Europa oder in den USA. Diese Form des Missbrauchs ist nur in Afrika südlich der Sahara, im ostasiatischen und dem pazifischen Raum stärker ausgeprägt. Forschern zufolge haben mehr als ein Drittel der türkischen Frauen Gewalt durch Männer erfahren und sind bei 14 % der Eheschließungen minderjährige Mädchen beteiligt. Nur 24 % der türkischen Frauen stehen in einem Beschäftigungsverhältnis. Vier Millionen Frauen in der Türkei sind Analphabeten.

1. Wie kann die Kommission zur Veränderung einer Kultur beitragen, in der Frauen als Geschlecht zweiter Klasse angesehen werden?

2. Die türkische Regierung vertritt die Auffassung, dass Frauen innerhalb der Familie Schutz erfahren sollen. In Wirklichkeit jedoch leiden Frauen in der Familie am meisten unter Gewalt, insbesondere durch Ehemänner und Väter. Wie kann die Kommission Schulungsprogramme für Männer anbieten, um das Problem durch eine Änderung ihrer Einstellung zu lösen?

3. Wie kann die Kommission einen Wandel der kulturellen Gegebenheiten in die Wege leiten, durch die Frauen in einer von Männern dominierten Gesellschaft, in der die Hauptakteure Männer und Pädagogen sind, herabgewürdigt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(18. Juli 2012)

Der Schutz der Rechte der Frauen, die Förderung der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter und die Bekämpfung der Gewalt gegen Frauen stellen in der Türkei weiterhin große Herausforderungen dar.

Der Rechtsrahmen zur Gewährleistung der Rechte der Frauen und der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter ist weitgehend vorhanden. Das am 8. März 2012 verabschiedete Gesetz zum Schutz der Familie und zur Vorbeugung von Gewalt gegen Frauen stellt eine Verbesserung gegenüber den bisherigen Rechtsvorschriften dar, da es Familienmitglieder und auch Personen in nichtehelichen Beziehungen vor Gewalt schützt. Besonders positiv sind vor allem die in dringenden Fällen vorgesehenen Verfahren sowie die umfassende von den Behörden durchgeführte Konsultation der Zivilgesellschaft.

Jedoch sind weitere erhebliche Anstrengungen erforderlich, um diese rechtlichen Vorgaben zu politischer, gesellschaftlicher und wirtschaftlicher Realität werden zu lassen. Dafür muss eine konsequente Umsetzung der Rechtsvorschriften im ganzen Land angestrebt werden. Ehrenmorde, Früh- und Zwangsehen sowie häusliche Gewalt gegen Frauen stellen immer noch gravierende Probleme dar. Fortbildungen und bewusstseinsbildende Maßnahmen in Bezug auf Frauenrechte und Gleichstellung der Geschlechter sind erforderlich, insbesondere für Polizeibeamte. Die Kommission unterstützt alle Bemühungen der türkischen Behörden und anderer Akteure in dieser Hinsicht, unter anderem auch durch finanzielle Hilfe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005676/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Violence against women in Turkey

According to a UN report, 603 million women live in countries where domestic violence is not considered a crime. In Turkey, despite huge progress in terms of legislation, the level of violence against women remains worse than that found anywhere else in Europe or the US. This type of abuse is more prevalent only in sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and the Pacific. Researchers say that more than one in three Turkish women have suffered violence by men and 14% of marriages involve underage girls. Only 24%of Turkish women work. Four million women in Turkey are illiterate.

1. How can the Commission contribute to changing a culture in which women are regarded as a second-class gender?

2. The Turkish Government says women should be protected within the family. But the reality is that it is within the family that women suffer most violence, in particular from husbands and fathers. How can the Commission offer training programmes to men in order to solve the problem by changing their mentality?

3. How can the Commission change cultural attitudes which degrade women in a male-dominated society where the main actors are men and educationalists?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

Protecting women's rights, promoting gender equality and combating violence against women remain major challenges in Turkey.

The legal framework guaranteeing women's rights and gender equality is broadly in place. The Law on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women adopted on 8 March 2012 is an improvement on previous legislation, protecting from violence family members and those in relationships outside marriage. More specifically, the procedures foreseen in cases of urgency are particularly positive, as was the inclusive consultation exercise undertaken by the authorities with civil society.

However, further substantial efforts are needed to turn the legal framework into political, social and economic reality. Legislation needs to be implemented consistently across the country. Honour killings, early and forced marriages and domestic violence against women remain serious problems. Further training and awareness raising on women's rights and gender equality are needed, particularly for the police. The Commission supports all efforts of the Turkish authorities and stakeholders in this regard including through financial assistance.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005677/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Berufstätige Einwanderinnen

Es besteht Anlass zur Besorgnis aufgrund der Situation von berufstätigen Einwanderinnen im Dienstleistungssektor, die größtenteils ohne Vertrag im Haushalt arbeiten, sehr geringe Löhne beziehen und keinerlei soziale Ansprüche haben. Berufstätige Einwanderinnen tragen mit Transferleistungen aus ihren Einkommen, die in einigen Ländern 10 % des BIP ausmachen, zur Entwicklung des Herkunftslands wie auch des Aufnahmelandes bei.

1. Wie kann die Kommission ein europäisches Umfeld schaffen, durch das die wirtschaftliche, soziale und physische Sicherheit der berufstätigen Einwanderinnen geschützt ist?

2. Wie kann die Kommission einen Schwerpunkt auf die Förderung sicherer Einwanderung von Frauen, die Beseitigung des Menschenhandels und die Schaffung eines förderlichen politischen, institutionellen und sozioökonomischen Umfelds setzen, durch das die Chancengleichheit der Frauen und die Vorteile der Einwanderung für Frauen gewährleistet werden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(10. August 2012)

Die Kommission räumt ein, dass sich Migrantinnen häufig in prekären Situationen befinden, was sowohl auf ihren Status als auch auf ihr Geschlecht zurückzuführen ist. Sie sind stärker gefährdet, Opfer von Menschenhandel, Prostitution und geschlechtsspezifischer Ausbeutung als Haushaltshilfe, Pflege- oder Reinigungskraft zu werden.

Eine Verbesserung *ihrer Lage ist geboten, unabhängig davon, ob sie sich rechtmäßig oder unrechtmäßig in der EU aufhalten und welche Nationalität sie besitzen. Die* Kommission führt eine Konsultation zum Potenzial an hochwertigen Arbeitsplätzen im Bereich personenbezogener und haushaltsnaher Dienstleistungen durch ([1]). *Die Umsetzung des* Übereinkommens über die Rechte von Hausangestellten (2011) wird zu einer Verbesserung ihrer Arbeitsbedingungen und zu mehr Schutz vor Gewalt beitragen. Die Mitgliedstaaten sind nachdrücklich aufgefordert, das Übereinkommen im Zuge der Strategie zur Beseitigung des Menschenhandels zu unterzeichnen ([2]).

In der Europäischen Plattform gegen Armut und soziale Ausgrenzung ([3]) wird eine Reihe politischer Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung von Armut und sozialer Ausgrenzung aller gefährdeten Gruppen, einschließlich Migranten, aufgezeigt.

Auch andere Maßnahmen auf EU-Ebene können sich positiv auf die Beschäftigung von Migranten auswirken. So verhindern die Rückführungsrichtlinie ([4]) und die Richtlinie über Arbeitgebersanktionen ([5]) die Ausbeutung illegal aufhältiger und beschäftigter Migranten.

Der Vorschlag zu Saisonarbeitnehmern ([6]) wird nach seiner Annahme der Ausbeutung von Saisonkräften aus Drittländern entgegenwirken, indem Rechte und Schutzmaßnahmen vorgesehen und die legale Einreise in die EU ermöglicht wird.

Die Richtlinie über die kombinierte Aufenthalts-/Arbeitserlaubnis ([7]) wird die Verwaltungsverfahren beschleunigen und sicherstellen, dass Migranten in Bezug auf Arbeitsbedingungen, Anerkennung von Qualifikationen, Zugang zur sozialen Sicherheit und Übertragung erworbener Rentenansprüche genauso behandelt werden wie EU-Bürger.

([1]) Potenzial an hochwertigen Arbeitsplätzen im Bereich personenbezogener Dienstleistungen und Dienstleistungen im Haushalt, begleitende Arbeitsunterlage SWD(2012)95 zur Mitteilung „Einen arbeitsplatzintensiven Aufschwung gestalten", KOM(2012)173 vom 18.4.2012.

([2]) EU-Strategie zur Beseitigung des Menschenhandels (2012-2016), KOM(2012)286 vom 19.6.2012.

([3]) KOM(2010)758 endg. vom 16. Dezember 2010 unter: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0758:FIN:DE:PDF.

([4]) Richtlinie 2008/115/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 2008 über gemeinsame Normen und Verfahren in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Rückführung illegal aufhältiger Drittstaatsangehöriger, ABl. L 348 vom 24.12.2008, S. 98-107.

([5]) Richtlinie 2009/52/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 18. Juni 2009 über Mindeststandards für Sanktionen und Maßnahmen gegen Arbeitgeber, die Drittstaatsangehörige ohne rechtmäßigen Aufenthalt beschäftigen, ABl. L 168 vom 30.6.2009, S. 24-32.

([6]) KOM(2010)379 endg.

([7]) Richtlinie 2011/98/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 13. Dezember 2011 über ein einheitliches Verfahren zur Beantragung einer kombinierten Erlaubnis für Drittstaatsangehörige, sich im Hoheitsgebiet eines Mitgliedstaats aufzuhalten und zu arbeiten, sowie über ein gemeinsames Bündel von Rechten für Drittstaatsarbeitnehmer, die sich rechtmäßig in einem Mitgliedstaat aufhalten, ABl. L 343 vom 23.12.2011, S. 1-9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005677/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Female immigrant workers

The situation of female immigrant workers in the service sector is a matter of concern, as the vast majority work without a contract in domestic service, with very low wages and no social rights of any kind. Migrant women workers contribute to the development of both sending and receiving countries, with remittances from their incomes accounting for as much as 10% of the GDP in some countries.

1. How can the Commission create a European environment that protects migrant workers' economic, social and physical security?

2. How can the Commission focus on promoting safe migration for women, eliminating trafficking, and creating enabling policy, institutional and socioeconomic environments that ensure women's equal opportunities and benefits from migration?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 August 2012)

The Commission agrees that female migrants are in vulnerable situations both because of their status and their gender. They are more likely to become victims of trafficking, prostitution and gender-based exploitation in domestic, care and cleaning work.

It is important to improve their situation, whether they reside regularly or irregularly and regardless of their nationality. The Commission is consulting stakeholders on the potential for quality jobs in personal and household services ([1]). *The implementation of the* 2011 Domestic Workers Convention will contribute to improve working conditions and the protection against violence. Member States are urged to ratify the Convention in the context of the strategy against trafficking in Human Beings ([2]).

The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion ([3]) has set out a range of policy actions fighting poverty and social exclusion of all vulnerable groups, including migrants.

Other existing measures at EU level can have a positive impact on employment of migrants. The Return Directive ([4]) and the Employer Sanctions Directive ([5]) prevent exploitation of irregularly staying and employed migrants.

Once adopted, the proposal on Seasonal Workers ([6]) will help prevent exploitation of non-EU seasonal workers with rights and protective measures and provide legal means to enter the EU.

The Single Permit Directive ([7]) *will expedite administrative procedures and ensure that migrant workers receive equal treatment with EU nationals as regards working conditions, recognition of qualifications, access to social security and transfer of acquired pensions.*

([1]) Exploiting the employment potential of the personal and household services SWD (2012) 95 accompanying Towards a job-rich recovery COM(2012)173 of 18.4.2012.
([2]) EU strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016, COM(2012)286 of 19.6.2012.
([3]) COM(2010) 758 final of 16 December 2010, at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0758:FIN:EN:PDF.
([4]) Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 98-107.
([5]) Directive 2009/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 providing for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals OJ L 168, 30.6.2009, p. 24-32.
([6]) COM(2010) 379 final.
([7]) Directive 2011/98/EU Directive 2011/98/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011on a single application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a Member State and on a common set of rights for third-country workers legally residing in a Member State. OJ L 343 , 23.12.2011, p. 1-9.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005678/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Arbeitsbedingungen von Frauen im Dienstleistungssektor

Es besteht eine Konzentration berufstätiger Frauen im öffentlichen Dienst, wo 25 % aller Frauen gegenüber 17 % der Männer arbeiten.

1. Wie kann die Kommission Stereotype im Dienstleistungssektor bekämpfen, die besagen, dass es männliche und weibliche Berufe gibt und dass Letztere mit Arbeiten verbunden sind, die Frauen im häuslichen Bereich und in Bereichen ausüben, die als eine Erweiterung davon angesehen werden?

2. Wie könnte die Kommission sich dafür einsetzen, dass die Teilzeitarbeit nicht mehr hauptsächlich unter Frauen verbreitet ist?

3. Wie kann die Kommission angesichts der Tatsache, dass Frauen im Dienstleistungssektor durchschnittlich 17,1 % weniger verdienen als Männer, dazu beitragen, dass die derzeitige Lage beendet wird, in der weiterhin eine vertikale und horizontale Segregation in der Berufswelt herrscht und sie mehr Teilzeitstellen bekleiden?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juli 2012)

In der Strategie für die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern 2010-2015 räumt die Kommission ein, dass starre Geschlechterrollen die Wahlfreiheit der Einzelnen behindern und das Potenzial von Frauen und Männern einschränken. Die Förderung diskriminierungsfreier Geschlechterrollen in allen Lebensbereichen stellt somit einen wesentlichen Beitrag zur Gleichstellung dar. Im Jahr 2009 hat sich die Kommission im Rahmen eines Programms zum Austausch vorbildlicher Verfahren zur Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten mit der Geschlechterstereotypisierung befasst; dabei stand die Wahl des Bildungsweges von Mädchen und Jungen im Vordergrund ([1]). Außerdem führte die Kommission im Zeitraum 2007 bis 2009 eine Sensibilisierungskampagne zur Bekämpfung von Geschlechterstereotypen durch ([2]). Im Zuge dieser Initiative wurden ein Toolkit entwickelt und Seminare veranstaltet, um KMU in Europa zu unterstützen und aufzuzeigen, welche Vorteile sich aus dem Abbau von Geschlechterstereotypen ergeben.

Die Beseitigung des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles zählt zu den Hauptprioritäten der Kommissionsstrategie. Zwischen 2009 und 2012 organisierte die Kommission eine EU-weite Informationskampagne, um das Bewusstsein für diese Problematik und deren Ursachen zu schärfen. 2012 leitete die Kommission eine Initiative mit Schulungsangeboten für Unternehmen zum „Businesskonzept“ für Geschlechtergleichstellung und geschlechtsspezifische Lohnunterschiede sowie zu deren Ursachen und wirksamen Wegen zur Herstellung der Lohngleichheit ein.

Im Kontext der Strategie Europa 2020 hat die Kommission dem Rat im Mai 2012 länderspezifische Empfehlungen unterbreitet. Darin wird betont, dass erschwingliche Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen verfügbar sein müssen, damit Frauen am Arbeitsmarkt teilnehmen und auch Vollzeit arbeiten können; zehn Mitgliedstaaten wurde empfohlen, ihre Politik zur Vereinbarkeit von Berufs- und Privatleben zu verbessern. Weitere Empfehlungen betreffen den Ausbau von Betreuungsleistungen für ältere Menschen ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3274&langId=en.
([2]) http://www.businessandgender.eu/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005678/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Women's working conditions in the service sector

There is a concentration of women working in the public sector, with 25% of women compared with 17% of men.

1. How can the Commission combat stereotypes in the service sector, where there is an assumption that there are male and female jobs and that the latter are associated with the work that women do in the home and considered as an extension of this?

2. In what ways can the Commission act to ensure that part-time employment ceases to be a predominantly female domain?

3. Given that women earn on average 17.1% less than men in the service sector, how can the Commission contribute to ending the present situation, with its continuing vertical and horizontal occupational segregation and higher incidence of part-time jobs?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2012)

In its Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 the Commission acknowledges the fact that rigid gender roles hamper individual choices and restrict the potential of both women and men. Promoting non-discriminatory gender roles in all areas of life is an essential contribution towards gender equality. In 2009, within the framework of a programme of exchange of good practices on gender equality between Member States, the Commission organised an exchange on gender stereotyping focusing on girls and boys educational choices ([1]). From 2007 to 2009, the Commission also launched an awareness-raising initiative to combat gender stereotypes ([2]). This initiative developed a toolkit and workshops aimed at assisting SMEs in Europe to inform them of the benefits of tackling gender stereotypes.

Tackling the gender pay gap is one of the Commission's priorities in the strategy. From 2009 to 2012, the Commission held an EU-wide information campaign to raise awareness on the gender pay gap and the causes behind it. In 2012 the Commission has started an initiative which will train companies on the 'business case' for gender equality and the gender pay gap, its underlying causes and effective ways to ensure equal pay.

Within the context of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission proposed country-specific recommendations (CSR) to the Council in May 2012. The Commission emphasised the need for available and affordable childcare services in order to enable women to start working including on a full time basis and ten Member States were recommended to improve reconciliation policies. Further recommendations included improving reconciliation policies, as well as care services for the elderly ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3274&langId=en.
([2]) http://www.businessandgender.eu/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005679/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Pensionen von Frauen

Zwischen 2012 und 2020 wird das Renteneintrittsalter für Frauen in der EU durchschnittlich um sechs Jahre ansteigen, was eine ungerechte Veränderung darstellt und unverhältnismäßige Folgen für eine bedeutende Zahl von Frauen haben wird.

1. Braucht Europa nach Ansicht der Kommission eine grundlegende Reform, um dem Problem der Pensionen für Frauen zu begegnen?

2. Wie gedenkt die Kommission der Tatsache gerecht zu werden, dass die Höhe der Betriebsrente der weiblichen Pensions- und Rentenbezieher wesentlich geringer ist, da während ihres Berufslebens ihre Erwerbstätigkeit geringer war, sie mehr Teilzeitstellen bekleideten, ihr Durchschnittseinkommen geringer war und sie eher im Dienstleistungssektor beschäftigt waren, in dem die Altersvorsorge geringer ist?

3. Befürwortet die Kommission die Einführung einer europäischen Grundrente, die ausreicht, um den Lebensunterhalt zu bestreiten?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juli 2012)

In ihrem Jahreswachstumsbericht 2012 empfiehlt die Kommission den Mitgliedstaaten, die noch immer ein niedrigeres Renteneintrittsalter für Frauen haben, das Rentenalter für Frauen und Männer anzugleichen. Dies entspricht den Gleichstellungsstrategien und trägt der Notwendigkeit Rechnung, das Berufsleben im Interesse der Angemessenheit und Nachhaltigkeit der Renten zu verlängern.

Das Rentenalter soll in zehn Mitgliedstaaten angehoben werden. In neun dieser Mitgliedstaaten ist ein Anstieg um ein bis drei Jahre vorgesehen; nur im privaten Sektor in Italien soll das Rentenalter zwischen 2012 und 2020 um sechs Jahre ansteigen ([1]).

In ihrem Weißbuch über Renten vom 16. Februar 2012 betont die Kommission die Notwendigkeit eines geschlechtsspezifischen Ansatzes zur Gewährleistung angemessener Renten, der es sowohl Frauen als auch Männern ermöglicht, länger und durchgängiger erwerbstätig zu sein, damit sie angemessene Rentenansprüche erwerben können. Es sollte nicht vergessen werden, dass ein niedrigeres Renteneintrittsalter Frauen in beitragsabhängigen Rentensystemen die Möglichkeit nimmt, angemessene Rentenansprüche zu erwerben.

In dem Weißbuch werden Initiativen vorgeschlagen, mit denen Regierungen und Sozialpartner dabei unterstützt werden, die Absicherung von Frauen in beruflichen oder anderen privaten Rentensystemen zu verbessern. Die Kommission bestärkt die Mitgliedstaaten darin, die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern bei Beschäftigung und Entlohnung zu fördern. Außerdem weist die Kommission auf die Möglichkeit hin, die Rentenergebnisse für Frauen durch die Anrechnung von Pflegezeiten zu verbessern, wie bereits von einigen Mitgliedstaaten praktiziert.

Die Kommission hat nicht die Absicht, die Einführung einer europäischen Grundrente vorzuschlagen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/04_pensions.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005679/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Women's pensions

Between 2012 and 2020, the pensionable age for women will rise by six years on an EU average basis, a change that is unfair and will have disproportionate consequences for a significant number of women.

1. In the Commission's view, does Europe need a radical reform to tackle the problem of women's pensions?

2. How does the Commission propose to deal with the fact that female pensioners currently receive much lower levels of occupational pension because during their working life they had a much lower level of employment, a greater tendency to be in part-time work, lower average earnings and a greater tendency to work in service sectors, where pension provision was less prevalent?

3. Does the Commission support a European basic pension which could provide enough to live on?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

In the Annual Growth Survey 2012 the Commission has recommended to Member States which still have lower pension ages for women that they equalise them with those applying to men. This is in line with gender equality policies as well as responding to the need of prolonging working lives to ensure the adequacy and sustainability of pensions.

The pension ages for women will rise in 10 Member States. In 9 of them the planned rise amounts to 1-3 years, only in Italy in the private sector it goes up by as much as 6 years between 2012 and 2020. ([1])

In the White Paper on Pensions of 16 February 2012 the Commission underlined the need to take a gender specific approach to questions of securing adequate pensions including by enabling both women and men to have longer and less broken working careers that allow them to build adequate pension entitlements. It should be noted that a lower pensionable age prevents women from earning adequate pension entitlements in pension systems where contributions determine the level of benefits.

The White Paper suggests initiatives to help governments and social partners raise the coverage of women in occupational and other private pension schemes. The Commission is supporting Member States to promote greater gender equality in employment and remuneration. The Commission is also drawing attention to the possibility of improving pension outcomes for women through care crediting such as presently practised by a number of Member States.

The Commission has no plans to suggest the introduction of a European basic pension.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/04_pensions.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005680/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Häusliche Gewalt gegen Frauen

1. Wie kann die Kommission zur Verhütung und strafrechtlichen Verfolgung von Fällen häuslicher und sexueller Gewalt sowie zur Bereitstellung von Hilfeleistungen für Opfer von Gewalt beitragen?

2. Wie kann die Kommission zur Änderung von Einstellungen in Bezug auf häusliche Gewalt, zur Förderung des Bewusstseins für häusliche Gewalt und zur Verbesserung von Diensten und Vorschriften zugunsten von Opfern beitragen?

3. Kann die Kommission Empfehlungen an Hochschuleinrichtungen richten, umfassend und auf abgestimmte Weise der häuslichen Gewalt, Gewalt in der Beziehung, sexuellen Nötigung und beharrlichen Nachstellung zu begegnen?

4. Wie kann die Kommission die Schulung und Dienste für Opfer von Gewalt gegen ältere Menschen, von Vernachlässigung oder Ausbeutung, einschließlich Opfern häuslicher Gewalt, Gewalt in der Beziehung, sexueller Nötigung oder beharrlicher Nachstellung verbessern?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(16. Juli 2012)

Die Kommission setzt sich für ein entschlossenes Vorgehen gegen alle Formen von Gewalt gegen Frauen ein. Das wird im Stockholmer Programm und durch die Strategie für die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern (2010-2015) ([1]) bestätigt. Die Kommission tritt für eine Stärkung der Rolle der Frau sowie die Schärfung des Bewusstseins für diese Problematik ein, sie fördert den Austausch vorbildlicher Verfahren und eine bessere Datenerfassung. Mit dem Programm Daphne III wird die Umsetzung grenzübergreifender Projekte auf diesem Gebiet finanziell unterstützt.

Des Weiteren ist die Kommission im Bereich der Strafjustiz tätig geworden und hat Rechtsakte zur Bekämpfung des Menschenhandels ([2]), des sexuellen Missbrauchs und der sexuellen Ausbeutung von Kindern ([3]) sowie zu den Rechten der Opfer von Straftaten erlassen. Im Mai 2011 legte sie das Paket zum Opferschutz vor, das einen Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über die Rechte der Opfer von Straftaten einbezieht, die auf den bisherigen EU-Vorschriften aufbaut und zur Stärkung des Opferschutzes beiträgt. Der Vorschlag, über den zurzeit im Europäischen Parlament und im Rat beraten wird, umfasst das Recht auf Achtung der Würde und Anerkennung, das Recht Informationen zu erteilen und zu erhalten sowie das Recht auf Schutz. Außerdem soll sichergestellt werden, dass die Erfordernisse der Opfer individuell bewertet und die besonders Schutzbedürftigen, einschließlich der Opfer sämtlicher Formen geschlechtsspezifischer Gewalt, eine spezielle bedarfsgerechte Behandlung erfahren ([4]). Das Paket zum Opferschutz enthält auch einen Vorschlag für eine Verordnung über die gegenseitige Anerkennung von Schutzmaßnahmen in Zivilsachen in Ergänzung der Europäischen Schutzanordnung (die für Strafsachen gilt). Diese beiden Instrumente werden gewährleisten, dass in einem Mitgliedstaat erlassene Schutzmaßnahmen in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat anerkannt werden, so dass Opfer umziehen oder reisen können, ohne ihren Schutz zu verlieren. Die Kommission hofft, dass diese Maßnahmen bald vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat angenommen werden.

([1]) KOM(2010)491 endg.: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:DE:PDF.
([2]) Richtlinie 2011/36/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 5. April 2011 zur Verhütung und Bekämpfung des Menschenhandels und zum Schutz seiner Opfer sowie zur Ersetzung des Rahmenbeschlusses 2002/629/JI des Rates, ABl. L 101 vom 15.4.2011, S. 1-11.
([3]) Richtlinie 2011/93/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 13. Dezember 2011 zur Bekämpfung des sexuellen Missbrauchs und der sexuellen Ausbeutung von Kindern sowie der Kinderpornografie sowie zur Ersetzung des Rahmenbeschlusses 2004/68/JI des Rates, ABl. L 335 vom 17.12.2011, S. 1-14.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_de.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005680/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Domestic violence against women

1. How can the Commission help to prevent and prosecute cases of domestic and sexual violence as well as offer assistance to victims of violence?

2. How can the Commission contribute to changing attitudes towards domestic violence, to fostering awareness of domestic violence and to improving services and provisions for victims?

3. How can the Commission encourage institutions of higher education to adopt a comprehensive, coordinated response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking?

4. How can the Commission enhance training and services for victims of elder abuse, neglect or exploitation, including victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2012)

The Commission is committed to a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women, as confirmed in the Stockholm Programme and the strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015) ([1]). The Commission works for the empowerment of women, awareness raising, the promotion of exchanges of good practices and the improvement of data collection. The Daphne III Programme provides financial support for the implementation of transnational projects in this field.

The Commission is also taking measures in the criminal justice area and has put in place legislation on human trafficking ([2]), on sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children ([3]) and on the rights of victims of crime. In May 2011, it presented the Victims' Package including a proposal for the directive on the rights of victims of crime that builds on existing EU legislation and strengthens the rights of victims. The proposal, which is being discussed in the European Parliament and the Council, includes the right to respect and recognition, the right to provide and receive information, and the right to protection. It also aims at ensuring that the needs of victims are individually assessed and that the most vulnerable including victims of all forms of gender-based violence receive specific treatment appropriate to their requirements ([4]). The Victims' Package also includes a proposal for a regulation on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters, which complements the recently adopted European Protection Order (which applies in criminal matters). These two instruments will ensure that protection measures issued in one Member State can be recognised in another Member State to avoid that the victims loses their protection if they move or travel. The Commission looks forward to seeing these measures adopted by the European Parliament and the Council.

([1]) COM(2010) 491 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) 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, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1-11.
([3]) Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA, OJ L 335, 17.12.2011, p. 1-14.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005681/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: EFSF-Gelder für griechische Banken

Innerhalb der vergangenen drei Jahre sollen Bankenexperten zufolge aus Angst, das Land könne aus der gemeinsamen Währung aussteigen, rund 75 Mrd. EUR aus Griechenland herausgeschafft worden sein. Die Folge ist eine ständige, sich vergrößernde Liquiditätskrise des griechischen Bankensystems. Ganz aktuell haben daher die griechischen Bankhäuser National Bank, Alpha, Eurobank und Piraeus Bank 18 Mrd. EUR aus dem EU-Rettungsfonds EFSF erhalten. Vordringliche Aufgabe muss es sein, weiteren Kapitalabfluss aus Griechenland zu verhindern.

1. Inwieweit unterstützt die Kommission Griechenland dabei, die Kapitalflucht aus dem Land schnell und effektiv zu unterbinden?

2. Inwieweit koordiniert die Kommission die Zusammenarbeit der Mitgliedstaaten, so dass griechische Gelder nicht einfach innerhalb der EU transferiert werden können?

3. Welche weiteren Aktivitäten zur Bekämpfung dieses Problems plant die Kommission, und bis wann will sie diese umsetzen?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(31. Juli 2012)

1. Die Kapitalzuführung in Form von Anleihen der Europäischen Finanzstabilisierungsfazilität (EFSF) hat die Kapitalbasis der vier größten griechischen Banken gestärkt. Nach dieser Kapitalaufstockung und den politischen Umwälzungen während der griechischen Wahlen kehren die Geldeinlagen zunehmend wieder in das Bankensystem zurück. Allerdings ist das Vertrauen immer noch sehr schwach und anfällig gegenüber weiteren negativen Einflüssen wie etwa politische Instabilität.

2. Es ist nicht Sache der Kommission, die Initiative zur Einführung von Beschränkungen für innergemeinschaftliche Geldtransfers zu ergreifen. Allerdings können — wie bereits in der Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-011592/2011 ([1]) dargelegt — unter außergewöhnlichen Umständen nach Artikel 66 AEUV Schutzmaßnahmen in Form von Kapitalverkehrskontrollen für Kapitalbewegungen nach und aus dritten Ländern getroffen werden. Zusätzlich können Erwägungen der öffentlichen Ordnung oder Sicherheit (Artikel 65 Absatz 1 Buchstabe b AEUV) sowie zwingende Gründe des allgemeinen Interesses (entsprechend der Rechtsprechung des Europäischen Gerichtshofes) ebenfalls eine Beschränkung der Vertragsbestimmungen über den freien Kapitalverkehr durch die Mitgliedstaaten begründen, sofern die Mitgliedstaaten nachweisen, dass die betreffenden Maßnahmen gerechtfertigt und verhältnismäßig sind.

3. Die Geschichte hat gezeigt, dass die Umsetzung des wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprogramms einschließlich der fiskalischen und strukturellen Anpassungen bei weitem der wichtigste Faktor ist, um das Vertrauen der Anleger in das griechische Bankensystem zu erhalten.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005681/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: EFSF funding for Greek banks

According to banking experts, around EUR 75 billion have been moved out of Greece over the last three years because of fears that the country may exit the single currency. The consequence is a permanent, ever-increasing liquidity crisis exists in the Greek banking system, and so Greek banks National Bank, Alpha, Eurobank and Piraeus Bank have just received EUR 18 billion from the European Union rescue fund, the EFSF. The primary aim must be to prevent the further outflow of capital from Greece.

1. To what extent is the Commission helping Greece to stop the flight of capital from the country quickly and effectively?

2. To what extent is the Commission coordinating cooperation between Member States, so that Greek money cannot be simply transferred within the European Union?

3. What other steps is the Commission planning to deal with this problem and when will it implement them?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2012)

1. The capital injection in the form of the European Financial Stability Facility bonds has strengthened the capital base of the four largest Greek banks. Following this recapitalization and the political turmoil during the Greek elections, deposits have started to return back to the banking system. It should be noted that the confidence is still very thin and open to further shocks, such as political instability.

2. It is not for the Commission to take initiative regarding the imposition of restrictions on intra-EU money transfers. However, as already pointed out in the reply to Written Question E-011592/2011 ([1]), in exceptional circumstances and based on Article 66 TFEU, safeguard measures in the form of capital controls may be taken with respect to movements of capital to or from third countries. In addition, public policy or public security considerations (Article 65 (1) b.) TFEU) as well as overriding reasons in the general interest (as recognised by the jurisprudence f the Court of Justice) may also lead to a restriction by Member States of the Treaty rules of free movement of capital, provided that Member States can prove that the respective measures are justified and proportionate.

3. History has shown that the implementation of the Economic Adjustment Programme, including fiscal and structural adjustments is by far the most crucial factor to maintain the confidence of depositors in the Greek banking system.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005682/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Zusammenschluss der MNLA und Ansar al-Din im Norden Malis

Im Norden Malis haben sich Tuareg-Rebellen mit Al-Qaida-Anhängern zusammengeschlossen. Die sogenannte Nationale Befreiungsbewegung (MNLA) der Tuareg sowie die Ansar al-Din, ein Al-Qaida-Ableger, haben beschlossen, im Norden Malis einen unabhängigen islamischen Staat zu gründen. Dieses Territorium ist ein Wüstengebiet von der Größe Frankreichs, und es droht nunmehr zu einem Zentrum des weltweiten Terrors zu werden.

1. Wie beurteilt die Hohe Vertreterin diese Entwicklung und wie hat sie bisher im Rahmen ihres Dienstes darauf reagiert?

2. Sind EAD-Dienste in Mali präsent?

3. Erhält Mali finanzielle oder andere Unterstützung durch die Europäische Union — und wenn ja, erbitte ich eine detaillierte Aufstellung wofür, in welcher Höhe und seit wann die Unterstützung besteht?

4. Erhalten die genannten MNLA oder die Ansar al-Din oder ihnen nahestehende oder ihnen zurechenbare Organisationen direkte oder indirekte finanzielle Unterstützung seitens der EU?

5. Wie gedenkt die Hohe Vertreterin vorzugehen, sollte der genannte neue islamische Staat tatsächlich gegründet werden?

Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juli 2012)

Der Zusammenschluss der MNLA (die keine religiöse Bewegung ist) und der Ansar al-Din wurde voreilig angekündigt. In der Tat ist keine formelle Vereinbarung unterzeichnet worden, und es gibt weiterhin starke ideologische, stammesbezogene und persönliche Spannungen zwischen den beiden Bewegungen. Deshalb ist die Gründung eines neuen islamischen Staates im Moment unwahrscheinlich. Die EU hat die Erklärung der Unabhängigkeit von Azawad seit dem Beginn der Krise verurteilt und hält an Malis territorialer Integrität fest.

Seit dem Putsch hat es keine offizielle Mission des Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienstes (EAD) nach Mali gegeben. Die EU-Delegation in Bamako arbeitet jedoch weiterhin regelmäßig mit Malis Übergangsregierung zusammen.

Die lange Zusammenarbeit zwischen Mali und der EU reicht bis zum ersten Abkommen von Lomé zurück. Das nationale Richtprogramm im Rahmen des 10. EEF (2008-2013) sieht 583 Mio. EUR aus Finanzrahmen B vor. Damit soll eines der ärmsten Länder der Welt unterstützt werden, das bis vor kurzem ein Beispiel für Demokratie in der Region war.

Nach dem Putsch sind einige Projekte auf Eis gelegt worden und es wurden Vorsichtsmaßnahmen getroffen. Dennoch setzt sich die EU weiterhin für den Übergangsprozess und die Befriedigung der Grundbedürfnisse der Bevölkerung Malis ein, zum Beispiel in Form von humanitärer Hilfe und Entwicklungshilfe. Die EU-Mittel für Mali könnten jedoch bald überprüft und an die neue Situation angepasst werden.

Die MNLA und Ansar al-Din oder ihnen nahestehende Organisationen erhalten keine finanzielle Unterstützung seitens der EU.

Die Haltung der EU gegenüber Nordmali ist seit Beginn der Krise gleich geblieben: In Einklang mit unseren afrikanischen und internationalen Partnern setzen wir uns entschieden für die territoriale Integrität Malis ein und befürworten eine politische Lösung durch Dialog mit allen beteiligten Akteuren, abgesehen von den Gegnern der territorialen Einheit Malis und den Terroristen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005682/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Merger the MNLA and Ansar al-Din in Northern Mali

Northern Malian Tuareg rebels, the so-called National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), have merged with Ansar al-Din, an off-shoot of al-Qaida, to establish an independent Islamic state in northern Mali, a desert territory about the size of France, which threatens to become a global terrorism centre.

1. How does the High Representative assess this development and what has been the official response?

2. Are there any European External Action Service (EEAS) missions in Mali?

3. Does Mali receive financial or other aid from the European Union? If so, I would request a detailed list of what aid has been provided, for what purpose and since when.

4. Do the MNLA, the Ansar al-Din or associated organisations receive direct or indirect financial aid from the EU?

5. How does the High Representative intend to proceed if the aforementioned new Islamic state is actually founded?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

The announcement of a merger between the MNLA (which is not a religious movement) and Ansar al-Din was premature. In fact no formal agreement has been signed, and ideological, tribal and personal tensions between the two movements remain high. That is why the foundation of a new Islamic state appears for the moment unlikely. From the beginning of the crisis, the EU has condemned the declaration of independence of Azawad and remains very attached to the territorial integrity of Mali.

Since the coup, there has not been any official mission in Mali from the European External Action Service (EEAS). However, the EU Delegation in Bamako continues to work on a regular basis with Malian transitional authorities.

Mali and the EU have a long history of cooperation since the first Lomé Convention. The National Indicative Programme for the 10th EDF (2008-2013) amounts to EUR 583 million (A envelope). This assistance aims at supporting one of the poorest countries in the world which used to be until recently a model of democracy in the region.

Following the coup, some projects have been put on hold and prudential measures applied. But the EU remains committed to supporting the transition process and the basic needs of the Malian population for instance through humanitarian aid and development assistance. However, the EU aid portfolio to Mali may be reviewed soon and adapted to the new situation.

MNLA and Ansar al-Din or associated organisations do not receive any financial aid from the EU.

The EU approach towards North Mali remains the same since the beginning of the crisis: in line with our African and international partners, we strongly support the territorial integrity of Mali and favour a political solution through dialogue with all stakeholders, except those opposed to the territorial unity of Mali, and terrorists.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005683/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(6 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Asesinato del joven saharaui Hamdi Etarfaoui en los Territorios Ocupados por Marruecos

El joven saharaui, Hamdi Etarfaoui, desapareció de El Aaiún tras una cena en la que coincidió con diversos altos cargos del gobierno marroquí. Hamdi, que siempre se había mostrado crítico con el régimen de Mohamed VI, había denunciado públicamente la represión ejercida por Marruecos en el Sáhara Occidental durante el Foro Agrícola de Meknes.

La familia del joven nunca perdió la esperanza de encontrarlo y el 22 de mayo organizó una sentada para exigir una explicación. Al día siguiente, la policía marroquí afirmó haber encontrado el cadáver de Hamdi estrangulado y descuartizado. Las fuentes oficiales marroquíes han esgrimido el mismo argumento que utilizaron en el caso de Said Dambar, otro joven saharaui de 26 años de edad que, tras recibir un disparo entre los ojos, pasó unos días en coma y murió. La policía argumenta que Hamdi fue visto bebiendo con su asesino, de origen marroquí, y que el móvil del cruento asesinato habrían sido «diferencias personales».

Por su parte, organizaciones como Western Sahara Human Rights Watch afirman que en esa misma cena el joven saharaui había acusado a la administración marroquí de corrupción en el Sáhara Occidental y que los servicios secretos de dicho país habían estado siguiéndolo desde el foro de Meknes. Diversas fuentes saharauis denuncian por tanto que se trata de un nuevo crimen político y denuncian el asedio policial y paramilitar al que están sometidos en El Aaiún.

En el marco del diálogo entre la UE y Marruecos, establecido por el Acuerdo de Asociación entre ambas partes, ¿ha solicitado la Alta Representante información a Marruecos por la violencia sufrida por saharauis perpetrada impunemente por cuerpos policiales y población marroquí en los Territorios Ocupados del Sáhara Occidental?

Ante la gravedad de estos hechos que no son investigados con garantías y cuyas responsabilidades penales no son depuradas, ¿va la Comisión a estudiar la activación de mecanismos de presión sobre Marruecos mientras no cese la persecución y represión de la población saharaui? ¿No considera que Marruecos está violando flagrantemente la cláusula segunda del Acuerdo de Asociación que exige que ambos actores actúen respetando constantemente los principios democráticos básicos y los derechos humanos tanto en sus asuntos internos como externos?

Respuesta del Sr. Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de julio de 2012)

La UE sigue de cerca la situación en el Sáhara Occidental y apoya los esfuerzos del Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas para lograr una solución política justa, duradera y aceptable para ambas partes, que permita la autodeterminación del pueblo del Sáhara Occidental, de conformidad con las resoluciones pertinentes del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas.

En consecuencia, la UE apoya la Resolución 2044 (2012) adoptada por el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas, de 24 de abril de 2012, por la que se prorroga el mandato de la Minurso en el Sáhara Occidental hasta el 30 de abril de 2013, y señala que la Resolución enfatiza particularmente «la importancia de mejorar la situación de los derechos humanos en el Sáhara Occidental y en los campamentos de Tinduf» y alenta «a las partes a que colaboren con la comunidad internacional en este sentido». En la antigua Resolución de 1979 (2011) adoptada por el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas el 27 de abril de 2011 se acoge con satisfacción la creación de un Consejo Nacional de Derechos Humanos en Marruecos y el componente propuesto sobre el Sáhara Occidental, así como el compromiso de Marruecos para garantizar el acceso sin reservas ni obstáculos a todos los procedimientos especiales del Consejo de Derechos Humanos de la ONU.

Los derechos humanos son uno de los aspectos esenciales del diálogo político de la UE con Marruecos y se tratan regularmente en las reuniones de los organismos conjuntos establecidos en virtud del Acuerdo de Asociación. Lo mismo ocurre con la cuestión del Sáhara Occidental. En general, Marruecos avanza hacia un mayor cumplimiento de los principios relativos a los derechos humanos, aunque son necesarias más mejoras. La creación del Consejo Nacional de Derechos Humanos, en virtud de la nueva Constitución, es un ejemplo de esa evolución positiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005683/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Murder of Hamdi Etarfaoui, a young Sahrawi man, in the Moroccan-occupied territories

Hamdi Etarfaoui, a young Sahrawi man, disappeared from Laayoune after a dinner that was attended by several senior Moroccan government officials. Hamdi, who had always been critical of King Mohammed VI's regime, had publicly denounced the repressive measures taken by Morocco in Western Sahara during the Meknes Agricultural Fair.

Hamdi's family never lose hope of finding him and organised a sit-in on 22 May to demand an explanation. The following day, the Moroccan police claimed that they had found Hamdi's body strangled and dismembered. The argument is similar to one used by Moroccan government sources in the case of Said Dambar, another young Sahrawi, aged 26, who spent several days in a coma and died after being shot between the eyes. In this case, the police claim that Hamdi was seen drinking with his Moroccan murderer and that the motive for his bloody murder was 'personal differences'.

Meanwhile, organisations such as Western Sahara Human Rights Watch claim that at the dinner Hamdi had accused the Moroccan administration of corruption in Western Sahara and that the Moroccan secret services had been following him since the Meknes Fair. Several Sahrawi sources have denounced Hamdi's death as a new political crime and also denounce the police and paramilitary harassment they are subjected to in Laayoune.

In dialogue between the EU and Morocco, under the Association Agreement between both parties, has the High Representative asked Morocco to explain the violence suffered by the Sahrawi people, perpetrated with impunity by the Moroccan police on people in the occupied territories of Western Sahara?

Given the seriousness of these events, which have not been fully investigated and for which no one has been charged, will the Commission exert pressure on Morocco to end the persecution and repression of the Sahrawi people? Does it believe that Morocco is blatantly violating Article 2 of the Association Agreement that requires both parties to respect basic democratic principles and fundamental human rights in both domestic and external affairs?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

The EU is following closely the situation in the Western Sahara and supports the efforts of the United Nations (UN) Secretary General with a view to achieving a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Consequently the EU supports the Resolution 2044 (2012) adopted by UN Security Council on 24 April 2012 extending the mandate of Minurso in Western Sahara until 30 April 2013 and notes in particular that the Resolution underlines 'the importance of improving human rights situation in Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps' and encourages 'the parties to work with the international community in this sense'. The former Resolution 1979 (2011) adopted by the UN Security Council on 27 April 2011 welcomed the establishment of a National Council for Human Rights in Morocco and the proposed component regarding Western Sahara, and the commitment of Morocco to ensure unqualified and unimpeded access to all Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council.

Human rights are one of the core issues in the EU-Morocco political dialogue and are regularly addressed in the meetings of the joint bodies established under the Association Agreement. The same applies for the issue of Western Sahara. Overall Morocco is making progress towards more compliance with the human rights principles, although further improvements are necessary. The creation by the new Constitution of the National Council for Human Rights is an example of a positive development in this regard.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005684/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(6 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Terremoto in Emilia e ispezioni geologiche

Da recenti informazioni risulta che tra le cause del terremoto siano da considerare gli effetti delle prospezioni geologiche condotte negli ultimi anni in Emilia, dove nel sottosuolo vengono fatte brillare delle cariche alla ricerca di idrocarburi. Si parla del cosiddetto «fracking», che consiste fondamentalmente in perforazioni idrauliche, le quali, una volta arrivate in profondità, piegano e corrono parallelamente al terreno; nei buchi creati vengono poi immesse ad alta pressione sostanze tra cui acqua (almeno quattro milioni di litri per pozzo) e CO2. Sono tutti materiali che finiscono nelle falde sottostanti e che possono creare voragini nel sottosuolo, con la conseguenza di influire sull'assetto idrogeologico del luogo.

Si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È essa a conoscenza del «fracking» e di ciò che stava avvenendo in Emilia per la ricerca di idrocarburi?

2. Può essa far sapere se esistono normative europee che controllano le ispezioni o le trivellazioni geologiche per la ricerca di gas e petrolio su suolo abitativo? Non dovrebbe esserci un controllo sulle infrastrutture e sugli edifici costruiti su terreni adibiti a tali scopi scientifici?

3. Può essa garantire che siano stati fatti controlli in loco, per quanto riguarda le costruzioni sia a uso abitativo che lavorativo, secondo le modalità di cui alla Gazzetta Ufficiale n. 47 del 26 febbraio 2009 — Suppl. Ordinario n. 27 sulle norme tecniche per le costruzioni?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(17 luglio 2012)

1. La Commissione è al corrente in termini generali dei permessi di prospezione, ricerca ed estrazione di idrocarburi rilasciati negli Stati membri, ma non segue nel particolare le operazioni specifiche condotte nelle singole località o regioni. La Commissione è altresì al corrente del fatto che, per alcune operazioni, si ricorre al fracking.

2. Spetta agli Stati membri assicurare — tramite valutazioni, rilascio di permessi e monitoraggio adeguati — che ogni operazione di prospezione, ricerca o sfruttamento di idrocarburi sia conforme ai requisiti previsti dall'ordinamento giuridico dell'UE, comprese, tra l'altro, le disposizioni in materia di protezione delle acque superficiali e sotterranee ([1]), di valutazioni d'impatto ambientale ([2]) e di gestione dei rifiuti ([3]). Per quanto riguarda le ispezioni, si può fare riferimento, ad esempio, alla normativa dell'UE sulla prevenzione e il controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti connessi con determinate sostanze pericolose ([4]), che si applica in funzione della quantità di sostanze pericolose prodotte, manipolate e/o depositate nello stabilimento.

Le disposizioni dell'UE sulla salute e sicurezza dei lavoratori, quali la direttiva 92/91/CE ([5]), si applicano anche alle operazioni di trivellazione.

3. La normativa cui l'onorevole parlamentare rimanda nell'interrogazione è una normativa nazionale italiana, la cui applicazione non compete alla Commissione.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/60/CE che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria in materia di acque (GU L 327 del 22.12.2000) e direttiva 2006/118/CE sulla protezione delle acque sotterranee dall'inquinamento e dal deterioramento (GU L 372 del 27.12.2006).
([2]) Direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati (GU L 26 del 28.1.2012).
([3]) Direttiva 2006/21/CE relativa alla gestione dei rifiuti delle industrie estrattive e che modifica la direttiva 2004/35/CE (GU L 102 dell'11.4.2006).
([4]) Direttiva 96/82/CE del Consiglio, del 9 dicembre 1996, sul controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti connessi con determinate sostanze pericolose (GU L 10 del 14.1.1997).
([5]) Direttiva 92/91/CEE del Consiglio, del 3 novembre 1992, relativa a prescrizioni minime intese al miglioramento della tutela della sicurezza e della salute dei lavoratori nelle industrie estrattive per trivellazione (GU L 348 del 28.11.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005684/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Earthquake in Emilia and geological inspections

Recent information shows that geological prospecting work carried out over recent years in Emilia, where underground charges have been detonated in the search for oil and gas, is among the causes of the earthquake. 'Fracking' is cited as a possible cause. This consists of hydraulic drilling down to a certain depth, then turning and running the borehole parallel to the ground. Substances including water (at least four million litres per well) and CO_2 are then released into these holes at high pressure. All the materials end up in the underlying aquifers and can create chasms in the sub-soil, which consequently affect the hydro-geological structure of the site.

I would like the Commission to answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of 'fracking' and of what was happening in Emilia in the search for oil and gas?

2. Are there any European regulations governing geological inspection or drilling work when searching for oil and gas on residential land? Should checks be carried out on the infrastructure and buildings constructed on land used for these scientific purposes?

3. Can it guarantee that checks were carried out on-site, with respect to residential buildings or places of work, according to the Official Journal No 47 of 26 February 2009 — Ordinary Supplement No 27 on technical regulations for buildings?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2012)

1. The Commission is aware in general terms of hydrocarbon prospection, exploration and extraction authorisations issued in Member States, but does not follow in detail specific operations in individual locations or regions. The Commission is also aware that fracking is used in some of the operations.

2. It is for the Member States to ensure — via appropriate assessment, permitting and monitoring — that all prospection, exploration or exploitation of hydrocarbons complies with the requirements of the legal framework in the EU which includes, *inter alia*, provisions on the protection of surface and groundwater ([1]), on environmental impact assessments ([2]), and on waste management ([3]). Regarding inspections, reference can be made, for instance, to the EU legislation on the prevention and control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances ([4]), which would apply subject to the quantity of dangerous substances that would be produced, handled and/or stored in the establishment.

EU provisions on workers' health and safety such as Directive 92/91/EC ([5]) also apply to drilling operations.

3. The legislation referred to in the question appears to be Italian legislation; its application is not within the Commission's remit.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, and Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration, OJ L 372, 27.12.2006.
([2]) Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([3]) Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of waste from extractive industries and amending Directive 2004/35/EC, OJ L 102, 11.4.2006.
([4]) Council Directive 96/82/EC of 9 December 1996 on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, OJ L 10, 14.1.1997.
([5]) Council Directive 92/91/EEC of 3 November 1992 concerning the minimum requirements for improving the safety and health protection of workers in the mineral- extracting industries through drilling, OJ L 348, 28.11.1992.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005685/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(6 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Terremoto e Fondo europeo di solidarietà

Nella stampa nazionale italiana, il Commissario per le politiche regionali, Johannes Hahn, dopo aver valutato i danni causati dal terremoto che dal 20 maggio non dà tregua all'Emilia Romagna e ad alcune zone della Lombardia, ha fornito informazioni sullo stanziamento di fondi europei, in particolare sul Fondo di solidarietà e sul 4 % di quello rurale messo a disposizione dai ministri agricoli europei, per aiutare la ricostruzione della città colpite.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Ha la Protezione civile nazionale già presentato domanda presso gli uffici competenti della Commissione?

2. Il Commissario Hahn ha parlato di 150-200 milioni stanziabili attraverso il Fondo di solidarietà e di 100 milioni per quello rurale. Può la Commissione confermare tale disponibilità? Si tratta di una previsione budgetaria fatta solamente per i danni causati all'Emilia o coprirebbe anche le altre città colpite, in Lombardia, come le zone del mantovano?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(19 luglio 2012)

1. La Commissione non ha ancora ricevuto una richiesta di aiuti del Fondo di solidarietà.

2. L'importo dell'aiuto che può essere concesso dal Fondo di solidarietà dipende dai danni verificatisi. Dato che il Fondo di solidarietà è finanziato con somme non incluse nel normale bilancio dell'UE, qualsiasi importo proposto dalla Commissione a titolo di aiuto deve essere approvato dal Consiglio e dal Parlamento europeo prima di poter essere erogato. L'aiuto sarebbe concesso allo Stato italiano e riguarderebbe la catastrofe nel suo insieme. L'assegnazione dei fondi a singole regioni o per determinate operazioni spetterebbe allo Stato membro, che ne sarebbe pienamente responsabile.

Per quanto riguarda il Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale, la Conferenza delle regioni italiane ha deciso di destinare il 4 % della dotazione finanziaria del 2013 di ogni programma di sviluppo rurale regionale italiano (ad eccezione di quello della Lombardia) ai programmi di sviluppo rurale dell'Emilia Romagna e dell'Abruzzo (rispettivamente 44 milioni di euro e 6 milioni di euro). Questo cambiamento comporta la modifica del piano strategico nazionale (PSN) italiano e, susseguentemente, decisioni individuali della Commissione per ciascuno dei programmi interessati dalla riassegnazione dei fondi. La proposta di modifica del PSN è stata presentata in data 19 giugno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005685/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Earthquake and the European Solidarity Fund

The Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn, has provided information in the Italian media on the allocation of European funds — particularly through the Solidarity Fund and the 4% of the Rural Fund made available by Europe's agriculture ministers — to help with the rebuilding of the affected towns after assessing the earthquake damage constantly afflicting Emilia-Romagna and some areas of Lombardy since 20 May.

I would like to ask the Commission the following:

1. Have the Italian civil defence authorities already made an application to the competent Commission offices?

2. Commissioner Hahn spoke of EUR 150-200 million that could be allocated through the Solidarity Fund and EUR 100 million through the Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. Can the Commission confirm the availability of these sums? Is this a budgetary provision made exclusively for the damage caused in Emilia, or would it also cover the other affected towns in Lombardy, such as those in the Mantua area?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2012)

1. The Commission has not yet received an application for Solidarity Fund assistance.

2. The amount of aid that could be granted by the Solidarity Fund depends on the damage caused. As the Solidarity Fund is financed outside the normal EU budget any amount of aid proposed by the Commission has to be approved by the Council and the European Parliament before it can be paid out. The aid would be granted to the Italian State and concern the disaster as whole. The allocation of the money to individual regions/operations would be under the full responsibility of the Member State.

With regard to the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the Italian Conference of Regions decided to shift 4% of the 2013 financial allocation of every Italian regional Rural Development Programme (except Lombardia) to the Emilia Romagna and Abruzzo Rural Development Programmes (EUR 44 million and EUR 6 million respectively). The change implies the modification of the Italian National Strategy Plan (NSP) and, subsequently, individual Commission decisions for each of the programmes concerned by the financial reallocation. The NSP modification proposal was submitted on 19 June.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005687/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de junho de 2012)

Assunto: Metas definidas para Portugal no âmbito da Estratégia UE 2020

Tendo em conta que:

— A Estratégia UE 2020 para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo desenha 5 grandes objetivos a atingir pela União no seu conjunto, que se concretizam e quantificam num conjunto de indicadores;

— O Governo de Portugal já reafirmou o seu forte compromisso com a Estratégia UE 2020 e o seu papel na promoção de um crescimento inclusivo e sustentável;

— Existem indicadores quantitativos e metas que se encontram definidas para cada Estado-Membro em particular, de acordo com os seus programas nacionais de reforma, de abril de 2011;

— Se entende que tais indicadores nacionais não devem constituir metas para todas as regiões de um Estado-Membro, mas que estas devem realizar progressos significativos nesse sentido;

— De acordo com o 7.° relatório de progresso sobre a coesão económica, social e territorial, no que diz respeito a alguns indicadores, as regiões ultraperiféricas figuravam entre as 10 regiões europeias mais afastadas das metas nacionais definidas para 2020;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual é o conjunto de metas e indicadores que foram estabelecidos para Portugal no âmbito da Estratégia UE 2020?

2. Qual a posição relativa das Regiões Autónomas da Madeira e dos Açores no que toca ao conjunto das metas apontadas para Portugal?

3. Existem já, em concreto, metas e indicadores estabelecidos para a Região Autónoma da Madeira? Em caso afirmativo, quais?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de julho de 2012)

O governo português apresentou em 7 de maio de 2012 uma atualização do seu programa nacional de reformas com vista a alcançar os objetivos Europa 2020. O principal objetivo permanece a criação das condições necessárias a uma economia mais flexível, competitiva, abrangente e sustentável.

Os objetivos Europa 2020 são estabelecidos apenas a nível nacional. O quadro anexo ([1]) mostra os objetivos Europa 2020 de Portugal e a atual situação, tanto no que respeita ao país na sua totalidade como (caso existam dados) às Regiões Autónomas da Madeira e dos Açores.

([1]) O anexo será enviado diretamente ao Senhor Deputado e ao Secretariado do Parlamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005687/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Goals set for Portugal under the Europe 2020 strategy

Given that:

— The Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth sets out five major goals for the Union as a whole, which will be affirmed and quantified in a set of indicators;

— The Portuguese Government has already reaffirmed its strong commitment to the Europe 2020 strategy and its role in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth;

— There are quantitative indicators and goals set out for each Member State in accordance with their national reform programmes, from April 2011;

— It is understood that these indicators are not goals for every region in a Member State, but that these regions should show significant progress towards them;

— In terms of the 7th progress report on economic, territorial and social cohesion, according to several indicators the outermost regions are among the 10 European regions which fall most short of the national goals set for 2020;

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. What are the goals and indicators set out for Portugal under the Europe 2020 strategy?

2. What is the position of the Autonomous Regions of Madeira and the Azores in relation to all the goals set for Portugal?

3. Are there currently any concrete goals and indicators set out for the Autonomous Region of Madeira? If so, what are these?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 July 2012)

The Government of Portugal submitted on 7 May 2012 an update of its National Reform Programme to achieve its Europe 2020 targets. The central objective remains the creation of the necessary conditions for a more flexible, competitive, inclusive and sustainable economy.

The Europe 2020 targets are only set at national level. The table in annex ([1]) shows the EUROPE 2020 targets of Portugal and the current position for Portugal as whole (PT) and for the two Autonomous Regions of Madeira (RAM) and Azores (RAA) (if available).

([1]) An annex/attachement is sent directly to the Honourable Member and the Parliament's Secretariat.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005688/12
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: De la Autoridad bancaria europea y la supervisión de las entidades financieras

El Gobierno del Reino de España ha adoptado en las últimas semanas especiales medidas económicas de intervención con relación a un gran grupo financiero (BFA). Ante la alarma generada ha decidido contratar a cuatro empresas auditoras para valorar la situación del sistema financiero español.

Esa Autoridad bancaria europea a la que me dirijo ha ido realizando desde su creación varias pruebas de solvencia de las entidades financieras en cumplimiento de las funciones que le atribuye el Reglamento (UE) n° 1093/2010, de 24 de noviembre. Pruebas que fueron desgraciadamente contestadas por los hechos porque en los primeros «test» se calificó como adecuada la situación de los bancos irlandeses, en otro «test de estrés» también obtuvo una relevante puntuación la entidad Dexia, ahora intervenida por el Gobierno belga y, con relación a las entidades financieras españolas, se afirmó que la entidad Bankia (filial de la citada BFA) requería unas exigencias de capital exiguas. Si no recuerdo mal no llegaban a doscientos millones de euros, cantidad muy alejada de los veintitrés mil millones que ahora los nuevos gestores consideran necesarios.

Por todo ello, en virtud de la previsión contenida en el artículo 3 del citado Reglamento, de 24 de noviembre de 2010, en el que se afirma la responsabilidad de esa Autoridad ante el Parlamento Europeo, este Diputado quisiera saber:

1. ¿Ha modificado esa Autoridad bancaria los criterios para analizar la solvencia de las entidades financieras europeas de tal modo que se aproximen a la realidad?

2. ¿Qué opinión le merece que el Gobierno de un Estado miembro contrate a empresas privadas para realizar auditorías de las entidades financieras europeas?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de julio de 2012)

Dada la situación de la deuda soberana y la crisis bancaria, en la actualidad se están tomando medidas de gran alcance, tanto a nivel nacional como europeo. La realización de ejercicios teóricos, y entre ellos las pruebas de resistencia, forman parte importante del proceso. Las pruebas se desarrollan con arreglo al marco jurídico e institucional vigente.

La Comisión es perfectamente consciente de que determinados elementos de la metodología aplicada en anteriores pruebas de resistencia en toda la UE son mejorables. Por ello, la ABE está revisando actualmente su enfoque de cara al próximo ejercicio. En este proceso, la Comisión será consultada por la ABE y velará por que se pongan en práctica las oportunas mejoras metodológicas.

El Gobierno de un Estado miembro es libre de contratar a consultores externos para que realicen el proceso de diligencia debida y comprueben la calidad de los activos en manos de las entidades financieras. En cuanto a la decisión del Ministerio de Economía de España, la Comisión entiende que las inspecciones están encaminadas a proporcionar al Banco de España una estimación independiente de las potenciales necesidades de capital de las distintas entidades de crédito y que, a partir de la información obtenida, el Banco de España tomará una decisión final sobre el nivel de requisitos de capital más apropiado para las entidades objeto de examen. Las autoridades españolas han encargado además la realización de nuevas auditorías, que se añaden a las auditorías legales, en las que el auditor nombrado por la entidad auditada dictamine si los estados financieros de la empresa se han elaborado de acuerdo con las normas contables aplicables en el territorio de que se trate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005688/12
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: On the European Banking Authority and the supervision of financial institutions

In recent weeks, the Spanish Government has adopted special economic intervention measures in relation to a major financial group (BFA). Given view the alarm that this has created, the Government has decided to contract four auditing firms to assess the state of Spain's financial system.

Since its establishment, the European Banking Authority has been carrying out various stress tests on financial institutions in fulfilment of its duties under Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010, of 24 November. These tests, unfortunately, have been contradicted by events, as the state of the Irish banks was found to be satisfactory in the first 'test'. The financial institution, Dexia, was also marked as outstanding in another 'stress test', and has since been rescued by the Belgian Government. Moreover, in the case of Spanish financial institutions, Bankia (a subsidiary of the aforementioned BFA) was said to have relatively small capital requirements of less than EUR 200 million, which is far removed from the EUR 23 billion which the new managers now find they need.

Given all the above and in view of Article 3 of the aforementioned Regulation which states the responsibility of the EBA to the European Parliament, I would like to ask:

1. If the EBA has altered its criteria for testing the solvency of European banking institutions to bring them into line with reality?

2. What does the Commission think of the fact that a Member State Government is contracting private companies to carry out audits of European financial institutions?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2012)

Comprehensive measures are being undertaken at the European and national level in view of the current sovereign debt and banking crisis. Fact finding exercises including stress tests are an important part of this process. These tests are carried out within the existing legal and institutional framework.

The Commission is aware that certain elements of the methodology applied for previous EU-wide stress tests can be improved. Hence, EBA is currently reviewing its approach in preparation for the next exercise. The Commission will be consulted by EBA in this process and will also ensure that possible methodological improvements are implemented.

A Member State government is free to contract external advisers in order to provide due diligence and reviews of the quality of assets held by financial institutions. As regards the decision of the Spanish Ministry of Economy, the Commission understands that such reviews are intended to provide the Bank of Spain with an independent estimate of potential capital needs of individual credit institutions and that, based on the information obtained, the Bank of Spain will take a final decision on the level of capital requirements appropriate for the examined institutions. Also, the Spanish authorities have mandated new 'audits', in addition to the statutory audits where the auditor appointed by the audited entity provides an opinion on whether the company's financial statements are prepared in accordance with the accounting rules applicable in that jurisdiction.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-005689/12
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(6 iunie 2012)

Subiect: Necesitatea unui Corp European de Protecție Civilă

Având în vedere problema insuficienței de personal civil în cadrul misiunilor Politicii de Securitate și Apărare Comune (PSAC), consideră Comisia că este necesară crearea unui Corp European de Protecție Civilă?

Acesta ar putea fi responsabil cu recrutarea și formarea întregului personal civil mobilizabil, facilitând punerea la dispoziție a unui număr suficient de experți din toate domeniile prioritare ale capacităților civile, și anume poliție, justiție, administrație civilă, protecție și monitorizare civilă, precum și în domeniul drepturilor omului.

Răspuns dat de dna Georgieva în numele Comisiei
(27 iulie 2012)

Comisia nu intenționează să creeze un Corp European de Protecție Civilă.

Mecanismul european de protecție civilă are un mandat specific, și anume de a acorda asistență guvernelor pentru a răspunde la dezastrele naturale sau provocate de om; poliția, justiția, administrația civilă, reforma sectorului de securitate și programele de dezarmare, demobilizare și reintegrare nu intră în domeniul de aplicare al mecanismului.

Cooperarea europeană în domeniul protecției civile este coordonată în cadrul Mecanismului european de protecție civilă. La 20 decembrie 2011, Comisia a prezentat o propunere legislativă [COM(2011)934 final] ce vizează consolidarea mecanismului, *inter alia* prin crearea unei Capacități europene de răspuns în situații de urgență.

Această propune poate fi accesată online la următoarea adresă: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0934:FIN:RO:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005689/12
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Need for a European Civil Protection Corps

Given the shortage of civilian personnel in Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions, does the Commission consider it necessary to create a European Civil Protection Corps?

It could be responsible for the recruitment and training of all mobilisable civilian personnel, facilitating the supply of a sufficient number of experts from all the priority civilian capability areas, namely police, justice, civilian administration, civil protection and monitoring, as well as in the area of human rights.

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(27 July 2012)

The Commission has no plans to create a European Civil Protection Corps.

The European Civil Protection Mechanism has a specific mandate to assist governments in responding to natural or man-made disasters, while police, justice, civilian administration, Security Sector Reform and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration programmes are outside the remit of the Mechanism.

European cooperation in the field of civil protection is coordinated within the framework of the European Civil Protection Mechanism. On 20 December 2011, the Commission presented a legislative proposal, COM(2011)934 final, to strengthen this Mechanism, *inter alia* through the creation of a European Emergency Response Capacity.

This proposal can be accessed online at:
http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/about/COM_2011_proposal-decision-CPMechanism_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005690/12
aan de Commissie
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE)
(6 juni 2012)

Betreft: Verwarring over de definitie van gepulseerde en niet-gepulseerde radiosignalen

Het parlement van het Brusselse Hoofdstedelijke Gewest besloot om „niet-gepulseerde" straling (radio- en tv-uitzendingen) weg te laten uit zijn 3 V/m-norm van maart 2007, die erop gericht is de gezondheid van zijn burgers te beschermen. Dit onderscheid werd door beleidsmakers in Brussel gerechtvaardigd met het argument dat gepulseerde golven vermoedelijk een groter effect op de volksgezondheid hebben dan niet-gepulseerde golven. Maar in een recent onderzoek dat namens beleidsmakers van het Brusselse Hoofdstedelijke Gewest is uitgevoerd heeft het ISSeP (het openbaar wetenschappelijk instituut van het Waalse Gewest) verschillende criteria vastgesteld voor de gevallen waarin radiosignalen als gepulseerd of niet-gepulseerd beschreven moeten worden. Volgens het onderzoek zijn digitale radiogolven (Digital Audio Broadcasting, DAB) en analoge tv-signalen gepulseerd, en zijn 3G-technologie en digitale tv-signalen niet-gepulseerd.

Derhalve schept dit onderzoek verwarring met betrekking tot het exacte toepassingsgebied van de Brusselse norm van 3 V/m. Verder zou een niet-onderbouwd onderscheid discriminerend en ontwrichtend kunnen zijn voor de markt.

Gelet op het voorgaande is mijn vraag:

1. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat een onderscheid tussen blootstelling aan gepulseerde straling en niet-gepulseerde straling objectief kan worden gerechtvaardigd door wetenschappelijk onderzoek dat verschillende gezondheidseffecten aantoont? Kan het onderscheid tussen blootstelling aan signalen van radio- en tv-uitzendingen enerzijds en blootstelling aan signalen van de antennes van mobiele exploitanten anderzijds objectief worden gerechtvaardigd door wetenschappelijk onderzoek dat verschillende gezondheidseffecten aantoont?

2. Zo ja, kan de Commissie een wetenschappelijk gefundeerde definitie geven van de radiofrequentiebronnen die als gepulseerd moeten worden beschouwd en van de bronnen die als niet-gepulseerd moeten worden beschouwd?

3. Zo niet, moet de omissie van de door radio- en televisiezenders uitgezonden straling in een op het onderscheid tussen gepulseerde en niet-gepulseerde golven gebaseerde verordening met betrekking tot blootstelling als discriminerend worden beschouwd?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(6 juli 2012)

1. De bevoegdheid van de Europese Unie op het gebied van volksgezondheid, en met name inzake de bescherming van de bevolking tegen de mogelijke schadelijke effecten van elektromagnetische velden (EMV), is volgens het Verdrag beperkt tot het ondersteunen van het optreden van de lidstaten. De Raad heeft daartoe in 1999 een aanbeveling gedaan (Aanbeveling 1999/519/EG van de Raad ([1])) ter beperking van blootstelling van de bevolking aan elektromagnetische velden, en met name aan de door radio- en tv-uitzendingen en mobiele telefonie veroorzaakte velden. De aanbeveling maakt geen onderscheid tussen de categorieën gepulseerde en niet-gepulseerde straling. De tenuitvoerlegging van deze niet-bindende aanbeveling blijft een taak van de lidstaten.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1999:199:0059:0070:NL:PDF.

2. De Commissie volgt de stand van de wetenschap op dit gebied via een wetenschappelijk comité van onafhankelijke deskundigen, het Wetenschappelijk Comité voor nieuwe gezondheidsrisico's (WCNG ([2])). Uit het meest recente wetenschappelijk advies betreffende EMV, dat in januari 2009 door het WCNG werd goedgekeurd ([3]), blijkt dat de in Aanbeveling 1999/519/EG van de Raad vastgestelde grenswaarden voor blootstelling niet hoeven te worden gewijzigd. Hoewel er enig wetenschappelijk bewijs bestaat dat gepulseerde EMV de cognitieve functies en de slaap zouden kunnen aantasten, zijn aanvullende studies noodzakelijk om de resultaten te bevestigen en om andere eindpunten op het gebied van de gezondheid te onderzoeken. De Commissie heeft het WCNG verzocht de beoordeling van de mogelijke schadelijke gevolgen van EMV op de gezondheid bij te werken. In deze context zal de Commissie het WCNG verzoeken ook onderzoek te doen naar het onderscheid en de definitie van de categorieën gepulseerde en niet-gepulseerde straling.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005690/12
to the Commission
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Confusion over the definition of pulsed and non-pulsed radio signals

The Parliament of the Brussels-Capital Region decided not to include 'non-pulsed' radiation (radio and TV broadcasting) in its 3V/m decree of March 2007, which aims to protect the health of its citizens. This distinction was justified by Brussels policy-makers on the grounds that pulsed waves were presumed to have a more significant impact on human health than non-pulsed waves. However, in a recent study carried out on behalf of Brussels-Capital Region policy-makers, the ISSeP (the Public Service Scientific Institute of the Walloon Region) set different criteria for when radio signals should be described as pulsed or non-pulsed. The study concluded that digital radio transmissions (Digital Audio Broadcasting) and analog TV transmissions were pulsed, and that 3G technology and digital TV transmissions were non-pulsed.

This study therefore creates confusion with regard to the exact scope of application of the Brussels 3V/m standard. Furthermore, an unsubstantiated distinction might be discriminatory and disruptive to the market.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission agree that that a distinction between exposure to pulsed radiation and non-pulsed radiation can be objectively justified by scientific research showing different health effects? Can the distinction between exposure to signals from radio and TV broadcasting on the one hand and exposure to signals from mobile operators' antennas on the other hand be objectively justified by scientific research showing different health effects?

2. If so, can the Commission give a science-based definition of the radio frequency sources that should be considered as pulsed and of the sources that should be considered as non-pulsed?

3. If not, is the exclusion of the radiation emitted by radio and TV broadcasting from an exposure regulation, based on the pulsed/non-pulsed distinction, to be considered discriminatory?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 July 2012)

1. According to the Treaty, the competence of the European Union in the area of public health, including in particular the protection of the public against the possible health effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF), is limited to support the action of the Member States. To that aim, the Council adopted in 1999 a recommendation (Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC ([1])) setting limits for the exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields, including in particular those created by sound and TV broadcasting and mobile telephony. The recommendation does not make a distinction between the categories of 'pulsed' and 'non-pulsed' radiation. The task of implementing this non-binding recommendation remains with the Member States.

2. The Commission monitors regularly the state of the science in this area with the help of a Scientific Committee composed of independent experts, the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health risks (SCENIHR ([2])). The latest scientific opinion on EMF that the SCENIHR adopted in January 2009 ([3]) does not show a need to modify the exposure limits provided by Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC. Although there is some scientific evidence suggesting that pulsed EMF can affect cognitive function and sleep, further studies are needed to confirm the results and to investigate other health end-points. The Commission has requested a new update of the assessment of the potential health effects of EMF from the SCENIHR. In this context, the Commission will ask SCENIHR to include an examination of the distinction and the definition of the categories of 'pulsed' and 'non-pulsed' radiation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/electrical/files/lv/rec519_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005691/12
a la Comisión
Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D), Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D) y Andres Perello Rodriguez (S&D)
(6 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: Situación del Plan de gestión de la anguila en la Comunidad Valenciana

El 23 de diciembre de 2009 el Consejo Internacional para la Explotación del Mar (CIEM) emitió dictamen positivo sobre el Proyecto de Plan de Gestión de la Anguila para Valencia, presentado por las autoridades valencianas. La Comisión Europea analizó entonces, tanto el Plan de gestión como el dictamen del CIEM, y el 1 de octubre de 2010 aprobó la versión definitiva del mencionado Plan.

Habiendo transcurrido más de 18 meses desde el pronunciamiento de la Comisión, parece oportuno formular las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Ha recibido la Comisión alguna información o ha tomado alguna iniciativa respecto al cumplimiento por parte de las autoridades españolas del Plan de de Gestión de la Anguila para Valencia?

2. ¿Qué consideración le merece a la Comisión el hecho de que las autoridades españolas hayan colocado la anguila en la lista de las especies que se pueden pescar con caña a lo largo de determinados tramos de la costa y de los ríos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de septiembre de 2012)

El Reglamento (CE) n° 1100/2007 ([1]) dispone la obligación de los Estados miembros de elaborar un plan de gestión para cada una de las cuencas fluviales de la anguila.

Los Estados miembros tienen la obligación de informar a la Comisión acerca de la aplicación y los resultados de sus planes de gestión.

Teniendo en cuenta cada informe y el dictamen del Comité Científico, Técnico y Económico de la Pesca (CCTEP) sobre tales informes, la Comisión evaluará el grado de aplicación y la eficacia de los distintos planes de gestión y presentará un informe al Parlamento Europeo y al Consejo.

La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de ninguna lista de especies que se pueden pescar con caña a lo largo de determinados tramos de la costa y de los ríos y solicita a Su Señoría que facilite más información a este respecto.

([1]) Reglamento por el que se establecen medidas para la recuperación de la población de anguila europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005691/12
to the Commission
Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D), Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D) and Andres Perello Rodriguez (S&D)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Status of the Eel Management Plan in the Autonomous Community of Valencia

On 23 December 2009, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) gave a positive opinion on the Draft Eel Management Plan for Valencia, submitted by the Valencian authorities. The Commission then considered both the Management Plan and the ICES opinion and on 1 October 2010, it approved the definitive version of the aforementioned Plan.

As more than 18 months have elapsed since the Commission's pronouncement, it seems appropriate to ask the following questions:

1. Has the Commission received any information or taken any initiative regarding the compliance of the Spanish authorities with the Eel Management Plan for Valencia?

2. What does the Commission think of the fact that the Spanish authorities have placed the eel on the list of species that may be line-caught along certain sections of the coast and the rivers?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(14 September 2012)

Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 ([1]) foresees the obligation for Member States to prepare a management plan for each eel river basin.

Member States have the obligation to report to the Commission about the implementation and results of their management plans.

Taking into account each particular report and the advice of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) on these reports, the Commission will evaluate the degree of application and effectiveness of the different management plans and will present a report to the European Parliament and the Council

The Commission is not aware of a list of species which may be fished with a rod in some particular areas of the coast or rivers and would ask the Honourable Member to provide further information in this regard.

([1]) Establishing measures for the recovery of the stock of European eel.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005692/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(6 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σχεδιασμός 23 πυρηνικών εργοστασίων στα ανατολικά σύνορα της ΕΕ

Στο πλαίσιο του Διεθνούς Οικονομικού Φόρουμ, που διοργανώνεται αυτές της ημέρες στην Κωνσταντινούπολη (4-6 Ιουνίου), ο Τούρκος υπουργός Ενέργειας κ. Τανέρ Γιλντίζ, σε ομιλία του για ενεργειακά θέματα, ανακοίνωσε ότι «είμαστε αποφασισμένοι, θέλουμε να ικανοποιήσουμε τις ολοένα αυξανόμενες ανάγκες μας σε ηλεκτρισμό με την ανέγερση τουλάχιστον 23 πυρηνικών μονάδων έως το 2023». Μάλιστα, σύμφωνα με τις σχετικές μελέτες, ορισμένες από τις πυρηνικές αυτές μονάδες πρόκειται να κατασκευαστούν απέναντι από ελληνικά νησιά, σε μια εξαιρετικά σεισμογενή περιοχή του Αιγαίου.

Έχοντας υπόψη την απάντηση 264/11 και δεδομένου ότι πολλοί σεισμολόγοι προειδοποιούν για τη μεγάλη σεισμικότητα του υπεδάφους της περιοχής του Αιγαίου και της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου, καθώς η στατιστική των σεισμών δείχνει ότι κάθε μήνα γίνεται ένας σεισμός μεγέθους 5 Ρίχτερ και κάθε χρόνο ένας σεισμός μεγέθους 6 Ρίχτερ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή

1. Με ποιόν τρόπο προτίθεται να προειδοποιήσει την υποψήφια χώρα για τους κινδύνους του πυρηνικού της σχεδίου;

2. Πιστεύει ότι οι «αυξανόμενες» ανάγκες της Τουρκίας σε ηλεκτρισμό, θα μπορούσαν να καλυφθούν εξίσου αποτελεσματικά από εναλλακτικές μορφές ενέργειας, όπως για παράδειγμα η ηλιακή ή η αιολική;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005913/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(13 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πυρηνικά εργοστάσια στην Τουρκία

Στο πλαίσιο του Παγκόσμιου Οικονομικού Φόρουμ, που διεξάγεται στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, ο υπουργός Ενέργειας και Φυσικών Πόρων της Τουρκίας κ. Γιλντίζ, υπογράμμισε την επιθυμία της Τουρκίας για την ανέγερση τουλάχιστον 23 πυρηνικών μονάδων ως το 2023. Ο κ. Γιλτνίζ δήλωσε, μεταξύ άλλων, «αν και τα πυρηνικά εργοστάσια ενέχουν κινδύνους, … όπως το ατύχημα της Φουκοσίμα … προσφέρουν εξίσου πολλές ευκαιρίες». Επιπρόσθετα, γνωστοποιείται από τον Υπουργό ότι η Τουρκία έχει ξεκινήσει τις σχετικές διαδικασίες για την ανέγερσή τους.

Η εξέλιξη αυτή στους κόλπους της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης δημιουργεί ιδιαίτερες ανησυχίες για την ασφάλεια των πολιτών της σε μια περιοχή που παραδοσιακά είναι σεισμογενής. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει λάβει γνώση γι' αυτά τα σχεδία της Τουρκιάς, που επηρεάζουν άμεσα της γειτονικές χώρες, μελή της ΕΕ, και, έμμεσα, το σύνολο της ΕΕ;

2. Δεδομένου ότι η Τουρκία τελευταία πλήττεται από σεισμούς της τάξεως του 6,0 έως 7,2 Ρίχτερ, πως σκοπεύει να αποτρέψει τον υπαρκτό κίνδυνο να δημιουργηθεί στο μέλλον ένα νέο πυρηνικό ατύχημα στην γειτονιά της ΕΕ (π.χ. Τσερνομπίλ);

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Štefan Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Ιουλίου 2012)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των φιλοδοξιών της Τουρκίας όσον αφορά την πυρηνική ενέργεια. Τα σχέδια της Τουρκίας για την κατασκευή σταθμών πυρηνικής ενέργειας σε περιοχές γνωστές για τη σεισμική δραστηριότητά τους αποτελεί πηγή μεγάλης ανησυχίας. Η Επιτροπή ασκεί πιέσεις στην εν λόγω χώρα προκειμένου να θεσπίσει νόμο-πλαίσιο για τα πυρηνικά που να διασφαλίζει υψηλό επίπεδο πυρηνικής ασφάλειας σύμφωνα με τα πρότυπα της ΕΕ, μεταξύ άλλων, με την προσχώρησή της στην κοινή σύμβαση για την ασφάλεια διαχείρισης αναλωμένου καυσίμου και την ασφάλεια διαχείρισης ραδιενεργών αποβλήτων. Αυτή η κοινή σύμβαση ευρίσκεται στο στάδιο της τελικής έγκρισής της από το τουρκικό Κοινοβούλιο.

Ως υποψήφια χώρα, η Τουρκία είναι υποχρεωμένη να εναρμονίσει προοδευτικά τη νομοθεσία της με όλο το κεκτημένο για την πυρηνική ασφάλεια, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της οδηγίας για την πυρηνική ασφάλεια ([1]). Ταυτόχρονα, πρέπει να τονισθεί ότι η επιλογή όσον αφορά το συνδυασμό ενεργειακών πηγών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της χρήσης πυρηνικής ενέργειας, αποτελεί, καταρχήν, κυρίαρχη απόφαση κάθε χώρας. Μια τέτοια απόφαση πρέπει να βασίζεται στην ικανότητα της χώρας να εγγυάται υψηλό επίπεδο ασφάλειας, προστασίας και διασφαλίσεων κατά τη διάρκεια του πλήρους κύκλου ζωής μιας πυρηνικής εγκατάστασης, σύμφωνα με τις διεθνείς συμβάσεις και τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές. Πρόκειται για ένα θέμα που υπήρξε πάντα σημαντική παράμετρος της πολιτικής διεύρυνσης της ΕΕ.

Η Τουρκία έχει εφαρμόσει εν μέρει το κεκτημένο σχετικά με τις εκτιμήσεις περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων (ΕΠΕ). Σύμφωνα με τουρκική εθνική νομοθεσία, ΕΠΕ πρέπει να πραγματοποιείται για τα δημόσια και ιδιωτικά έργα τα οποία ενδέχεται να έχουν σημαντικές επιπτώσεις στο περιβάλλον. Η Επιτροπή είναι πεπεισμένη ότι η Τουρκία θα προβεί σε ΕΠΕ, για τους προγραμματισμένους πυρηνικούς σταθμούς παραγωγής ενέργειας και θα παρακολουθήσει το θέμα εκ του σύνεγγυς.

([1]) Οδηγία 2009/71/Ευρατόμ του Συμβουλίου, της 25ης Ιουνίου 2009, περί θεσπίσεως κοινοτικού πλαισίου για την πυρηνική ασφάλεια πυρηνικών εγκαταστάσεων, ΕΕ L 172 της 2.7.2009, σ. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005692/12
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Planning for 23 nuclear power plants on the EU's eastern borders

In the framework of the World Economic Forum organised to take place in Istanbul (4-6 June), the Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Mr Taner Gildiz announced in a speech on energy issues that 'we are resolved, and we want to satisfy our ever-growing need for electricity by building at least 23 nuclear power plants by 2023'. In fact, according to the relevant studies, some of these nuclear plants will be constructed opposite Greek islands, in an exceptionally earthquake-prone region of the Aegean.

Considering answer No 264/11 and given that many seismologists warn of the great seismicity of subterranean strata in the Aegean region and the Eastern Mediterranean, with earthquake statistics showing that there is one Richter magnitude five earthquake every month and one Richter magnitude six earthquake every year, can the Commission answer the following:

1. How does it intend to warn this EU candidate country of the dangers of its nuclear power plan?

2. Does it believe that Turkey's 'growing' need for electricity could equally be satisfied by alternative forms of energy, such as for example solar or wind energy?

Question for written answer E-005913/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(13 June 2012)

Subject: Nuclear power plants in Turkey

During the World Economic Forum held in Istanbul, Turkey's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Mr Yildiz, indicated that Turkey intended to build at least 23 nuclear power plants by 2023. Mr Yildiz stated, among other things, that 'even though nuclear power plants harbour several dangers, … such as the Fukushima accident… they offer an equal amount of opportunities'. Additionally, the Minister revealed that Turkey had set the wheels in motion for construction of the plant.

This development, which is in proximity to the European Union, raises significant concerns regarding the safety of its citizens, in an area which has a long history of seismic activity. We ask the Commission:

1. Is the Commission aware of Turkey's plans, which directly affect neighbouring EU Member States and indirectly the entire EU?

2. Considering that Turkey has recently experienced earthquakes ranging from 6.0 to 7.2 on the Richter scale, how does it intend to avert the real danger of causing a future nuclear accident like the Chernobyl disaster for example, near the EU?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2012)

The European Commission is aware of Turkey's nuclear energy ambitions. Turkey's plans to build nuclear power plants in areas known for their seismic activity are a matter of concern. The Commission has been urging Turkey to adopt a nuclear law framework which ensures a high level of nuclear safety in line with the EU standards, *inter alia* by acceding to the Joint Convention on the safety of spent fuel management and radioactive waste management. This Joint Convention is before the Turkish Parliament for final approval.

As a candidate country, Turkey is expected to progressively align its legislation with all the *acquis* on nuclear safety, including the Nuclear Safety Directive ([1]). At the same time, it has to be stressed that the choice of the energy mix, including the use of nuclear power, is in principle a sovereign decision of each country. Such a decision should be based on the country's capacity to ensure a high level of safety, security and safeguards throughout the entire lifecycle of a nuclear installation, in line with international conventions and best practices. This has always been an important parameter of the EU enlargement policy.

Turkey has partially implemented the *acquis* on Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA). Under the Turkish national legislation, an EIA has to be carried out for those public and private projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. The Commission is confident that Turkey will carry out an EIA in the case of any planned nuclear power plant and will follow the matter closely.

([1]) Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom of 25 June 2009, establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations, OJ L 172, 2.7.2009, p. 18.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005694/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Arbeitslosigkeit versus Fachkräftemangel

Die Arbeitslosenquote in den 27 Mitgliedstaaten der EU beträgt aktuell 10,3 %, die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit 22,6 %.

1. Kann die Kommission hier aktuell unterscheiden zwischen Jugendlichen, die eine Handwerk-Ausbildung absolviert haben, und jenen, die ein Hochschulstudium erfolgreich beendet haben?

2. Welche aktuellen Möglichkeiten gibt es für die Jugendlichen, die ein Handwerk gelernt haben, für eine gewisse Zeit in ein anderes europäisches Land zum Arbeiten zu gehen?

3. In Österreich besteht aktuell ein Mangel von circa 500 Facharbeitern. Wie sieht die Situation aktuell europaweit aus?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(26. Juli 2012)

Die Arbeitslosigkeit lag 2011 in den 27 Mitgliedstaaten der EU bei durchschnittlich 9,7 % ([1]), für die Altersgruppe 15-24 Jahre bei 21,3 %.

Eine Aufschlüsselung nach Bildungsniveau zeigt, dass bei Personen, die mindestens die Sekundarstufe abgeschlossen und eine nichtuniversitäre Ausbildung einschließlich Berufsbildungsmaßnahmen absolviert haben ([2]), die Arbeitslosenquote 9 % bzw. in der Altersgruppe 15-24 Jahre 18,7 % betrug. Die genannten Kategorien schließen Absolventen einer Ausbildung in Handwerk und Handel ein, eine weitere Aufschlüsselung liegt derzeit jedoch nicht vor.

Allen, die einen Arbeitsplatz in einem anderen EU-Mitgliedstaat suchen, empfiehlt die Kommission EURES, das europäische Portal zur beruflichen Mobilität ([3]). Es gibt eine spezifische Initiative, die sich an junge Menschen richtet (Dein erster EURES-Arbeitsplatz ([4])).

Daten über die Entwicklung der Arbeitskräftenachfrage in Europa, aufgeschlüsselt nach Branchen, veröffentlicht die Kommission im „Europäischen Monitor für offene Stellen“ ([5]).

In den 27 EU-Mitgliedstaaten gaben im 3. Quartal 2011 insgesamt 1 350 000 Personen an, dass sie in den vorangegangenen drei Monaten einen Arbeitsplatz in Handwerk und verwandten Handelsbrachen gefunden hatten, 1 110 000 als Techniker oder in verwandten Berufsgruppen. Diese Gruppen decken sich am ehesten mit der angesprochenen Kategorie „Facharbeiter“.

([1]) Eurostat.
([2]) ISCED 3 und 4: Internationale Standardklassifikation für das Bildungswesen.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eures/.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=993&langId=de.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=955&langId=de.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005694/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Unemployment versus shortages of specialist staff

At present, unemployment in the 27 Member States stands at 10.3%, with youth unemployment at 22.6%.

1. Can the Commission differentiate between young people who have completed training in a craft or trade and those who have graduated from university?

2. What options are currently available to young people who have learned a trade to work in a different European country for a certain period?

3. Austria currently needs about 500 specialist workers. What is the situation in Europe as a whole?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

Unemployment was 9.7% in 2011 in the EU-27 ([1]) and 21.3% for the 15-24 years of age.

A breakdown by education shows that for persons who completed at least upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education ([2]), including vocational training the unemployment rate was 9% and 18.7% for the 15-24 years of age. These categories include those having completed training in craft or trade, while no further occupational breakdown is available at the moment.

For everybody looking for a job in another EU country the Commission recommends to make use of the EURES Job Mobility portal ([3]). There is a specific initiative underway targeting young people (Your first EURES job ([4])).

Data on the development of labour demand in Europe by occupations are published by the Commission in the 'European Vacancy Monitor ([5])' .

In EU-27, in the 3rd quarter 2011 overall 1 350 000 persons indicated that they had found a job as craft and related trade workers, and 1 110 000 as technicians and associate professionals during the previous three months. These groups come closest to the requested information about 'specialist workers'.

([1]) Eurostat.
([2]) ISCED levels 3 and 4 : International Standard Classification of Education.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eures/.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=993.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=955&langId=en.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005695/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: 380-kV-Leitung in Eugendorf bei Salzburg

Jüngsten Meldungen zufolge zieht die Österreich-Niederlassung der deutschen Beschlägefirma Dorma — nach 32 Jahren — wegen der geplanten Trasse der 380-kV-Leitung des Verbunds aus Eugendorf ab. Als Grund dafür wird der Umstand angegeben, dass die Mitarbeiter nicht direkt unter dieser Leitung arbeiten wollen.

1. Ist der Kommission die Gefahr der Firmenabwanderung aufgrund der 380-kV-Leitung bekannt? (Bitte um ausführliche Begründung in der Antwort.)

2. Gibt es Abschätzungen über die möglichen Folgen allfälliger Firmenabwanderungen infolge der geplanten 380-kV-Leitung im Salzburger Land?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(10. Juli 2012)

Beim Bau neuer Hochspannungsleitungen muss die Belastung durch elektromagnetische Felder entsprechend der Empfehlung 1999/519/EG des Rates ([1]) berücksichtigt werden. Seit der Veröffentlichung dieser Empfehlung hat die Kommission vier ausführliche und unabhängige Überprüfungen der wissenschaftlichen Grundlage und die Angemessenheit der vorgeschlagenen Grenzwerte zum Schutz der Bevölkerung vor elektromagnetischen Feldern veranlasst. Am aktuellsten ist der im Januar 2009 herausgegebene Bericht des Wissenschaftlichen Ausschusses „Neu auftretende und neu identifizierte Gesundheitsrisiken“. Die Kommission plant, Ende 2012 eine neue Überprüfung in Auftrag zu geben.

Nach dem Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union, vor allem dessen Artikel 168, obliegt es in erster Linie den Mitgliedstaaten, ihre Bevölkerung vor möglichen Gesundheitsgefahren zu schützen.

Es ist daher nicht Aufgabe der Kommission, die Folgen des Baus der vom Herrn Abgeordneten genannten Stromleitung zu bewerten, und sie verfügt dazu auch über keinerlei Daten oder Schätzungen.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1999:199:0059:0070:DE:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005695/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: 380 kV power line in Eugendorf near Salzburg

According to the latest reports, the Austrian subsidiary of the German metal fittings manufacturer Dorma is moving from Eugendorf after 32 years because of the plans to route a section of the 380 kV power line through its site. The company says that its employees do not want to work directly beneath this line.

1. Is the Commission aware of the risk of business relocations because of the 380 kV power line? (Please provide detailed reasons in the answer.)

2. Have any estimates been made of the possible consequences of business relocations as a result of the planned 380 kV line in the Salzburg region?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2012)

The installation of new high voltage power lines must take into account exposures to electromagnetic fields (EMF), as proposed by Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC ([1]). Since the adoption of this Council Recommendation, the Commission has organised four exhaustive and independent reviews of the scientific basis and adequacy of the proposed EMF exposure limits for the protection of citizens. The most recent is the opinion of the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks adopted in January 2009. The Commission intends to launch a new review at the end of 2012.

It must be recalled that, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in particular its Article 168, it is primarily the Member States' responsibility to protect the populations from potential health risks.

It is therefore not the Commission role to assess the possible impact of the specific power line referred to by the Honourable Member, and it does not possess any data or estimates on this impact.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/electrical/files/lv/rec519_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005696/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Berechnung eines allfälligen EU-Austritts Österreichs?

Die EU-Gegner scheinen sich europaweit zu formieren — jüngst in Österreich mit der Gründung der „EU-Austrittspartei" (EU-aus).

Diese Partei hat sich das Ziel gesetzt, eine Volksabstimmung über den Weiterverbleib Österreichs in der Europäischen Union zu initiieren.

1. Wurde ein allfälliger Austritt Österreichs (bzw. anderer Nettozahler) bereits simuliert (bitte mit Angabe von Gründen), bzw. was würde ein solcher Austritt die österreichischen Bürger und Bürgerinnen kosten?

2. Welche Konsequenzen ergäben sich für Österreich und seine Bürger und Bürgerinnen im Detail?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juli 2012)

Die Kommission beabsichtigt nicht, die Untersuchungen durchzuführen, die zur Beantwortung der Frage der Frau Abgeordneten erforderlich wären. Die Kommission beantwortet grundsätzlich keine hypothetischen Fragen. Zudem sollten die verfügbaren Haushaltsmittel für andere, vorrangige Belange genutzt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005696/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Counting the cost of a possible Austrian exit from the European Union

Opponents of the EU seem to be mobilising all across Europe, most recently in Austria with the founding of the 'EU Exit Party' (EU-aus).

This party's objective is a referendum on Austria's continued membership in the European Union.

1. Has the possibility of an exit by Austria (or other net contributors) already been simulated (please provide the reasons) and what would such an exit cost Austria's citizens?

2. What would be the specific consequences for Austria and its citizens?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2012)

The Commission does not consider undertaking the research that the answer to the questions of the Honourable Member would imply. It is not Commission's policy to answer hypothetical questions and available resources should be used for other priorities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005697/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: USA brauchen ein starkes Europa, das wieder auf Hochtouren läuft

US-Außenministerin Hillary Rodham Clinton erklärte, dass die USA ein starkes Europa brauchen, das wieder auf Hochtouren läuft, damit sich die USA wieder vollständig von ihrem Konjunkturabschwung erholen.

Schließt sich die Kommission dieser Ansicht tendenziell an? Ist nicht vielmehr das Gegenteil der Fall? Bitte nennen Sie in Ihren Antworten konkrete Beispiele.

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(3. August 2012)

Die EU und die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika unterhalten die umfangsreichsten Wirtschaftsbeziehungen weltweit und ihre Volkswirtschaften hängen in hohem Maße voneinander ab. Der Handel und die Investitionen zwischen der EU und den USA schaffen 15 Mio. Arbeitsplätze auf beiden Seiten des Atlantiks. Die EU und die Vereinigten Staaten brauchen einander, um stark zu sein und wieder ihre volle Leistungskraft zu entfalten. In diesem Sinne vereinbarten beide Seiten auf dem letzten Gipfel vom November 2011, nach Mittel und Wegen zu suchen, um die Handels- und Investitionsbeziehungen weiter zu vertiefen und somit eine positive Wirkung auf Arbeitsplätze, Wachstum und Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zu erzielen. Zu diesem Zweck wurde eine Arbeitsgruppe auf hochrangigem Niveau für Arbeitsplätze und Beschäftigung eingesetzt.

Die derzeitige Krise in Europa ist jedoch Teil eines größeren Gesamtbildes: So hat es die Weltwirtschaft bislang nicht geschafft, die Auswirkungen der Finanzkrise von 2008 aufzufangen und zu überwinden. Gemeinsam sehen wir uns in der EU und in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika der Herausforderung gegenüber, das Vertrauen in die Finanzmärkte wieder herzustellen, die Schulden unter Kontrolle zu bringen sowie das Wachstum anzukurbeln und neue Arbeitsplätze zu schaffen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005697/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: The US needs Europe 'to be strong and operating at full speed once again'

US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has said that the United States needs Europe 'to be strong and operating at full speed once again' in order for the US to recover completely from its own economic downturn.

Is the Commission inclined to agree with this view? Is it not the case that the contrary is true? Please give specific examples in your answers.

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 August 2012)

The EU and the United States have the largest bilateral economic relationship in the world and very interdependent economies. EU-US trade and investment generates 15 million jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. The EU and the United States need each other in order to be strong and operating at full speed once again. In that spirit, at their latest Summit in November 2011, both sides agreed to look into ways and means to deepen further the trade and investment relationship with a view to maximising positive impact on jobs, growth and competitiveness, through the establishment of a High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth.

The current crisis in Europe is, however, part of a wider picture: the world economy has not yet been able to absorb and overcome the effects of the 2008 financial crisis. We face — in the EU and in the United States — the common challenge of restoring confidence in financial markets, bringing debt under control, stimulating growth and creating new jobs.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005698/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Mögliche Wechselwirkung zwischen der Arbeitslosenquote der USA und der EU

Im Mai 2012 belief sich die Arbeitslosenquote der USA auf 8,2 %, während die Arbeitslosenquote in Europa im April 2012 bei 11,0 % in der Eurozone und 10,3 % in der EU-27 lag.

Nach Auffassung der Kommission:

1. Hat die Arbeitslosenquote der USA Auswirkungen auf die Arbeitslosenquote der EU oder umgekehrt?

2. Braucht die EU nicht den US-Arbeitsmarkt, um wieder auf Kurs zu kommen und sich damit stetig von der derzeitigen dramatischen Situation zu erholen?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(27. Juli 2012)

Die Volkswirtschaften der Europäischen Union und der USA, aber auch der großen Schwellenländer, beeinflussen sich gegenseitig — und damit auch die Arbeitsmärkte. Deshalb sind auch eine globale Wirtschaftslenkung und die Abstimmung der Wirtschafts- und Beschäftigungspolitik innerhalb der G20-Länder sowie die Zusammenarbeit der internationalen Organisationen so wichtig.

Die einzelstaatlichen Arbeitsmärkte werden von der Nachfrage nach Arbeitskräften (diese steht in enger Wechselwirkung mit dem Wirtschaftswachstum) und dem entsprechenden Angebot (dies wird in erster Linie durch demografischen Entwicklungen und in geringerem Maße durch Migrationsbewegungen beeinflusst) gesteuert; eine weitere Einflussgröße ist die Arbeitsmarktpolitik. Die Tatsache, dass sich die Arbeitslosenquote in der EU und den USA in den letzten 12 Monaten in unterschiedliche Richtungen entwickelt hat (Anstieg bzw. Rückgang um jeweils einen Prozentpunkt) ist in erster Linie auf das Wachstumsgefälle zurückzuführen (der tatsächliche BIP-Zuwachs im Vergleich zum Vorjahr betrug 0,1 % bzw. 2,0 %), wobei in den USA die Arbeitslosenquote auch durch eine geringe Erwerbsbeteiligung gedrückt wird. Der schwache EU-Arbeitsmarkt führt zu einer geringeren Binnennachfrage; dies wiederum hemmt das Wirtschaftswachstum.

Daraus folgt:

1. Die Arbeitslosenquoten diesseits und jenseits des Atlantiks stehen in keiner direkten Wechselbeziehung;

2. die Wirtschaft der EU muss ihr Vertrauen in den Wiederaufschwung zurückgewinnen. Hierbei spielen die US-amerikanische Wirtschafts- und Arbeitsmarktlage nur eine untergeordnete Rolle.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005698/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Possible interdependence between the US and EU unemployment rates

In May 2012 the US unemployment rate stood at 8.2%, while in Europe the rate as at April 2012 was 11.0% within the euro area and 10.3% in the EU-27.

In the Commission's view:

1. does the US unemployment rate have an effect on the EU unemployment rate, or vice versa?

2. does the EU not need the US job market to be back on track in order to be able to recover steadily from the current dramatic situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(27 July 2012)

The economies, and thus the labour markets, of the European Union and the USA, along with the large emerging market economies, are interdependent. That is also why global economic governance and consistency between economic and employment policy within the G-20 and cooperation between international organisations are so important.

National labour markets are influenced by demand for labour (which depends largely on economic growth) and its supply (which depends mainly on demographics and to some extent on migration), along with labour market policy. The fact that the EU and the US unemployment rates have developed differently over the last 12 months (rising and falling respectively by one percentage point) mainly reflects the growth differential (real year-on-year GDP growth was 0.1% and 2.0% respectively), though the US unemployment rate was also held down by low labour participation. By hampering growth in domestic demand, the weakness of the EU labour market translates in turn into weak economic growth.

As a consequence:

1. There is no direct link between the unemployment rates on the two sides of the Atlantic;

2. The EU economy needs to regain confidence for the economy to recover. The US economic and labour market situation only plays a secondary role in this.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005699/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: EU legislation on sale of cooked and raw meat

I have been contacted by a constituent whose butcher has informed her that new EU legislation requires him to have separate areas if he wishes to sell cooked meats as well as raw meat.

This means that he now would have to take off his raw meat apron in a dedicated area, wash his hands and put on a cooked meat apron with which he would be able to cut ham. Following this, he would have to go through the entire procedure in reverse in order to serve the next customer raw meat. This means that he can now sell only packaged goods, as he cannot afford the increased cost of having a dedicated member of staff responsible for processed meat.

Can the Commission:

1. state whether the UK Government has 'gold-plated' this legislation, and outline the minimum requirements existing under EC law;

2. state what monitoring it has undertaken to assess the application of this legislation in the different Member States;

3. explain why it has introduced these requirements and whether it has assessed their impact on small butchers' shops?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(13 July 2012)

EU legislation on food hygiene ([1]) was adopted in 2004 and has been applicable since 1 January 2006.

This legislation provides that food business operators have primary responsibility for food safety. This legislation concentrates on objectives to be reached, rather than maintaining very detailed requirements. However, it clearly establishes that food business operators must apply the hygienic procedures necessary to ensure that food is safe. In particular, the operators must, at all stages of production, processing and distribution, ensure that food is protected against any contamination.

The verification of compliance of the operators with the requirements is a competence of the Member States through the appropriate official controls. That includes the verification and assessment that the objectives of the legislation are achieved.

The Commission inspection services ([2]) carry out regular audits in order to verify the performance of competent authorities of Member States and compliance with EU legislation. The outcome of those audits is publicly available ([3]).

No new EU legislation on this specific subject has been introduced since the adoption of the EU food hygiene Regulations in 2004.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs (OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 1), Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin (OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 55) and Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption (OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 206).

([2]) Directorate-General for Health and Consumers' Food and Veterinary Office.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/what_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005700/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Palm stearin

A constituent has contacted me regarding the Commission's response to my Question E-009569/2011 on palm stearin. The Commission replied that due to growing global demand for agricultural commodities there is a risk that part of the demand for biofuels will be met through an increase in the amount of land devoted to agriculture worldwide.

However, my constituent suggests that where crops are able to produce by-products and co-products, such as palm stearin and palm biomass from the oil palm plant, there could be clear benefits without increasing land use.

Further to this, can the Commission confirm:

1. whether it is aware that the oil palm is the world's most efficient oil crop, with only 0.26 hectares of land planted with oil palms being required to produce one tonne of oil, while soybean, sunflower and rapeseed require 2.22, 2.0 and 1.52 hectares respectively, to produce the same amount;

2. whether it is aware that a wide range of products can be derived from the oil palm, including palm oil (used in different foods), as well as large quantities of biomass such as palm lumber, fronds and empty fruit bunches containing some 3.5 times the energy value of palm oil alone;

3. whether it believes that, in the light of the EU 2020 greenhouse gas reduction targets, the EU should be doing more to promote fuels that produce the best value in terms of oil on a per hectare basis and can serve both food and fuel needs?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 2012)

The Commission is aware that palm oil is an efficient crop to produce not only vegetable oils, but also a range of by-products mentioned by the Honourable Member. Under the current sustainability criteria the greenhouse gas emissions from producing biofuels include emissions related to cultivation. If higher yields are obtained while keeping the levels of inputs constant, the greenhouse gas reduction perfomance increases. In this way the sustainability criteria already provides incentives for those biofuel crops that are the most productive.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005701/12
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE) en Johannes Cornelis van Baalen (ALDE)
(6 juni 2012)

Betreft: Bedrijfskapingen in Oekraine

In het journalistieke onderzoeksprogramma Brandpunt, wekelijks uitgezonden op de Nederlandse televisie, werd op 3 juni jl. een schokkende reportage gebracht over bedrijfsovernames in Oekraine. Een lokale organisatie in Oekraine maakt melding van 1 300 dergelijke kapingen van bedrijven, waarbij het inzetten van knokploegen niet ongebruikelijk is. Eigendomsbewijzen worden via een corrupte rechterlijke macht afgegeven, waarna bedrijven, desnoods met geweld, worden overgenomen. De Nederlandse ondernemer Dhr. van Munster, voormalig eigenaar van een succesvolle chocoladefabriek in Oekraine, overkwam dit en vertelt hierover in de Brandpunt reportage. De Amerikaanse ambassade in Kiev waarschuwt Amerikaanse ondernemers voor deze praktijken.

1. Beschikt de Commissie over cijfers over de frequentie van dergelijke bedrijfskapingen, specifiek ook als het om Europese ondernemers gaat?

2. Voert de Commissie een gestructureerde dialoog met de Oekrainse autoriteiten om het probleem van bedrijfskapingen aan te pakken?

3. Bevatten de onlangs geïnitieerde associatie-en vrijhandelsverdragen met Oekraine specifieke maatregelen om bedrijfskapingen in de toekomst te voorkomen?

4. Wat zijn de concrete plannen van de Commissie op de korte termijn om bedrijfskapingen te voorkomen?

5. Is de Commissie voornemens actief voor de belangen van EU-bedrijven op te komen die nu en in het verleden slachtoffer zijn geworden van dit soort illegale overnames?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(6 augustus 2012)

De Commissie werd ingelicht over de vermeende wijdverbreide bedrijfskapingen. Als blijkt dat dit waar is, zijn er extra redenen om bezorgd te zijn over de rechtsstaat in Oekraïne.

Het recente akkoord over diepe en brede vrijhandelsruimte (DCFTA), die integraal deel uitmaakt van de associatieovereenkomst van Oekraïne met de EU, bevat geen specifieke bepalingen over bedrijfskapingen. Terwijl klassieke vrijhandelsovereenkomsten alleen belemmeringen aan de grenzen aanpakken, heeft de recent bereikte overeenkomst een veel bredere toepassingssfeer. Binnen de vrijhandelsruimte zullen niet alleen de douanerechten worden afgeschaft, maar zullen ook duidelijke regels gelden inzake bestuur op belangrijke gebieden als concurrentie, overheidsopdrachten, diensten en investeringen. De diepe en brede vrijhandelsruimte zal dus in grote mate bijdragen aan een transparant en voorspelbaar handels- en investeringsklimaat in Oekraïne.

Op dit ogenblik is er geen structurele dialoog gepland met de Oekraïense overheid over het probleem van de bedrijfskapingen. Er bestaan wel andere mechanismen om deze problemen aan te pakken. De Commissie zal de kwestie met name aanhalen tijdens de volgende vergadering van de subcommissie justitie, vrijheid en veiligheid, waarin ook een dialoog over mensenrechten wordt gevoerd en die één keer per jaar vergadert.

Daarnaast bevat het actieplan over visumliberalisatie dat in november 2010 werd goedgekeurd, specifieke ijkpunten over het voorkomen en bestrijden van corruptie, zodat dit probleem ook in dat kader kan worden aangepakt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005701/12
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE) and Johannes Cornelis van Baalen (ALDE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Company hijackings in Ukraine

Brandpunt, the investigative journalism programme broadcast weekly on Dutch television, aired a shocking report on 3 June 2012 about company takeovers in Ukraine. A local organisation in Ukraine reports 1 300 such hijackings, in which the deployment of gauges of thugs is not unusual. Title deeds are issued through a corrupt legal authority, after which companies are taken over, with violence if necessary. Dutch entrepreneur Mr van Munster, former owner of a successful chocolate factory in Ukraine, experienced this and talks about it in the *Brandpunt* programme. The American Embassy in Kiev has warned American entrepreneurs about these practices.

1. Does the Commission have access to figures on the frequency of such company hijackings, specifically in relation to European entrepreneurs?

2. Is the Commission conducting a structured dialogue with the Ukrainian authorities to deal with the problem of company hijackings?

3. Do the recently initiated association and free-trade agreements with Ukraine include specific measures to prevent company hijackings in the future?

4. What are the Commission's concrete plans in the short term to prevent company hijackings?

5. Does the Commission intend to actively defend the interests of EU companies which have fallen victim to this type of illegal takeover now and in the past?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2012)

The Commission has been informed about the issue of alleged widespread company hijacking, which if substantiated would be cause for additional concerns about the rule of law in Ukraine.

The recently negotiated Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), which is an integral part of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, does not include specific provisions on hijackings of companies. However, whereas classic free trade agreements only tackle obstacles at the borders, the recently negotiated DCFTA will have a much broader scope. In addition to the elimination of customs duties, the DCFTA will contain clear rules of governance in key areas such as competition, public procurement, services and investment. Therefore, the DCFTA will substantially contribute to the creation of a transparent and predictable trade and investment environment in Ukraine.

There is currently no structured dialogue foreseen with the Ukraine authorities to deal with the problem of company hijacking. However, there are other mechanisms already in place that allow for such concerns to be addressed. In particular, the Commission will raise the issue at the next Justice Liberty and Security Sub Committee Meeting, which includes a Human Rights Dialogue and which meets once a year.

Furthermore, the action plan on Visa Liberalisation of November 2010 contains specific benchmarks on *inter alia* preventing and fighting corruption and this issue could also be addressed there.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-005702/12
an die Kommission
Peter Simon (S&D)
(6. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Maßnahmen zur Lärmreduzierung im Güterverkehr

Aufgrund der zunehmenden Verlagerung des Güterverkehrs in Europa auf die Schiene hat auch der Schienenverkehrslärm in den vergangenen Jahren stetig zugenommen. Schwerwiegende gesundheitliche Schäden für den Menschen wie auch gravierende volkswirtschaftliche Einbußen können die Folgen sein.

Eine Reduzierung des Güterverkehrslärms könnte durch die Ausweitung des Geltungsbereichs der technischen Spezifikation für die Interoperabilität (TSI) „Lärm" auf alle vorhandenen Güterwagen erreicht werden. Dies würde eine Umrüstung der Bremsen aller in Europa verkehrenden Güterwagen auf „K-Sohle" oder „LL-Sohle" bedeuten und hätte eine Reduzierung des Lärms um etwa 10 Dezibel zur Folge, was vom menschlichen Gehör als Halbierung des Lärms wahrgenommen wird. Gerade beim grenzüberschreitenden Güterverkehr müssen einheitliche Standards für Europa gelten, denn die lärmbetroffene Bevölkerung verdient überall den gleichen Schutz.

Im Verhältnis zu den Mehrkosten, die für den lärmoptimierten Ausbau einzelner Trassenabschnitte in ganz Europa anfallen, ist dies eine wirtschaftlich sehr günstige Lösung.

Kann die Kommission vor diesem Hintergrund folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Beabsichtigt sie, den Geltungsbereich der technischen Spezifikation für die Interoperabilität (TSI) „Lärm" auch auf vorhandene Güterwagen auszudehnen?

2. Wenn nein, aus welchem Grund?

3. Welche sonstigen Maßnahmen zur Lärmreduzierung im Eisenbahnsektor will die Kommission in Bezug auf die Technik an Fahrzeugen und in Bezug auf die Trassengestaltung bestehender Schienenwege ergreifen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(2. Juli 2012)

Die Kommission ist sich des Problems des Schienenverkehrslärms und der erheblichen negativen Auswirkungen, die dieser auf die am stärksten Betroffenen haben kann, bewusst. Die Zunahme des Schienengüterverkehrs, hat, obschon sie dieses Problem verschärft, in Hinblick auf Umwelt und Sicherheit trotz allem deutlich positive Effekte für das allgemeine Verkehrssystem.

1. Die Kommission beabsichtigt derzeit nicht, den Geltungsbereich der technischen Spezifikation für die Interoperabilität (TSI) „Lärm" ([1]) auf vorhandene Wagen auszudehnen. Es muss aber betont werden, dass die Richtlinie 2008/57/EG ([2]) den Mitgliedstaaten bereits die Möglichkeit gibt, unter bestimmten Bedingungen auf vorhandene Fahrzeuge Lärmgrenzen anzuwenden, die in der Interoperabilität (TSI) „Lärm" definiert sind. Artikel 20 der Richtlinie, der sich auf die Erneuerung und Umrüstung vorhandener Teilsysteme bezieht, legt fest, dass bei einer erforderlichen neuen Inbetriebnahmegenehmigung der Mitgliedstaat entscheidet, inwieweit die TSI auf das Vorhaben anzuwenden ist.

2. Es wurden wichtige Vorschläge für Rechtsakte angenommen, die zur Reduzierung des Schienenverkehrslärms beitragen könnten:

— ein Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie zur Schaffung eines einheitlichen europäischen Eisenbahnraums (KOM(2010) 475), in welchem die Kommission empfiehlt, dass die Differenzierung der Wegeentgelte nach Lärm auf eine verbindlichen Grundlage gestellt wird;

([1]) 2011/229/EU: Beschluss der Kommission vom 4. April 2011 über die Technische Spezifikation für die Interoperabilität (TSI) zum Teilsystem „Fahrzeuge — Lärm" des konventionellen transeuropäischen Bahnsystems (Bekannt gegeben unter Aktenzeichen K(2011) 658), ABl. L 99 vom 13.4.2011, S. 1-39.

([2]) Richtlinie 2008/57/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 17. Juni 2008 über die Interoperabilität des Eisenbahnsystems in der Gemeinschaft (Neufassung), ABl. L 191 vom 18.7.2008, S. 1.

— ein Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Schaffung der Fazilität „Connecting Europe“ (KOM(2011)665/3), der für Verkehrsprojekte 31,7 Mrd. EUR vorsieht und damit eine EU-Kofinanzierung für die Nachrüstung vorhandener Güterwagen mit geräuscharmen Bremsklötzen ermöglichen würde.

3. Die Kommission ist der Ansicht, dass es möglicherweise andere, geeignetere Rechtsinstrumente gibt, die die Nachrüstung vorhandener Wagen mit geräuscharmen Bremsklötzen sicherstellen könnten. Sie plant, 2012 eine gezielte Studie zur Untersuchung dieser Frage in Auftrag zu geben.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005702/12
to the Commission
Peter Simon (S&D)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Measures to reduce noise from freight traffic

The increasing transfer of freight traffic in Europe to the railways has resulted in a steady rise in rail traffic noise in recent years. This can seriously impact human health, as well as result in major economic losses.

It would be possible to reduce the noise from freight traffic by extending the scope of the technical specification for interoperability (TSI) for 'noise' to cover all existing freight rolling stock. This would mean converting the brakes of all freight rolling stock in use in Europe to 'composite' or 'low-low' brake pads, reducing noise by about 10 decibels, which is perceived by the human ear as a 50% reduction in noise levels. It is particularly important to apply uniform standards to cross-border freight traffic in Europe because people affected by noise deserve the same level of protection wherever they may be.

Compared with the additional costs associated with noise abatement measures for individual railway lines throughout Europe, this is a very economical solution.

In view of this, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it intend to extend the scope of the TSI for 'noise' to cover existing freight rolling stock?

2. If not, why not?

3. What other noise abatement measures does the Commission intend to take in the railway sector in relation to the technology used in rolling stock and the design of existing railway lines?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

The Commission is fully aware of the rail noise issue, and recognises the considerable negative impact it can have on the individuals most affected. The increase in rail freight traffic, while contributing to the problem, has, nonetheless, a substantial positive environmental and safety impact for the general transport system.

1. For the time being the Commission does not plan to extend the scope of the TSI Noise ([1]) to cover existing wagons. It must be stressed, however, that directive 2008/57/EC ([2]) already gives the Member States the possibility, under certain conditions, to apply noise limits specified in the TSI Noise to existing rolling stock. Article 20 of this directive relating to renewal and upgrade of existing subsystems states that if a new authorisation for placing into service is needed, the Member State shall decide to what extent the TSI needs to be applied to the project.

2. Important legislative initiatives have been adopted which would help to reduce railway noise:

— a proposal for a directive establishing a single European railway area (COM(2010) 475), in which the Commission proposes that the differentiation of infrastructure charges in relation to noise be applicable on a mandatory basis;

— a proposal for a regulation of the EP and Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility (COM(2011) 665/3) with EUR 31.7 billion earmarked for transport projects, which would make it possible for the EU to co-fund the retrofitting of existing freight wagons with silent brake blocks.

3. The Commission is of the opinion that there may be other, more appropriate, legal instruments which would allow the retrofitting of existing wagons with low-noise brake blocks to be achieved. The Commission is planning to launch IN 2012 a dedicated study to analyse this issue.

([1]) 2011/229/EU: Commission decision of 4 April 2011 concerning the technical specifications of interoperability relating to the subsystem 'rolling stock — noise' of the trans-European conventional rail system (notified under document C(2011) 658) , OJ L 99, 13.4.2011, p. 1-39.

([2]) Directive 2008/57/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 on the interoperability of the rail system within the Community (Recast), OJ L 191, 18.7.2008, p. 1-45.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005706/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Barry Madlener (NI)
(6 juni 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Moslims onthoofden Christen in Tunesië

1. Is de Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger bekend met het bericht „Muslims slaughter convert to Christianity in Tunesia" ([1])?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger deze gruwelijke daad in het licht van de door haar zelf zo bewierookte „Arabische Lente" ([2])?

3. Is de Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger bereid om onmiddellijk te stoppen met het verstrekken van miljoenen euro's aan Tunesië gezien de huidige situatie in dat land? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Welke actie gaat de Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger ondernemen om er voor te zorgen dat Christenen, vrouwen, homoseksuelen, bekeerlingen, andersdenkenden, etc. een menswaardig bestaan kunnen leiden in Tunesië?

5. Wanneer is de Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger bereid om afstand te nemen van de term „Arabische Lente", of eerder te spreken van een barre „Arabische Winter"?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(27 juli 2012)

De EU volgt de ontwikkelingen in Tunesië op de voet, met name wat de eerbiediging van de vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging betreft.

Zij veroordeelt alle daden van geweld jegens personen, ongeacht hun herkomst en overtuiging, geslacht of seksuele geaardheid, alsook alle beperkingen op fundamentele mensenrechten.

Zij constateert dat Tunesië bij de overgang naar de democratie aanzienlijke vooruitgang heeft geboekt inzake de eerbiediging van de grondrechten en de rechtsstaat. Zij erkent dat een overgangsproces altijd complex en fragiel is.

Om die reden is de EU vastbesloten om Tunesië te steunen bij dit democratische overgangsproces, zodat de wens van het Tunesische volk, die tijdens de revolutie tot uiting is gekomen, inzake een op vrijheid, gerechtigheid en waardigheid gestoelde samenleving, kan worden gerealiseerd.

([1]) http://www.raymondibrahim.com/11798/graphic-video-tunisian-muslims-slaughter-convert.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/918.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005706/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Barry Madlener (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Muslims behead Christian in Tunisia

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative familiar with the report 'Muslims slaughter convert to Christianity in Tunisia'? ([1])

2. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's view of this gruesome act in the light of the 'Arab Spring', which she herself praised? ([2])

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to immediately stop sending millions of euros to Tunisia given the current situation in that country? If not, why not?

4. What action will the Vice-President/High Representative undertake to ensure that Christians, women, homosexuals, converts, dissenters, etc. can lead a decent life in Tunisia?

5. When is the Vice-President/ High Representative prepared to distance herself from the term 'Arab Spring', or to rather call it a biting 'Arab Winter'?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(27 July 2012)

The EU is following developments in Tunisia very closely in particular as regards respect for freedom of religion and belief.

It condemns any act of violence directed towards people regardless of their origins and beliefs, gender or sexual orientation as well as any restrictions on fundmental human rights.

It notes the considerable progress that Tunisia has made in the transition towards democracy based on respect for fundamental rights and the rule of law. It recognises that any transition process is complex and fragile.

For this reason the EU is determined to support Tunisia during this democratic transition process in order that the hopes of the Tunisian people expressed during the Revolution for a society based on respect for freedom, justice and dignity can be realised.

([1]) http://www.raymondibrahim.com/11798/graphic-video-tunisian-muslims-slaughter-convert.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/918.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005707/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 juni 2012)

Betreft: Dierentuinrichtlijn

Ik dank de heer Potocnik voor zijn antwoord op mijn vragen over de dierentuinrichtlijn. (25.5.2012).

Naar aanleiding van dit antwoord heb ik drie aanvullende vragen.

In het antwoord van de heer Potocnik stelt hij dat de Commissie zich bezig houdt met „(de) opleiding voor overheidsambtenaren en betrokken beroepsbeoefenaars, met name dierenartsen en bestuurders van dierentuinen, alsook leden van niet-gouvernementele organisaties die werkzaam zijn op dit gebied".

1. Op welke wijze houdt de Commissie zich bezig met de opleiding van deze mensen?

2. Op welke grond berust deze bemoeienis van de Commissie?

3. Waar komt de financiering vandaan voor deze bemoeienis van de Commissie met de opleiding(en)?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(17 juli 2012)

De Commissie heeft actief deelgenomen aan een reeks regionale workshops over dierenwelzijn, georganiseerd door de lidstaten, met de steun van de Federatie van dierenartsen in Europa (FVE), in Boedapest, Barcelona en Riga in de periode 2011-2012. Tijdens deze workshops hebben meer dan 400 vakmensen uit 20 lidstaten (hoofdzakelijk dierenartsen) specifieke sessies voor verschillende soorten bijgewoond (pluimvee, runderen, varkens en dieren in gevangenschap) en konden zij gebruikmaken van de expertise van deskundigen.

Met dit initiatief wil de Commissie de kennis vergroten van de huidige specifieke EU-wetgeving en dierenartsen ertoe aanzetten om bij de beoordeling van de gezondheid en het welzijn van dieren die zij verzorgen ook welzijnsindicatoren op te nemen.

Het initiatief is opgenomen in het financieringsbesluit voor 2011 van activiteiten op veterinair gebied ([1]).

([1]) Uitvoeringsbesluit van de Commissie van 1 juli 2011 betreffende de financiering voor 2011 van activiteiten op veterinair gebied in verband met het voorlichtingsbeleid van de Europese Unie, de ondersteuning van internationale organisaties, de melding van ziekten en de informatisering van de veterinaire procedures.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005707/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Zoo Directive

I thank Mr Poto for his answer to my questions on the Zoo Directive (25 May 2012).

Further to his response, I have three follow-up questions.

Mr Poto states in his answer that the Commission is engaged in 'training for government officials and relevant practitioners, particularly veterinarians and managers of zoological gardens as well as members of non-governmental organisations operating in the field'.

1. How is the Commission engaged in the training of these people?

2. What is the reason for the Commission's involvement?

3. What is the source of the funding for the Commission's involvement in this training?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 July 2012)

The Commission engaged in a series of regional workshops on animal welfare organised by Member States with the support of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) in Budapest, Barcelona, and Riga during 2011-2012. In these workshops, more than 400 professionals from 20 Member States (mostly veterinarians) attended specific sessions for different species (poultry, cattle, pigs, and animals in captivity) and were able to benefit from the knowledge of experts.

Through this initiative, the Commission seeks to increase knowledge of current EU specific legislation and engage veterinary practitioners to include welfare indicators when assessing the health and welfare status of animals in their care.

The initiative was included in the financing Decision for 2011 of activities in the veterinary field ([1]).

([1]) Commission Implementing Decision of 1 July 2011 concerning the financing for the year 2011 of activities in the veterinary field related to European Union's information policy, support of international organisations, diseases notification and computerisation of veterinary procedures, OJ C 193, 2.7.2011.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005708/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(6. juni 2012)

Om: Short selling på aktiemarkedet

De meget store kursbevægelser på de europæiske aktiemarkeder under den usikkerhed, som bl.a. er en følge af den europæiske gældskrise, ses at blive forstærket af adgangen til at sælge aktier til senere levering, såkaldt short selling. Medens det synes naturligt at afhænde egne aktier med aftalt senere levering, er det mere problematisk at der foretages store, spekulative salg til senere levering på basis af lånte aktier. Aktører på aktiemarkedet kan således ved salg af store mængder aktier, de ikke ejer, fremkalde en negativ kursudvikling, som ikke har basis i den økonomiske situation i den virksomhed, hvis aktier »shortes« men alene tjener til at skaffe sælgeren en spekulativ fortjeneste. Store, kunstigt fremkaldte bevægelser i en række større virksomheders aktiekurs destabiliserer markedet og er medvirkende til at forøge den krisestemning, som er fremherskende i europæisk økonomi.

Følgevirkningerne for verdensøkonomien af spekulative dispositioner såvel på aktiemarkedet som på råvare- og valutamarkedet er altovervejende negative.

Vil Kommissionen på denne baggrund redegøre for, hvilke ændringer af den europæiske finansmarkedsregulering den påtænker?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Michel Barnier
(23. juli 2012)

Kommissionen er klar over, at spekulative transaktioner kan få negative indvirkninger på realøkonomien, og har hurtigt truffet konkrete foranstaltninger til at forbedre gennemsigtigheden og effektiviteten på markederne for short selling og credit default swaps (CDS) ved hjælp af sit forslag til en forordning om short selling og visse aspekter af credit default swaps (CDS). Forordningen blev vedtaget af Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet den 14. marts 2012 og træder i kraft den 1. november 2012. Kommissionen har færdiggjort de delegerede ([1]) og gennemførelsesmæssige ([2]) forordninger om short selling på grundlag af udkast til tekniske standarder og teknisk rådgivning fra Den Europæiske Værdipapir- og Markedstilsynsmyndighed (ESMA). Forudsat at Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet ikke har gjort indsigelse inden for fristen på tre måneder, offentliggøres den delegerede forordning dernæst i Den Europæiske Unions Tidende. Forordningen finder anvendelse fra den 1. november 2012.

Forordningen omfatter en række foranstaltninger og tager sigte på at forbedre gennemsigtigheden, begrænse visse risici i forbindelse med short selling, navnlig udækket short selling og udækkede CDS relateret til statsobligationer, og sikre en fælles reguleringstilgang i alle medlemsstaterne. Der bør indføres et krav om meddelelse til den relevante myndighed om betydelige korte positioner relateret til statsobligationer i Unionen. Udækket short selling af statsobligationer begrænses ved hjælp af et krav om en lokaliseringsregel, ifølge hvilken en tredjepart bekræfter, at investor kan have en rimelig forventning om, at den givne short selling kan dækkes ved levering af statsobligationerne til køber som krævet. Forordningen forbyder også fysiske og juridiske personer at indgå udækkede CDS i statsobligationer. Bestemmelserne om gennemsigtighed og fritagelser finder anvendelse på personer, uanset om de er bosiddende eller etableret i eller uden for EU.

([1]) C2012/4362 og C2012/4338 af 29.6.2012.
([2]) C2012/4530 og C2012/4529 af 5.7.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005708/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: Short selling on the share market

The considerable price fluctuations on European share markets due to the instability partly caused by the financial crisis in Europe, seem to be exacerbated by the capacity to sell shares for later delivery, so-called short selling. Whilst it seems natural for an individual to sell their shares and agree on later delivery, speculation involving the sale of large amounts of loaned shares for later delivery is more problematic. It enables share market actors to cause a negative price trend by selling large numbers of shares that they do not own. This trend has no basis in the economic situation of the company: if the shares are 'shorted', this simply serves the seller seeking speculative earnings. Large and artificially created fluctuations in several large companies' share prices destabilise the market and increase the feeling of crisis which prevails in the European economy.

The consequences for the global economy of speculative transactions, both on the share market and on the commodities and currency markets, are overwhelmingly negative.

What regulation changes is the Commission contemplating for European financial markets?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2012)

The Commission is aware of potentially negative impacts of speculative transactions on the real economy and has taken concrete and rapid steps to enhance the transparency and functioning of short selling and credit default swaps (CDS) markets through its proposal for a regulation on short selling and certain aspects of CDS. This regulation was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 14 March 2012 and will enter into application on 1 November 2012. The Commission has finalised the delegated ([1]) and implementing ([2]) regulations on short selling, in light of the draft technical standards and technical advice submitted by the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA). Provided that the three months objection period for the co-legislators expires without any objection being raised, the Delegated Regulation will then be published in the Official Journal of the EU. It will apply from 1 November 2012.

The regulation comprises a number of measures and aims to enhance transparency, reduce certain risks associated with short selling, in particular uncovered short selling and uncovered CDS in relation to sovereign debt, and ensure a common regulatory approach across Member States. Significant short positions in EU sovereign debt will need to be notified to the relevant competent authority. Naked short selling of sovereign debt is restricted through a requirement for a locate rule that requires that a third party confirms that it is reasonable for the investor to expect to be able to cover their short sale by delivering the debt to the buyer as required. The regulation also prohibits natural or legal persons from entering into uncovered CDS in sovereign debt. The transparency provisions and exemptions apply to persons whether resident or established in or outside the European Union.

([1]) C2012/4362 and C2012/4338 of 29.6.2012.
([2]) C2012/4530 and C2012/4529 of 5.7.2012.

PRENUMERATIONSPRISER 2013 (exkl. moms, inkl. frakt och porto)

Europeiska unionens officiella tidning, L- och C-serierna, endast pappersversion	22 officiella EU-språk	1 300 euro per år
Europeiska unionens officiella tidning, L- och C-serierna, pappersversion + årsutgåva på dvd	22 officiella EU-språk	1 420 euro per år
Europeiska unionens officiella tidning, L-serien, endast pappersversion	22 officiella EU-språk	910 euro per år
Europeiska unionens officiella tidning, L- och C-serierna, månatlig (kumulativ) utgåva på dvd	22 officiella EU-språk	100 euro per år
Tillägg till *Europeiska unionens officiella tidning* (S-serien), meddelanden och offentliga kontrakt, dvd, 1 nummer per vecka	flerspråkig: 23 officiella EU-språk	200 euro per år
Europeiska unionens officiella tidning, C-serien – allmänna uttagningsprov	Antal språk beroende på uttagningsprov	50 euro per år

Europeiska unionens officiella tidning (EUT) ges ut på EU:s officiella språk, och det går att prenumerera på den i 22 olika språkversioner. Den består av två serier: L (lagstiftning) och C (meddelanden och upplysningar).

Varje språkversion kräver en separat prenumeration.

Enligt rådets förordning (EG) nr 920/2005 som offentliggjordes i EUT L 156 av den 18 juni 2005 är Europeiska unionens institutioner under en övergångsperiod inte skyldiga att avfatta och offentliggöra alla rättsakter på iriska. Den iriska utgåvan av EUT säljs därför separat.

En prenumeration på tillägget till EUT (S-serien: meddelanden och offentliga kontrakt) omfattar en flerspråkig dvd med alla de 23 officiella språkversionerna.

Prenumeranter på EUT kan på begäran få de olika bilagorna till tidningen. När en bilaga ges ut meddelas prenumeranterna detta genom ett ”meddelande till läsarna” i *Europeiska unionens officiella tidning*.

Försäljning och prenumeration

Prenumerationer på olika tidskrifter, såsom *Europeiska unionens officiella tidning*, kan beställas från någon av våra kommersiella distributörer. En lista över dessa finns på följande internetadress:

http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_sv.htm

Via EUR-Lex (http://eur-lex.europa.eu) har du kostnadsfritt direkt tillgång till Europeiska unionens lagstiftning. På webbplatsen kan du söka i *Europeiska unionens officiella tidning* samt i fördrag, lagstiftning, rättspraxis och förberedande rättsakter.

Mer information om Europeiska unionen finns på http://europa.eu

Europeiska unionens publikationsbyrå
2985 Luxemburg
LUXEMBURG

SV