IV

(Informacje)

INFORMACJE INSTYTUCJI, ORGANÓW I JEDNOSTEK ORGANIZACYJNYCH UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ

PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI

PYTANIA PISEMNE Z ODPOWIEDZIĄ

Pytania pisemne skierowane przez posłów do Parlamentu Europejskiego i odpowiedzi na te pytania udzielone przez instytucję Unii Europejskiej

(2013/C 75 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000411/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Rechazo a pagar facturas por motivos lingüísticos

El pasado jueves 12 de enero trascendió la noticia ([1]) de que IB3, la televisión pública de la comunidad autónoma de las Illes Balears, solo admite facturas de sus colaboradores si estas se encuentran escritas en lengua castellana.

Esta actitud es impropia de una administración pública, ya que el artículo 4 del Estatuto de Autonomía de las Illes Balears especifica claramente que «la lengua catalana, propia de las Illes Balears, tendrá, junto con la castellana, el carácter de idioma oficial».

Asimismo según el artículo 2 del Tratado de Lisboa, en el cual se pone de relieve cuáles son los fundamentos de la Unión, el respeto al Estado de Derecho y la protección de los derechos de las minorías son nombrados como valores fundamentales.

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que la actitud de la televisión pública de las Islas Baleares es consistente con el artículo 2 del TUE?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que se incurre en un caso de discriminación por motivos de lengua?

Respuesta de la Sra Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de febrero de 2012)

La Comisión desea recordar que, de conformidad con el artículo 51, apartado 1, de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE, las disposiciones de dicho instrumento solo se dirigen a los Estados miembros cuando aplican el Derecho de la UE. Ahora bien, las políticas lingüísticas nacionales no se rigen por el Derecho de la UE sino que, en virtud de lo dispuesto en el Tratado, son competencia de los Estados miembros, bajo cuya única responsabilidad permanecen en consonancia con las obligaciones que les impone el Derecho nacional e internacional. Por lo que respecta a la discriminación por motivos lingüísticos, es preciso indicar que ese criterio no figura entre los recogidos por la legislación antidiscriminatoria de la UE ([2]). Según la información aportada por Su Señoría, no puede decirse que la actuación del Estado miembro en cuestión se haya producido con ocasión de la aplicación del Derecho de la Unión, por lo que la Comisión no puede pronunciarse al respecto.

([1]) http://www.ara.cat/comunicacio/Factures-castella-segons-Diario-Mallorca_0_626937385.html
([2]) Directiva 2000/43/CE del Consejo, de 29 de junio de 2000, relativa a la aplicación del principio de igualdad de trato de las personas independientemente de su origen racial o étnico, DO L 180 de 19.7.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000411/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Refusal to pay invoices for linguistic reasons

On Thursday, 12 January 2012 it was reported ([1]) that IB3, the public television station of the autonomous community of the Balearic Islands will only accept invoices from its contractors if they are written in Spanish.

This attitude is improper for a public administration, as Article 4 of the Statute of Autonomy of the Balearic Islands clearly states that 'the Catalan language, proper to the Balearic Islands, will have, together with Spanish, the character of official language'.

At the same time, Article 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon, which outlines the fundamental principles of the Union, enshrines respect for the rule of law and the protection of minority rights as fundamental values.

In light of the above,

1. Does the Commission believe that the attitude of the public television station of the Balearic Islands is consistent with Article 2 of the EU Treaty?

2. Does the Commission believe that this represents discrimination on grounds of language?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

The Commission recalls that according to Article 51(1) of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, its provisions are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing EC law. National language policies, however, are not regulated by EU law. They remain, under the Treaty, within the jurisdiction of each Member State and under their sole responsibility, in accordance with their obligations under national and international law. As regards discrimination on the ground of language, language as such is not a criterion for which discrimination is prohibited under EU's anti-discrimination legislation ([2]). On the basis of the information provided by the Honorouble Member, it does not appear that in the matter referred to the Member State concerned did act in the course of implemention of Union law. The Commission is therefore not in a position to comment on this issue.

([1]) http://www.ara.cat/comunicacio/Factures-castella-segons-Diario-Mallorca_0_626937385.html
([2]) Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, OJ L 180, 19.7.2000.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000412/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Discriminación laboral por motivos lingüísticos

El pasado 12 de enero apareció en la prensa catalana una carta al director en la que un chico denunciaba haber sido despedido por motivos puramente lingüísticos. En concreto, explicaba que el hecho había ocurrido después de haber discutido con un guarda de seguridad sobre el uso del catalán y el castellano en el lugar de trabajo.

Cabe señalar que el Estatuto de Autonomía de Cataluña, aprobado en el año 2006, y que tiene rango de ley orgánica, en su artículo 32 dice que: «Todas las personas tienen derecho a no ser discriminadas por motivos lingüísticos». Asimismo, según el artículo 2 del Tratado de Lisboa, en el cual se ponen de relieve cuales son los fundamentos de la Unión, el respeto al Estado de Derecho, así como la protección de los derechos de las minorías son nombrados como valores fundamentales. También en su artículo 10 se manifiesta que la Unión luchará contra cualquier discriminación por motivos de convicciones personales.

Por otro lado, el artículo 4 explicita que la Comisión tiene competencias compartidas en el campo de la cohesión y de la política social, y por lo tanto se entiende que tiene capacidad para proponer o sugerir a los Estados miembros acabar con malas prácticas como la antes citada.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que es lícito el despido de un ciudadano europeo de su lugar de trabajo debido a sus convicciones personales?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que un ciudadano europeo puede ser discriminado laboralmente debido a su elección lingüística si esta se encuentra reconocida por las leyes relevantes al caso?

3. ¿Consideraría la Comisión proponer una modificación del marco legal establecido con el objeto de evitar situaciones como las nombradas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de marzo de 2012)

Las políticas lingüísticas nacionales no están reguladas por la legislación de la UE, sino que son competencia de cada Estado miembro, de acuerdo con sus obligaciones en virtud del Derecho nacional e internacional. Con excepción de la legislación relativa a la lucha contra la discriminación sobre la base de la nacionalidad en el ámbito de la libre circulación de los trabajadores, la lengua como tal no constituye un criterio respecto al cual está prohibida la discriminación en virtud de la legislación de la UE en materia de lucha contra la discriminación. Así pues, la Comisión no está en situación de comentar este asunto.

Respecto a la posibilidad de adoptar una nueva legislación de la UE, la Comisión desea señalar que la referencia a los artículos 10 y 19 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea a «la religión y las convicciones» se refiere solo a las creencias religiosas o filosóficas. No es extensiva a la utilización de la lengua. Además, el artículo 4 del TFUE solo enumera los ámbitos en los que la Unión Europea tiene competencia compartida con los Estados miembros, pero no establece competencias para adoptar medidas relativas al uso de la lengua.

Por lo tanto, aparte del acervo en el ámbito de la libre circulación de los trabajadores sobre la posible discriminación basada en el uso de un cierto nivel de conocimiento de una lengua determinada para el acceso a algunos puestos, no existe base alguna en los Tratados para proponer una nueva legislación en este ámbito.

No obstante, la Comisión, actuando dentro de los límites de sus competencias, de acuerdo con lo establecido en el Tratado, desarrolla una política de apoyo a la diversidad lingüística en la Unión Europea. En su Comunicación de septiembre de 2008 «Multilingüismo: una ventaja para Europa y un compromiso compartido» ([1]), la Comisión confirma su apoyo a todas las lenguas habladas en la Unión Europea. La Comisión también se compromete a hacer un uso estratégico de los programas e iniciativas pertinentes de la UE a fin de acercar el multilingüismo a los ciudadanos.

([1]) COM(2008) 566 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000412/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Employment discrimination on linguistic grounds

On 12 January 2012, a letter to the editor appeared in the Catalan press in which a young man reported having been dismissed for purely linguistic reasons. Specifically, he explained that his dismissal occurred after he had argued with a security guard about the use of Catalan and Spanish in the workplace.

It should be noted that the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia, adopted in 2006 with the status of a framework or so-called organic law, states in Article 32 that: 'Each individual has the right not to be discriminated against for linguistic reasons'. Also, according to Article 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon, which sets out the foundations of the Union, the fundamental values of the EU include respect for the rule of law and the protection of the rights of minorities. Article 10 of the Treaty also states that the Union will fight against any discrimination on ground of personal beliefs.

Article 4 clarifies that the Commission has shared competence in the field of cohesion and social policy, and is therefore understood to be empowered to propose or suggest that Member States put an end to bad practices, such as the aforementioned.

1. Does the Commission consider it lawful for European citizens to be dismissed from their place of work because of their personal beliefs?

2. Does the Commission believe that European citizens may be discriminated against at work due to their choice of a language that is recognised by the laws relevant to the case?

3. Would the Commission consider proposing an amendment of the established legal framework in order to prevent situations such as that mentioned above from arising?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

National language policies are not regulated by EU law. They remain within the jurisdiction of each Member State, in accordance with their obligations under national and international law. With the exception of legislation on anti-discrimination on the basis of nationality in the area of free movement of workers, language as such is not a criterion for which discrimination is prohibited under EU' other anti-discrimination legislation. Therefore, the Commission is not in a position to comment on this issue.

Concerning the possibility of adoption of new EU legislation, the Commission would like to point out that the reference in Articles 10 and 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to 'religion and belief' relates to a religious or philosophical belief only. It does not extend to the use of language. Moreover, Article 4 TFEU only lists the areas where the European Union has shared competence with Member States. It does not provide competence to adopt measures on the use of language.

Therefore, apart the *acquis* in the area of free movement of workers on possible discrimination based on the use of a certain level of knowledge of a given language for access to certain posts, there is no basis in the Treaties to propose new legislation in this field.

However, the Commission acting within the limits of its competences as set out in the Treaty develops a policy to support linguistic diversity in the European Union. In its communication of September 2008, 'Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment' ([1]), the Commission confirms its support for all languages spoken in the European Union. The Commission also commits itself to make strategic use of relevant EU programmes and initiatives to bring multilingualism closer to the citizen.

([1]) COM(2008) 566 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000413/12
à la Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(23 janvier 2012)

Objet: Arrêt de la CJUE concernant les traces de pollen OGM dans le miel

Dans un arrêt en date du 6 septembre 2011, la CJUE a estimé que le pollen constituait un ingrédient du miel et que le miel contenant du pollen issu d'un OGM constituait une denrée alimentaire produite à partir d'OGM qui ne peut être commercialisée sans autorisation préalable.

L'application des conclusions de la CJUE aurait des conséquences néfastes pour le commerce des produits de la ruche.

Elle rendrait notamment obligatoire la détection systématique de traces de pollen issu d'OGM dans tous les miels, alors même que des pollutions fortuites sont possibles sur l'ensemble du territoire de l'Union, ne serait-ce via les échanges commerciaux ou les expérimentations de la recherche scientifique. En conséquence, cela entraverait durablement le marché intérieur du miel et perturberait les importations en raison de l'absence d'un seuil de quantification pour «pollution fortuite».

Cet arrêt pourrait également conduire à la pratique de l'ultrafiltration, qui vise à retirer le pollen présent dans le miel. Cette technique priverait tous les opérateurs du marché du seul élément permettant de tracer l'origine géographique des miels et pourrait donc à terme favoriser les contrefaçons sur l'origine des miels, nuisant ainsi à la qualité des produits et à la santé du consommateur.

1. En conséquence, la Commission entend-elle clarifier le statut juridique du pollen contenu dans le miel au regard de la réglementation OGM en rappelant notamment que le miel est un produit d'origine animale (le miel est la substance sucrée naturelle produite par les abeilles, et non le résultat d'un processus de production effectué par l'apiculteur) et le pollen un constituant naturel du miel?

2. La Commission prévoit-elle de transposer en termes législatifs l'interprétation donnée par le comité permanent de la chaîne alimentaire et de la santé animale en date du 23 juin 2004, selon laquelle le miel n'est pas couvert par l'application du règlement (CE) n° 1829/2003 sur les denrées alimentaires génétiquement modifiées?

3. En ce qui concerne l'ultrafiltration, la Commission envisage-t-elle de proposer un étiquetage obligatoire pour le miel destiné à l'industrie et de renforcer l'information du consommateur, notamment par l'obligation d'une mention claire du pays d'origine, y compris pour les miels issus de mélanges?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(29 février 2012)

La Commission renvoie l'auteur de la question à sa réponse à la question écrite E-11752/2011 ([1]), dans laquelle elle livre son analyse de l'arrêt de la Cour de justice européenne sur les traces de pollen issu d'OGM dans le miel.

La directive 2001/110/CE du Conseil relative au miel ([2]) énonce les caractéristiques de composition et les dispositions applicables à l'étiquetage de tous les miels, y compris le miel importé de pays tiers et les mélanges contenant du miel importé de pays tiers. En ce concerne le miel filtré, la directive prévoit qu'aucun pollen ou constituant propre au miel ne peut être retiré, sauf si cela est inévitable lors de l'élimination de matières organiques et inorganiques étrangères. Le miel qui subit une ultrafiltration — un procédé qui dépasse le cadre de la filtration autorisée par la directive — ne peut plus être qualifié de miel. Les États membres doivent interdire la mise sur le marché de miel non conforme aux dispositions de la directive.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) JO L 10 du 12.1.2002, p. 47.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000413/12
to the Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: ECJ ruling on traces of pollen from GMOs in honey

On 6 September 2011, the ECJ ruled that pollen is an ingredient of honey and therefore honey containing pollen from GMOs is a foodstuff produced from GMOs that cannot be placed on the market without prior authorisation.

The application of the ECJ judgment could have harmful consequences for trade in bee products.

In particular, it would require all honey to be systematically checked for traces of GM pollen, even though unintentional contamination is possible right across the Union, if only via commercial exchanges or scientific research experiments. This would cause long-lasting damage to the internal honey market and disrupt imports because of the absence of a quantitative limit for 'adventitious contamination'.

This judgment could also lead to the introduction of ultra-filtration, a technique used to remove pollen from honey. Its use deprives market operators of the only component of honey on the basis of which its geographic origin can be traced; in the long term, therefore, this practice could facilitate fraud in relation to the origin of honey, thus placing at risk both product quality and consumer health.

1. In view of the foregoing, does the Commission intend to clarify the legal status of pollen contained in honey with respect to the legislation on GMOs, bearing in mind that honey is an 'animal product' (since honey is the natural sugary substance produced by bees, and not the result of a production process carried out by the beekeeper) and pollen is a natural constituent of honey?

2. Does the Commission envisage incorporating into the legislation the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health interpretation of the rules, issued on 23 June 2004, namely that honey is not covered by the application of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food?

3. With regard to ultrafiltration, does the Commission intend to propose an obligatory labelling system for honey for use by the food industry and to provide more information for consumers by, in particular, requiring the country of origin to be clearly stated, including when the honey is of mixed origin?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-11752/2011 ([1]) which sets out the Commission's analysis of the ruling of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) on traces of pollen from GMOs in honey.

Council Directive 2001/110/EC ([2]) on honey lays down the composition criteria and labelling requirements for all honey, including honey imported from Third Countries as well as blends containing such honey. As regards filtered honey, under the directive no pollen or constituent particular to honey may be removed, except where this is unavoidable in the removal of foreign inorganic or organic matter. Honey which is subject to ultrafiltration, which goes beyond the process of filtration permitted by the directive, cannot be described as honey. Member States must prohibit the marketing of honey which fails to conform to the provisions of the directive.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([2]) OJ L 10, 12.1.2002, p. 47.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000414/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: English rugby premiership salary cap

Do the English rugby premiership salary cap and the new Irish Rugby Football Union 'position specific/one contract' restrictions comply with European law, especially in relation to competition and employment, as they affect the pan-European multi-Member-State Heineken Cup and Amlin Challenge Cup competitions?

Is a restriction excluding a player from selection for the England rugby team if he is attached to a French or Italian rugby club a restriction on the free movement of labour?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

Sports rules should be investigated on a case-by-case basis in order to assess their compatibility with EU competition rules, taking into account the overall context and the rule's objectives. It has to be assessed whether the rule pursues a legitimate objective, and whether the restrictive effects resulting from such a rule are inherent to the pursuit of that objective and are proportionate to its achievement.

The Commission notes that, while salary caps limit the economic freedom of clubs, they seem to pursue a legitimate objective (the promotion of equality in sporting competitions). However, as mentioned above, sports rules have to be assessed in the context of the concrete circumstances. On the basis of the limited information, it is not possible to determine the rules' compatibility with EU competition law.

Concerning the reference made by the Honourable Member to the new Irish Rugby Football Union 'position specific/one contract' restrictions, the Commission understands these restrictions are related to the announcement made by the Irish Rugby Football Union on 21 December 2011 about refinements to its professional player contract policy. The Commission considers that further analysis of the legal and factual elements of the planned refinements is needed in order to assess their compatibility with EU free movement rules.

With regard to the rules on the selection of players for a national team, it should be underlined that the ECJ ([1]) established an exception to the general application of EU free movement rules in sports activities. This exception was justified on non-economic grounds, relating to the particular nature and context of the sporting interest in matches between the national teams of different countries. However, this exception must remain limited to its proper objective.

([1]) Judgments of 12 December 1974, Case 36/74 *Walrave*, ECR 1974 p. 01405; and of 14 July 1976, Case 13/76 *Donà*, ECR 1976 p. 01333; and of 15 December 1995, Case C-415/93 *Bosman*, ECR 1995 p. I-04921.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000415/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Economic compliance prospects

In the context of the 1997 Stability and Growth Pact requirement that:

'All countries in the Eurozone should aim to keep their annual budget deficit below 3 % of GDP, and keep total public debt below 60 % of GDP. If a country broke the rules, it had to take measures to reduce its deficit. If it broke the rules in three consecutive years, the Commission could impose a fine of up to 0.5 % of GDP',

will the Commission state why it believes that any new requirements will achieve greater compliance than under the Pact?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2012)

The requirements of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) in its initial form have been developed further in various steps since 1997. In particular, by 13 December 2011 a major strengthening of the EU fiscal framework has been put into effect with the implementation of the so-called six-pack comprising three regulations and a directive on fiscal policy (and also two regulations relating to macroeconomic imbalances).

For euro area Member States (MS), new enforcement mechanisms have been introduced and those that already existed have become stricter. Before last year reform, it was envisaged that whenever the Council decided under Article 126(11) TFEU to impose measures on a MS failing to comply with a notice to correct its excessive deficit, this sanction should have, as a rule, taken the form of a non-interest bearing deposits. This provision has been amended so that, as a rule, this sanction should now take the form of a fine. The six-pack does also allow for new enforcement instruments coming in already in the preventive arm of the Pact (interest-bearing deposits) and at much earlier stages of the excessive deficit procedure, specifically already at the level of Articles 126(6) TFEU (non-interest bearing deposits) and 126(8) TFEU (fines). Specific Council voting procedures have also been adopted so as to, as far as the imposition of these new sanctions is concerned, increase the degree of automaticity in the procedure.

A further strengthening of the EU fiscal framework is envisaged by a regulation on common provisions for monitoring and assessing draft budgetary plans and ensuring the correction of excessive deficit of the MS in the euro area, proposed by the Commission on 23 November 2011 ([1]).

([1]) COM(2011) 0821 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000416/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Stability and Growth Pact compliance

The following has been stated in connection with the 1997 Stability and Growth Pact:

'All countries in the Eurozone should aim to keep their annual budget deficit below 3 % of GDP, and keep total public debt below 60 % of GDP. If a country broke the rules, it had to take measures to reduce its deficit. If it broke the rules in three consecutive years, the Commission could impose a fine of up to 0.5 % of GDP.'

Will the Commission set out which Member States failed to meet this requirement over what periods of time, in particular highlighting those Member States which failed to meet the 'three consecutive years' criterion, and set out, in each case, what action it took in response?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

Numerous EU Member States have been subject to the excessive deficit procedure since the Stability and Growth Pact came into effect ([1]).

In most cases, on a recommendation by the Commission, only Council recommendations under Article 126(7) TFEU (or its precursor Article under earlier Treaties) to correct the excessive deficit have been adopted. However, in the case of Greece the procedure has been stepped up on two occasions (in February 2005 and again in February 2010). Here, after that the Council had established inadequate action, the Commission recommended to the Council to give notice to the Member State concerned under Article 126(9) TFEU (or its precursor Article) and the Council gave such notice, implying a strengthened surveillance of budgetary policies.

To date no pecuniary sanctions have ever been imposed, however the imposition of such sanctions including fines has become considerably easier in the aftermath of the recent reforms of fiscal governance, specifically the entering into force of the so-called six-pack of legislative items on 13 December 2011.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-000415/2012.

([1]) The full historical record can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/deficit/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000417/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) και Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κουπόνια Εκπαίδευσης και Κατάρτισης

Τα Κουπόνια Εκπαίδευσης και Κατάρτισης (Education Vouchers) αποτελούν μια πολιτική πρόταση στο χώρο της τυπικής και μη τυπικής εκπαίδευσης. Ταυτόχρονα, οι υπέρμαχοι της εξατομικευμένης χρηματοδότησης κάνουν λόγο για αναβάθμιση της ποιότητας των φορέων και μείωση του κόστους σπουδών μέσα από την καταπολέμηση της κρατικής γραφειοκρατίας. Στην αντίπερα όχθη, ένα μεγάλο μέρος της εκπαιδευτικής και ακαδημαϊκής κοινότητας υποστηρίζει, μεταξύ άλλων, ότι η εφαρμογή της «εκπαιδευτικής επιταγής» -ιδιαίτερα σε περιόδους οικονομικοκοινωνικής κρίσης και υψηλής ανεργίας- αλλοιώνει το δημόσιο και κοινωνικό χαρακτήρα της εκπαίδευσης οδηγώντας στην «εμπορευματοποίηση» της εκπαιδευτικής διεργασίας.

Παράλληλα επισημαίνονται οι κίνδυνοι της διαμορφώσης συνθηκών οικονομικής συνδιαλλαγής μεταξύ ιδρυμάτων και εκπαιδευόμενων, της προαγωγής του ατομικισμού σε βάρος της συνεργατικής κουλτούρας και μάθησης, καθώς και της υποχρηματοδότησης των κρατικών δομών εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης με τη συνακόλουθη απαξίωση της δημόσιας παιδείας και την απορρύθμιση των εργασιακών σχέσεων των εκπαιδευτικών (απολύσεις, μειώσεις μισθών, συρρίκνωση ωραρίου απασχόλησης), επικαλούμενοι το παράδειγμα των ΗΠΑ. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο και με δεδομένη την υιοθέτηση ανάλογων πολιτικών, με διάφορες παραλλαγές, από τα κράτη-μέλη, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία αξιολόγησης από την εφαρμογή αυτών των πολιτικών στα κράτη-μέλη;

2. Προτίθεται να προωθήσει την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών μεταξύ των κρατών-μελών, προκειμένου να αναδειχθούν τα ενδεδειγμένα πεδία παρέμβασης μέσω της «εκπαιδευτικής επιταγής» στη σφαίρα της τυπικής και μη τυπικής εκπαίδευσης;

3. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για ενδεχόμενη ή μη μείωση των εκπαιδευτικών ανισοτήτων στις χώρες της ΕΕ που υιοθέτησαν το σύστημα των «vouchers κοινωνικών κριτηρίων», δηλαδή της επιλογής επιδότησης δικαιούχων με βάση οικονομικά και κοινωνικά κριτήρια;

4. Πώς αξιολογεί το γεγονός ότι μια τέτοια μεταρρυθμιστική πρωτοβουλία, έστω και σε περιορισμένο βαθμό, στο σύστημα επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης και δια βίου μάθησης στην Ελλάδα πραγματοποιείται χωρίς τον απαιτούμενο διάλογο με τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους;

Απάντηση της κυρίας Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τις μεταρρυθμίσεις που έγιναν σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη τα οποία εισήγαγαν το μέτρο των κουπονιών εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης, αλλά δεν έχει πληροφορίες σχετικά με τον βαθμό επιτυχημένης υλοποίησης των σχετικών πολιτικών.

Η Επιτροπή συγκρότησε ειδική ομάδα εργασίας για τη χρηματοδότηση της εκπαίδευσης ενηλίκων, η οποία αποτελείται από εμπειρογνώμονες προερχόμενους από τα κράτη μέλη και από τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους. Η ομάδα αυτή, στόχος της οποίας είναι να διευκολύνει την ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών, γνώσεων και ορθών πρακτικών για τη χρηματοδότηση της εκπαίδευσης ενηλίκων, θα εξετάσει, μεταξύ άλλων, το ζήτημα των κουπονιών εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης.

Οι πληροφορίες που διαθέτει επί του παρόντος η Επιτροπή για τον τρόπο με τον οποίο τα συστήματα των κουπονιών εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης μπορούν να συμβάλουν στη μείωση των εκπαιδευτικών ανισοτήτων είναι περιορισμένες και ελλιπείς. Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με το Ευρωπαϊκό Δίκτυο Εμπειρογνωμόνων για τα Οικονομικά της Εκπαίδευσης (EENEE) ([1]) και με το CEDEFOP σχετικά με εναλλακτικά χρηματοδοτικά μέσα «εξατομικευμένης χρηματοδότησης». Τα τελευταία χρόνια, το Cedefop ιδίως εκπόνησε ορισμένες μελέτες και εκθέσεις σχετικά με διάφορα χρηματοδοτικά μέσα, όπως: φορολογικά κίνητρα ([2]), τομεακά ταμεία κατάρτισης ([3]), ατομικοί λογαριασμοί μάθησης ([4]), κουπόνια εκπαίδευσης ([5]) και άλλα μέσα ([6]). Σύμφωνα με τις εν λόγω μελέτες, τα κουπόνια που προορίζονται για την επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση και κατάρτιση μετά την υποχρεωτική βαθμίδα σπουδών ή για την εκπαίδευση ενηλίκων φαίνεται να ενισχύουν την

([1]) http://www.eenee.de/portal/page/portal/EENEEContent/_IMPORT_TELECENTRUM/DOCS/EENEE_AR10.pdf
([2]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/5180_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/5189_en.pdf
([4]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/5192_en.pdf
([5]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/6003_en.pdf
([6]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications.aspx?page=1.

ευαισθητοποίηση των εκπαιδευομένων όσον αφορά τη διαθεσιμότητα και τη σημασία της μάθησης. Ωστόσο, για να γίνουν τα κουπόνια εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης αποτελεσματική και δίκαιη μορφή χρηματοδότησης της εν λόγω εκπαίδευσης, είναι σημαντικό να εκδίδονται με στοχευμένο τρόπο.

Σε ό,τι αφορά την εφαρμογή της συγκεκριμένης μεταρρύθμισης στην Ελλάδα, η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει ότι, σύμφωνα με τη Συνθήκη για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (Συνθήκη της Λισαβόνας), η αρμοδιότητα για την οργάνωση και το περιεχόμενο του εκπαιδευτικού συστήματος ανήκει στα κράτη μέλη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000417/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) and Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Education vouchers

A political proposal has been made to introduce standard and non-standard education vouchers, with advocates of personalised financing talking about improving the quality of providers and reducing the cost of study by opposing state bureaucracy. On the other hand, many of those in the educational and academic community fear that the introduction of an 'educational cheque' — especially in times of economic crisis and high unemployment — may, for example, undermine the public and social character of education, causing it to be 'commercialised'.

At the same time, concern is being expressed regarding the dangers of encouraging financially motivated relations between institutions and their pupils, the promotion of individualism at the expense of teamwork and learning and the under-financing and consequent devaluation of state education and training structures, as well as the deregulation of teachers' conditions of employment (dismissals, pay cuts, reduced working hours), as is happening in the USA, for example. Against this background, and given the adoption of similar policies, with variations, by the Member States:

1. Does the Commission have any information regarding the degree of success with which such policies are being implemented in the Member States?

2. Does it intend to promote the exchange of best practices among Member States with a view to establishing the extent to which the 'educational cheque' should be introduced in the field of standard and non-standard education to produce the desired results?

3. Does it have any information regarding the extent to which it has been possible to reduce educational inequalities in those EU Member States which have adopted the system of 'social criteria vouchers', using financial and social criteria to select beneficiaries?

4. What view does it take of the fact that this albeit limited reform of vocational training and lifelong learning in Greece is being implemented without engaging in the necessary dialogue with the social partners?

Answer given by Mrs Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(16 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of reforms in some Member States introducing vouchers but has no information on the success with which such policies are being implemented.

The Commission has set up a peer-learning working group on Financing Adult Learning consisting of experts from Member States as well as from social partners. The objective of this group is to facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge and good practice with regard to the financing of adult learning and it will address, *inter alia*, the issue of educational vouchers.

The Commission currently has only limited and inconclusive information on how voucher schemes might impact on reducing educational inequalities. The Commission works closely with the European Experts Network in Economics of Education (EENEE) ([1]) and with Cedefop on alternative funding tools for 'personalised financing'. In recent years, Cedefop in particular has produced a number of studies and reports on different funding tools such as: tax incentives ([2]), sectoral training funds ([3]), individual learning accounts ([4]), vouchers ([5]) and others ([6]). According to these studies, vouchers for post-compulsory vocational education and training or adult education seem to strengthen learners' awareness of the availability and importance of learning. However, in order to make vouchers an efficient and equitable form of funding such education, it is important to issue them in a targeted way.

([1]) http://www.eenee.de/portal/page/portal/EENEEContent/_IMPORT_TELECENTRUM/DOCS/EENEE_AR10.pdf
([2]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/5180_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/5189_en.pdf
([4]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/5192_en.pdf
([5]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/6003_en.pdf
([6]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications.aspx?page=1.

With regard to the implementation of the particular reform in Greece, the Commission would recall that under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (the Lisbon Treaty), responsibility for the organisation and content of the education system rests with the Member States.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000418/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Fitosanitarios

El 31 de octubre de 2011 se formuló por escrito una pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión (E-009846/2011) sobre la necesidad de adoptar medidas y controles para que las avellanas turcas importadas en los países de la Unión Europea respeten la normativa fitosanitaria comunitaria en la fase de producción.

A la luz de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta el acuerdo comercial bilateral entre Turquía y la UE sobre productos agrícolas (Decisión n° 2/2006 del Consejo de asociación CE-Turquía de 17 de octubre de 2006), en el cual Turquía se beneficia de una preferencia arancelaria reducida para las avellanas, que pueden ser exportadas con un derecho ad valorem del 3 % en vez del 3,2 %,

1. ¿Cuál es el porcentaje de muestras tomadas respecto a la totalidad de los productos importados en el año 2010, para la avellana turca?

2. ¿Qué nivel de representatividad estadística posee dicho porcentaje?

3. Si resultara escasa la representatividad de los controles, ¿no cree el Parlamento que habría que adoptar otras medidas más efectivas para evitar la entrada de productos de terceros países —como la avellana turca— producidos empleando fitosanitarios no permitidos en la Unión Europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de marzo de 2012)

Existe todo un arsenal legislativo para garantizar que los alimentos sean seguros y saludables y que los alimentos importados en la Unión respeten los requisitos de seguridad de la UE. En concreto, el Reglamento (CE) n° 178/2002 ([1]) y el Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 ([2]) son los dos instrumentos principales empleados para lograr este objetivo.

Los Estados miembros son los encargados de hacer cumplir la legislación sobre piensos y alimentos de la UE y de comprobar, a través de controles oficiales sobre productos nacionales e importados, si se respetan los requisitos pertinentes.

La cantidad total de avellanas turcas importadas en la UE en 2010 fue de 95 250,30 toneladas. Se analizó el contenido de 355 plaguicidas de 14 muestras y en ninguna de las ellas se detectaron niveles superiores al límite de cuantificación analítica. De conformidad con el artículo 30 del Reglamento 396/2005 ([3]), los Estados miembros establecerán programas nacionales de control plurianuales para los residuos de plaguicidas. Corresponde a los Estados miembros decidir sobre los productos que tienen que muestrearse.

No obstante, si la tasa de incumplimiento en materia de importación lo justifica, la Comisión, en base a riesgos conocidos o emergentes para la salud, podría evaluar la situación en cooperación con los Estados miembros y, en caso necesario, incrementar el nivel de los controles específicos modificando el anexo I del Reglamento (CE) n° 669/2009 ([4]).

Si surge la necesidad de intensificar la vigilancia en relación con el tema que plantea Su Señoría, la Comisión confía en que los instrumentos actuales permitan reaccionar rápidamente.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 178/2002 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 28 de enero de 2002, por el que se establecen los principios y los requisitos generales de la legislación alimentaria, se crea la Autoridad Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria y se fijan procedimientos relativos a la seguridad alimentaria (DO L 31 de 1.2.2002).

([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 29 de abril de 2004, sobre los controles oficiales efectuados para garantizar la verificación del cumplimiento de la legislación en materia de piensos y alimentos y la normativa sobre salud animal y bienestar de los animales (DO L 165 de 30.4.2004).

([3]) DO L 70 de 16.3.2005.

([4]) Reglamento (CE) n° 669/2009 de la Comisión, de 24 de julio de 2009, por el que se aplica el Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo en lo que respecta a la intensificación de los controles oficiales de las importaciones de determinados piensos y alimentos de origen no animal y se modifica la Decisión 2006/504/CE (DO L 194 de 25.7.2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000418/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Plant health products

On 31 October 2011, a written parliamentary question was tabled to the Commission (E-009846/2011) regarding the need to adopt measures and controls to ensure that Turkish hazelnuts imported into European Union countries conform to Community plant health rules during the production phase.

In light of the above, and taking into account the bilateral trade agreement between Turkey and the EU on agricultural products (Decision No 2/2006 of the EC-Turkey Association Council of 17 October 2006), by which Turkey benefits from a reduced preferential tariff for hazelnuts, which can be exported with an *ad valorem* duty of 3 % instead of 3.2 %:

1. What percentage of samples was taken of the total imports of Turkish hazelnuts in the year 2010?

2. What degree of statistical representation does this percentage have?

3. If the representativeness of the controls proves to be low, is it not the case that other more effective measures should be adopted to prevent the entry of products from third countries, such as Turkish hazelnuts, that are produced using plant health products not permitted in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

There is a comprehensive body of legislation to ensure that food is safe and wholesome, and that food imported into the Union is in line with EU safety requirements. In particular, Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([1]) and Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([2]) are the two main tools used in order to achieve this objective.

Member States are responsible for the enforcement of EU feed and food law and verify, through official controls on domestic and imported products, that the relevant requirements are fulfilled.

The total quantity of Turkish hazelnuts imported to the EU in 2010 was 95 250.30 tons. 14 samples were analysed for 355 pesticides, none of which were found with levels above the limit of analytical quantification. According to Art. 30 of Regulation 396/2005 ([3]), Member States shall establish Multi-annual National Control Programmes. It is up to the Member States to decide on the commodities to be sampled.

However, if warranted due to the rate of non-compliance on importation, the Commission could, on the basis of known or emerging risks for health, assess the situation in cooperation with the Member states and, if required, set an increased level of specific controls by amending Annex I to Regulation (EC) 669/2009 ([4]).

Should the need to step up vigilance in relation to the issue raised by the Honourable Member arise, the Commission is confident that the existing tools will allow it to react promptly.

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

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (OJ L 165, 30.4.2004).

([3]) OJ L 70, 16.03.2005.

([4]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 669/2009 of 24 July 2009 implementing Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the increased level of official controls on imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin and amending Decision 2006/504/EC (OJ L 194, 25.7.2009).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000422/12
an den Rat
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Klagen über zu viele deutsche Studenten im EU-Ausland

Für die vielen deutschen Studenten an niederländischen Universitäten fordern die Niederlande angeblich eine Ausgleichszahlung. Diesbezügliche Probleme hat auch Österreich im Rat vorgebracht. Ungarn hat speziell beim Medizinstudium einen Andrang deutscher Studenten registriert. Deutschland bringt vor, dass es innerhalb der EU netto mehr Studenten aus anderen Ländern aufnimmt als exportiert.

1. Wurde im Rat über Ausgleichszahlungen diskutiert bzw. steht ein solches Gespräch an?

2. Haben weitere Länder (in einzelnen Fächern) einen Andrang an Studenten aus einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten verzeichnet?

3. Wie ist der Verhandlungsstand in Bezug auf das Studium im EU-Ausland auf der Ebene des Rates?

Antwort
(19. März 2012)

Laut Artikel 165 AEUV ist der Rat für den Bildungsbereich nur begrenzt zuständig und hat die vom Herrn Abgeordneten vorgebrachten spezifischen Fragen nicht besprochen.

Allgemein möchte der Rat den Herrn Abgeordneten auf die am 28. November 2011 ([1]) verab-schiedeten Schlussfolgerungen des Rates zur Modernisierung der Hochschulbildung hinweisen. In diesen Schlussfolgerungen hat der Rat erklärt, dass er sich in Folgendem einig ist: „Die internatio-nale Mobilität von Studenten, Forschern und anderen Mitarbeitern […] wirkt sich positiv auf die Qualität aus und betrifft alle wichtigen Reformbereiche. Allerdings kann die Mobilität auch eine Herausforderung für verschiedene Bildungssysteme darstellen, die einen starken Zustrom von Studenten erleben“ ([2]). Der Rat begrüßte die Absicht der Kommission, die Analyse der Mobilitäts-ströme ([3]) zu unterstützen, um ausführlichere Informationen über Mobilitätstrends und deren Aus-wirkungen zu sammeln.

([1]) ABl. C 372 vom 20.12.2011, S. 36.
([2]) Ebenda.
([3]) Ebenda, S. 23, Nummer 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000422/12
to the Council
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Complaints about excessive numbers of German students studying abroad in EU Member States

Apparently the Netherlands is demanding a compensatory payment for the large numbers of German students studying at universities in the Netherlands. Austria has also raised a similar issue in the Council. Hungary has registered a large wave of German students studying medicine in particular. Germany has stated that, as a net figure, it plays host to more students from within the EU than it exports.

1. Have there been discussions within the Council regarding compensatory payments or do plans exist for such discussions?

2. Have other countries also experienced large waves of students from individual Member States (in specific subjects)?

3. What is the status of negotiations at Council level in relation to studying abroad within the EU?

Reply
(19 March 2012)

The Council has a limited competence in the field of education under Article 165 TFEU and it has not discussed the specific issues raised by the Honourable Member.

In a more general way, the Council would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to its conclusions on the modernisation of higher education, adopted on 28 November 2011 ([1]). In these conclusions, the Council agreed that 'the international mobility of students, researchers and staff […] has a positive impact on quality and affects all key areas of reform. However, it can also pose challenges for some education systems which receive substantial inflows of students' ([2]). The Council welcomed the Commission's intention to support the analysis of mobility flows ([3]) with a view to gathering more detailed information on mobility trends and impacts.

([1]) OJ C 372, 20.12.2011, p. 36.
([2]) Idem.
([3]) Idem, p. 40, paragraph 4.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000423/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(24. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Deutsche Studenten im EU-Ausland

Für die vielen deutschen Studenten an niederländischen Universitäten fordern die Niederlande angeblich eine Ausgleichszahlung. Diesbezügliche Probleme hat auch Österreich im Rat vorgebracht. Ungarn hat speziell beim Medizinstudium einen Andrang deutscher Studenten registriert. Deutschland bringt vor, dass es innerhalb der EU netto mehr Studenten aus anderen Ländern aufnimmt als exportiert.

1. Sind der Kommission Forderungen nach Ausgleichszahlungen bekannt?

2. Haben weitere Länder (in einzelnen Fächern) einen Andrang an Studenten aus einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten verzeichnet?

3. Wie ist der Verhandlungsstand in Bezug auf das Studium im EU-Ausland auf der Ebene der Kommission?

4. Welche Änderungen sind in diesem Zusammenhang im Rahmen des geplanten EU-Bildungskonzepts „Erasmus für alle“ vorgesehen?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(29. Februar 2012)

Die Kommission kennt dieses Thema aus den Medien.

Abgesehen von den in der Anfrage des Herrn Abgeordneten genannten Ländern hat auch Belgien in den letzten Jahren einen großen Zustrom von Studierenden aus Frankreich im Bereich paramedizinischer Qualifikationen zu verzeichnen. Die von den belgischen Behörden daraufhin festgesetzten Quoten wurden vom Europäischen Gerichtshof und dem belgischen Verfassungsgericht geprüft.

Die Kommission ist eine Verfechterin der Mobilität zu Lernzwecken und fördert diese durch ihre Programme — wie Erasmus und Leonardo — und ihre politischen Strategien, so in der vor kurzem veröffentlichten Mitteilung „Wachstum und Beschäftigung unterstützen — eine Agenda für die Modernisierung von Europas Hochschulsystemen“ (KOM(2011)567 endgültig). Die Kommission ist außerdem aktiv am Bologna-Prozess zur Schaffung eines Europäischen Hochschulraums beteiligt. Das Recht aller Unionsbürger, sich im Hoheitsgebiet der Mitgliedstaaten frei zu bewegen und aufzuhalten, ist darüber hinaus in Artikel 21 AEUV verankert und unterliegt lediglich den in den Verträgen und in den Durchführungsvorschriften vorgesehenen Beschränkungen und Bedingungen. Der Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union hat wiederholt bestätigt, dass EU-Staatsangehörige beim Zugang zu keinerlei Ausbildungsgängen diskriminiert werden dürfen.

In ihrem Vorschlag für „Erasmus für alle“ hat die Kommission angeregt, die Möglichkeiten der Mobilität zu Lernzwecken für Studierende, Lehrkräfte und Ausbilder, Auszubildende und Freiwillige deutlich auszuweiten. Darüber hinaus schlägt die Kommission auch ein Garantieinstrument für Master-Studierende vor, die ihr Studium im Ausland absolvieren wollen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000423/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: German students studying abroad in EU Member States

Apparently the Netherlands is demanding a compensatory payment for the large numbers of German students studying at universities in the Netherlands. Austria has also raised a similar issue in the Council. Hungary has registered a large wave of German students studying medicine in particular. Germany has stated that, as a net figure, it plays host to more students from within the EU than it exports.

1. Is the Commission aware of the demands for compensatory payment?

2. Have other countries also experienced large waves of students from individual Member States (in specific subjects)?

3. What is the status of negotiations at Commission level in relation to studying abroad within the EU?

4. Which changes are planned in this context as part of the projected EU education programme 'Erasmus for All'?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

The Commission is aware of these issues from media reports.

In addition to the countries mentioned by the Honorable MEP, Belgium has also seen in past years a large inflow of students from France enrolling in para-medical qualifications. The quotas set by the Belgian authorities in response to this situation have been addressed by the European Court and the Belgian Constitutional Court.

The Commission takes a very favourable view of learning mobility. It promotes it through its programmes, such as Erasmus and Leonardo, as well as its policies, as re-affirmed recently in the communication 'Supporting growth and jobs — an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems' (COM(2011)567 final). The Commission is also an active partner in the Bologna Process aimed at creating a European Higher Education Area. It should also be added that the right of every citizen of the Union to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States is enshrined in Article 21 of the TFEU, and is subject only to the limitations and conditions laid down in the Treaties themselves and in the measures adopted to give them effect. As repeatedly updeld by the Court of Justice of the European Union, EU nationals should not be discriminated against in access to any course of education.

In its proposal for 'Erasmus for All' the Commission has proposed to increase signficantly the opportunities for learning mobility for students, teachers and trainers, trainees and young volunteers. In addition, the Commission is also proposing a loan guarantee scheme to support Master's degree students wishing to undertake their course of studies abroad.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000425/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Gezieltes Ausnutzen minderjähriger Flüchtlinge durch Schlepper

In den Entwicklungsländern werben Schlepper gezielt Ausreisewillige und scheuen dabei auch nicht davor zurück, mit Gewalt dafür zu sorgen, dass die Menschen Haus und Vieh verkaufen und migrieren. Geworben wurde auch mit den 40 Euro Taschengeld, die Flüchtige im österreichischen Lager Traiskirchen monatlich für Artikel des täglichen Bedarfs bekamen und zumeist in die Herkunftsländer heimschickten, wo 40 Euro viel Geld sind und Grund, Söhne nach Europa zu schicken. Dieses Schneeballsystem versucht Österreich nun zu stoppen, indem statt Bargeld Genussscheine ausgegeben werden.

Nachdem Kinder und Jugendliche bevorzugt behandelt werden, wurden viele Flüchtlinge von den Schleppern mit Scheinpapieren — zumindest auf dem Papier — jünger gemacht. Eine Altersfeststellung durch Röntgen konnte diesem Missbrauch einen Riegel vorschieben.

Der neueste Trend ist nun jedoch, Afghanen, die in griechischen Flüchtlingslagern gestrandet sind, die Kinder abzunehmen und diese vor das Lagertor in Traiskirchen zu stellen. Die Zahl sogenannter „unbegleiteter Minderjähriger" wuchs so in kürzester Zeit immens. Asylverfahren bei Kindern werden rasch abgewickelt. Den „Ankerkindern" — wie sie im Fachjargon genannt werden — folgen die Erwachsenen im Sinne der gesetzlichen Familienzusammenführung nach.

1. Welche Erfahrungen wurden in anderen Mitgliedstaaten hinsichtlich Schneeballeffekt durch „Taschengeld" für Asylanten gemacht?

2. In welchen Mitgliedstaaten läuft die Altersfeststellung durch Röntgen bereits und in welchen ist diese noch geplant?

3. Wie steht die Kommission zu diesem Trend der Ausnutzung sog. „Ankerkinder", welcher sicherlich nicht der Intention der Asylgesetze entspricht?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(27. Februar 2012)

Artikel 13 Absatz 2 der Richtlinie 2003/9/EG ([1]) bestimmt Folgendes: „Die Mitgliedstaaten sorgen dafür, dass die gewährten materiellen Aufnahmebedingungen einem Lebensstandard entsprechen, der die Gesundheit und den Lebensunterhalt der Asylbewerber gewährleistet". Gemäß Artikel 2 Buchstabe j gelten als „materielle Aufnahmebedingungen" „die Aufnahmebedingungen, die Unterkunft, Verpflegung und Kleidung in Form von Sach- und Geldleistungen oder Gutscheinen sowie Geldleistungen zur Deckung des täglichen Bedarfs umfassen". Der Betrag für diese täglichen Aufwendungen ist im EU-Recht nicht festgelegt. Die Mitgliedstaaten können über den notwendigen Betrag frei entscheiden.

Was den Einsatz von Röntgenaufnahmen zwecks Altersfeststellung anbelangt, verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre ausführliche Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-6466/09 ([2]). Darüber hinaus sind ausführliche Informationen über alle in den 22 Mitgliedstaaten praktizierten Methoden der Altersfeststellung in einer Studie des Europäischen Migrationsnetzes über unbegleitete Minderjährige ([3]) aufgeführt.

Die Richtlinie 2003/86/EG ([4]) gilt nicht für Drittstaatsangehörige, die einen Antrag auf Zuerkennung des Flüchtlingsstatus gestellt haben und über deren Antrag noch nicht endgültig entschieden wurde bzw. denen ein befristeter Schutz gewährt wird. Die Ausbeutung von Kindern und Minderjährigen ist inakzeptabel, und es spielt dabei keine Rolle, ob die Betreffenden um internationalen Schutz nachsuchen oder nicht.

([1]) Richtlinie 2003/9/EG des Rates vom 27. Januar 2003 zur Festlegung von Mindestnormen für die Aufnahme von Asylbewerbern in den Mitgliedstaaten.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=DE.
([3]) Unaccompanied Minors — an EU comparative study, Europäisches Migrationsnetz, 2010. Die Zusammenfassung und die 22 nationalen Berichte, auf die sich die Zusammenfassung stützt, sind abrufbar unter: http://www.emn.europa.eu unter der Rubrik „EMN-Studies".
([4]) Richtlinie 2003/86/EG des Rates vom 22. September 2003 betreffend das Recht auf Familienzusammenführung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000425/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Deliberate exploitation of underage refugees by people-smugglers

In developing countries people-smugglers deliberately recruit those wishing to leave the country and do not shrink from using force to make people sell their homes and cattle and migrate. They also use as an incitement the EUR 40 pocket money which refugees at the Austrian Traiskirchen camp used to receive monthly for items of daily use and usually sent home to their countries of origin, where EUR 40 is a lot of money and a reason for sending sons to Europe. Austria is now attempting to stop this snowball effect by issuing tokens instead of cash.

Since children and adolescents receive preferential treatment, many refugees are made younger — at least on paper — by the smugglers by means of false papers. Determination of age using X-rays could put a stop to this abuse.

However, the most recent trend is now to take children from Afghans who are stranded in Greek refugee camps and to put them outside the camp gate in Traiskirchen. The number of 'unaccompanied minors' has grown immensely in a very short time as a result. Asylum procedures are settled quickly in the case of children. The adults then follow the 'anchor children' — as they are called in technical jargon — in accordance with statutory family reunification.

1. What experiences have other Member States had regarding the snowball effect due to 'pocket money' for asylum-seekers?

2. In which Member States is age already determined by X-rays and in which ones is this still planned?

3. What is the Commission's position regarding this trend towards exploiting 'anchor children', which certainly does not correspond to the intention of asylum laws?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

Article 13(2) of Directive 2003/9/EC ([1]) states that: 'Member States shall make provisions on material reception conditions to ensure a standard of living adequate for the health of applicants and capable of ensuring their subsistence.' Article 2(j) defines material reception conditions as 'the reception conditions that include housing, food and clothing, provided in kind, or as financial allowances or in vouchers, and a daily expenses allowance'. The sum of this daily expenses allowance is not defined in EC law. It is up to the Member States to decide the amount, which is expected to cover necessary expenses.

Concerning the use of X-rays for age determination, the Commission would like to draw the attention to the detailed response to Written Question E-6466/09 ([2]). Moreover, extensive information on the age assessment techniques used in 22 Member States can be found in a European Migration Network study on unaccompanied minors ([3]).

Directive 2003/86/EC ([4]) does not apply to a third-country national applying for recognition of refugee status whose application has not yet received a final decision or who is under a temporary form of protection. The exploitation of children and under-aged is unacceptable regardless of whether they are seeking international protection or not.

([1]) Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27 January 2003 laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum-seekers.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([3]) Unaccompanied minors — an EU comparative study, European Migration Network, 2010. The Synthesis Report, as well as the 22 National Reports upon which the synthesis is based, is available from http://www.emn.europa.eu under 'EMN Studies'.
([4]) Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000427/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόοδος στη διασφάλιση της ποιότητας στην τριτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση των κρατών μελών

Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την πρόοδο που έχει σημειωθεί όσον αφορά τη διασφάλιση της ποιότητας στη τριτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση στα νέα δεδομένα που δημιουργεί η κρίση (COM(2009)0487) διατυπώνονται συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις για την ποιοτική αναβάθμιση της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης στην ΕΕ, ως συνέχεια της σύστασης του 2006, τις οποίες τα κράτη μέλη καλούνται να λάβουν υπόψη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι η αξιολόγησή της σχετικά με την πρόοδο που έχει συντελεσθεί στον χώρο αναβάθμισης της ποιότητας της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης στα κράτη μέλη; Καθώς η οικονομική κρίση εξακολουθεί να απασχολεί τα κράτη μέλη, παρατηρεί η Επιτροπή υπαναχώρηση των στόχων, των προσδοκιών και των ποιότητας της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης στην ΕΕ;

Ποια είναι η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

Απάντηση της κας Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Ιουνίου 2012)

Χάρη στη διαδικασία της Μπολόνιας και το θεματολόγιο των μεταρρυθμίσεων για τον εκσυγχρονισμό της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης στην Ευρώπη, έχει συντελεστεί αξιοσημείωτη πρόοδος την τελευταία δεκαετία για τη δημιουργία του ευρωπαϊκού συστήματος διασφάλισης της ποιότητας. Η πρόοδος αυτή επιταχύνθηκε με το έργο της «ομάδας Ε4» [ευρωπαϊκό δίκτυο διασφάλισης ποιότητας (ENQA), Ένωση των Ευρωπαϊκών Πανεπιστημίων (EUA), Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση Ιδρυμάτων Τριτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης (EURASHE), ευρωπαϊκές φοιτητικές ενώσεις (ESU)]. Η Ευρώπη διαθέτει πλέον ένα λειτουργικό δίκτυο οργανισμών διασφάλισης της ποιότητας, και το 2008 δημιουργήθηκε το «ευρωπαϊκό μητρώο οργανισμών διασφάλισης της ποιότητας» με σκοπό την προώθηση της συνεργασίας και της αμοιβαίας εμπιστοσύνης.

Ωστόσο, η πρόοδος αυτή δεν σημαίνει εγκατάλειψη των στόχων και εξακολουθούν να υπάρχουν τομείς όπου πρέπει να γίνουν βελτιώσεις. Η έκθεση της Επιτροπής το 2009 σχετικά με την πρόοδο που έχει σημειωθεί όσον αφορά τη διασφάλιση της ποιότητας στην τριτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση κατέληξε στο συμπέρασμα ότι η ενίσχυση της διεθνούς διάστασης της διασφάλισης της ποιότητας θα πρέπει να είναι το επίκεντρο της μελλοντικής ανάπτυξης. Η κύρια πρόκληση είναι η προσαρμογή της εθνικής νομοθεσίας, ώστε να μπορούν τα πανεπιστήμια να αξιολογούνται από μη εθνικούς οργανισμούς διασφάλισης της ποιότητας. Η Ελλάδα, όπως πολλές άλλες χώρες της ΕΕ, δεν έχει πάρει ακόμα αυτά τα μέτρα και οι οργανισμοί της διασφάλισης της ποιότητας δεν είναι ακόμη μέλη του ENQA ούτε περιλαμβάνονται στο ευρωπαϊκό μητρώο.

Η δεύτερη έκθεση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τη διασφάλιση της ποιότητας, που πρέπει να υποβληθεί έως το τέλος του 2012, θα αξιολογήσει την πρόοδο από το 2009, και θα εξετάσει, π.χ., τη διαφάνεια των μηχανισμών διασφάλισης της ποιότητας, την προστιθέμενη αξία των ευρωπαϊκών προτύπων και κατευθυντήριων γραμμών και των μηχανισμών διασφάλισης της ποιότητας που ενθαρρύνουν τη διασυνοριακή συνεργασία των ιδρυμάτων τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000427/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Progress in quality assurance in higher education in the Member States

In the Commission report on progress in quality assurance in higher education under the new conditions dictated by the current crisis (COM(2009)0487), Member States are called on to take note of specific proposals for improving the quality of higher education in the EU, following the 2006 recommendation.

In view of this:

What view does the Commission take of progress in quality assurance in higher education in the Member States? Has it observed any abandonment of objectives, expectations and quality standards in respect of higher education in the EU in the context of the economic crisis which is continuing to afflict the Member States?

What is the situation regarding Greece?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2012)

Thanks to the Bologna Process and the European agenda for modernising higher education, considerable progress has been made in the last decade in establishing a European quality assurance (QA) system. This has been facilitated by the work of the 'E4 group' (European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA), European Universities Association (EUA), European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), European Students' Union (ESU)). Europe now has a functioning network of quality assurance agencies, and the European Register of QA Agencies was established in 2008 to foster cooperation and mutual trust.

However, this progress does not mean any abandoning of objectives and there remain areas for improvement. The Commission's 2009 Progress Report on Quality Assurance in higher education concluded that strengthening the international dimension of quality assurance should be the main focus for further development. The central challenge is adapting national legislation to make it possible for universities to be assessed by non-national quality assurance agencies. Greece, like many other EU countries, has not yet done this and its quality assurance agencies are not yet members of ENQA nor listed on the European Register.

The Commission's second report on quality assurance, due by end 2012, will assess progress since 2009, looking, for example, at the transparency of quality assurance mechanisms, , the added value of the European Standards and Guidelines and quality assurance mechanisms that stimulate cross-border cooperation by higher education institutions.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000428/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Καταμερισμός του ποσού που αξιοποίησε η Ελλάδα από το πρόγραμμα διανομής τροφίμων στους απόρους

Σε απάντηση της Επιτροπής σε προηγούμενη ερώτησή μου (E-009181/2011) διευκρινίζεται ότι «όσον αφορά το σχέδιο του 2010, μια σειρά από διοικητικές ανεπάρκειες εμπόδισαν την πλήρη απορρόφηση των κονδυλίων από την Ελλάδα, η οποία αξιοποίησε μόνο το 47,3 % των διατεθέντων πόρων, σε σύγκριση με τον μέσο όρο του 96,8 % στα 20 συμμετέχοντα κράτη μέλη». Σημειώνεται ότι το 47 % αντιστοιχεί σε περίπου 10 εκατομμύρια ευρώ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει και μπορεί να παραθέσει στοιχεία σχετικά με το ποιοι φορείς της Ελλάδας και πόσα χρήματα ο καθένας έλαβε από το συγκεκριμένο ποσό προκειμένου να τα διαθέσουν για την σίτιση των απόρων;

2. Η Επιτροπή αναφέρει ότι μια σειρά από διοικητικές ανεπάρκειες εμπόδισαν την πλήρη απορρόφηση των κονδυλίων από την Ελλάδα. Μπορεί να αναφέρει συγκεκριμένα ποιες είναι αυτές οι ανεπάρκειες;

3. Έχει πληροφορίες για την πορεία απορρόφησης πόρων από το πρόγραμμα διανομής τροφίμων στους απόρους από την Ελλάδα για το 2011;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Τα κράτη μέλη διαθέτουν σημαντική ελευθερία όσον αφορά τον σχεδιασμό και την υλοποίηση του προγράμματος διανομής τροφίμων σε εθνικό επίπεδο, συμπεριλαμβανομένης και της επιλογής των δικαιούχων οργανισμών. Στην Ελλάδα, η επιλογή τόσο των φιλανθρωπικών οργανώσεων διανομής, όσο και των τελικών δικαιούχων, γίνεται ετησίως με βάση τα κριτήρια επιλεξιμότητας που ορίζονται στην κοινή υπουργική απόφαση αριθ. 40946/2005. Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με τους δικαιούχους οργανισμούς, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στις αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές, δηλαδή στο Υπουργείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και Τροφίμων.

Η Ελλάδα δεν κατάφερε να αποσύρει εντός της καθορισμένης προθεσμίας το αποκορυφωμένο γάλα σε σκόνη το οποίο είχε καταλογιστεί στο πλαίσιο του ετήσιου σχεδίου του 2010, συνολικής αξίας 10 556 528 ευρώ. Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που παρασχέθηκαν από τις αρμόδιες αρχές, δεν ήταν δυνατόν να τηρηθεί η προθεσμία αυτή λόγω των προβλημάτων που αντιμετωπίστηκαν κατά τη διαδικασία διαγωνισμού για την επιλογή της επιχείρησης που θα αναλάμβανε τη διανομή των γαλακτοκομικών προϊόντων.

Έως τον Δεκέμβριο 2011, η Ελλάδα χρησιμοποίησε το 86 % των πόρων που διατέθηκαν στο πλαίσιο του σχεδίου 2011, σε σύγκριση με τη μέση απορρόφηση που ανέρχεται σε 96,4 % σε επίπεδο ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000428/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Allocation of the sum used by Greece from the plan for the distribution of food to the most deprived persons

The Commission, in reply to my earlier Question (E-009181/2011), explained that 'As regards the 2010 plan, a number of administrative shortcomings hampered a complete take-up of funds by Greece, which used only 47.3 % of allocated resources, compared to the average of 96.8 % in the 20 participating Member States'. 47 %, it should be noted, corresponds to approximately EUR 10 million.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say which bodies in Greece received funding, and how much for the distribution of food to the most deprived persons?

2. What exactly were the administrative shortcomings referred to by the Commission which prevented the complete absorption of funds by Greece?

3. Does the Commission have any information regarding the take-up of funding under the plan for the distribution of food to the most deprived persons by Greece for 2011?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

Member States dispose of significant freedom in planning and implementing the food distribution programme at national level, including also the selection of the beneficiary organisations. In Greece, the selection of both the charitable organisations distributing the aid and the final recipients is made annually on the basis of the eligibility criteria defined in the Joint Ministerial Decision No 40946/2005. For more information on the beneficiary organisations, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Greek competent authorities, i.e. the Ministry of Rural Development and Food.

Greece failed to withdraw within the set deadline the Skimmed Milk Powder which it had been attributed in the frame of the 2010 annual plan, for a total value of EUR 10 556 528. According to the information provided by the national authorities, this deadline could not be met because of problems encountered in the tendering procedure for the selection of the operator in charge of the supply of dairy products.

Until December 2011, Greece used 86 % of the resources allocated within the frame of the 2011 plan, compared to an average take-up of 96.4 % at EU level.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000429/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πολίτες της ΕΕ που αντιμετωπίζουν ή κινδυνεύουν να αντιμετωπίσουν πρόβλημα έλλειψης στέγης σύμφωνα με την ευρωπαϊκή τυπολογία ETHOS και πρωτοβουλίες της Επιτροπής

Η οικονομική κρίση που πλήττει τα κράτη μέλη της ευρωζώνης έχει ως συνέπεια την αύξηση του κινδύνου για τις πολύ αδύναμες κοινωνικές ομάδες να αντιμετωπίσουν πρόβλημα έλλειψης στέγης. Εξάλλου, οι συνθήκες οικονομικής κρίσης έχουν ως συνέπεια να προστίθεται σταδιακά ένας αριθμός νεοάστεγων ατόμων, που βρίσκονται ξαφνικά αντιμέτωποι ταυτόχρονα, με την ανεργία, την έλλειψη ή απώλεια ιδιόκτητης οικίας και την απουσία υποστηρικτικού οικογενειακού περιβάλλοντος.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Συγκεντρώνει στοιχεία σύμφωνα με την ευρωπαϊκή τυπολογία ETHOS για τον αριθμό αστέγων στα κράτη μέλη και για τον αριθμό εκείνων που αντιμετωπίζουν ή κινδυνεύουν να αντιμετωπίσουν πρόβλημα έλλειψης στέγης; Παρατηρείται αύξηση του ποσοστού αυτού τα τελευταία χρόνια;

2. Έχουν αξιοποιηθεί από την Ελλάδα πόροι από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο για την αντιμετώπιση του προβλήματος έλλειψης στέγης;

3. Θα εξέταζε θετικά η Επιτροπή την προώθηση ενός προγράμματος αντίστοιχου με εκείνο που εκτελείται για την πρόσβαση των άπορων ατόμων στη τροφή (Δωρεάν τροφή για τους άπορους ανθρώπους), ώστε να απορροφούνται άμεσα πόροι από τα κράτη μέλη, χωρίς την απαίτηση εθνικής συμμετοχής, για την κάλυψη των πολύ έκτακτων περιστάσεων αδυναμίας εξεύρεσης στέγης από πολίτες;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι πρέπει να διερευνηθεί περισσότερο το θέμα των αστέγων και να βελτιωθούν οι σχετικές στατιστικές και, όπως ήδη εξήγησε στην απάντησή της στο ψήφισμα του Κοινοβουλίου 383, της 14ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2011, βρίσκονται υπό εξέταση το πεδίο εφαρμογής και η αξία χρήσης της ευρωπαϊκής τυπολογίας ETHOS, στην οποία αναφέρεται ο κ. βουλευτής. Ωστόσο, έχει σημειωθεί σημαντική πρόοδος όσον αφορά τη συγκέντρωση στοιχείων σχετικά με την ανασφάλεια ή την ακαταλληλότητα στέγης. Η εργασία που διενεργήθηκε υπό την αιγίδα της επιτροπής κοινωνικής προστασίας οδήγησε στην ανάπτυξη τριών δεικτών για το κόστος της στέγης και την έλλειψη στέγης στα κράτη μέλη. Στοιχεία για τους δείκτες αυτούς διατίθενται από την Eurostat.

Για την τρέχουσα περίοδο προγραμματισμού, η Ελλάδα δεν έχει προβλέψει τη διάθεση κονδυλίων από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο για τη στήριξη των αστέγων.

Όπως αναφέρει ο κ. βουλευτής, για το τρέχον «πρόγραμμα διάθεσης τροφίμων στους απόρους», από το οποίο μπορούν να ωφεληθούν και οι άστεγοι, δεν απαιτείται εθνική συγχρηματοδότηση. Τα κράτη μέλη είναι αρμόδια να καθορίσουν τις ομάδες-στόχους που μπορούν να λάβουν στήριξη όσον αφορά τη διάθεση τροφίμων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000429/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: The ETHOS approach to homelessness or the risk of homelessness in the EU and Commission initiatives

The current economic crisis affecting the Member States of the eurozone has placed the most vulnerable members of society at greater risk of homelessness. As a result of the crisis a steadily increasing number of people are for the first time finding themselves in this situation, having been abruptly deprived of their jobs and homes and having no family to fall back on.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission gathering data for the purposes of ETHOS regarding the number of the homeless in the Member States and the number of those losing or at risk of losing their homes? Has any increase in these percentages been observed in recent years?

2. Has Greece earmarked any European Social Fund appropriations for measures to deal with the issue of homelessness?

3. Would the Commission consider promoting a programme similar to the programme for the provision of food for the most deprived persons (free food for the most deprived persons), to ensure that resources are directly used by the Member States, without any national contribution being required, to address especially urgent cases of homelessness?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The Commission is well aware of the need for research and for better statistics on homelessness and, as explained, in its response to the Parliament's resolution 383 of 14 September 2011, the scope and value of using the ETHOS European typology mentioned by the Honourable Member is under consideration. However, important progress has been made in collecting data bearing on the insecurity or inadequacy of housing. Work under the aegis of the Social Protection Committee has led to development of three indicators on housing costs and housing deprivation in Member States. Data on these indicators is available from Eurostat.

Greece has not earmarked European Social Fund funding to support homeless people in the current programming period.

As it is pointed out by the Honourable Member, no national co-financing is required under the current 'food for the most deprived persons scheme', which may also benefit homeless people. The responsibility for identifying the target groups for food support lies with the Member States.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000430/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πανευρωπαϊκό σύστημα για την κατάταξη των πανεπιστημίων

Σύμφωνα με την ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής «Στήριξη της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης και της απασχόλησης — ένα θεματολόγιο για τον εκσυγχρονισμό των συστημάτων τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης της Ευρώπης (SEC(2011)1063)» σημειώνεται ότι, παρόλο που η εκπαίδευση εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών, η ΕΕ μπορεί να συμβάλει σημαντικά στη στήριξη των εκσυγχρονιστικών τους προγραμμάτων και προβλέπεται η στήριξη αυτή να περιλαμβάνει την καθιέρωση ενός πανευρωπαϊκού συστήματος για την κατάταξη των πανεπιστημίων και την ενημέρωση των φοιτητών σχετικά με το πού είναι καλύτερο για αυτούς να σπουδάσουν σε όλη την Ευρώπη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια κριτήρια σκοπεύει να ακολουθήσει η Επιτροπή για την καθιέρωση ενός πανευρωπαϊκού συστήματος για την κατάταξη των πανεπιστημίων;

2. Ποια είναι τα εργαλεία, εύκολα προς τον χρήστη, που σκοπεύει να συστήσει προκειμένου να ενημερώνεται ο μελλοντικός φοιτητής για τα καλύτερα πανεπιστήμια στο αντικείμενο που θέλει να σπουδάσει;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι δεν έχει αξιοποιηθεί πλήρως το δυναμικό της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης στη συμβολή για την ευρωπαϊκή οικονομική και κοινωνική ανάπτυξη. Τα ιδρύματα τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης πρέπει να προσαρμοστούν στις μεταβαλλόμενες απαιτήσεις, να αυξήσουν τα επίπεδα των αποτελεσμάτων της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης και να βελτιώσουν την ποιότητα και την κοινωνική και οικονομική σημασία της τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης. Η ποικιλομορφία των ιδρυμάτων τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης στην Ευρώπη είναι ένα από τα ισχυρά τους σημεία, αλλά η επίτευξη μεγαλύτερης διαφάνειας θα εξυπηρετούσε καλύτερα τους σπουδαστές, τη χάραξη πολιτικής τόσο σε εθνικό όσο και σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, και θα έδινε τη δυνατότητα στα ιδρύματα να αναπτύξουν στρατηγικές με βάση τα ιδιαίτερα πλεονεκτήματά τους.

Οι ισχύουσες κατατάξεις των πανεπιστημίων έχουν την τάση να επικεντρώνονται στην έρευνα, αγνοώντας τις επιδόσεις σε άλλους σημαντικούς τομείς. Η πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής θα αναπτύξει ένα πολυδιάστατο εργαλείο κατάταξης, με βάση μια σειρά κριτηρίων όπως την ποιότητα της διδασκαλίας, την περιφερειακή δέσμευση, τη διεθνοποίηση και τη μεταφορά γνώσεων, καθώς και την έρευνα. Το σύστημα κατάταξης θα στηρίζεται στους χρήστες — οι χρήστες θα μπορούν να πραγματοποιούν εξατομικευμένες «έξυπνες κατατάξεις» με βάση τις δικές τους ανάγκες. Θα είναι δίκαιο — συγκρίνοντας όμοια στοιχεία– και ανεξάρτητο. Θα επιτρέπει στα ιδρύματα να αξιολογούν τη θέση τους σε σχέση με αντίστοιχα ιδρύματα σε εθνικό και διεθνές επίπεδο.

Το σύστημα κατάταξης θα περιλαμβάνει μία φιλική προς τον χρήστη διεπαφή στον ιστό που θα επιτρέπει σε κάθε χρήστη να δημιουργεί την προσωπική του κατάταξη, σύμφωνα με τις προτιμήσεις του, με σαφείς εξηγήσεις σχετικά με ό,τι υπολογίζεται με κάθε έναν από τους δείκτες επιδόσεων σε κάθε διάσταση. Θα επιτρέπει στους χρήστες να «προφιλτράρουν» ιδρύματα τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης σύμφωνα με ορισμένα κριτήρια (π.χ. επιλέγοντας ένα υποσύνολο χωρών, ιδρυμάτα ηλεκτρονικής μάθησης κ.λπ.). Τα προκαθορισμένα προφίλ χρηστών θα καθιστούν το εν λόγω σύστημα ιδιαίτερα προσβάσιμο σε μη εξειδικευμένους χρήστες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000430/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Pan-European system for university classification

According to the Commission communication 'Supporting growth and jobs — an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems (SEC(2011)1063)', it should be pointed out that, although education falls within the remit of the Member States, the EU may have a significant contribution to make in supporting their modernisation programmes, including the adoption of a pan-European system for university classification and information for students on the best place for them to study anywhere in Europe.

In view of this:

1. What criteria does the Commission intend to apply in adopting a pan-European university classification system?

2. What user-friendly tools will it recommend with a view to informing prospective students about the best universities for their chosen subjects?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The Commission is of the view that the potential of higher education to contribute to European economic and social growth has not been fully realised. Higher education institutions need to adapt to changing demands, raise higher education attainment levels and increase the quality and societal and economic relevance of higher education. The diversity of higher education institutions in Europe is one of their strengths: but more transparency would better serve students, inform policymaking at national as well as European level, and enable institutions to develop strategies based on their specific strengths.

Existing university rankings tend to focus on research , ignoring performance in other important areas. The Commission's initiative will develop a multidimensional ranking tool, based on a range of criteria such as teaching quality, regional engagement, internationalisation and knowledge transfer, as well as research. The ranking system will be user-driven — users will be able to make a personalised 'smart ranking' based on their own needs. It will be fair — comparing like with like — and independent. It will allow institutions to benchmark themselves against similar institutions at national and international level.

The ranking system will include a user-friendly web interface enabling every user to create a personal ranking, tuned to their preferences, with clear explanations of what is being measured by each of the performance indicators in every dimension. It will allow users to pre-filter institutions according to certain criteria (e.g. by choosing a subset of countries, e-learning institutions, etc.). Pre-defined user profiles will make it highly accessible for non-specialist users.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-000431/12
Komisi
Jan Březina (PPE)
(23. ledna 2012)

Předmět: Nabízení spotřebitelských úvěrů

Z výsledků šetření, které na podzim nechala provést Evropská komise, vyplývá, že většina (70 %) webových stránek nabízejících spotřebitelské úvěry neobsahuje nebo zkresluje důležité informace, které mohou být pro zájemce při rozhodování, zda o takový úvěr požádat, klíčové. V České republice neprošlo takovou kontrolou devět z deseti webů. Nejčastěji se podle Komise chybovalo u reklamy na osobní půjčky, kreditní karty či jiné typy spotřebitelských úvěrů, která obsahovala neúplné, zavádějící či nepravdivé údaje. A právě ty jsou pro zájemce, který o půjčce uvažuje, zcela klíčové. V České republice se kontrola týkala desítky webů, z nichž jich devět šetřením neprošlo.

Jaká opatření hodlá Komise podniknout, aby byla zjednána náprava?

Odpověď Johna Dalliho jménem Komise
(29. února 2012)

Šetření („sweep“) týkající se spotřebitelských úvěrů, na které pan odkazuje, prováděly vnitrostátní donucovací orgány působící v rámci sítě pro spolupráci v oblasti ochrany spotřebitele ([1]) zřízené v roce 2006.

Předběžná zjištění předložená Komisí dne 10. ledna 2012 se týkají první fáze uvedeného šetření. Nyní byla zahájena druhá, tzv. „donucovací“ fáze šetření, během níž se příslušné orgány obracejí na dotčené finanční instituce s žádostí o odpovídající nápravná opatření.

Komise toto šetření koordinuje a sleduje jeho průběh. O výsledcích „donucovací“ fáze podá zprávu v roce 2013.

([1]) Nařízení o spolupráci v oblasti ochrany spotřebitele; Úř. věst. L 364, 9.12.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000431/12
to the Commission
Jan Březina (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Consumer credit offers

The results of an investigation carried out for the European Commission in autumn 2011 show that the majority (70 %) of websites offering consumer credit either distort or do not contain important information that could be crucial for potential applicants when deciding whether to apply for credit. In the Czech Republic, nine out of ten of websites failed this check. According to the Commission, the most frequent shortcomings were in advertisements for personal loans, credit cards or other types of consumer credit, which contained incomplete, misleading or incorrect information. And it is precisely this information that is crucial for people considering a loan. Ten websites were investigated in the Czech Republic, of which nine failed.

What measures does the Commission intend to take in order to correct this situation?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

The 'Sweep' covering consumer credit to which the Honourable Member refers to was carried out by the national enforcement authorities working within the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network ([1]) established in 2006.

The preliminary findings of the sweep, presented by the Commission on 10 January 2012, correspond to the first phase of the exercise. The second, so called, 'enforcement phase' of the sweep has now started and participant authorities are contacting the financial institutions concerned to demand corrective actions as appropriate.

The Commission coordinates and monitors the sweeps. It will report on the outcome of the s enforcement phase in 2013.

([1]) Regulation on consumer protection cooperation; OJ L 364, 9.12.2004.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-000432/12
Komisi
Jan Březina (PPE)
(25. ledna 2012)

Předmět: Vzájemné uznávání odborných kvalifikací

Návrhy, kterými by se měla měnit směrnice, jíž se řídí vzájemné uznávání odborných kvalifikací, uvádějí, že po registraci mohou orgány u lékařů a zdravotnických pracovníků provádět kontroly způsobilosti, nicméně z návrhu jasně nevyplývá, kdo by tyto kontroly vykonával u osob samostatně výdělečně činných.

Jak Komise zajistí, aby nebyla ohrožena bezpečnost pacientů v důsledku toho, že navzdory změnám pravidel upravujících pohyb pracovní síly, které Evropská komise navrhuje, budou lékaři v EU i nadále mít možnost registrovat se v hostitelské zemi, aniž by byla ověřena jejich znalost tamějšího jazyka či odborná způsobilost?

Odpověď pana Barniera jménem Komise
(29. února 2012)

Komise dne 19. prosince 2011 předložila návrh na změnu směrnice o odborných kvalifikacích 2005/36/ES. Návrh nezavádí změny kontrol způsobilosti zdravotnických pracovníků.

Podle návrhu mohou příslušné orgány členských států ověřit znalost jazyka lékařů EU, pokud mají vážnou a konkrétní pochybnost o jejich dostatečných jazykových znalostech. V případě povolání, která mají důsledky pro bezpečnost pacienta, mohou členské státy svěřit příslušným orgánům pravomoc provádět kontrolu jazykových znalostí všech dotčených zdravotnických pracovníků, pokud to výslovně vyžaduje vnitrostátní systém zdravotní péče. V případě samostatně výdělečných zdravotnických pracovníků, kteří nejsou součástí vnitrostátního systému zdravotní péče, by kontroly jazykových znalostí měly provádět reprezentativní vnitrostátní organizace pacientů.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000432/12
to the Commission
Jan Březina (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Mutual recognition of professional qualifications

The proposals announced for changes to the directive that governs the mutual recognition of professional qualifications say doctors and other healthcare professionals can face competence checks by authorities after registration although it is not clear who would carry these out on self-employed people.

How will the Commission ensure patient safety is not at risk because, despite changes to rules on the movement of labour proposed by the European Commission, EU doctors will still be able to register in the host country without being tested on knowledge of its language or medical competence?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

On 19 December 2011 the Commission presented a proposal amending the Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC. The proposal does not introduce changes to competence checks of healthcare professionals.

The proposal provides for the possibility for Member States' competent authorities to check the language knowledge of EU doctors if there is a serious and concrete doubt about their sufficient language skills. In the case of professions with patient safety implications, Member States may confer to the competent authorities the right to carry out language checks covering all professionals concerned if it is expressly requested by the national healthcare system. In the case of self-employed health professionals not affiliated to the nationals' healthcare system, the language checks should be carried out by representative national patient organisations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000433/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE) e Barbara Matera (PPE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Inadempienze dell'Enel nella fornitura di energia elettrica a un agriturismo

Un imprenditore ha ricevuto dalla Regione Puglia una concessione trentennale per l'apertura nella Foresta Umbra del Gargano di un rifugio, una piccola attività di turismo forestale. In realtà la struttura non ha mai funzionato per la mancanza di energia elettrica.

Da due anni, infatti, manca l'elettricità nonostante l'imprenditore abbia versato 24mila euro all'Enel. In una prima fase l'Enel aveva richiesto 12mila euro per la realizzazione dei tralicci elettrici, ma l'Ente parco del Gargano non aveva concesso l'autorizzazione perché l'area è sottoposta a vari vincoli ambientali. Successivamente l'Enel ha chiesto altri 12mila euro per l'interramento dei cavi elettrici.

Nonostante i due pagamenti siano stati regolarmente effettuati già nel novembre del 2009, l'Enel non ha mai provveduto a portare l'energia elettrica nella struttura, vanificando così gli sforzi economici sostenuti dall'imprenditore.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può la Commissione far sapere se l'attività di turismo forestale che l'azienda si era prefissa è stata finanziata con fondi europei allo scopo di promuovere e sostenere il turismo ambientale e sostenibile?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(6 marzo 2012)

In base alle informazioni fornite dalle autorità di gestione interessate, il progetto cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare non ha ricevuto alcun finanziamento dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, né dal programma di sviluppo regionale per la regione Puglia.

A prescindere da eventuali finanziamenti europei per il progetto, le informazioni fornite dall'onorevole parlamentare indicano che eventuali ricorsi per la situazione attuale andrebbero presentati innanzitutto alla autorità italiane. La direttiva 2009/72/CE ([1]) impone alle autorità di regolamentazione dei singoli Stati membri di far sì che i gestori dei sistemi ottemperino ai loro obblighi [articolo 37, paragrafo 1, lettera b)] e di controllare il tempo impiegato per effettuare connessioni e riparazioni [articolo 37, paragrafo 1, lettera m)].

([1]) Direttiva 2009/72/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 13 luglio 2009, relativa a norme comuni per il mercato interno dell'energia elettrica e che abroga la direttiva 2003/54/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000433/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE) and Barbara Matera (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Failure by Enel to supply electricity to a forestry tourism business

An entrepreneur obtained a 30-year licence from the Apulian regional authorities to run a small forestry tourism business, a lodge, in the Umbra forest, on the Gargano peninsula. However, the plan never got off the ground, owing to the lack of an electricity supply.

For the last two years, even though the entrepreneur has paid the Italian electricity board, Enel, EUR 24 000, no electricity has been supplied. Initially, Enel asked for EUR 12 000 to install pylons, but the Gargano National Park Authority refused permission on the grounds that the area is subject to various environmental protection rules. Enel then asked for a further EUR 12 000 to lay cables underground.

Despite the fact that the two payments were duly made in November 2009, Enel has never supplied electricity to the establishment, rendering the entrepreneur's investment worthless.

In the light of the foregoing, can the Commission say whether the entrepreneur's projected forestry tourism business has ever received European funding designed to promote and support low-impact sustainable tourism?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

According to the information provided by the concerned managing authorities, the project referred to by the Honourable Member did not receive any EU funding from the European Regional Development Fund, nor from the Rural Development Programme for the Puglia Region.

Irrespective of any European funding for the project, the information provided by the Honourable Member indicates that any redress of the current situation should be sought first of all from the Italian authorities. Directive 2009/72/EC ([1]) obliges the regulatory authority of each Member State to ensure the compliance of system operators with their obligations (Article 37.1(b)) and to monitor the time taken by them to make connections and repairs (Article 37.1(m)).

([1]) 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 and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000434/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Furto delle pietre della Shoah

I quotidiani riportano la scoperta di un gesto di oltraggio alla memoria dei deportati di Roma avvenuto di recente. Sono, infatti, state rubate tre «pietre di inciampo» che l'artista tedesco Gunter Denmig aveva depositato pochi giorni fa in via Santa Maria in Monticelli di fronte alla casa da cui furono deportate le tre sorelle Spizzichino durante la Seconda guerra mondiale, pietre che sono state divelte e sostituite con tre normali sampietrini.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione riferire se, per monumenti di importanza storica come quello descritto, esiste la possibilità che vengano riconosciuti a fini di preservazione dei siti della memoria storica europea, affinché opere di questa importanza possano essere preservate in migliori condizioni e con maggiore protezione?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(28 febbraio 2012)

La Commissione ha a cuore la preservazione della memoria delle vittime dei crimini commessi dal nazismo. In tal modo si aiutano i cittadini a comprendere meglio il proprio passato comune e i valori su cui si fonda l'Unione europea, in particolare il recupero e il mantenimento della pace e della democrazia.

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni specifiche in merito al furto avvenuto presso il memoriale di via Santa Maria in Monticelli.

L'istituzione e la gestione di siti commemorativi all'interno dell'UE sono di competenza degli Stati membri. La Commissione non è pertanto direttamente coinvolta nel monitoraggio della situazione riguardante siti commemorativi esistenti o di futura creazione. Per questa ragione la Commissione può contribuire solo in minima parte alle iniziative nazionali volte a preservare i siti della memoria storica europea.

Nell'ambito dell'Azione 4 «Memoria europea attiva» ([1]), che rientra nel Programma «Europa per i cittadini», la Commissione finanzia progetti di organizzazioni e siti commemorativi già esistenti per mantenere viva la memoria dei crimini commessi da nazismo e stalinismo. L'assegnazione delle sovvenzioni avviene tramite una procedura di selezione pubblicata su base annuale ([2]).

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme/documents/2011/programme_guide_it.pdf
([2]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_en.php.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000434/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Theft of stones commemorating the Holocaust

Newspapers have reported the discovery of an act which took place recently and which is an affront to the memory of the deportees from Rome. Three 'Stumbling Blocks', by the German artist Gunter Denmig, have been stolen. He had installed them a few days ago at Via Santa Maria, in Monticelli, in front of the house from which the three Spizzichino sisters were taken to be deported, during the Second World War. The stones were dug up and replaced with three normal cobblestones.

This being so, could the Commission say whether it would be possible for monuments of historical importance, such as the one described, to be recognised as sites of European Historic Memory for the purposes of preservation, so that works of this importance can be preserved in better conditions and with greater protection?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2012)

Preserving the memory of the victims of crimes committed by Nazism is of importance for the Commission. It helps citizens to better understand their common past and the values on which the European Union is built, in particular the restoration and preservation of peace and democracy.

The Commission has no information about the particular case of the theft at the memorial place in Via Santa Maria in Monticelli.

The establishment and administration of commemorative sites in the EU falls under the responsibility of Member States. Hence, the Commission is not directly involved and does not monitor the situation of existing or prospective commemorative sites. For this reason, the Commission can contribute only to a limited extent to national efforts made to preserve the sites of European historical memory.

Under Action 4 'Active European Remembrance' ([1]) within the 'Europe for Citizens' Programme, the Commission provides funding to projects of already established organisations and memorial sites which keep alive the memory of the crimes committed by Nazism and Stalinism. The grants are allocated through a call for proposals which is published once a year ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme-actions/doc48_en.htm
([2]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_en.php.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000435/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Vivisezione sugli animali

Moltissime sono le proteste di cittadini italiani che si sono radunati in questi giorni davanti a Palazzo Montecitorio (Roma) per chiedere la chiusura di un allevamento bresciano, unico in Italia nel suo genere poiché al suo interno vengono cresciuti cani di razza, i beagle, destinati alla vivisezione.

La fabbrica della morte, così è stata definita, è ora posta sotto pressione e si chiede all'azienda di chiudere i battenti. Questo anche grazie alla direttiva 2010/63/UE in materia di vivisezione, che sarà presto recepita anche in Italia e che stabilisce che non sarà possibile allevare nel territorio nazionale cani, gatti o primati che siano destinati alla vivisezione o alla sperimentazione animale.

In pratica, con l'applicazione della normativa europea non ci sarà più possibilità di vivisezione su queste specie e sarà obbligatorio ricorrere a tecniche scientifiche differenti. Non solo, sarà proibito qualsiasi test che non preveda pratiche anestetiche per evitare agli animali inutili sofferenze.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se può comunicare quanti sono attualmente gli allevamenti in Europa che crescono animali ai fini della vivisezione;

2. nel caso in cui l'azienda bresciana non volesse adattarsi al provvedimento europeo, se è possibile un intervento europeo che obblighi l'allevamento a rispettare la legge.

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2012)

La Commissione non possiede informazioni sul numero di stabilimenti per l'allevamento di cani nell'Unione europea.

La direttiva 86/609/CEE del Consiglio relativa alla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini sperimentali o ad altri fini scientifici ([1]) verrà abrogata dalla direttiva 2010/63/UE ([2]) con effetto a decorrere dal 1° gennaio 2013. La direttiva 2010/63/UE stabilisce misure a tutela degli animali utilizzati nelle procedure scientifiche e include nel suo campo di applicazione le attività degli allevatori, dei fornitori e degli utilizzatori di animali.

Le disposizioni di tale direttiva non vietano l'allevamento a fini scientifici di cani o anche di gatti o di primati non umani; ogni uso di animali per fini scientifici deve tuttavia essere conforme alle disposizioni della direttiva medesima, che fissa tra l'altro norme vincolanti per l'alloggiamento e la cura degli animali.

Le autorità nazionali competenti per la direttiva 86/609/CEE e per la direttiva 2010/63/UE, che la sostituirà, sono garanti del rispetto della normativa unionale nel proprio territorio e sono perciò tenute a controllare che le disposizioni della direttiva vigente siano correttamente applicate e osservate.

([1]) GU L 358 del 18.12.1986.
([2]) GU L 276 del 20.10.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000435/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Animal testing (vivisection)

Italian citizens who have recently been gathering outside the Chamber of Deputies (Palazzo Montecitorio) in Rome have been protesting loudly to demand the closure of a breeding centre in Brescia, the only one of its kind in Italy, which breeds pedigree dogs — beagles — intended for vivisection.

The factory of death, as it has been called, is now under pressure and the company has been asked to close down its business. One reason for this is Directive 2010/63/EU, which concerns vivisection and will shortly be implemented in Italy too. Under that directive, it will be prohibited to breed, on national territory, dogs, cats and primates intended for vivisection (animal testing).

For all practical purposes, once the European legislation is implemented, vivisection of these species will no longer be permitted and the use of different scientific techniques will be required. Moreover, tests without anaesthetic will be prohibited, to avoid unnecessary suffering for the animals .

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. How many farms/breeding centres that breed animals for vivisection currently exist in Europe?

2. Should the company in Brescia not wish to comply with the European directive, would it be possible for the EU to take action to oblige the company to respect the law?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

The Commission does not possess information on the number of dog breeding centres in the EU.

Directive 86/609/EEC ([1]), on the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes, will be repealed by Directive 2010/63/EU ([2]) taking effect from 1 January 2013. Directive 2010/63/EU establishes measures which protect animals that are used in scientific procedures, and includes within its scope the operations of breeders, suppliers and users of animals.

According to the provisions of this directive the breeding of dogs, or indeed cats or non-human primates for scientific purposes is not forbidden. However, all use of animals for scientific purposes must comply with the provisions set out in the directive. With the new Directive these include binding standards for the housing and care of animals.

The national authorities competent for Directives 86/609/EEC and its replacement, 2010/63/EU, are responsible for enforcing EC law in their respective territories and thus controlling the correct application and compliance of the provisions of the directive.

([1]) OJ L 358, 18.12.1986.
([2]) OJ L 276, 20.10.2010.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000436/12
adresată Consiliului
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(23 ianuarie 2012)

Subiect: Președinția daneză a UE — acțiuni pentru promovarea Anului european al îmbătrânirii active

2012 este Anul european al îmbătrânirii active. Președinția daneză a Consiliului UE a anunțat că intenționează să promoveze această inițiativă. Aș dori să întreb Consiliul care sunt acțiunile pe care Președinția daneză a Consiliului UE le are în vedere pentru promovarea Anului european al îmbătrânirii active în primul semestru al anului 2012?

Răspuns
(12 aprilie 2012)

Grupul de lucru relevant din cadrul Consiliului a început deja discuțiile în vederea prezentării de către Președinție a concluziilor privind îmbătrânirea activă prin incluziunea și participarea active, în contextul mai larg al provocărilor demografice. Consiliul va fi invitat să adopte respectivele concluzii în iunie.

În acest sens, s-a solicitat Comitetului Regiunilor să elaboreze un aviz exploratoriu cu privire la cele mai bune modalități de a promova îmbătrânirea activă. Contribuții suplimentare pot veni din partea Comitetului pentru protecția socială și a Comitetului pentru ocuparea forței de muncă, îmbătrânirea activă fiind pe ordinea de zi a reuniunii lor comune din 26 și 27 martie 2012.

De asemenea, la 19 și 20 ianuarie 2012, Președinția daneză a găzduit Conferința inaugurală a Anului european al îmbătrânirii active și solidarității între generații de la Copenhaga.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000436/12
to the Council
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: EU Danish Presidency — actions to promote the European Year of Active Ageing

2012 is the European Year of Active Ageing. The Danish Presidency of the EU Council has announced that it intends to promote this initiative. I would like to ask the Council what measures the Danish Presidency of the EU Council is envisaging to promote the European Year of Active Ageing in the first half of 2012.

Reply
(12 April 2012)

The relevant working party within the Council has already started discussions with a view to submission by the Presidency of conclusions on active ageing through active inclusion and participation, in the broader context of demographic challenges. The Council will be invited to adopt such conclusions in June.

To this end, the Committee of the Regions was requested to draw up an exploratory opinion on how best to promote active ageing. Further contributions may come from the Social Protection Committee and the Employment Committee, which have active ageing on the agenda of their joint meeting on 26 and 27 March 2012.

Moreover, on 19 and 20 January 2012 the Danish Presidency hosted the Inaugural Conference of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations in Copenhagen.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000437/12
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(23 ianuarie 2012)

Subiect: Testele de rezistență pentru centralele nucleare

După accidentul de la Fukushima, UE a decis ca, începând cu 1 iunie 2011, să fie efectuate teste de rezistență la toate cele 143 de centrale nucleare din UE. În martie 2011, Consiliul European a aprobat inițiativa Comisiei de a lansa un proces de evaluare completă, în întreaga UE, a riscurilor și a securității centralelor nucleare. Inițiativa a fost susținută și de Parlamentul European în cadrul dezbaterii din data de 6 aprilie 2011, Parlamentul solicitând definirea unor criterii de evaluare comune și detaliate. Toate cele paisprezece state membre ale UE care au în funcțiune centrale nucleare, plus Lituania, participă la exercițiul de testare a rezistenței centralelor nucleare. Elveția și Ucraina au acceptat, la rândul lor, să participe la acest exercițiu, în calitate de țări învecinate. Un număr de țări au hotărât — în plus față de cerințele convenite — să includă nu numai centralele nucleare aflate în funcțiune, dar și pe cele dezafectate sau alte instalații nucleare.

Comisia a solicitat includerea în testele de rezistență a evaluărilor specifice pentru trei domenii principale: fenomenele naturale extreme (seisme, inundații, condiții meteorologice extreme), reacția instalațiilor la pene prelungite de electricitate și/sau la pierderi ale disipatorului termic ultim (indiferent de cauză) și gestionarea accidentelor grave. Metodele de investigare sunt definite la nivel național și se află în responsabilitatea autorităților naționale de reglementare specifice.

Conform calendarului stabilit de Comisie, procesul de evaluare a rezistenței centralelor nucleare ale UE ar trebui finalizat până în aprilie 2012, astfel încât rezultatele evaluărilor *inter pares* să fie prezentate într-un raport final la reuniunea Consiliului European din 28 — 29 iunie 2012. Aș dori să întreb Comisia când va prezenta Parlamentului European rezultatele raportului final privind testele de rezistență pentru centralele nucleare și măsurile propuse ca rezultat al evaluărilor efectuate?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(27 februarie 2012)

Se preconizează că raportul final al Comisiei privind testele de rezistență va fi finalizat spre sfârșitul lunii mai a anului 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000437/12
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Nuclear power plant stress tests

In the aftermath of the Fukushima accident, the EU decided to have stress tests carried out at all 143 nuclear power plants in the Union, starting on 1 June 2011. In March 2011 the European Council approved the Commission's initiative launching a process involving a full assessment throughout the EU of risks and safety at the nuclear power plants. This initiative also received the backing of Parliament in a debate held on 6 April 2011, with the EP calling for the definition of common and detailed evaluation criteria. All 14 Member States which have operative nuclear power plants, plus Lithuania, are taking part in the stress test exercise at those plants. Switzerland and Ukraine have, for their part, agreed to participate in this exercise as countries bordering on the EU. A number of countries have decided, in addition to the agreed requirements, to include not only operative nuclear power plants but also decommissioned plants or other nuclear installations.

The Commission has requested that the stress tests should include specific assessments in three main areas: extreme natural events (earthquakes, flooding, extreme weather conditions); response of the installations to prolonged power failures and/or loss of the ultimate heat sink (irrespective of the cause); and severe accident management. The investigation methods are defined nationally and fall under the responsibility of the specific national regulators.

According to the timetable set by the Commission, the process for evaluating the resilience of the nuclear power plants in the EU should be completed by April 2012, so that the results of the peer reviews can be presented in a final report at the European Council meeting of 28-29 June 2012.

Can the Commission state when it will inform Parliament of the results contained in the final report on the nuclear power plant stress tests and the measures proposed as a result of the evaluations carried out?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

The final report of the Commission on stress tests is expected to be finalised towards the end of May 2012.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000438/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(25. januar 2012)

Om: Bygningsreglementet og Eurocodes

På den danske Erhvervs- og Byggestyrelses hjemmeside kan det danske bygningsreglement downloades, og heri er rækken af Eurocodes nævnt. Disse knytter sig til et tilsvarende antal nationale, danske anvendelsesdokumenter. Det er imidlertid den generelle opfattelse, at disse Eurocodes er ganske indviklede, således at et kursus i hvert enkelt Eurocode er nødvendig for dens forståelse.

Den tilgængelige vejledning består i at melde sig til omkostningstunge kurser, arrangeret af det danske, private firma Byggecentrum. Kurserne synes dog — til forskel fra tidligere — mere at handle om, hvordan man kan få et overblik over Eurocodes og deres indhold med tilhørende nationale anvendelses-dokumenter end at lære brugen af dem som værktøj indenfor det fag, brugeren er uddannet i.

Dette er et problem, som ikke letter samhandlen mellem de europæiske lande, hvor fælles regler burde tilsigte en mindre besværlig handel over de europæiske grænser.

Vil Kommissionen derfor oplyse, om den har kendskab til, hvordan andre medlemslande forvalter dette komplicerede spørgsmål og herunder oplyse, om andre medlemslande har oplevet samme vanskeligheder som i Danmark?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(6. marts 2012)

Eurocodes er tekniske standarder for strukturelt design og konstruktion, der er udviklet af den europæiske standardiseringsorganisation CEN/CENELEC. For at tage hensyn til forskellige nationale klimatiske og geologiske forhold samt eventuelle forskellige nationale byggeskikke indebærer deres omsættelse til nationalt plan af de nationale standardiseringsorganisationer udarbejdelse af nationale bilag, herunder navnlig nationalt fastsatte parametre, og eventuel fastsættelse af nationale sikkerhedsmæssige koefficienter.

Denne omstændighed forhindrer ikke den frie omsætning af tekniske tjenester i det indre marked, men den kan rent faktisk øge kompleksiteten af Eurocodes.

Derfor har en række nationale standardiseringsorganisationer i EU offentliggjort retningslinjer og andet informationsmateriale til praktiske brugere. Oplysninger om disse initiativer vil af Det Fælles Forskningscenter i Ispra i de kommende måneder blive indsamlet og offentliggjort på en specifik hjemmeside for Eurocodes.

Kommissionen har ikke kendskab til eventuelle forpligtelser til at deltage i kurser for Eurocodes, eller at retningslinjerne medfører fordele for en bestemt virksomhed, der udbyder kurser. Ikke desto mindre opfordres medlemsstaterne til, inden for arbejdsgruppen af nationale korrespondenter for Eurocodes, at fremme udbredelsen af oplysninger om og uddannelse i Eurocodes på nationalt plan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000438/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Building regulations and Eurocodes

Danish building regulations, which list a series of Eurocodes, can be downloaded from the Danish Business Authority's website. The codes link to a corresponding number of national Danish application documents. There is, however, a general feeling that these Eurocodes are very complicated, to the extent of requiring a course in order to understand each of them.

The available guidelines suggest signing up to expensive courses run by the Danish private company, *Byggecentrum*. Unlike before, however, it seems that the courses are more on how to obtain an overview of Eurocodes and their content, with the corresponding national application documents, than on learning to use them as tools within the discipline the user is qualified in.

This is a problem which does not facilitate cooperation between Member States, where common rules should aim to facilitate trade across European borders.

Does the Commission know how other Member States manage this complex issue and whether other Member States have experienced the same difficulties as in Denmark?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The Eurocodes are technical standards for structural design and construction developed by the European Standardisation Organisation CEN/CENELEC. To take account of different national climatic and geological conditions as well as of possible different national building practices, their transposition to national level by the national standard bodies entails the drafting of national annexes, notably including nationally determined parameters, and the possible setting up of national safety coefficients.

This circumstance does not prevent the free circulation of engineering services in the internal market, but it may indeed increase the complexity of the Eurocodes.

Therefore, a number of national standardisation organisations in the EU have published guidelines and other information material for practical users. Information on these initiatives being collected and will be published in the next months on a specific website for Eurocodes by the Joint Research Centre in Ispra.

The Commission has no knowledge about any obligations for attending courses for Eurocodes or that guidelines are setting preferences for any specific company providing courses. It nevertheless encourages Member States, within the Working Group of Eurocodes National Correspondents, to promote the dissemination of information and the training of Eurocodes at national level.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000439/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(23. januar 2012)

Om: Prostitution i EU

Det danske dagblad BT har gennem længere tid sat fokus på den voksende prostitution i Danmark, som østudvidelsen af EU har medført. I den forbindelse kunne avisen 1. januar 2012 meddele, at der siden Polen blev medlem af EU 1. maj 2004 har været 10 000 polakker, som hvert år er blevet presset ud i prostitution rundt omkring i Vesteuropa.

Spørgeren finder dette tal foruroligende højt og vil derfor bede Kommissionen be- eller afkræfte dette?

Har Kommissionen kendskab til lignende tal, og hvordan ser det i givet fald ud for de ni andre østeuropæiske lande?

Hvilke tiltag agter Kommissionen at tage for at komme dette alvorlige problem til livs?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(30. maj 2012)

De former for prostitution, som nævnes i spørgsmålet, omfatter ofte menneskehandel og seksuel udnyttelse. Kommissionen betragter bekæmpelse af menneskehandel som en topprioritet for EU. Direktiv 2011/36/EU ([1]) blev vedtaget i marts 2011. Direktivet anerkender det kønsspecifikke ved menneskehandel og omfatter forskellige former for menneskehandel, såsom menneskehandel med henblik på seksuel udnyttelse, tvangsarbejde eller tvangstjenester og fjernelse af organer. Medlemsstaterne skal gennemføre direktivet inden april 2013.

Kommissionen har også iværksat et dataindsamlingsinitiativ vedrørende menneskehandel. Dataindsamlingen er i gang, og resultaterne forventes at foreligge i løbet af 2012. Dataene vil bl.a. give oplysninger om oprindelses- og bestemmelseslande, ofrenes køn og de forskellige former for udnyttelse, hvilket vil give et klarere billede af menneskehandelen i EU.

En oversigt over alle de lovgivningsmæssige og ikke-lovgivningsmæssige aktiviteter, som sigter mod at bekæmpe menneskehandel, kan findes på webstedet om bekæmpelse af menneskehandel:www.ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking.

([1]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2011/36/EU af 5. april 2011 om forebyggelse og bekæmpelse af menneskehandel og beskyttelse af ofrene herfor, og om erstatning af Rådets rammeafgørelse 2002/629/RIA, EUT L 101 af 15.4.2011, s. 1-11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000439/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Prostitution in the EU

For some time, the Danish newspaper *BT* has been focusing on the growth of prostitution in Denmark as a result of the EU's expansion eastwards. On this subject, in its 1 January 2012 issue, the paper was able to report that, since Poland became a member of the EU on 1 May 2004, 10 000 Poles have been forced into prostitution each year across Western Europe.

I find this number alarmingly high. Could the Commission therefore please confirm or deny this statistic?

Is the Commission aware of similar statistics and, if so, how do they stand for the other nine East European Member States?

What action is the Commission intending to take in order to come to grips with this serious problem?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2012)

The practices of prostitution referred to in the question often involve trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation. The Commission considers addressing trafficking in human beings a top priority for the EU. In March 2011, Directive 2011/36/EU ([1]) was adopted. The directive recognises the gender-specific nature of trafficking and covers different forms of trafficking such as trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, for forced labour or services or for the removal of organs. Member States have until April 2013 to transpose the directive.

The Commission has also launched a data collection initiative on trafficking in human beings. The process is currently ongoing and results are expected in the course of 2012. The data will *inter alia* yield information on countries of origin and destination, the gender of victims and types of exploitation allowing a better understanding of trafficking in human beings in the EU.

An overview of all legislative and non-legislative activities aimed at addressing trafficking in human beings can be found on the EU anti-trafficking website: www.ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking

([1]) 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.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000440/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Burma/Myanmar's apparent turn towards democracy

The Vice-President/High Representative will have read reports of the unprecedented historic ceasefire negotiated on 12.1.2012 between the Burmese Government and the ethnic minority Karen population, who have traditionally sought an element of autonomy from central governmental control, bringing to an end what has been labelled 'the longest running insurgency in history'. This detente is the latest in a series of apparently progressive steps that Rangoon has made in order to seek legitimacy on the world stage through democratic reforms, in the hope of ending its international isolation.

The most celebrated and publicised of these moves was the release from long-term house arrest of the celebrated opposition politician and Sakharov Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi in 2011. Following high-level separate visits from both British Foreign Secretary William Hague and United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the Burmese Government has gone on, to its great credit, to pledge the release of over 600 political prisoners.

— Can the Vice-President/High Representative welcome and comment on these extremely encouraging major steps towards freedom and democracy for the people of Burma instigated by President Thein Sein?

Rangoon is currently subject to stringent EU sanctions, due for review in April of this year.

— Can the Vice-President/High Representative outline a plan of tangible, concrete steps (i.e. a road map) that the Burmese Government will have to undertake in order for the sanctions to be lifted?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is following events in Burma/Myanmar closely. There have been significant positive changes since the new Government took office in early 2011. These include the engagement with the opposition — i.e. with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her NLD party — amendments to the Constitution and the Party Registration Law allowing the NLD to contest the by-elections on 1 April; the release of many political prisoners with the most prominent and sensitive cases among them; the creation of a National Human Rights Commission; new laws on trade unions and free assembly, as well as relaxed censorship; and major efforts to resolve peacefully the conflicts in ethnic areas. An intensive debate on economic and social reform has been launched, focusing on rural poverty and improving the business climate.

It is the view of the HR/VP that as these positive steps add up, they make a reversal of course more difficult. Certainly, after fifty years of military rule, much needs to change. However, the conditions seem in place to reset relations between the EU and Myanmar. Commissioner Piebalgs, responsible for Development, undertook a mission to Myanmar in February 2012 and announced an additional financial envelope of EUR 150 million. These funds shall be used in areas of health, education and agriculture/livelihoods.

Factors contributing to a normalisation of relations would be a free and fair conduct of the by-elections on 1 April, the release of the remaining political prisoners, and continued efforts to settle the ethnic conflicts peacefully. Whether the set of EU restrictive measures will be lifted or further eased will depend on a unanimous decision by EU Foreign ministers in April 2012. At this point, it seems appropriate to focus on opportunities to support the ongoing reform efforts in Burma/Myanmar with more dialogue and assistance, and to encourage further progress.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000441/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Corredor mediterráneo

La nueva Ministra de Fomento española, Ana Pastor, ha declarado que la red de AVE en construcción es «irrenunciable» ([1]). En este sentido, parece ser que no hay ningún cambio con el Gobierno anterior, ya que el nuevo Gobierno español continuará construyendo kilómetros y kilómetros de trenes de alta velocidad poco rentables.

Mientras la Comisión anuncia los nuevos corredores ferroviarios europeos prioritarios para reactivar la economía, el Gobierno español no apuesta por su construcción y decide continuar apostando por infraestructuras ferroviarias de pasajeros y no de mercancías.

El Corredor Mediterráneo, recientemente calificado por la Comisión como prioritario, ni siquiera fue mencionado en el debate de investidura del nuevo Presidente español, Mariano Rajoy, por lo que se desprende que el nuevo Gobierno no apostará por construir esta infraestructura tan necesaria para la reactivación económica del sur de Europa.

¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión que el nuevo Gobierno español siga construyendo líneas ferroviarias AVE radiales y deficitarias, mientras no hace ningún comentario sobre la construcción del corredor mediterráneo?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de febrero de 2012)

La Comisión constata que la implantación de la red de alta velocidad española se ha producido a un ritmo rápido y con un adecuado control de los costes de construcción. Observa asimismo que han entrado en funcionamiento varias líneas (Madrid-Andalucía, Madrid-Barcelona y Madrid-Valencia), y que otras nuevas (como la Barcelona-Valencia, siguiendo el corredor mediterráneo, o la Y vasca) se justifican por la demanda existente y desviada, según los análisis de viabilidad y de coste/beneficio realizados por España en relación con sus corredores de alta velocidad. De la información disponible se desprende, no obstante, la existencia de dificultades en algunas paradas intermedias (como Madrid-Albacete / Madrid-Cuenca) de líneas más largas (a Valencia y a Alicante, respectivamente) dada la corta distancia a que se encuentran y la demanda relativamente escasa de este servicio provisionalmente limitado. Además, la plena explotación de las líneas de alta velocidad saldría beneficiada de una apertura de este mercado potencialmente fructífero.

En lo que se refiere a los corredores, tras las consultas con los Estados miembros para el establecimiento de la red principal y las prioridades esenciales en cuanto a su implantación en 2014-2020, se alcanzó el acuerdo de que España se centrara en la interoperabilidad de los corredores más importantes (incluido el corredor mediterráneo) durante el próximo período de programación.

Además, España participará en el establecimiento de dos corredores ferroviarios de mercancías, el 4 y el 6 ([2]). Se trata de las líneas Almería-Valencia/Madrid-Zaragoza/Barcelona-Marsella del corredor 6 y Lisboa/Leixões-Madrid-Medina del Campo/Bilbao-San Sebastián-Irún del corredor 4. Los consejos de administración de estos dos corredores tendrán que definir las líneas ferroviarias que se utilizarán en ellos y estudiar la posibilidad de utilizar estas líneas de alta velocidad que comparten el ancho de vía europeo principal.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120112/54244852536/fomento-red-ave-construccion-irrenunciable.html
([2]) Según se describe en el anexo 1 del Reglamento (UE) n° 913/2010 sobre una red ferroviaria europea para un transporte de mercancías competitivo, DO L 276 de 20.10.2010, pp. 22-32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000441/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: The Mediterranean Corridor

The new Spanish Minister for Public Works, Ana Pastor, has declared that, 'there can be no going back' regarding the AVE high speed train network, currently under construction ([1]). In that respect, it seems that there is no change from the previous Government, since the new Spanish Government will continue to construct more and more kilometres of unprofitable high-speed railway lines.

While the Commission has announced that the new European railway corridors are a priority for reviving the economy, the Spanish Government is failing to commit to their construction and has decided to continue to support passenger, rather than freight, railway infrastructure.

The Mediterranean Corridor, recently classed as a priority by the Commission, was not even mentioned in the inaugural debate of the new Spanish Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy. It is therefore clear that the new Government will not support building this infrastructure, which is so necessary to economic recovery in southern Europe.

What is the Commission's view of the new Spanish Government continuing to build loss-making, radial, high-speed railway lines, whilst making no reference to construction of the Mediterranean Corridor?

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

The Commission notes that the implementation of the Spanish high-speed network took place at a fast pace and with a good control over construction costs. The Commission also observes that many lines have successfully entered into operation (Madrid-Andalucia, Madrid-Barcelona and Madrid-Valencia), and new lines (e.g. Barcelona-Valencia along the Mediterranean Corridor, the Y Basque) are justified by the existing and diverted demand according to the feasibility and cost-benefit analysis performed by Spain on its high-speed corridors. From the information at its disposal, the Commission notes however that some operations faced difficulties on some intermediate stops (e.g.: Madrid-Albacete/Madrid — Cuenca) of longer lines (to Valencia, to Alicante, respectively) due to the short distance of these stops and the relatively poor demand for this provisionally limited service. In addition, the full exploitation of high speed lines would benefit from an opening of this potentially fruitful market.

As far as Corridors are concerned, following the consultations of Member States for setting the Core Network and the key priorities in terms of implementation for 2014-2020, it was commonly agreed that Spain will focus on the interoperability of the most important corridors (including the Mediterranean corridor) in the next programming period.

Moreover, Spain will be participating in the establishment of two Rail Freight Corridors 4 and 6 ([2]). These are the lines Almeria-Valencia/Madrid-Zaragoza/Barcelona-Marseille of Corridor 6 and Lisbon/Leixoes-Madrid-Medina del Campo/Bilbao-San Sebastian-Irun of Corridor 4. The Management Boards of these 2 Corridors have to define the rail lines to be used in these Corridors and have to consider the possibility to use these high speed lines which share the main European gauge.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120112/54244852536/fomento-red-ave-construccion-irrenunciable.html
([2]) as described in Annex A of Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight, OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 22-32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000442/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Ecodesign of products for recycling

Securing maximum economic and environmental advantage from the recycling of products requires that the supply of materials to be recycled contains as few impurities as possible. In turn this requires that the original products should be produced and packaged in a way that facilitates their recycling, not least through making it very easy indeed for the owners of products to sort and prepare them for recycling.

In practice, however, product owners may in some cases require considerable expertise to determine what can and what cannot be recycled, particularly as the requirements differ from one recycling company to another. In consequence, very large quantities of waste intended for recycling end up in landfills or incineration plants, or are shipped abroad as low-grade recycling material.

In many cases product suppliers put their own convenience far ahead of any wish to ensure that the eventual waste they produce can be recycled with ease. For example, publishers may distribute magazines and advertising literature in sealed plastic covers that must be removed if the contents are to be considered as high-grade recycling material, even when their recipient has no wish to read the contents.

— Does the Commission intend to come forward with proposals to require that products be designed and packaged with a view to their being eventually recycled, and to prohibit practices that make effective recycling very difficult or impossible?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

The Commission strategy towards increased resource efficiency in Europe is set out in the recently published 'Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe' ([1]).

The Roadmap states the Commission will:

— 'assess the introduction of minimum recycled material rates, durability and reusability criteria and extensions of producer responsibility for key products';

— 'review existing prevention, re-use, recycling, recovery and landfill diversion targets to move towards an economy based on reuse and recycling, with residual waste close to zero';

— 'address the environmental footprint of products, building on an ongoing assessment due in 2012 and following a consultation with stakeholders, including through setting requirements under the Ecodesign directive, to boost the material resource efficiency of products (e.g. reusability/recyclability/recoverability, durability), and through expanding the scope of the Ecodesign directive to non-energy related products (in 2012);'.

The Commission is currently moving to the implementation phase of the Roadmap for Resource Efficient Europe.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency/pdf/com2011_571.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000443/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Waste hierarchy and paper recycling

The paper industry's production process often now requires the use of waste paper materials. Allegedly, in some Member States these supplies are now threatened by the demand from waste-to-energy incinerators, although this is contrary to the waste hierarchy.

Does the Commission have any authority to introduce requirements on Member States that can confirm and reinforce the priority that waste paper should be recycled rather than diverted to energy recovery, and if so will it consider making use of them?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2012)

Paper recycling is considered to be an environmentally better waste management option than incineration with energy recovery. This is supported by applicable EU legislation as set out below.

The Waste Framework Directive ([1]) (WFD) lays down a five-step hierarchy of waste treatment operations. This places waste prevention and re-use at the top followed by — in descending order — preparation for re-use, recycling, other recovery (including energy recovery) and safe disposal. Member States are required to take measures to encourage the options that deliver the best overall environmental outcome. Should a Member State decide to depart from the waste hierarchy, a justification supported by life-cycle thinking on the overall impacts of the generation and management of waste must be provided accordingly.

Member States are also bound by the recycling targets set for some waste streams, including paper waste. Article 11 of the WFD requires Member States to recycle 50 % of household waste by 2020, and Article 6 of the directive on packaging and packaging waste ([2]) provides that a minimum recycling target of 60 % for paper and board shall be met by Member States. Reports received from Member States show that the 60 % target has been met across the EU.

Finally, end-of-waste (EoW) criteria for waste paper are being developed in order to encourage recycling markets through the production of quality secondary material.

([1]) Directive 2008/98 of the Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain directives, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) Directive 94/62/EC of 20 December 1994, OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000444/12
a la Comisión
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Georgios Papastamkos (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE) y Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: El sector del arroz y la reforma de la política agrícola común

1. La propuesta de la Comisión Europea relativa a la reforma de la PAC podría resultar en una drástica reducción de los pagos directos a los productores de arroz, por lo que la reforma haría que resultara completamente imposible obtener beneficio alguno de este cultivo.

— ¿Se propone la Comisión realizar un estudio y presentar medidas concretas para paliar el impacto negativo de la reforma en sectores como éste, que no pueden sobrevivir si no se les brinda el nivel de apoyo actual?

2. La nueva ecologización de la política agrícola común no podría aplicarse fácilmente a monocultivos como el arroz. El artículo 29 del Reglamento propuesto sobre los pagos directos incluye una derogación para las rotaciones de cultivos sumergidos bajo el agua durante buena parte del año.

— ¿Podría aplicarse esta derogación al sector del arroz?

— ¿Cómo va a combinar la Comisión la introducción de un área de enfoque ecológico con la necesidad de incrementar la producción de alimentos?

3. La naturaleza específica de este producto, cultivado en regiones sin cosechas alternativas y en terrenos salinos y con tendencia a anegarse, debiera hacer que resultara susceptible de recibir el nuevo pago directo destinado a zonas que presentan desventajas naturales.

— ¿Se tendrán en cuenta estas desventajas concretas relacionadas con las áreas arroceras a la hora de tomar la decisión final?

4. El Reglamento de Desarrollo Rural debería proporcionar un respaldo complementario al sector del arroz como forma de reconocimiento de su importante contribución al medio ambiente.

— Teniendo en mente el importante papel que desempeña este sector desde un punto de vista medioambiental, ¿cómo podría el Reglamento de Desarrollo Rural ofrecer apoyo específico a los productores de arroz?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de febrero de 2012)

En lo relativo al punto 1, la Comisión no tiene previsto poner en marcha un estudio, porque la reforma se basa en una evaluación de impacto. En lo que respecta a las medidas específicas, recuerde que se podrán conceder ayudas asociadas voluntarias en favor del arroz a partir de 2014.

Sobre el punto 2, la Comisión tiene la intención de que la excepción se aplique al arroz.

En cuanto al punto 3, los criterios biofísicos propuestos para la delimitación de las zonas con importantes desventajas naturales no deben ser específicos para determinados cultivos, tal como se establece en el Acuerdo de la OMC. Sin embargo, los criterios establecidos en el anexo II de la propuesta legislativa sobre el desarrollo rural incluyen la sodicidad, la profundidad de enraizamiento superficial, la pedregosidad, las pendientes pronunciadas, la sequedad y las bajas temperaturas, que constituyen condiciones desfavorables para el cultivo del arroz. No obstante, el artículo 33 de la propuesta excluye las zonas en las que se haya documentado una desventaja ya superada. Un ejemplo típico de una zona donde se ha superado una desventaja natural es una superficie de regadío artificial.

En relación con el punto 4, el Reglamento de desarrollo rural apoya las medidas agroambientales que compensan los agricultores por los costes adicionales en que incurran y los ingresos a que renuncien al aplicar prácticas agrícolas que superen las obligaciones jurídicas básicas. Los Estados miembros o sus regiones formulan estas medidas y puedan formular otras de interés para la producción de arroz, por ejemplo, medidas que apoyen las prácticas respetuosas con la biodiversidad en las praderas encharcadas.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000444/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Georgios Papastamkos (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE) και Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ο τομέας του ρυζιού και η μεταρρύθμιση της Κοινής Γεωργικής Πολιτικής

1. Οι προτάσεις που υπέβαλε η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή σχετικά με τη μεταρρύθμιση της Κοινής Γεωργικής Πολιτικής (ΚΓΠ) θα μπορούσαν να επιφέρουν δραστική μείωση των άμεσων ενισχύσεων που χορηγούνται στους παραγωγούς ρυζιού. Η μεταρρύθμιση θα καταστήσει την ορυζοκαλλιέργεια τελείως μη αποδοτική.

— Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να διεξαγάγει μελέτη και να παρουσιάσει συγκεκριμένα μέτρα για να μετριάσει τον αρνητικό αντίκτυπο της μεταρρύθμισης σε τομείς όπως ο προαναφερθείς, οι οποίοι δεν μπορούν να επιβιώσουν χωρίς το παρόν επίπεδο στήριξης;

2. Η νέα περιβαλλοντική διάσταση της ΚΓΠ δεν θα ήταν εύκολο να εφαρμοστεί σε μονοκαλλιέργειες όπως αυτή του ρυζιού. Το άρθρο 29 του προτεινόμενου κανονισμού σχετικά με τις άμεσες ενισχύσεις περιλαμβάνει μια παρέκκλιση για τις καλλιέργειες που καλλιεργούνται κάτω από το νερό για σημαντικό τμήμα του έτους.

— Θα μπορούσε αυτή η παρέκκλιση να εφαρμοσθεί και στον τομέα του ρυζιού;

— Με ποιο τρόπο πρόκειται η Επιτροπή να συνδυάσει την εισαγωγή μιας περιοχής οικολογικής εστίασης με την ανάγκη για αύξηση της παραγωγής τροφίμων;

3. Η ιδιαίτερη φύση του συγκεκριμένου προϊόντος, το οποίο καλλιεργείται σε αλατούχα και ανεπαρκώς στραγγιζόμενα εδάφη και σε περιοχές που δεν προσφέρονται για εναλλακτικές καλλιέργειες, πρέπει να το καταστήσει επιλέξιμο για τη νέα ενίσχυση που χορηγείται σε περιοχές με φυσικά μειονεκτήματα.

— Υπάρχει περίπτωση αυτά τα ειδικά μειονεκτήματα σχετικά με τις περιοχές ορυζοκαλλιέργειας να ληφθούν υπ' όψιν στην τελική απόφαση;

4. Ο κανονισμός για την αγροτική ανάπτυξη πρέπει να παρέχει συμπληρωματική στήριξη στον τομέα του ρυζιού, αναγνωρίζοντας κατά αυτόν τον τρόπο τη σημαντική συμβολή του στην προστασία του περιβάλλοντος.

— Δεδομένου του σημαντικού ρόλου που διαδραματίζει ο συγκεκριμένος τομέας από περιβαλλοντική άποψη, με ποιο τρόπο θα μπορούσε ο κανονισμός για την αγροτική ανάπτυξη να παράσχει ειδική στήριξη στους παραγωγούς ρυζιού;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Αναφορικά με το σημείο 1, η Επιτροπή δεν σκοπεύει να προχωρήσει σε τέτοια μελέτη, εφόσον η μεταρρύθμιση βασίστηκε σε εκτίμηση επιπτώσεων. Όσον αφορά τη λήψη συγκεκριμένων μέτρων, ας σημειωθεί ότι από το έτος 2014 είναι δυνατή η χορήγηση προαιρετικής συνδεδεμένης στήριξης για το ρύζι.

Σχετικά με το σημείο 2, πρόθεση της Επιτροπής είναι να ισχύσει παρέκκλιση για το ρύζι.

Αναφορικά με το σημείο 3, τα βιοφυσικά κριτήρια τα προτεινόμενα για την οριοθέτηση περιοχών με σημαντικά φυσικά μειονεκτήματα δεν πρέπει να βασίζονται σε καλλιέργειες, όπως εκτίθεται στη συμφωνία του ΠΟΕ. Βεβαίως, τα κριτήρια του παραρτήματος ΙΙ της νομοθετικής πρότασης για την αγροτική ανάπτυξη περιλαμβάνουν την αλκαλικότητα, το μικρό βάθος ριζώματος, την περιεκτικότητα σε λίθους, την κλίση, την ξηρασία και τη χαμηλή θερμοκρασία, που συνιστούν δυσμενείς συνθήκες καλλιέργειας του ρυζιού. Ωστόσο, το άρθρο 33 της πρότασης αποκλείει περιοχές για τις οποίες έχει τεκμηριωθεί μειονέκτημα το οποίο έχει αντιμετωπιστεί. Τυπικό παράδειγμα περιοχής όπου έχει πραγματοποιηθεί υπέρβαση φυσικού εμποδίου αποτελούν οι τεχνικά αρδευόμενες περιοχές.

Όσον αφορά το σημείο 4, ο κανονισμός για την αγροτική ανάπτυξη υποστηρίζει γεωργοπεριβαλλοντικά μέτρα αποζημίωσης αγροτών για το επιπλέον κόστος που επωμίζονται και την απώλεια εισοδήματος κατά την εφαρμογή γεωργικών πρακτικών που υπερβαίνουν τη βασική γραμμή που συνιστούν οι νομικές υποχρεώσεις. Τα εν λόγω μέτρα προβλέπονται από κράτη μέλη ή περιφέρειές τους και είναι δυνατό να περιλαμβάνουν μέτρα σχετικά με την οριζοπαραγωγή — παραδείγματος χάρη μέτρα στήριξης πρακτικών φιλικών προς τη βιοποικιλότητα σε κατακλυζόμενους λειμώνες.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000444/12
à la Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Georgios Papastamkos (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE) et Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 janvier 2012)

Objet: Secteur rizicole et réforme de la politique agricole commune

1. Les propositions de la Commission européenne relatives à la réforme de la politique agricole commune (PAC) pourraient entraîner une diminution spectaculaire des paiements directs aux producteurs de riz. Avec cette réforme, la culture du riz pourrait n'être plus rentable du tout.

— La Commission entend-elle mener une étude et présenter des mesures spécifiques afin d'atténuer les répercussions négatives de cette réforme sur des secteurs tels que le secteur rizicole, qui ne peuvent survivre sans les aides actuelles?

2. La nouvelle approche « d'écologisation» de la PAC ne serait pas facile à appliquer dans les monocultures telles que la riziculture. L'article 29 de la proposition de règlement relatif aux paiements directs prévoit une dérogation à l'obligation de rotation pour les cultures sous eau pendant une grande partie de l'année.

— Cette dérogation pourrait-elle être appliquée au secteur rizicole?

— Comment la Commission entend-elle associer l'introduction d'une surface d'intérêt écologique à la nécessité d'accroître la production alimentaire?

3. Compte tenu de la nature particulière de ce produit, lequel est cultivé dans des régions sans cultures de remplacement et sur des terres salées et mal drainées, il devrait pouvoir bénéficier du nouveau système de paiement direct aux zones soumises à des handicaps naturels.

— Ces handicaps spécifiques affectant les zones rizicoles seront-ils pris en considération dans la décision finale?

4. Le règlement sur le développement rural devrait prévoir une aide supplémentaire au secteur rizicole afin de reconnaître sa contribution importante à l'environnement.

— Eu égard au rôle important de ce secteur du point de vue environnemental, comment le règlement sur le développement rural pourrait-il apporter un soutien spécifique aux producteurs de riz?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(21 février 2012)

En ce qui concerne le point 1, la Commission n'a pas l'intention de lancer pareille étude, car la réforme s'appuie sur une analyse d'impact. Pour ce qui est des actions spécifiques, veuillez noter que des mesures de soutien couplé facultatif peuvent être accordées pour le riz à compter de 2014.

En ce qui concerne le point 2, l'intention de la Commission est que le riz bénéficie de cette dérogation.

En ce qui concerne le point 3, les critères biophysiques proposés pour la délimitation des zones soumises à de fortes contraintes naturelles ne doivent pas dépendre du type de culture, conformément aux dispositions de l'accord sur l'OMC. Cependant, les critères définis à l'annexe II de la proposition législative sur le développement rural comprennent la teneur en sodium, la faible profondeur d'enracinement, la piérosité, les fortes pentes, la sécheresse et les températures basses, qui constituent des conditions défavorables à la riziculture. Il n'en reste pas moins que l'article 33 de la proposition exclut les zones dans lesquelles un handicap a été documenté, mais surmonté. Les zones bénéficiant d'une irrigation artificielle sont des exemples typiques de cas où une contrainte naturelle a été surmontée.

En ce qui concerne le point 4, le règlement sur le développement rural prévoit des mesures agrienvironnementales visant à indemniser les agriculteurs pour les coûts supplémentaires qu'ils supportent et les pertes de revenus qu'ils subissent lorsqu'ils mettent en œuvre des pratiques agricoles allant au-delà d'un cadre de référence d'obligations légales. Il s'agit de mesures conçues par les États membres ou leurs régions, qui sont libres d'élaborer des mesures présentant un intérêt pour la riziculture, telles que des mesures en faveur de pratiques respectueuses de la biodiversité en prairie inondée.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000444/12
alla Commissione
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Georgios Papastamkos (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Il settore risicolo e la riforma della politica agricola comune

1. Le proposte della Commissione europea sulla riforma della PAC potrebbero portare ad una drastica riduzione dei pagamenti diretti ai produttori di riso. La riforma renderebbe questa coltura assolutamente non redditizia.

— Intende la Commissione condurre uno studio e presentare misure specifiche per attenuare l'impatto negativo della riforma su settori come questo, che non possono sopravvivere senza l'attuale livello di sostegno?

2. La nuova PAC «più verde» non sarebbe facile da applicare a monoculture come il riso. L'articolo 29 del regolamento proposto sui pagamenti diretti include una deroga per la rotazione di colture coltivate in acqua per una parte significativa dell'anno.

— Può questa deroga essere applicata al settore risicolo?

— Come coniugherà la Commissione l'introduzione di un'area di interesse ecologico con la necessità di incrementare la produzione alimentare?

3. La specificità di questo prodotto, coltivato nelle regioni prive di colture alternative e in terreni salsi e poco drenati, dovrebbe renderlo ammissibile al nuovo pagamento diretto per zone caratterizzate da svantaggi naturali.

— Verranno questi svantaggi specifici delle aree risicole presi in considerazione nella decisione finale?

4. Il regolamento sullo sviluppo rurale dovrebbe fornire supporto complementare al settore risicolo come mezzo di riconoscimento del suo importante contributo per l'ambiente.

— Tenendo presente l'importante ruolo svolto da questo settore da un punto di vista ambientale, come può il regolamento sullo sviluppo rurale fornire un sostegno specifico ai produttori di riso?

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(21 febbraio 2012)

Per quanto riguarda il punto 1, la Commissione non intende realizzare alcuno studio poiché la riforma si basava su una valutazione d'impatto. Quanto ad eventuali misure specifiche, si tenga presente che sarà possibile concedere aiuti accoppiati su base volontaria per il riso a partire dal 2014.

In merito al punto 2, è intenzione della Commissione che la deroga si applichi al settore risicolo.

Circa il punto 3, i criteri biofisici proposti per la delimitazione delle zone che presentano svantaggi naturali di rilievo non devono essere criteri ad hoc per determinati tipi di coltura, come prevede l'accordo OMC. Ciò nonostante, i criteri definiti nell'allegato II della proposta legislativa sullo sviluppo rurale includono la sodicità, la profondità del radicamento superficiale, la pietrosità, la ripidezza dei pendii, l'aridità e le basse temperature, elementi che danno luogo a condizioni sfavorevoli per la coltivazione del riso. Tuttavia, l'articolo 33 della proposta esclude le zone nelle quali uno svantaggio sia stato sì documentato ma successivamente superato. Un esempio tipico di una zona in cui il condizionamento naturale è stato superato è una zona irrigata artificialmente.

Quanto al punto 4, il regolamento sullo sviluppo rurale fornisce un sostegno alle misure agroambientali intese a compensare gli agricoltori per le spese supplementari che essi sostengono e per i redditi cui essi rinunciano allorché scelgono di applicare pratiche agricole che oltrepassano la linea di riferimento degli obblighi giuridici. Gli Stati membri o le loro regioni mettono a punto tali misure e possono anche definire misure che presentino un qualche interesse per la produzione del riso — ad esempio misure di sostegno alle pratiche rispettose della biodiversità in suoli saturi di acqua.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000444/12
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Georgios Papastamkos (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 de janeiro de 2012)

Assunto: O setor do arroz e a reforma da Política Agrícola Comum

1. A proposta da Comissão Europeia relativa à reforma da PAC pode levar a uma queda drástica dos pagamentos diretos aos produtores de arroz. A reforma fará com que o cultivo do arroz deixe de ser um negócio rentável.

— Pretende a Comissão realizar um estudo e apresentar medidas específicas que atenuem o impacto negativo da reforma em setores como este, que não conseguem subsistir sem o atual nível de apoio?

2. Os novos objetivos ambientais da PAC não serão fáceis de aplicar a monoculturas como a do arroz. O artigo 29.° da proposta de regulamento relativa aos pagamentos diretos inclui a derrogação da rotação em culturas sob água durante uma parte significativa do ano.

— Poderá esta derrogação ser aplicada ao setor do arroz?

— Como irá a Comissão combinar a introdução dos interesses ecológicos com a necessidade de aumentar a produção de alimentos?

3. A cultura do arroz apresenta características muito próprias, sendo muitas vezes realizada em regiões que não têm culturas alternativas e em terrenos salgados e mal drenados. Estas condições deveriam ser suficientes para que este caso fosse considerado elegível para os pagamentos diretos relativos a zonas com condicionantes naturais específicas.

— Serão estas condicionantes relacionadas com os arrozais tomadas em consideração na decisão final?

4. O regulamento relativo ao desenvolvimento rural deveria prestar um apoio suplementar ao setor do arroz como forma de reconhecer a sua importante contribuição para o ambiente.

— Tendo em conta o papel importante que este setor desempenha no ambiente, como poderia o regulamento relativo ao desenvolvimento rural prestar apoio específico aos produtores de arroz?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloș em nome da Comissão
(21 de fevereiro de 2012)

Relativamente à pergunta colocada no ponto 1, a Comissão não tenciona efetuar o estudo referido pelos Senhores Deputados, visto que a reforma assenta numa avaliação de impacto. No que respeita a medidas específicas, queiram ter em atenção que, a partir de 2014, o arroz poderá beneficiar do regime de apoios associados voluntários.

Relativamente ao ponto 2, a intenção da Comissão é que a derrogação se aplique ao arroz.

Relativamente à questão do ponto 3, o Acordo da OMC estabelece que os critérios biofísicos propostos para a delimitação de zonas com condicionantes naturais significativas não podem ser específicos de determinadas culturas. Todavia, os critérios previstos no anexo II da proposta legislativa relativa ao desenvolvimento rural compreendem a sodicidade, a pouca profundidade de enraizamento, a pedregosidade, fortes declives, a seca e temperaturas baixas, que constituem condições desfavoráveis ao cultivo de arroz. Importa, porém, referir que o artigo 33.° da proposta exclui as zonas nas quais tenham sido documentadas condicionantes entretanto ultrapassadas. Um exemplo claro de uma zona na qual foi ultrapassada uma condicionante natural é uma zona irrigada artificialmente.

Quanto ao objeto do ponto 4, o Regulamento relativo ao desenvolvimento rural prevê o apoio a medidas agroambientais destinadas a compensar os agricultores pela perda de rendimentos e pelos custos adicionais resultantes da aplicação de práticas agrícolas que ultrapassem o nível de referência das obrigações legais. A conceção dessas medidas compete aos Estados-Membros ou regiões de Estados-Membros, que podem prever medidas adequadas à orizicultura — por exemplo, medidas de apoio a práticas que favoreçam a biodiversidade nos prados alagadiços.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000444/12
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Georgios Papastamkos (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Rice sector and the common agricultural policy reform

1. The European Commission's proposals on the CAP reform could lead to a drastic drop in direct payments to rice producers. The reform would make this culture completely unprofitable.

— Does the Commission intend to carry out a study and present specific measures to soften the negative impact of the reform on sectors like this one, which cannot survive without the present level of support?

2. The new 'greening' of the CAP would not be easy to apply in monocultures like rice. Article 29 of the proposed regulation on direct payments includes a rotation derogation for crops which are cultivated under water during a significant part of the year.

— Could this derogation be applied to the rice sector?

— How is the Commission going to combine the introduction of an ecological focus area with the need to increase food production?

3. The specific nature of this product, cultivated in regions without alternative crops and in salty and poorly drained lands, should make it eligible for the new direct payment to areas with natural handicaps.

— Are these specific handicaps relating to the rice areas going to be taken into account in the final decision?

4. The Rural Development Regulation should provide complementary support to the rice sector as a way of recognising its important contribution to the environment.

— Bearing in mind the important role played by this sector from an environmental point of view, how could the Rural Development Regulation provide specific support to rice producers?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2012)

On point 1, the Commission does not intend to launch such study as the reform was based on an impact assessment. As regards specific measures please note that voluntary coupled support may be granted for rice from 2014.

Regarding point 2, the Commission intention is that derogation should apply to rice.

On point 3, the biophysical criteria proposed for the delimitation of areas with a significant natural constraint must not be crop-specific, as set out in the WTO Agreement. Nevertheless, the criteria set out in the annex II to the legal proposal on rural development includes sodicity, shallow rooting depth, stoniness, steep slopes, dryness and low temperature, which form unfavourable conditions for growing rice. However, Article 33 of the proposal excludes areas where a handicap has been documented but overcome. A typical example of an area where a natural constraint has been overcome is an artificially irrigated area.

As for point 4 the rural development regulation supports agri-environmental measures compensating farmers for the extra costs they incur and for the income which they forego in applying farming practices which go beyond a baseline of legal obligations. These measures are designed by Member States or their regions, and they can design measures relevant to rice production — for example measures which support biodiversity-friendly practices in waterlogged meadows.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000445/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κόστος Πιστοποιητικού Ενεργειακής Απόδοσης

Η οικονομική κρίση στην Ελλάδα, που τροφοδοτείται από τις πολιτικές των μνημονίων, έχει οδηγήσει σε μεγάλη κρίση και τον τομέα της κατοικίας. Η κατασκευή κατοικιών έχει νεκρώσει πλήρως· χιλιάδες κατοικίες και εμπορικοί χώροι μένουν ξενοίκιαστοι, οδηγώντας σε μια επικίνδυνη και βίαιη κατακρήμνιση των αξιών. Ταυτόχρονα, η ιδιοκατοίκηση «ποινικοποιείται», με την επιβολή όλο και περισσότερων φόρων και ειδικών τελών, οι οποίοι πλήττουν κυρίως τη μικρή κατοικία.

Το κόστος έκδοσης του Πιστοποιητικού Ενεργειακής Απόδοσης, αυτή την εποχή και υπό αυτές τις συνθήκες, επιβαρύνει ακόμα περισσότερο την κατοικία, αφού το άρθρο 13 του Προεδρικού Διατάγματος 100/2010, επιβάλλει ελάχιστες αμοιβές στους ενεργειακούς επιθεωρητές, που ξεκινούν από 150 ευρώ για διαμέρισμα 50 τ.μ. και άνω και φτάνουν τα 300 ευρώ για καταστήματα 50 τ.μ. και άνω.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι θα μπορούσε να συναινέσει στο αίτημα των φορέων ιδιοκατοίκησης για παράταση της επιβολής του μέτρου για ένα διάστημα, προκειμένου να ανακουφιστεί ο μέσος ιδιοκτήτης κατοικίας, εφόσον αυτό ζητηθεί από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση;

2. Πως σχολιάζει τις κατώτερες υποχρεωτικές αμοιβές που επιβάλει το άρθρο 13 του Π.Δ. 100/2010 για τους επιθεωρητές ενεργειακής απόδοσης, οι οποίες πλήττουν δυσανάλογα κυρίως τις πολλές και μικρές κατοικίες και καταστήματα;

Απάντηση από τον κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Το πιστοποιητικό ενεργειακής απόδοσης αξιολογεί την ενεργειακή απόδοση των κτιρίων και περιλαμβάνει συμβουλές για τη βελτίωση της εν λόγω απόδοσης κατά οικονομικό τρόπο. Ισχύει για χρονικό διάστημα έως 10 ετών. Ο ενωσιακός νομοθέτης θεώρησε ότι το κόστος έκδοσης πιστοποιητικού ενεργειακής απόδοσης δικαιολογείται δεδομένου του θετικού αντικτύπου του στην ενεργειακή απόδοση, ο οποίος ακολούθως συνεπάγεται σημαντική εξοικονόμηση χρημάτων για τους ενοίκους των κτιρίων. Απαιτείται μόνο σε περίπτωση αλλαγής ιδιοκτησίας, ανέγερσης νέου κτιρίου ή εκμίσθωσης κτιρίου.

Με βάση την οδηγία για την ενεργειακή απόδοση των κτιρίων ([1]) και την αναδιατύπωσή της ([2]), τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να μεριμνούν ώστε η πιστοποίηση των κτιρίων και η σύνταξη των συνοδευτικών συστάσεων να διεξάγονται από ειδικευμένους ή/και διαπιστευμένους εμπειρογνώμονες (άρθρο 10 της οδηγίας για την ενεργειακή απόδοση των κτιρίων· άρθρο 17 της αναδιατυπωμένης οδηγίας). Ούτε στην οδηγία για την ενεργειακή απόδοση των κτιρίων ούτε στην αναδιατύπωσή της περιλαμβάνονται διατάξεις σχετικά με τις αμοιβές των εμπειρογνωμόνων. Το θέμα αυτό εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών.

([1]) Οδηγία 2002/91/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Δεκεμβρίου 2002, για την ενεργειακή απόδοση των κτιρίων, ΕΕ L 1 της 4.1.2003.
([2]) ΕΕ L 153 της 18.6.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000445/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: The cost of Energy Performance Certificates

The economic crisis in Greece, which is fuelled by the policies of the Memoranda, has also led to a major crisis in the housing sector. House construction has come to a complete halt, with thousands of residential dwellings and commercial premises remaining unlet, leading to a dangerous and dramatic fall in their value. At the same time, home ownership is being penalised through the imposition of ever more taxes and special charges, primarily targeting the small homeowner.

The cost of obtaining an Energy Performance Certificate, at this time and under these conditions, is placing an even greater burden on home ownership, given that Article 13 of Presidential Decree 100/2001 imposes a minimum remuneration for energy inspectors starting from EUR 150 for an apartment of 50 square metres and above, and rising to EUR 300 for commercial outlets of 50 square metres and above.

In view of this:

1. Could the Commission agree to the request by homeowner associations for postponement of this measure, so as to afford some relief to the average homeowner, if this were also requested by the Greek Government?

2. What view does it take of the minimum compulsory remuneration for energy performance inspectors imposed by Article 13 of Presidential Decree 100/2010, a measure which places disproportionate burdens in the first instance on many small homes and business premises?

Answer given by M. Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

The energy certificate assesses the energy performance of buildings and includes advice on improving such performance in a cost effective way. It is valid for up to 10 years. The EU legislator considered that the cost of issuing an energy performance certificate is justified by its positive impact on energy efficiency, which in turn leads to significant monetary savings for building occupiers. It is required only when there is a change in occupancy, a new building is constructed or a building is rented out.

Under the Energy Performance Buildings Directive (EPBD) ([1]) and its recast ([2]), Member States must ensure that the certification of buildings and the drafting of the accompanying recommendations are carried out by qualified and/or accredited experts (EPBD Article 10; recast EPBD Article 17). Neither the EPBD Directive nor its recast contains provisions on fees for the experts. This falls within the competence of the Member States.

([1]) Directive 2002/91/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2002 on the energy performance of buildings, OJ L 1, 4.1.2003.
([2]) OJ L 153, 18.6.2010.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000446/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πώληση 4 Airbus της πρώην Ολυμπιακής Αεροπορίας

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, εφαρμόζοντας το ασφυκτικό χρονοδιάγραμμα που απορρέει από το Μεσοπρόθεσμο Πρόγραμμα Δημοσιονομικής Προσαρμογής, πούλησε 4 αεροσκάφη Airbus A340-300 στην εταιρεία Apollo Aviation που εδρεύει στις ΗΠΑ, στο ποσό των 31 εκατ. ευρώ και για τα τέσσερα.

Η τιμή στην οποία πουλήθηκαν τα 4 Airbus, θεωρείται εξευτελιστική και σκανδαλώδης, με δεδομένο ότι, α) αγοράστηκαν περίπου προς 140 εκατ. ευρώ το καθένα, δηλαδή, 560 εκατ. ευρώ και τα τέσσερα, β) η αποτίμηση της αξίας τους από το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών και η κατώτερη τιμή που είχε θέσει το 2010 ήταν 100 εκατ. ευρώ, και γ) η προσφερόμενη τιμή της πλειοδότριας εταιρείας στον προηγούμενο άγονο διαγωνισμό το 2010, ήταν 95 εκατ. ευρώ.

Κοινός τόπος στην Ελλάδα είναι η εκτίμηση ότι τα 4 αεροσκάφη πουλήθηκαν για παλιοσίδερα, κάτω από την πίεση των ασφυκτικών χρονοδιαγραμμάτων που θέτουν οι 3μηνιαίοι στόχοι του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποίησης του Μεσοπρόθεσμου, από την οποία επωφελούνται σκανδαλωδώς οι διεθνείς κερδοσκόποι. Η εξευτελιστική τιμή της πώλησης των αεροσκαφών είναι τέτοια, που έχει υποψίες σκανδάλου το οποίο αξίζει να διερευνηθεί. Έχοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω, καθώς επίσης, ότι η πρώτη φάση των ιδιωτικοποιήσεων έχει υπολογιστεί στα 50 δις, αλλά και, ανεξάρτητα από την άποψη που κάποιος μπορεί να έχει για την πώληση της δημόσιας περιουσίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι η τιμή πώλησης των 4 Airbus είναι στο εύρος τιμής που είχε εκτιμήσει το Μεσοπρόθεσμο Πρόγραμμα; Εάν όχι, όπως εκτιμούν όλοι στην Ελλάδα, ανησυχεί η Επιτροπή ότι και τα υπόλοιπα προς πώληση περιουσιακά στοιχεία του ελληνικού δημοσίου θα έχουν την ίδια τύχη με τα 4 αεροσκάφη;

2. Επειδή το γεγονός της πώλησης περιουσιακών στοιχείων του ελληνικού δημοσίου αλλά και οι εξευτελιστικές τιμές με τις οποίες εκποιείται δημόσια περιουσία, προκαλεί αισθήματα οργής και αγανάκτησης στον ελληνικό λαό, είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να παράσχει τώρα: α) τον κατάλογο των περιουσιακών στοιχείων των 50 δις με την εκτιμώμενη τιμή πώλησης καθενός, β) ποια περιουσιακά στοιχεία έχει προγραμματιστεί να πουληθούν τα προσεχή τρίμηνα και γ) είναι δυνατόν η ελληνική κυβέρνηση να δέχεται αδιαμαρτύρητα ένα τέτοιο ευτελισμό της δημόσιας περιουσίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Μαρτίου 2012)

Σύμφωνα με τον Νόμο 3986/2011 ([1]), τα περιουσιακά στοιχεία που είναι έτοιμα για ιδιωτικοποίηση πρέπει να πωληθούν στις ισχύουσες αγοραίες τιμές. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πληροφορίες που υποδηλώνουν ότι τα περιουσιακά στοιχεία που αναφέρονται στην ερώτηση (τέσσερα μεταχειρισμένα αεροσκάφη Airbus) πωλήθηκαν κάτω από την αγοραία τιμή τους.

Μέχρι στιγμής, από τον Ιούνιο του 2011, η Ελλάδα έχει ολοκληρώσει την ιδιωτικοποίηση τεσσάρων μειζόνων περιουσιακών στοιχείων, εισπράττοντας μετρητά ύψους 1,6 δισ. ευρώ. Τα επόμενα τρίμηνα του 2012 αναμένεται να συγκεντρωθεί πρόσθετο ποσό ύψους 5,2 δισ. ευρώ.

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τις δύσκολες συνθήκες της αγοράς και την έλλειψη ζήλου εκ μέρους των επενδυτών για την αγορά περιουσιακών στοιχείων του ελληνικού δημοσίου που υπάγονται στο πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποίησης. Λόγω των χαμηλών αγοραίων τιμών και τη διάρκεια τεχνικής προετοιμασίας για τις δεδομένες συναλλαγές, οι στόχοι της ιδιωτικοποίησης για τα επόμενα έτη αναθεωρήθηκαν προς τα κάτω. Παρ'όλα αυτά, παραμένουν ως μεσοπρόθεσμος στόχος τα 50 δισ. ευρώ.

Ο κατάλογος περιουσιακών στοιχείων προς ιδιωτικοποίηση έχει δημοσιοποιηθεί (παρακαλούμε να ανατρέξετε στη μεσοπρόθεσμη δημοσιονομική στρατηγική του Ιουλίου 2011 και στον ιστότοπο του Ταμείου Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου, ΤΑΙΠΕΔ). Ο ιστότοπος περιλαμβάνει επίσης πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις συναλλαγές σε εξέλιξη.

Όπως ασφαλώς αντιλαμβάνεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος, η εκτιμώμενη αξία εκάστου ιδιαίτερου περιουσιακού στοιχείου αποτελεί εμπορικά ευαίσθητη πληροφορία και δεν επιτρέπεται στην Επιτροπή να αποκαλύπτει τις εκτιμώμενες τιμές που παρέχονται από το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών ή/και το ΤΑΙΠΕΔ.

([1]) ΦΕΚ Τεύχος Α' 152/01.07.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000446/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Sale of four former Olympic Airways Airbus aircraft

In a bid to meet the gruelling schedule imposed by the Medium-Term Fiscal Adjustment Programme, the Greek Government has sold four Airbus A340-300 aircraft to the US-based Apollo Aviation corporation for a total of EUR 31 million.

The sale price for the four Airbus aircraft is ridiculously, not to say scandalously low, considering that (a) the aircraft were purchased for approximately EUR 140 million each, a total of EUR 560 million, (b) following valuation by the Finance Ministry in 2010, the minimum selling price was set at EUR 100 million and (c) the highest bid in response to a previous unsuccessful call for tenders in 2010 was EUR 95 million.

It is the general view in Greece that the four aircraft were sold for scrap metal, in a gruelling race against time to meet the three-month deadlines imposed under the medium-term privatisation programme, from which international speculators have benefited outrageously. The whiff of scandal surrounding the sale of the aircraft at such a giveaway price undoubtedly warrants investigation. In view of this, coupled with the fact that the proceeds from the first phase of privatisations have been estimated to amount to a sum of EUR 50 billion, and irrespective of any views which may be held regarding the sale of public assets:

1. Does the Commission consider that the sale price of the four Airbus aircraft corresponds to the range of estimates made under the Medium-Term Programme? If, as is generally considered in Greece, this is not the case, is the Commission concerned that remaining Greek public assets up for sale may go the way of these four aircraft?

2. Given the anger and exasperation felt by the Greek people at not only the sale of Greek public assets, but also the outrageously low prices at which they are being disposed, can the Commission: (a) itemise the assets sold for EUR 50 billion, giving the estimated selling price of each, (b) indicate which assets have been scheduled for sale in the coming quarter and (c) say whether it is admissible for Greek Government to accept without demur such a devaluation of public assets?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

According to Law 3986/2011 ([1]), assets ready for privatisation have to be sold at prevailing market prices. The Commission has no information suggesting that the assets mentioned in the question (four second-hand Airbus planes) were sold below their market price.

So far, since June 2011, Greece has completed the privatisation of four major assets, bringing in EUR 1.6 billion in cash. An additional amount of EUR 5.2 billion is expected to be collected in the coming quarters of 2012.

The Commission is aware of the difficult market conditions and the lack of thirst from investors in purchasing Greek assets planned for privatisation. The privatisation targets for the next years have been revised downwards, given the low market prices and the length of technical preparation for the given transactions. Despite all of this, the EUR 50 billion objective remains as a medium-term target.

The list of assets for privatisation is in the public domain (please refer to the Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy of July 2011 and the website of the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund, HRADF). The latter also includes information on the transactions in progress.

As the Honourable Member understands, the estimated price of each specific asset is market sensitive information and the Commission is not allowed to reveal the estimated prices provided by the Ministry of Finance and/or the HRADF.

([1]) Government Gazette A 152/1.7.2011.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000447/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Εμφυτεύματα στήθους με βιομηχανική σιλικόνη στο πλαίσιο της οδηγίας 93/42/ΕΟΚ

Σύμφωνα με την οδηγία 2003/12/ΕΚ, τα εμφυτεύματα στήθους ανακατατάσσονται ως ιατροτεχνολογικά προϊόντα κατηγορίας ΙΙΙ, τα οποία εγκυμονούν σοβαρούς κινδύνους και των οποίων η διάθεση στην αγορά προϋποθέτει την προηγούμενη ρητή άδεια σχετικά με την πιστότητα. Κατά την οδηγία 93/42/ΕΟΚ, τα ιατροτεχνολογικά προϊόντα πρέπει να παρέχουν στους ασθενείς, στους χρήστες και στους τρίτους, υψηλό επίπεδο προστασίας της υγείας και της ασφάλειας.

Με δεδομένο το σκάνδαλο με τα επικίνδυνα υλικά της γαλλικής εταιρείας PIP σε εμφυτεύματα στήθους, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σε ποιές χώρες και σε πόσες γυναίκες έχουν χρησιμοποιηθεί τα συγκεκριμένα προϊόντα της εταιρείας PIP;

2. Πώς προκλήθηκε το σκάνδαλο για χιλιάδες γυναίκες τη στιγμή που, βάσει του άρθρου 2 της οδηγίας 93/42/ΕΟΚ, τα κράτη μέλη λαμβάνουν όλα τα αναγκαία μέτρα ώστε τα προϊόντα να διατίθενται στο εμπόριο και να χρησιμοποιούνται μόνον εφόσον δεν θέτουν σε κίνδυνο την ασφάλεια και την υγεία των ασθενών; Γιατί δόθηκε άδεια πιστότητας;

3. Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή ότι υπήρξε παραβίαση του άρθρου 11 της οδηγίας περί αξιολόγησης της πιστότητας, ιδίως για προϊόντα της κατηγορίας ΙΙΙ που εγκυμονούν σοβαρούς κινδύνους για την υγεία;

4. Γιατί δεν λειτούργησε αποτελεσματικά ο μηχανισμός επιτήρησης σχετικά με το σύστημα ποιότητας των προϊόντων;

5. Προτίθεται να προβεί σε αναθεώρηση της οδηγίας 93/42/ΕΟΚ με τη διαμόρφωση νέων αυστηρότερων διαδικασιών άδειας, εμπορίας και ελέγχων τόσο a priori όσο και a posteriori, εφόσον οι ισχύουσες διατάξεις αποδείχθηκαν αναποτελεσματικές;

6. Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι υπάρχει ευθύνη πέραν της κατασκευαστικής εταιρείας και των αρμοδίων κρατικών αρχών που είναι επιφορτισμένες για την πιστοποίηση του προϊόντος και τη διενέργεια ελέγχων;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαρτίου 2012)

Σύμφωνα με τις διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες, τα εμφυτεύματα στήθους με βάση τη σιλικόνη, της γαλλικής εταιρείας PIP, διατέθηκαν στην αγορά 71 χωρών. Εκτιμάται ότι περίπου 500 000 από αυτά τα εμφυτεύματα πωλήθηκαν σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, αλλά δεν είναι γνωστός ούτε ο ακριβής τους αριθμός, ούτε ο αριθμός των γυναικών που υπέστησαν βλάβη.

Δεν φαίνεται να υπάρχουν επαρκή στοιχεία που να αποδεικνύουν ότι ο κατασκευαστής παραπλανούσε σκόπιμα τις αρχές και τον κοινοποιημένο φορέα πιστοποίησης για μεγάλο χρονικό διάστημα. Από την τρέχουσα δικαστική διαδικασία ενδέχεται να προκύψουν περισσότερα αποδεικτικά στοιχεία που να συμβάλουν στον εντοπισμό των υποχρεώσεων που δεν τηρήθηκαν καθώς και των αντίστοιχων ευθυνών.

Ανεξάρτητα από την υπόθεση της εταιρείας PIP, η Επιτροπή ανέλαβε να αναθεωρήσει το κανονιστικό πλαίσιο της ΕΕ για τα ιατροτεχνολογικά προϊόντα, που βρίσκεται υπό κατάρτιση ([1]). Έχοντας ως βάση τα γνωστά πραγματικά περιστατικά της υπόθεσης PIP, η Επιτροπή διενήργησε «προσομοιώσεις ακραίων καταστάσεων» για να διαπιστώσει ποια διδάγματα μπορούν ακόμη να αντληθούν από αυτό το συμβάν. Επιπλέον, βρίσκεται υπό εκπόνηση ένα σχέδιο για την άμεση υλοποίηση δράσεων, βάσει της ισχύουσας νομοθεσίας, σε συνεργασία με τα κράτη μέλη, για την ενίσχυση των ελέγχων και την παροχή καλύτερων εγγυήσεων για την ασφάλεια των ιατροτεχνολογικών προϊόντων και, ιδίως, των εμφυτευόμενων και άλλων υψηλού κινδύνου προϊόντων.

([1]) Βλέπε http://ec.europa.eu/health/medical-devices/documents/revision/index_en.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000447/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Breast implants containing industrial silicone and compliance with Directive 93/42/EEC

Under Directive 2003/12/EC, breast implants are reclassified as Class III medical devices which represent a serious danger and which must be duly certified before being placed on the market. Under Directive 93/42/EEC, medical devices should provide patients, users and third parties with a high level of protection in terms of health and safety.

In the light of the scandal surrounding the dangerous materials used by the French company PIP in breast implants, the Commission is asked:

1. In which countries and in how many women have the PIP products been used?

2. How could this scandal affecting thousands of women have arisen, given that under Article 2 of Directive 93/42/EEC, Member States are required to take all necessary steps to ensure that devices may be placed on the market and put into service only if they do not compromise the safety and health of patients? Why was authorisation as to their conformity given?

3. Does the Commission agree that this was an infringement of Article 11 of the directive on conformity assessment procedures, especially for Class III devices representing a serious threat to health?

4. Why did the product quality monitoring mechanism fail to work effectively?

5. Does the Commission intend to revise Directive 93/42/EEC by implementing new, more stringent authorisation, marketing and monitoring procedures both a priori and a posteriori, given that existing provisions have proven to be ineffective?

6. Does it Commission think that liability extends beyond that of the manufacturer and thecompetent state authorities entrusted with the certification and inspection of the product?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

According to the information available, PIP silicone breast implants have been placed on the market in 71 countries. It is estimated that around 500,000 of such implants have been sold worldwide, but the exact number is not known and neither is the number of women affected.

It appears that there is sufficient evidence that the manufacturer intentionally misled the authorities, and the notified body in charge of the certification, over a prolonged period of time. Ongoing judicial proceedings may bring further evidence to light which may contribute to identifying which obligations were not respected, as well as the respective responsibilities.

Independently of the PIP case, the Commission has undertaken to revise the EU regulatory framework for medical devices, which is currently under preparation ([1]). Based on the known facts of the PIP case, the Commission has conducted a 'stress test' to see whether further lessons need to be drawn from this incident. In addition, a plan for immediate actions to be implemented, on the basis of the existing legislation, is currently been drawn up, together with the Member States, in order to tighten controls and provide a better guarantee of the safety of medical devices, especially implantable and other high-risk devices.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/health/medical-devices/documents/revision/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000448/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(23 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Donna cristiana fustigata in Somalia in seguito alla conversione al cristianesimo

Il 10 gennaio 2012, l'organizzazione Porte Aperte ha riferito che nel dicembre 2011 una donna somala è stata fustigata e fatta sfilare in pubblico come punizione per aver abbracciato «una religione straniera». La ventottenne era originaria di Genale, una città della regione somala del Basso Scebeli situata a 200 chilometri dalla capitale Mogadiscio. A novembre è stata detenuta dal gruppo radicale islamico al-Shabaab. La fustigazione pubblica doveva segnare il suo rilascio. È stata frustata 40 volte in pubblico ed è svenuta per le ferite riportate, e dopo aver fatto ritorno alla sua famiglia, è stata trasferita. La signora in questione si era convertita al cristianesimo quattro anni fa e si era unita ad una chiesa clandestina. I cristiani sono particolarmente vulnerabili agli attacchi dei militanti nel Corno d'Africa. Il gruppo al-Shabaab ha anche attaccato chiese di città situate nella parte settentrionale del Kenia, come Garissa, con l'obiettivo di fomentare tensioni settarie.

Agli inizi di dicembre 2011 un giovane keniota di origine somala è stato picchiato da un gruppo di fondamentalisti islamici perché sospettato di apostasia del cristianesimo. Gli attacchi contro i somali convertiti al cristianesimo sono aumentati in Kenia perciò gli stessi hanno scelto di fuggire per la loro sicurezza.

1. È consapevole il Vice presidente/Alto Rappresentante del trattamento ricevuto dai somali che hanno scelto di convertirsi dall'Islam?

2. È pronto il Vice presidente/Alto Rappresentante a chiedere all'Unione africana di fornire protezione ai religiosi somali convertiti che rischiano di subire violenze fisiche da parte dei militanti di al-Shabaab e dei loro simpatizzanti?

3. Può il Vice presidente/Alto Rappresentante confermare o meno se si stanno adottando misure per affrontare questo problema?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton viene informata regolarmente delle violazioni dei diritti umani perpetrate da Al-Shabaab nei confronti dei civili e dei cittadini somali convertitisi dall'Islam a un'altra religione. La tutela delle libertà fondamentali e dei diritti della popolazione civile sono elementi importanti della politica globale dell'UE nei confronti del Corno d'Africa, Somalia inclusa, e l'AR/VP continua a richiedere il rispetto di tali diritti e a prendere posizione contro la violenza ogniqualvolta ciò sia necessario.

L'Unione Africana, conformemente al mandato ricevuto, cerca di proteggere i civili somali mediante la missione per il mantenimento della pace in Somalia (AMISOM), in atto nel paese dal 2007. L'UE, che è uno dei finanziatori principali dell'AMISOM, discute con l'Unione africana in merito alla conduzione della missione e ritiene apprezzabili gli sforzi compiuti nel paese grazie ad essa. AMISOM ha avuto un ruolo centrale nell'allontanamento di Al-Shabaab da Mogadiscio, organizzazione che tuttavia continua a rappresentare una minaccia per i somali nella capitale e altrove.

Nell'ambito della politica globale nei confronti della Somalia, oltre al sostegno all'AMISOM, l'Unione europea adotta misure volte ad affrontare la mancanza di sicurezza e le violazioni dei diritti umani attraverso il sostegno alle forze dell'ordine somale e il rafforzamento dello Stato di diritto. Tramite la missione di formazione «EUTM Somalia» l'Unione europea addestra in Uganda le forze di sicurezza nazionali somale al fine di potenziare le capacità di sicurezza del paese. L'operazione dell'UE «Atalanta», condotta al largo delle coste della Somalia, protegge le spedizioni marittime del Programma alimentare mondiale e dell'AMISOM da attacchi armati in mare e atti di pirateria, contribuendo in generale a scoraggiare e prevenire tali atti. Lo sviluppo di capacità marittime a livello regionale è un'altra priorità fondamentale che sta per essere integrata nella PESC. Con il Programma per lo Stato di diritto e la sicurezza del PNUS, l'UE intende fornire alla Somalia la capacità di ristabilire lo Stato di diritto attraverso, tra l'altro, la formazione di giudici e forze di polizia, quale passo avanti nella lotta all'impunità e agli abusi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000448/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Christian woman flogged in Somalia for converting to Christianity

On 10 January 2012, the organisation Open Doors reported that in December 2011 a Somali woman was flogged and paraded in public as a punishment for embracing a 'foreign religion'. The 28-year-old woman was from Janale, a city in Somalia's lower Shabelle region located 200 km from the capital, Mogadishu. She was detained by the radical Islamic group al-Shabaab in November. The public flogging was intended to mark her release. She was lashed 40 times in public. She fainted as a result of her injuries, and after returning to her family, has since been relocated. The lady in question became a Christian four years ago, and joined an underground church. Christians have been particularly vulnerable to militant attacks across the Horn of Africa. The al-Shabaab group has even attacked churches in northern Kenyan towns such as Garissa, in order to stir up sectarian tensions.

In early December 2011 a young Kenyan man of Somali descent was beaten up by a group of Islamic radicals on suspicion that he was an apostate to Christianity. Attacks against Somalis who have converted to Christianity have risen in Kenya as they have chosen to flee for safety.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the treatment of Somalis who have chosen to convert from Islam?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask the African Union to provide protection for Somali religious converts who are at risk of physical violence from al-Shabaab militants and their sympathisers?

3. Can the Vice-President/High Representative confirm whether or not steps are being taken to address this matter?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) receives information on human rights abuses against civilians by Al-Shabaab, including on Somalis who choose to convert from Islam. Basic freedoms and rights of civilians form an important part of the EU's comprehensive approach to the Horn of Africa and Somalia therein, and the HR/VP continues to seek respect for these rights and to speak out against violence whenever necessary.

The African Union seeks to provide protection to Somali civilians through its peacekeeping mission in Somalia (Amisom), deployed in the country since 2007, in accordance with its mandate. The EU, as a key Amisom donor, discusses the conduct of the mission with the African Union and considers the missions' efforts in Somalia commendable. Amisom has been pivotal in pushing Al-Shabaab out of Mogadishu. But the latter continues to pose a threat to Somalis in the capital and beyond.

As part of the EU's comprehensive approach to Somalia, in addition to support to Amisom, the EU takes measures to address insecurity and human rights abuses through support to Somalia's security capabilities and through rule of law support. The EU training mission (EUTM Somalia) in Uganda trains the Somali National Security Forces (NSF), to help develop Somalia's security capabilities. The EU Operation Atalanta operates off the coast of Somalia protecting World Food Programme and Amisom shipping protection from acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea as well as more generally contributing to deterrence and prevention of acts of piracy. Regional Maritime Capacity building is also a key priority currently being planned as part of CFSP. Through the UNDP's Rule of Law and Security (ROLS) Programme, the EU aims to provide Somalia with the ability to re-establish the rule of law by i.a. training judges and police officers as a step towards addressing impunity and violations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000449/12
alla Commissione
Tiziano Motti (PPE)
(23 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: «Smart shops» e droghe leggere al self-service

Le cosiddette «smart drugs» sono sostanze classificate come erboristiche e definite impropriamente «droghe furbe» perché vendute legalmente come prodotti naturali per profumare ambienti, ma descritte e veicolate soprattutto sul web come simili alla cannabis. Per le modalità di assunzione autonoma e senza sorveglianza medica da parte di giovani e meno giovani in assenza di una regolamentazione, esse rappresentano pertanto una pericolosa tipologia di droghe prodotte, come recentemente appurato dai Nuclei Antisofisticazioni in Italia, da scarti di laboratorio.

I media avrebbero pertanto già il dovere morale di indicare tali sostanze come «trash drugs», anziché «smart drugs», per evitare di promuovere positivamente il fenomeno e favorire indirettamente le aspettative dei giovani consumatori. Assenzio, Tujone, Ashwagandha, questi i nomi di alcuni dei loro principi attivi di cui si sa ancora troppo poco in relazione ai potenziali effetti tossici sulle persone. È nostro dovere considerare gli effetti di queste sostanze in persone alla guida di veicoli, posto che esse non sono direttamente vietate dalla legge, trattandosi di prodotti «naturali» non compresi tra le sostanze stupefacenti e presumibilmente difficilmente rilevabili dai test attualmente utilizzati dalle forze dell'ordine sugli automobilisti.

Il contrasto a questo fenomeno assume, infatti, le fattezze di un continuo rincorrersi tra la disponibilità in commercio delle droghe e le misure legislative approvate in seguito alle scoperte scientifiche, alla luce delle conseguenze sociali del fenomeno. Un caso su tutti, quello della Salvia Divinorum: prodotto regolarmente e legalmente venduto negli smart shops (come profumatore ambientale) che le autorità italiane, dopo ricerche approfondite sugli effetti psicoattivi ed allucinogeni della pianta, hanno deciso di mettere al bando, inserendo fra le categorie illegali il suo principio attivo, la «Salvinorina A».

Al fine di prevenire il dilagare di questi surrogati di droghe leggere, può la Commissione riferire se ritenga di rivedere la normativa da cui derivano le legislazioni di attuazione, ossia la direttiva 92/109/CEE relativa alla fabbricazione e all'immissione in commercio di talune sostanze impiegate nella fabbricazione illecita di stupefacenti o di sostanze psicotrope e l'Allegato II della direttiva 88/388/EEC sugli aromatizzanti?

Quali altri interventi urgenti ritiene la Commissione di poter attuare nell'interesse della salute dei consumatori?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(20 febbraio 2012)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-010409/2011 ([1]), in cui illustra la situazione relativa alle nuove sostanze psicoattive e descrive la propria strategia in materia.

Nella comunicazione «Verso un'azione europea più incisiva nella lotta alla droga» ([2]), la Commissione ha precisato che nel 2012 avrebbe proposto norme più rigorose sul controllo della produzione e del commercio dei precursori di droghe. La direttiva 92/109/CEE è stata sostituita dal regolamento (CE) n. 273/2004 relativo ai precursori di droghe ([3]).

La direttiva 88/388/CEE è stata sostituita dal regolamento (CE) n. 1334/2008 relativo agli aromi e alla loro etichettatura ([4]), che riguarda unicamente i prodotti alimentari. In caso di dubbio circa la sicurezza di un aroma o di un ingrediente alimentare con proprietà aromatizzanti, l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare effettua una valutazione dei rischi connessi e presenta un parere, in base al quale la Commissione può adottare le misure necessarie.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-010409&language=EN.
([2]) COM(2011)689 del 25.10.2011.
([3]) Regolamento (CE) n. 273/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 febbraio 2004, relativo ai precursori di droghe (GU L 47 del 12.2.2004, pagg. 1-10).
([4]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1334/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 dicembre 2008, relativo agli aromi e ad alcuni ingredienti alimentari con proprietà aromatizzanti destinati a essere utilizzati negli e sugli alimenti e che modifica il regolamento (CEE) n. 1601/91 del Consiglio, i regolamenti (CE) n. 2232/96 e (CE) n. 110/2008 e la direttiva 2000/13/CE (GU L 354 del 31.12.2008, pagg. 34-50).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000449/12
to the Commission
Tiziano Motti (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: 'Smart shops' and soft drug free-for-all

So-called 'smart drugs' are substances that are classified as herbal, and improperly defined, because they are legally sold as natural products, such as air fresheners for rooms, but are described and marketed on the web as being similar to cannabis. Because of the way these drugs are consumed by people of all ages, independently and without medical supervision, in a completely unregulated manner, they are dangerous. Furthermore, as recently established by anti-fraud squads in Italy, they are produced from laboratory waste.

The media should thus feel morally obliged to call these substances 'trash drugs' rather than 'smart drugs', in order to avoid promoting them in a positive way and thus indirectly raising the expectations of young consumers. Some of the active ingredients about which we know too little with regard to their potentially toxic effects on people are: wormwood, thujone and ashwagandha. It is our duty to consider the effects of these substances on people driving vehicles, given that, as 'natural' products not deemed to be drugs, they are not expressly prohibited by law and are presumably hard to detect by the tests currently used by the police on motorists.

In an attempt to combat this problem, the authorities are continually going around in circles: the drugs come onto the market, legislative measures are adopted in response to scientific findings, in view of the social impact of the phenomenon, and so it goes on. One example among many is Salvia Divinorum, a product that is legally sold in 'smart shops' (as an air freshener) and which the Italian authorities, after extensive research on the plant's psychoactive and hallucinogenic effects, decided to ban. Its active substance, Salvinorina A, has now been included on the list of illegal drugs.

In order to prevent the spread of these soft drug surrogates, can the Commission say whether it will revise the legislation from which the implementing laws derive, namely Directive 92/109/EEC on the manufacture and the placing on the market of certain substances used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and Annex II to Directive 88/388/EEC on flavourings?

What other urgent measures does the Commission think it can take in the interest of consumer health?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010409/2011 ([1]), which explained the situation with new psychoactive substances and the Commission's response to it.

In its communication 'Towards a stronger European response to drugs' ([2]), the Commission announced that it will propose stronger EU rules on the control of production and trade in drug precursors in 2012. Directive 92/109/EEC has been replaced by Regulation (EC) 273/2004 on drug precursors ([3]).

Directive 88/388/EEC has been replaced by Regulation (EC) 1334/2008 on flavourings and their labelling ([4]), and is relevant for foodstuff only. When there is a doubt concerning the safety of a flavouring or food ingredient with flavouring properties, a risk assessment of such flavouring can be carried out by the European Food Safety Authority. Based on an opinion of the Authority, the Commission can adopt necessary measures.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-010409&language=EN.
([2]) COM(2011) 689, 25.10.2011.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 273/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 on drug precursors, OJ L 47, 12.2.2004, pp. 1-10.
([4]) Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on flavourings and certain food ingredients with flavouring properties for use in and on foods and amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 1601/91, Regulations (EC) No 2232/96 and (EC) No 110/2008 and Directive 2000/13/EC, OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, pp. 34-50.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000450/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej / Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(23 stycznia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Dagestan: zabójstwo Hadżimurata Kamałowa

Hadżimurat Kamałow, założyciel i wydawca „Czernowika", najważniejszego niezależnego tygodnika w Dagestanie, został zamordowany około północy dnia 15 grudnia 2011 r. w Machaczkale, stolicy Dagestanu. Jak zauważa organizacja Human Rights Watch, gazeta ta słynie z niezależności, dziennikarstwa śledczego i zwracania szczególnej uwagi na drażliwe tematy, jak korupcja i łamanie praw człowieka przez organy ścigania i służby bezpieczeństwa. Hadżimurat Kamałow pracował do późnych godzin i wyszedł z siedziby „Czernowika", aby odprowadzić gościa, gdy zamaskowany uzbrojony mężczyzna otworzył ogień, trafiając go wieloma kulami.

We wrześniu 2009 r. w Machaczkale pojawiły się ulotki, w których grożono śmiercią ośmiu dziennikarzom, w tym Hadżimuratowi Kamałowowi, czterem prawnikom i czterem obrońcom praw człowieka działającym w Dagestanie. Anonimowi autorzy ulotek wzywali do „eksterminacji bandytów i zemsty za [zabitych] policjantów". Komentując tę „listę śmierci", Hadżimurat Kamałow powiedział mediom informacyjnym, że jego zdaniem stoją za nią służby bezpieczeństwa. Chociaż rosyjscy przywódcy wielokrotnie obiecywali stworzyć działaczom i dziennikarzom w regionie normalne warunki pracy, nadal dochodzi do zabójstw i napaści na dziennikarzy śledczych.

W jakim zakresie Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji / Wysoka Przedstawiciel Unii do spraw Zagranicznych i Polityki Bezpieczeństwa porusza na spotkaniach z rosyjskimi władzami kwestie przemocy wobec dziennikarzy i przypadków łamania praw człowieka w regionie Północnego Kaukazu?

W jaki sposób UE może wpłynąć na Moskwę, aby chronić wszystkie osoby, które walczą o wolność wypowiedzi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(21 lutego 2012 r.)

UE potępia zabójstwo Hadżimurata Kamałowa. Sytuacja dziennikarzy w Rosji, którzy w swojej pracy zawodowej często napotykają ograniczenia i przeszkody, budzi poważny niepokój. W deklaracji z dnia 17 listopada 2010 r. Wysoka Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji Catherine Ashton wyraziła w imieniu UE zaniepokojenie wobec sytuacji dziennikarzy w Rosji.

Wolność mediów i swobodny przepływ informacji należą do praw podstawowych, o których mowa zarówno w europejskiej Konwencji o ochronie praw człowieka i podstawowych wolności, ratyfikowanej również przez Rosję, jak i w konstytucji Federacji Rosyjskiej. W swoich kontaktach z władzami rosyjskimi UE podkreśla, i nadal będzie to czynić, że ustanowione w tych aktach prawa powinny być przestrzegane i szanowane.

Kwestie dotyczące wolności wypowiedzi i wolności mediów, a także sytuacji na Północnym Kaukazie, zostały uwzględnione w ostatniej rundzie konsultacji UE-Rosja w dziedzinie praw człowieka. Zostały one również poruszone na ostatnim spotkaniu na szczycie, które odbyło się 15 grudnia 2011 r. w Brukseli. Kwestie dotyczące mediów wybrano także głównym tematem dorocznej konferencji dotyczącej praw człowieka zorganizowanej 12 kwietnia 2011 r. przez delegaturę UE w Moskwie.

Hadżimurat Kamałow zyskał rozgłos jako dziennikarz zajmujący się sprawami korupcji. Wiadomo również, że doświadczał wielu problemów w związku ze swoją pracą. UE nie szczędzi wysiłków, by rozwiązać problem korupcji, szczególnie na Północnym Kaukazie, jak również problem bezkarności w tym regionie, w którym dziennikarze i obrońcy praw człowieka często padają ofiarą brutalnych ataków. Kwestie te były również rozpatrywane na spotkaniu ekspertów ds. przeciwdziałania korupcji UE-Rosja, które odbyło się w dniu 21 grudnia 2011 r.

UE nieustannie wzywa rząd rosyjski do zagwarantowania poszanowania wolności mediów w Rosji, zgodnie z jej międzynarodowymi zobowiązaniami, oraz do zapewnienia dziennikarzom bezpiecznych warunków pracy, by nie musieli się zmagać z niepotrzebnymi ograniczeniami lub zastraszeniami.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000450/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Dagestan: the murder of Gadzhimurad Kamalov

Gadzhimurad Kamalov, founder and publisher of Dagestan's leading independent weekly, *Chernovik*, was killed close to midnight on 15 December 2011 in Makhachkala, the capital of Dagestan. As noted by Human Rights Watch, the newspaper is known for its editorial independence, investigative reporting and special focus on such sensitive topics as corruption and human rights abuses by law-enforcement and security agencies. Kamalov had been working late and had stepped out of *Chernovik*'s offices to see off a visitor when a masked gunman opened fire, riddling him with bullets.

In September 2009, leaflets making death threats against eight local journalists, including Kamalov, four lawyers and four human rights activists in Dagestan appeared in Makhachkala. Their anonymous authors called for the 'exterminat[ion of] bandits and vengeance for [killed] policemen'. Commenting on the 'death list,' Kamalov told the news media that he thought the security services were behind it. Despite numerous promises by the Russian leadership to create normal working conditions for activists and journalists in the region, killings of and physical attacks on investigative journalists continue.

To what extent does the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy address the issues of violence against journalists and human rights violations in the North Caucasus at meetings with the Russian authorities?

What pressure can the EU exert on Moscow to protect all individuals who strive for freedom of expression?

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

The EU condemns the assassination of Mr Kamalov. The situation of journalists in Russia, who often face restrictions and obstacles while carrying out their professional activities, is of serious concern. High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) Catherine Ashton expressed concerns, on behalf of the EU, with the situation of journalists in Russia in a declaration of 17 November 2010.

Freedom of media and information is a fundamental right, enshrined in both the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, to which Russia is a party, as well as in the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The EU stresses — and will continue to do so — in its contacts with the Russian authorities that the guarantees provided therein should be upheld and respected.

Issues pertaining to freedom of expression and media, as well as the situation in the North Caucasus, have been addressed at the last round of the EU-Russia human rights consultations. They have also been raised at the most recent Summit, which took place on 15 December 2011, in Brussels. Media issues were also chosen as the main topic of the annual human rights conference organised by the EU Delegation in Moscow, which took place on 12 April 2011.

Mr Gadzhimurat Kamalov's was known for reporting on corruption issues, facing many difficulties in his work. The EU does not spare efforts to address the issue of corruption, including especially in the North Caucasus, as well as the prevailing impunity in the region, where journalists and human rights defenders are often victims of violent attacks, which remain unpunished. These issues were also addressed at the EU-Russia anti-corruption expert meeting, which took place on 21 December 2011.

The EU continues urging the Russian government to ensure that freedom of the media is respected in the country, in line with Russia's international obligations, and that journalists can work safely in the country, without undue restrictions or intimidation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000451/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Attacchi contro la comunità cristiana in Nigeria

Sicurezza, pace e rispetto dei diritti umani sono tra le priorità stabilite per l'utilizzo del Fondo Europeo per lo Sviluppo nella cooperazione tra la Nigeria e l'Unione europea.

L'Alto Rappresentante dovrebbe garantire il pieno supporto al governo nigeriano che combatte i terroristi colpevoli delle stragi e di aver sottratto al controllo dello Stato il nord del paese.

Le rivendicazioni del gruppo terroristico Boko Haram di estendere a tutta la nazione la sharia, finora presente solo in 12 Stati confederati su 36, fanno presagire altri attacchi e mettono a rischio non solo la vita di quanti professano liberamente la loro fede ma il governo stesso, che al momento non sembra in grado di fronteggiare adeguatamente i terroristi.

1. Quali sono le azioni immediate che il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante intende adottare per arginare l'emergenza?

2. Quali sono le misure a lungo termine previste per aiutare il governo a ristabilire il controllo sul paese?

3. Come saranno impiegati concretamente i fondi a disposizione per il paese? Quali saranno le future priorità per il sostegno al paese?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2012)

Come sottolineato dall'onorevole parlamentare, la sicurezza in Nigeria, in particolare nel nord-est del paese, desta grande preoccupazione.

I contatti regolari tra l'Unione la Nigeria vanno intensificandosi. L'8 febbraio 2012 si è svolta ad Abuja una riunione ministeriale Nigeria-UE presenziata dal ministro danese degli Affari esteri, Villy Soevndal, in sostituzione dell'Alta Rappresentante Catherine Ashton.

Le questioni relative alla sicurezza e alla cooperazione nella regione sono state affrontate in modo approfondito ed è stato concordato di intavolare un regolare dialogo locale su pace, stabilità e sicurezza. È stato inoltre deciso di ricorre a esperti per individuare un possibile piano d'azione e intensificare la cooperazione sulla lotta al terrorismo, aumentando al tempo stesso gli sforzi per risolvere le cause a monte dei problemi di sicurezza nel nord del paese.

La Nigeria e l'UE hanno inoltre convenuto che per raggiungere gli obiettivi di sviluppo del millennio è necessario un maggiore impegno nella regione settentrionale e in particolare nel nord-est.

La Nigeria tutela la libertà di religione, sancita dalla costituzione. È corretto sostenere che alcuni attentati da parte di Boko Haram possono considerarsi attacchi contro i cristiani mirati a esacerbare le tensioni e ottenere visibilità mediatica. Si noti tuttavia che la maggior parte degli ultimi attentati di Boko Haram a Kano non prendevano di mira la comunità cristiana, bensì contro le autorità statali. Gli osservatori sono concordi nel sostenere che molte delle numerose vittime di Boko Haram a Kano erano mussulmani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000451/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Attacks on the Christian community in Nigeria

Security, peace and respect for human rights are among the priorities established for the use of the European Development Fund with regard to cooperation between Nigeria and the European Union.

The High Representative should guarantee full support for the Nigerian Government, which is fighting terrorists who have committed massacres and removed the north of the country from state control.

The Boko Haram terrorist group's demands to extend Sharia law across the whole country, where it currently exists in only 12 out of 36 federal states, are likely to be the prelude to further attacks and endanger not only the lives of those who profess their faith freely, but the existence of the government itself, which does not appear able to take the appropriate action to deal with the terrorists.

1. What immediate action does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take in order to contain the emergency?

2. What long-term measures are planned to help the government re-establish control over the country?

3. How will the funds available for the country be used in reality? What are the future priorities as regards support the country?

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

As the Honourable Member points out the security situation in Nigeria, particularly in the North East of the country, is a cause for considerable concern.

The EU and Nigeria have regular contacts and they are intensifying. A Nigeria-EU Ministerial meeting took place in Abuja 8 February 2012. The Danish Foreign Minister, Mr Villy Soevndal, represented the High Representative Ashton.

Security issues and cooperation in this area were discussed extensively. It was agreed to establish a regular local dialogue on peace, stability and security. It was also agreed to engage experts with a view to identifying a possible action plan and to enhance the cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism, while strengthening efforts to address the root causes of the security challenge in the North of the country.

Nigeria and the EU furthermore agreed that to attain the Millennium development goals enhanced efforts are needed in the North and more particularly in the North East.

Nigeria is committed to religious freedom, which is enshrined in the country's constitution. It is correct that some of the attacks by Boko Haram can be understood as directed against Christians with the intention of exacerbating tensions and also to gain media coverage. It is noteworthy in this context that the recent major attacks by Boko Haram in Kano were not targeting Christians, but the state authorities. Observers agree that most of Boko Haram's many victims in Kano were Muslims.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000453/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: 40 000 εντολές διακοπής ρεύματος σε Έλληνες καταναλωτές

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα του ελληνικού τύπου, η Δημόσια Επιχείρηση Ηλεκτρισμού (ΔΕΗ) της χώρας, η οποία είχε αναλάβει να εισπράξει μέσω των τιμολογίων της το έκτακτο ειδικό τέλος ακινήτων που επέβαλε η ελληνική κυβέρνηση στο πλαίσιο του σταθεροποιητικού προγράμματος, έχει προχωρήσει στην έκδοση εντολών διακοπής ρεύματος για 40 000 καταναλωτές, καθώς εξέπνευσε η προθεσμία των 80 ημερών που παρέχει η ελληνική νομοθεσία για την αποπληρωμή. Παρά τις ασφαλιστικές δικλείδες που παρέχει η ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία και τις διατάξεις του νόμου για την προστασία των ευάλωτων καταναλωτών, καθώς και την εξαίρεση καταναλωτών από διακοπή ρεύματος, βάσει σχετικής υπουργικής απόφασης, που προβλέπει τη σύσταση τριμελούς επιτροπής ανά εφορία στην οποία θα καταφεύγουν ευπαθείς ομάδες, στη ΔΕΗ δεν έχουν φθάσει ακόμα τα στοιχεία των συγκεκριμένων καταναλωτών που εξαιρούνται με αποτέλεσμα να κινδυνεύουν με άμεση διακοπή της ηλεκτροδότησης.

Σε συνέχεια των παραπάνω, αλλά και προηγούμενης ερώτησής μας [E-008716/2011], ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με δεδομένο ότι η ΔΕΗ δεν έχει τα στοιχεία που απαιτούνται ώστε να κρίνει ποιοι καταναλωτές συγκαταλέγονται στις ευάλωτες ομάδες που χρήζουν προστασίας, πώς μπορούν πολίτες που ανήκουν σε αυτές τις ομάδες να διεκδικήσουν το δικαίωμά τους να προστατευτούν από τη διακοπή ρεύματος στις οικίες τους και τις δραματικές συνέπειες που μπορεί να έχει για την καθημερινότητά τους η συγκεκριμένη πράξη;

2. Ποια είναι η θέση της Επιτροπής στο ενδεχόμενο διακοπής ρεύματος σε οικίες καταναλωτών που ανήκουν σε ευάλωτες ομάδες πολιτών ή ανήκουν σε κοινωνικές κατηγορίες που χρήζουν διαρκούς ηλεκτροδότησης, όπως ασθενείς που υποστηρίζονται μηχανικά κ.λπ.

3. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα στοιχεία σχετικά με περιπτώσεις κρατών μελών που έχουν συνδέσει την είσπραξη φορολογικών υποχρεώσεων με λογαριασμούς υπηρεσιών κοινής ωφελείας (πχ. προμήθεια ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας κ.λπ.);

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

1. και 2. Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 3 και το παράρτημα I της οδηγίας 2009/72/ΕΚ για την ηλεκτρική ενέργεια ([1]), η οδηγία υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να παρέχουν ενιαίο σημείο επαφής για τους πελάτες, μεταξύ άλλων, για την επίλυση των διαφορών. Η ρυθμιστική αρχή κάθε κράτους μέλους, που έχει συγκροτηθεί σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 37 της εν λόγω οδηγίας, καλείται μεριμνά σχετικά με την αποτελεσματική και πλήρη εφαρμογή των μέτρων για την προστασία των καταναλωτών. Είναι υποχρέωση των κρατών μελών να λαμβάνουν τα δέοντα μέτρα και να εξασφαλίζουν ικανοποιητικές εγγυήσεις για την προστασία των ευπαθών καταναλωτών. Η Επιτροπή αναλύει επί του παρόντος τη μεταφορά τις ως άνω και άλλων υποχρεώσεων των κρατών μελών βάσει της οδηγίας 2009/72/ΕΚ.

3. Σύμφωνα με τις ήδη διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες, οι λογαριασμοί υπηρεσιών κοινής ωφελείας έχουν χρησιμοποιηθεί εν μέρει σε ορισμένες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες για την είσπραξη των δημοτικών φόρων ή των ραδιοτηλεοπτικών τελών. Οι ρυθμίσεις για τη συλλογή των φόρων και τελών δεν καλύπτονται από την κοινοτική νομοθεσία και, συνεπώς, εναπόκειται στα κράτη μέλη να προβούν στις σχετικές ρυθμίσεις, οι οποίες επιβάλλεται να συνάδουν με τους ισχύοντες κανονισμούς και να μην παραβιάζουν την κοινοτική νομοθεσία.

([1]) Οδηγία 2009/72/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 13ης Ιουλίου 2009 σχετικά με τους κοινούς κανόνες για την εσωτερική αγορά ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας και την κατάργηση της οδηγίας 2003/54/ΕΚ, ΕΕ L 211 της 14.8.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000453/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Power cuts ordered in 40 000 Greek households

According to reports in the Greek press, the national Public Power Corporation, which has agreed to collect through electricity bills the special property tax imposed by the Greek Government as part of its stabilisation programme, has ordered power cuts in 40 000 households following expiry of the statutory 80-day payment deadline. Despite the safeguard clauses existing under European law, statutory provisions for the protection of vulnerable consumers and exemptions from power cuts under the relevant ministerial decision establishing a three-member committee in each tax office to consider appeals from vulnerable groups, the PPC has not yet received details concerning these specific exempt groups, with the result that they are at imminent risk of having their power cut.

In view of this and further to our previous question [E-008716/2011], the Commission is asked to respond to the following:

1. Given that PPC does not have the information necessary to assess which consumers are included in vulnerable groups in need of protection, how can those concerned claim their right to protection from power cuts in their homes and the disastrous effects this could have on their everyday lives?

2. What is the Commission's position regarding the possibility of vulnerable individuals or those in need of continuous electricity supply, such as patients on life support machines, having their power cut?

3. Is any information available regarding similar cases in other Member States which have decided to collect taxes through utility bills (electricity bills, for example)?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

1 and 2. According to Article 3 and Annex I of the Electricity Directive 2009/72/EC ([1]), the directive obliges Member States to provide a single point of contact for customers *inter alia* for dispute settlement. The regulatory authority of each Member State set up in accordance with Article 37 of the same Directive should help to ensure that the consumer protection measures are effective and enforced. It is the obligation of Member States to take appropriate measures and ensure satisfactory safeguards in order to protect vulnerable customers. The Commission is currently analysing the transposition of this and other Member State obligations under Directive 2009/72/EC.

3. According to currently available information, utility bills have been used to some extent in some European countries for the collection of municipal taxes or broadcast reception fees. The arrangements for collection of taxes and levies are not covered in EU legislation and are, therefore, a matter for Member States to rule on as long as the arrangements comply with applicable regulations and do not infringe EC law.

([1]) Directive 2009/72/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000454/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Το παραεμπόριο, σημαντικό πρόβλημα για την οικονομία της Ελλάδας

Σήμερα, στην Ελλάδα, όπου τα εμπορικά καταστήματα το ένα μετά το άλλο βάζουν λουκέτο εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης, των σκληρών μέτρων λιτότητας και της βαριάς φορολογίας, το παραεμπόριο ανθεί, δίνοντας τη χαριστική βολή στον μικροέμπορο και μικροεπιχειρηματία που προσπαθεί να διασώσει την επιχείρησή του. Πράγματι, το παραεμπόριο είναι ένα σημαντικό πρόβλημα το οποίο αντιμετωπίζει η ελληνική αγορά, καθώς χιλιάδες προϊόντα, αμφίβολης προέλευσης και χαμηλής ποιότητας, κατακλύζουν τα πεζοδρόμια των μεγάλων εμπορικών δρόμων, υπονομεύοντας τη λειτουργία των νόμιμων, στεγασμένων και υπαίθριων, εμπορικών επιχειρήσεων.

Σύμφωνα μάλιστα, με πρόσφατα στοιχεία του ΟΟΣΑ, ο τζίρος του παραεμπορίου στη χώρα μας υπολογίζεται ετησίως στα 25 δις. ευρώ, στερώντας την ίδια στιγμή από τα δημόσια ταμεία έσοδα ύψους τουλάχιστον 9 δις. ευρώ από τον ΦΠΑ, δασμούς και ασύλληπτη φορολογητέα ύλη. Επιπλέον, στις αρνητικές συνέπειες του παραεμπορίου συγκαταλέγονται και οι μειώσεις ωρών/ημερών απασχόλησης και αποδοχών των εργαζομένων, η απώλεια θέσεων εργασίας και το οριστικό λουκέτο των εμπορικών καταστημάτων.

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιες κατευθυντήριες γραμμές έχει δώσει η ΕΕ για την πάταξη του παραεμπορίου στα κράτη μέλη;

2. Στο πλαίσιο ανταλλαγής βέλτιστων πρακτικών, πώς θα μπορούσε να περιοριστεί το φαινόμενο του παραεμπορίου στην Ελλάδα; Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι θα συνεισφέρει θετικά στον περιορισμό του εν λόγω φαινομένου η δημιουργία Σώματος Δίωξης Παραεμπορίου, προκειμένου να εκλείψουν τα γραφειοκρατικά και άλλα προβλήματα που δημιουργούνται από τις συναρμοδιότητες δεκάδων υπουργείων και άλλων φορέων του δημόσιου τομέα στο ελεγκτικό έργο της Πολιτείας. Τί ισχύει στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη;

3. Τί θέση κατέχει η Ελλάδα στην Ευρώπη των 27, αναφορικά με την έκταση του παραεμπορίου; Κατά πόσο εκτιμά η Επιτροπή ότι τέτοιου είδους φαινόμενα πλήττουν την οικονομική δραστηριότητα στα κράτη μέλη και θέτουν σε κίνδυνο την προστασία των καταναλωτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Μαΐου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί ότι με το παράνομο εμπόριο υπονομεύονται τα επίπεδα απασχόλησης και επενδύσεων εντός της Εσωτερικής Αγοράς, όπως επίσης ότι το παραεμπόριο μπορεί να θέτει σε κίνδυνο την υγεία και την ασφάλεια των ευρωπαίων πολιτών.

Αυτή την περίοδο, οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής εξετάζουν προσεκτικά το ζήτημα αυτό και άλλες προβληματικές δραστηριότητες που προκύπτουν στον τομέα λιανικού εμπορίου, όπως η παρασιτική αντιγραφή, με σκοπό τον προσδιορισμό ενδεδειγμένων μέτρων που μπορεί να είναι αναγκαία σε επίπεδο ΕΕ. Αναφορικά με το ειδικότερο ζήτημα του διενεργούμενου κατά παράβαση των ΔΔΙ εμπορίου, η ΕΕ θέτει επί του παρόντος σε εφαρμογή το σχέδιο δράσης της για την επιβολή από τα τελωνεία της νομοθεσίας σχετικά με τα ΔΔΙ ([1]). Επιπροσθέτως, η Επιτροπή προώθησε την ουσιαστική εφαρμογή εναρμονισμένων διαδικασιών κατά τρόπο ώστε να εξασφαλίζεται ο κατάλληλος συντονισμός των δραστηριοτήτων επιβολής του νόμου εντός της Εσωτερικής Αγοράς. Η οδηγία 2004/48 αποβλέπει στη βελτίωση του συντονισμού της εφαρμογής των διατάξεων αστικού δικαίου για την καταπολέμηση των παραβιάσεων ΔΔΙ.

Όσον αφορά τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές, η Επιτροπή εκφράζει την ικανοποίησή της για την πρόσφατη έγκριση από το Κοινοβούλιο της πρότασής της για τη δημιουργία, εντός του ΓΕΕΑ, ενός Παρατηρητηρίου για τις παραβιάσεις των ΔΔΙ. Αυτό θα εξασφαλίσει την καλύτερη ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών.

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει κατατάξει τα κράτη μέλη με βάση την από πλευράς τους επιβολή της νομοθεσίας σχετικά με τα ΔΔΙ. Τα δεδομένα που θα συλλέγονται από το Παρατηρητήριο θα πρέπει να επιτρέψουν τη διενέργεια μιας πιο αντικειμενικής αξιολόγησης των συνεπειών του εν λόγω παράνομου εμπορίου για τους καταναλωτές, τους εργαζόμενους και τις επιχειρήσεις εντός της ΕΕ.

([1]) Ψήφισμα του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Μαρτίου 2009, σχετικά με το σχέδιο δράσης των τελωνείων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για την καταπολέμηση των παραβιάσεων ΔΔΙ για τα έτη 2009 έως 2012 (ΕΕ C 71 της 25.3.2009, σ. 1).

Σχετικά με τη γενικότερη καταπολέμηση του σοβαρού και οργανωμένου εγκλήματος, αυτό εντάσσεται στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος της Στοκχόλμης, του σχεδίου δράσης της και της στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για την εσωτερική ασφάλεια. Το πλαίσιο αυτό αποσκοπεί κυρίως στην πρόληψη, την ιχνηλάτηση και την εκρίζωση των φαινομένων διείσδυσης στη νόμιμη οικονομία. Η δέσμη μέτρων καταπολέμησης της διαφθοράς, η οποία θεσπίστηκε τον Ιούνιο του 2011, και η πρόταση οδηγίας για τη δέσμευση και δήμευση προϊόντων εγκλήματος αποτελούν μέρος της προσέγγισης αυτής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000454/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Illegal trade — An important issue for the Greek economy

Today in Greece, where businesses are closing down one after the other due to the economic crisis, austerity measures and heavy taxation, illegal trade is booming, giving the coup de grace to small traders and businessmen struggling to salvage their businesses. This is indeed a major problem for the Greek economy, with thousands of products of questionable origin and poor quality flooding the pavements of all the major shopping streets, undermining the operation of legal indoor and outdoor businesses.

According to recent OECD data, the turnover of illegal trade in our country is estimated at EUR 25 billion annually. This is also depriving the public coffers of at least EUR 9 billion in revenue from VAT and customs duties and in uncollected income tax. Additionally, the negative effects of illegal trade include reductions in working hours/days and salaries, job losses and the closure of businesses.

Based on the above, the Commission is requested to answer the following:

1. What EU guidelines apply to the elimination of illegal trade in the Member States?

2. How can illegal trade in Greece be restricted, through the exchange of best practices? Does the Commission believe that the creation of an Illegal Trade Squad could help contain the problem by eliminating red tape and other problems created by the concurrent jurisdiction of dozens of ministries and public watchdog bodies? What is being done in other Member States?

3. What is Greece's ranking within the EU-27, in terms of the extent of illegal trade? To what extent does the Commission believe that problems of this kind are affecting economic activity in the Member States and jeopardising consumer protection?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2012)

The Commission agrees that illegal trade undermines job and investment levels within the internal market, and that it may also put at risk the health and security of European citizens.

The Commission services are currently closely examining this issue and other problematic activities arising in the retail sector, such as parasitic copying, with a view to identifying any appropriate action that may be needed at EU level. As regards the more specific question of IPR infringing trade, the EU is currently implementing its action plan on customs enforcement of IPR ([1]). Furthermore, the Commission has promoted the effective application of harmonised procedures so that enforcement activities are properly coordinated within the internal market. Directive 2004/48 aims to improve civil enforcement coordination against IPR infringements.

As regards best practices, the Commission welcomes Parliament's recent endorsement of its proposal to establish an Observatory on IPR infringements within OHIM. This will ensure the better exchange of best practice.

The Commission has not ranked Member States in terms of their IPR enforcement. The data to be collected by the Observatory should allow for a more objective assessment to be made of the impact of such illicit trade on consumers, workers and businesses within the EU.

As regards the overall fight against serious and organised crime, this is framed within the Stockholm programme, its action plan and the EU internal security strategy. This framework notably aims to prevent, detect and root out the penetration of the licit economy. The anti-corruption package adopted in June 2011 and the proposal for a directive on the freezing and confiscation of proceeds of crime are part of this approach.

([1]) Council Resolution of 16 March 2009 on the EU Customs Action Plan to combat IPR infringements for the years 2009 to 2012 (OJ C 71, 25.3.2009, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000455/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Kyrgyzstan authorities' refusal to re-register the Ahmadiyya Muslim community

In December 2011, the Kyrgyzstan authorities refused to re-register the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, the main office of which is based in my home constituency of London. The State Commission on Religious Affairs' decision violates the rights of 1 000 Ahmadiyya Muslims in Kyrgyzstan.

1. Can the EEAS give its assessment of the Kyrgyz government's refusal to re-register the Ahmadis, given that the Kyrgyz constitution provides for freedom of religion and prohibits discrimination based on religion or religious beliefs?

2. Is the EEAS monitoring the situation in Chuy, Osh and Issyk Kul provinces, where the Ahmadis are based, to ensure that there is no occurrence of the kind of anti-Ahmadi attacks which have taken place in Indonesia and Pakistan?

3. Will the Vice-President/High Representative raise her concern over about human rights in Kyrgyzstan with the Bishkek authorities at the earliest opportunity, and instruct the Delegation of the European Union in Kyrgyzstan to increase pressure on the government to respect the rights of Ahmadi Muslims?

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

According to our information, the decision by the Kyrgyz authorities to discontinue registration of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community has to be placed within the larger context of the adoption in the Kyrgyz Republic 2009 of a new Law on the Freedom of Beliefs and Religious Organisations, which stipulates a re-registration of all entities. It is to be noted that complaints with regards to the re-registration process have come from a wide range of religious organisations.

During the last round of its Human Rights Dialogue with Kyrgyzstan in June 2011, the EU raised concerns regarding the new law on Religion, which would contradict the Constitutional guarantees on freedom of religion as well as international human rights standards. The Kyrgyz side informed that a working group to work out amendments to the law had been set up.

The services of the High Representative/Vice-President are following closely the situation of religious minorities, including Ahmadiyya Muslims, throughout the country. The EU will continue to raise the issue with regard to freedom of religion in the bilateral contacts with the Kyrgyz authorities. The EU will continue to voice, in particular, in the framework of the next Human Rights Dialogue, concerns about reports of difficulties encountered by religious organisations with registration and will urge the authorities to adequately address the issue.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000456/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: European Personnel Selection Office and the cost of recruitment

Can the Commission state how much the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) spent on recruiting candidates for the EU institutions in 2011, and how many successful candidates took up positions with the institutions in the same year (rather than simply being placed on reserve lists)?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

EPSO and its staff are committed to meeting both the needs of the institutions and the expectations of candidates by attracting and selecting talented individuals from across the EU by means of effective and fair selection procedures. EPSO aims to provide the institutions in a timely manner with highly qualified staff, in keeping with their requests, so that they may meet the challenges they face.

EPSO is responsible for the organisation of entire selection process, from preparing and publishing the notice of competition to managing and monitoring the use of the reserve lists. Recruitment itself is the responsibility of each institution.

With an average budget of approximately EUR 23 million per year allocated to selection activities (for future officials, temporary agents and contract agents), EPSO produced reserve lists with around 19 000 successful candidates in the period 2004-2011 out of several hundreds of thousands of applicants from all 27 Member States.

In 2011, in addition to placing 4 950 individuals in the database of potential contract agents following testing, EPSO selected 1 375 successful candidates in open competitions. The institutions recruited a total of 1 586 successful candidates of competitions in that year.

Against a backdrop of growing pressure to reduce the cost of the European public service, qualitative improvements introduced by EPSO have led to greater effectiveness and efficiency. The reserve lists more accurately reflect the real and immediate needs of the recruiting services as expressed in institutions' three-year rolling strategic human resources planning exercise. The actual number of selected successful candidates is more closely aligned to the budgetary possibilities of the institutions than in the past.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000457/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Face-to-face meetings between Vice-President/High Representative Ashton and Commissioner Füle during 2011

In July last year, Baroness Ashton told this parliament that Štefan Füle was her 'close and trusted partner' in conceiving the new European Neighbourhood Policy. Given the important role the Arab Spring played in shaping foreign policy last year, could the EEAS please inform me how many face-to-face meetings, outside of weekly Commission college meetings, took place between VP/HR Ashton and Commissioner Füle during 2011?

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

The HR/VP and Commissioner Füle meet each other on a regular basis. Due to the integrated nature of their competences and tasks, their respective cabinets are in contact on a daily basis and the same is the case for the European External Action Service (EEAS) staff working on the European Neighbourhood policy. This close coordination and cooperation is also reflected in the joint management meetings that take place on a regular basis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000458/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(17 January 2012)

Subject: List of international development assistance projects/budget support contributions cancelled during 2011

Given the commitments that the EU has made to aid effectiveness in Paris and Accra, it is important to closely monitor EU aid to ensure it is achieving its objectives and to be ready to withdraw this aid when projects fail to deliver.

Could the EEAS please provide a list of which international development assistance projects/budget support contributions were cancelled during 2011, indicating the financial value of each project and the reason for its cancellation?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

The Commission ensures the follow-up of all projects funded from the EU budget as part of its mandate and an obligation imposed by the Financial Regulation.

Regarding projects 'having failed to deliver', which implies that a respective contract and/or a financing convention with authorities had been signed, the Commission has not cancelled any related legal commitments in 2011.

However:

— Some project implementation has been suspended due to political instability in cases such as Yemen and Syria (suspension of bilateral and regional cooperation with Syria on 25 May 2011).

— Some budget support payments have also been deferred as conditionalities were not fully met (case of Tajikistan, Pakistan and Indonesia).

— In Venezuela and Panama three projects were not signed because there was no commitment by the partner government or a lack of a coherent and relevant sector strategy.

— Internal budgetary commitments for a total amount of EUR 26 million for Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico, plus EUR 25 million of such commitments for emergent Asian countries, were — following a screening of EU-cooperation activities — re-deployed in order to strengthen Arab countries after the Arab Spring movements in 2011.

— On 19 January 2012 the Eritrean Government informed the Commission of its intention to forfeit all ongoing commitments of 10th EDF. The Commission is analysing the consequences of this announcement.

— Finally, it is recalled that under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement cooperation with five ACP countries (Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Fiji, Guinea and Guinea Bissau) remains suspended.

The Honourable Member will find more information regarding 2011 budgetary execution in the Commission's Annual report on the EU development and external assistance policies and their implementation to be published end March 2012 ([1]).

([1]) Will be available on the website http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/infopoint/publications/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000459/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Cost of EEAS officials' so-called 'respite trips' to third countries

Can the Vice-President/High Representative confirm whether EEAS officials posted in certain third countries are entitled to so-called 'respite trips', for example an all-expenses-paid trip to Phuket in Thailand?

Can the EEAS provide more details of these trips, in particular the number of such trips taken each year and the amount that this costs it annually?

Can the EEAS also provide a justification for continuing such trips at a time of economic crisis and forced austerity?

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

On the basis of Article 8 of the annex X to the Staff Regulations, Officials, temporary and contract staff in Delegations may be granted rest leave on account of particularly difficult living conditions at their place of employment and be reimbursed of the travel expenses (return ticket) to the authorised place of leave for themselves and their dependents living with them. The destination of reference is Brussels except for Delegations in the Asia-Pacific region where Thailand (Pukhet) is the reference.

In 2011, out of 140 Delegations, 29 places of employment where granted such leave. The number of days ranged from six taken in a maximum of two periods (for example Indonesia, Nigeria) to 15 days taken in a maximum of five periods (for example Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan). The total cost for the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission in 2011 for their staff in Delegations was around EUR 4 million, including EUR 1 million from the EEAS budget covering EEAS staff costs in the EU Delegations. The advantage of Brussels as a reference destination is that it allows staff to cumulate rest leave with professional trips, and because air fares to Europe are frequently less expensive than more local trips, while fixing Thailand (Pukhet) as the reference destination in Asia is also generally a cheaper destination than Europe

The justification for such leave is to provide necessary relief to staff and their families from the psychological strains and difficult security environment in the countries concerned. This practice is in line with many Member States diplomatic services and is as an incentive as well as a compensation for hardship postings.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000460/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — «Informe sobre Jerusalén 2010»: deplorable situación de la población palestina en el área C de los territorios ocupados bajo control civil y de seguridad de Israel

Recientemente, representaciones diplomáticas acreditadas en Jerusalén y Ramala presentaron el «Informe sobre Jerusalén 2010» al PSC (Comité de Política y Seguridad de la UE) en el que describen la penosa situación a la que deben enfrentarse los palestinos bajo la ocupación ilegal de Israel «considerando la necesidad urgente de que se haga frente a esta situación»; reflejan la política activa y continua de las autoridades de este país para dificultar la vida de esta población y aislarla; y enumeran una serie de «recomendaciones para reforzar la política de la UE sobre Jerusalén Este».

Entre muchos puntos, el informe alerta sobre la voluntad de Israel de anexión de los territorios, especialmente de Jerusalén Este, donde está llevando a cabo una «demolición sistemática de la presencia palestina» y sentencia que por las prácticas de Israel «se deterioró seriamente la situación general en Jerusalén Este, poniendo seriamente en peligro las oportunidades de una paz duradera sobre la base de solución de los dos Estados».

Asimismo el informe describe la realidad a la que deben enfrentarse los palestinos que viven en el área C de los territorios ocupados, donde Israel está violando la Cuarta Convención de Ginebra, y ven como el Gobierno de Netanyahu implementa prácticas que, incumpliendo lo establecido en el Derecho Internacional, imposibilitan a la población palestina llevar a cabo una vida digna mediante una «expansión de los asentamientos, zonificación y planificación urbanística restrictiva, demoliciones y desalojos, discriminación en la política educativa, dificultad en el acceso a la atención sanitaria, suministro inadecuado de recursos e inversiones o precariedad en la vivienda».

Teniendo en cuenta que la Unión Europea mantiene con Israel un Acuerdo de Asociación preferente que está claramente supeditado, en su artículo segundo, a la garantía y cumplimiento de los derechos humanos y respeto a la democracia por ambas partes, y considerando que el informe explicita claramente la nula voluntad política de Israel de avanzar hacia una solución pacífica del conflicto, respetar el derecho internacional y trabajar para garantizar los derechos humanos,

1. ¿Qué conclusiones ha sacado la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante del informe citado?

2. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante poner en práctica las recomendaciones recogidas en éste e implementar medidas para responder a la necesidad urgente de hacer frente a la situación?

3. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante trasladar un «mensaje claro y potente» al Gobierno de Israel sobre la inaceptabilidad de la situación actual, solicitando a la Comisión Europea la congelación del Acuerdo de Asociación por el incumplimiento de la cláusula segunda del mismo?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta, Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de mayo de 2012)

El informe al que hace referencia Su Señoría en su pregunta es un ejercicio anual realizado por las misiones de la UE en Jerusalén y Ramala para informar de los avances sobre el terreno. Es un informe fáctico interior y no un documento público, que sirve como fuente de información para los debates sobre las políticas de la UE en Oriente Medio y Jerusalén Oriental. La posición oficial de la UE sobre Jerusalén Oriental y el proceso de paz en Oriente Medio está reflejada en las conclusiones del Consejo de diciembre de 2009 y 2010. Su postura respecto a los acuerdos alcanzados también es clara y se resume en dichas conclusiones.

La posición de la UE sobre la posibilidad de «bloquear» o suspender el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel puede encontrarse en la respuesta a la pregunta parlamentaria E-012660/2011 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000460/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR —'2010 Report on Jerusalem': the deplorable situation of the Palestinian population in area C of the Occupied Territories under Israeli civilian and security control

Recently, diplomatic missions accredited in Jerusalem and Ramallah presented the 2010 Report on Jerusalem to the PSC (the EU Political and Security Committee). The report describes the deplorable situation faced by the Palestinians under illegal Israeli occupation, 'considering the urgent need to address the situation'. Its authors refer to the continuous, active policy by the authorities of the country in question to hinder the life of this population and to isolate it. They also list a series of 'recommendations to reinforce EU policy on East Jerusalem'.

Among its many points, the report warns of Israel's intention to annex the Territories, particularly East Jerusalem, where it is 'systematically undermining the Palestinian presence in the city', and judges that Israel's practices have led to 'a further deterioration of the overall situation in East Jerusalem', which 'seriously endangers the chances of a sustainable peace on the basis of two states'.

The report also describes the situation faced by Palestinians living in area C of the Occupied Territories, where Israel is in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, as they watch Mr Netanyahu's Government implementing practices that, in breach of the provisions of international law, exclude the Palestinian population from decent living conditions through 'the continued expansion of settlements, restrictive zoning and planning, ongoing demolitions and evictions, an inequitable education policy, difficult access to healthcare, the inadequate provision of resources and investment and the precarious residency issue'.

Bearing in mind that the European Union maintains a preferential Association Agreement with Israel, which is clearly conditional, pursuant to its second article, on the guarantee and fulfilment of human rights, and on both sides' respect for democracy, and whereas the report in question makes clear Israel's political unwillingness to move towards a peaceful solution to the conflict, to respect international law and to work to ensure human rights:

1. What conclusions has the Vice-President/High Representative drawn from the above-mentioned report?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to put the recommendations made in the report into practice and to implement measures to respond to the urgent need to deal with the situation?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to transmit a 'clear and consistent message' to the Israeli Government regarding the unacceptability of the current situation, requesting the European Commission to freeze the Association Agreement because its second clause has been breached?

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

The report referred to in the Honourable Member's question is an annual exercise by the EU missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah reporting on developments on the ground. It is an internal factual report, and is not a public document. The report serves as a source of information and input into discussions surrounding EU policy towards the Middle East and East Jerusalem. The EU's official position on East Jerusalem and the Middle East Peace Process is reflected in the Council conclusions from December 2009 and 2010. Its position on settlements is also clear and outlined in the aforementioned conclusions.

The EU position on the possibility of 'freezing' or suspending the EU-Israel Association Agreement can be found in the reply to the parliamentary Question E-012660/2011 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000461/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Nuevas amenazas de muerte a defensores de derechos humanos en Colombia ante la pasividad del Gobierno de Juan Manuel Santos

El pasado viernes 13 de enero fue amenazado de muerte Abelardo Sánchez Serrano, miembro directivo de la Corporación Regional para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, Credhos.

Así, una persona que viajaba en la parte trasera de una motocicleta de alto cilindraje le apuntó al pecho con una pistola y le amenazó con matarlo si en 72 horas no había salido del país y si Credhos no dejaba de denigrar a la fuerza pública con sus investigaciones y su trabajo en defensa de los derechos humanos.

Esta amenaza, que se une a una docena de amenazas directas personales y colectivas, ocurría solo 24 horas después de una rueda de prensa de conmemoración de los asesinados de la masacre en la Vereda La Rochela, donde se recordó que, junto a paramilitares y narcotraficantes, también participaron fuerzas públicas en este crimen de lesa humanidad cometido el 18 de enero de 1989.

Además, como he denunciado en otras ocasiones, estas amenazas y esta situación de indefensión no son un caso aislado de los miembros de Credhos, sino que son numerosas las asociaciones y organizaciones de defensa de los derechos humanos que ven obstaculizado su trabajo, poniendo en peligro la propia integridad de sus trabajadores, para poder monitorear y conseguir que se garanticen estos derechos en Colombia.

Todas estas asociaciones han solicitado ya en diversas ocasiones acciones concretas y efectivas del Gobierno de José Manuel Santos para protegerlas en su trabajo, sin haber recibido respuesta hasta la fecha. Exigen que el Gobierno implemente medias encaminadas a evitar que, como ocurre en muchos de los casos, sean miembros de las fuerzas públicas los que actúan de esta manera, acabando para ello con la impunidad reinante, e investigando a fondo y llevando ante los jueces tanto los autores materiales como intelectuales de estas amenazas y atentados contra la integridad física de los activistas en Colombia.

1. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante exigir al Gobierno de Colombia que brinde a las organizaciones sociales y defensoras de derechos humanos las garantías políticas y materiales que les permitan realizar su importante labor?

2. ¿Piensa mostrar la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante su preocupación por este caso y exigir que se investiguen todos los atentados y amenazas contra la integridad física de las y los defensores de los derechos humanos en los encuentros que mantiene regularmente con representantes del Estado colombiano?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de marzo de 2012)

La UE ha planteado en diversas ocasiones la necesidad de garantizar la seguridad personal de los defensores de los derechos humanos en Colombia y de facilitarles el espacio y las garantías necesarias para llevar a cabo su importante y legítimo trabajo en relación con el Gobierno colombiano. El asunto de la protección de los defensores de los derechos humanos y la lucha contra la impunidad con respecto a las violaciones de las que son objeto ocuparon un lugar destacado en la agenda de la última reunión del diálogo UE-Colombia sobre derechos humanos, celebrada el 30 de enero de 2011. El Gobierno colombiano presentó en esa ocasión el recientemente creado organismo público encargado de proteger, entre otras, a las personas amenazadas por su participación en actividades relacionadas con los derechos humanos. Este nuevo sistema debería mejorar sustancialmente la capacidad del Estado para garantizar la seguridad de estas personas. La UE también sigue de cerca el proceso de la Mesa Nacional de Garantías para los Defensores de los Derechos Humanos.

En lo que respecta a las amenazas contra el Sr. Sánchez, la Delegación de la UE ha tenido conocimiento de este caso gracias a la información facilitada por la propia Credhos. La Delegación está recopilando datos sobre los hechos alegados y, en caso de que se confirmen, contactará con las autoridades colombianas competentes para invitarlas a abrir una investigación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000461/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — New death threats against defenders of human rights in Colombia, with the passivity of the Government of Juan Manuel Santos

Last Friday, 13 January, Abelardo Sánchez Serrano, a board member of the Regional Corporation for the Defence of Human Rights (CREDHOS), was threatened with death.

A person travelling on the back of a powerful motorcycle pointed a pistol at Mr Sánchez's chest and threatened to kill him within 72 hours if he did not leave the country by then and if CREDHOS continued to denigrate public law enforcement with its investigations and its work in defence of human rights.

This threat, another in a series of a dozen or so direct personal and collective threats, occurred just 24 hours after a press conference held to commemorate those killed in the Vereda La Rochela massacre. At this conference it was recalled that public forces were also involved in this crime against humanity committed on 18 January 1989, along with paramilitaries and drug traffickers.

Furthermore, as I have reported on other occasions, these threats and this situation of helplessness affect not only members of CREDHOS, but also numerous other associations and organisations working in defence of human rights. The latter have their work hampered and their workers are endangered as they try to monitor these rights and ensure that they are guaranteed in Colombia.

All of these associations have repeatedly requested that concrete and effective action be taken by the Government of José Manuel Santos to protect them in their work, and have received no response to date. They demand that the Government implement measures to prevent members of the public forces from acting in this way, as they often do. To this end, the associations call for an end to the prevailing impunity, a thorough investigation, and for both the material and intellectual perpetrators of these threats and attacks against the physical integrity of activists in Colombia to be brought before the courts.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to demand that the Colombian Government provide social and human rights organisations with the political and material guarantees that will enable them to carry out their important work?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to express concern about this case and demand an investigation into the attacks and threats against the physical integrity of human rights defenders at the meetings held regularly with representatives of the Colombian State?

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

The EU has on various occasions raised the need to guarantee the personal safety of human rights defenders in Colombia and to provide them with the space and the necessary guarantees to carry out their important and legitimate work vis-à-vis the Colombian government. The issues of protection of human rights defenders and the fight against impunity regarding violations committed against them figured prominently on the agenda of the last session of the EU-Colombian human rights dialogue, held on 30 January 2011. The Colombian government on this occasion presented the newly established government agency which has a mandate to provide protection, *inter alia*, to individuals who are under threat because of their involvement in human rights activities. This new system should substantially improve the ability of the State to ensure the security of these individuals. The EU is also accompanying the process of the National Roundtable on Guarantees for Human Rights Defenders (Mesa Nacional de Garantías para los Defensores de los Derechos Humanos).

As regards the threats against Mr Sánchez, the EU Delegation has been made aware of this case by CREDHOS itself. The Delegations is gathering more information about the alleged facts, and, should they be confirmed, will approach the competent Colombian authorities to encourage them to carry out through investigations.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000462/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(23 janvier 2012)

Objet: Mauvaises performances des sites internet de crédits à la consommation

La Commission vient de publier les résultats de son étude sur les sites internet offrant des crédits à la consommation. Ces «coups de balai» sont particulièrement intéressants, (contrairement aux «tableaux de bord», exercices sans intérêt pour les consommateurs).

Ils mettent en évidence les énormes lacunes qui existent dans l'application des de la législation de l'UE.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer:

— pourquoi elle refuse d'indiquer les noms des organismes financiers qui ne respectent pas la législation européenne, ce qui rend les résultats inutiles pour les consommateurs et inoffensifs pour les opérateurs financiers pris en défaut;

— comment elle entend contrôler les effets de ses recommandations, alors qu'elle délègue entièrement son autorité aux États membres;

— comment elle explique que dans certains États membres presque tous les opérateurs présentent des irrégularités;

— quelles sont les suites données aux précédents «coups de balai» et les analyses de la Commission sur les effets positifs de ceux-ci?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(15 février 2012)

Le «coup de balai» sur le crédit à la consommation auquel fait référence l'auteur de la question, a été effectué par les autorités nationales. La Commission contrôle et coordonne ce genre d'opérations.

La divulgation, dans le contexte d'un «coup de balai», du nom des entreprises suspectées d'infraction dépend de la législation nationale. Seules les autorités nationales chargées du respect de la législation peuvent déterminer s'il est loisible de nommer une entreprise.

L'application du droit des consommateurs relève de la responsabilité des États membres. La phase de contrôle du «coup de balai» a maintenant commencé, et les autorités qui y participent prennent contact avec les institutions financières concernées pour exiger des mesures correctives appropriées. La Commission rendra compte en 2013 des progrès accomplis lors de cette phase.

Les résultats du «coup de balai» varient selon les États membres en fonction, notamment, de la méthode d'échantillonnage utilisée: la proportion de sites comportant des irrégularités est généralement plus élevée dans les cas où les autorités ont plus particulièrement contrôlé les sites ayant déjà fait l'objet de plaintes.

Les premiers résultats de ce «coup de balai» sont semblables à ceux des précédents, au cours desquels des pourcentages similaires d'infractions avaient été relevés durant la première phase. La situation s'améliorera après la phase de contrôle.

Les «coups de balai» se sont révélés efficaces, mais rendre l'Internet plus sûr pour les consommateurs européens nécessite des efforts permanents et conjoints de la part des autorités nationales. La Commission examine les résultats des «coups de balai» avec ces autorités et les prend en compte dans la mise au point d'activités d'information et de familiarisation en matière d'application de la législation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000462/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Poor performance by consumer credit websites

The Commission has just published the results of its study on websites offering consumer credit. These 'sweeps' are particularly interesting, unlike 'scoreboards' which are of no interest to consumers.

They highlight the massive gaps that exist in the application of EU legislation.

Can the Commission say:

— why it refuses to give the names of financial organisations that do not comply with European legislation, since this makes the results useless for consumers and harmless for financial operators found to be at fault?

— how it intends to monitor the effects of its recommendations when it has delegated full authority to the Member States?

— how it explains the irregularities discovered for almost all operators in some Member States?

— what follow-up action was taken on previous 'sweeps', indicating the Commission's analysis of the positive effects these had?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2012)

The 'Sweep' covering consumer credit, to which the Honourable Member refers, was carried out by the national authorities. The Commission coordinates and monitors these exercises.

The naming of companies suspected of breaches in the framework of a sweep is subject to national legislation. Only national enforcement authorities can assess whether a company can be named.

The responsibility for enforcing consumer legislation lies with the Member States. The enforcement phase of the sweep has now started and participant authorities are contacting the financial institutions concerned to demand corrective actions as appropriate. The Commission will report on the outcome of the enforcement phase in 2013.

The results of the sweep vary by Member State depending, *inter alia*, on the sampling method used: the proportion of sites with irregularities is usually higher where the authority targeted sites based on previous complaints data.

The initial findings of the sweep mirror the outcome in previous sweeps where similar percentages of infringements were found in the first phase. The situation will improve after the enforcement phase.

The sweeps have proven to be an effective tool, but making the online world safer for European consumers is a matter of continued and cooperative endeavour by national authorities. The Commission discusses the outcome of the sweeps with national authorities and takes these results into account in the design of future enforcement information and education activities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000463/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Truffa on line sul software gratuito

Si offriva la possibilità di scaricare software gratuitamente dal proprio sito, ma agli utenti veniva poi comunicato che, avendo usufruito di tali servizi, risultavano aver sottoscritto un contratto biennale con richiesta di versamento di 96 euro l'anno. Configurando la tentata truffa, dietro l'emissione del messaggio ingannevole, la procura di Roma ha aperto un fascicolo processuale nei confronti dei responsabili della società riconducibile al sito «Italia-programmi.net» registrato alle Seychelles.

Gli accertamenti, per il momento contro ignoti, sono partiti sulla base di una decina di denunce e di almeno 4 000 segnalazioni arrivate al Garante della concorrenza e del mercato.

Sulla vicenda si sono mosse, nei mesi scorsi, anche le associazioni di consumatori, ottenendo dal Garante una dichiarazione di «pratica scorretta» ed una successiva intimazione a pubblicizzare correttamente le condizioni di scarico dei programmi online. Cosa che, da qualche tempo, si sta verificando. Secondo gli inquirenti, l'ammontare della somma ottenuta precedentemente in modo illecito sarebbe di circa 100 mila euro. Gli accertamenti puntano ora ad identificare i titolari del conto corrente, aperto in un istituto bancario di Cipro, sul quale sono finiti i soldi di chi, a fronte delle intimazioni della società, ha pagato.

Poiché la criminalità si sta sempre più internazionalizzando e le truffe on-line sono all'ordine del giorno mentre le misure per combatterla vengono prese prevalentemente a livello interno, si registrano notevoli differenze tra le normative degli Stati membri e difficoltà nel combatterla.

Può la Commissione far sapere quali normative sono state adottate per combattere le truffe connesse agli acquisti on-line e agli strumenti di pagamento non in contanti?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2012)

La Commissione è al corrente di tali pratiche e rinvia l'Onorevole Parlamentare alla sua risposta scritta all'interrogazione E-9052/2010 ([1]).

Le pratiche in questione sono vietate dalla direttiva 2005/29/CE sulle pratiche commerciali sleali ([2]): la direttiva vieta in effetti (qualsiasi siano le circostanze) le pratiche consistenti nel far pagare servizi non richiesti dal consumatore ([3]) e nel «descrivere un prodotto come gratuito, senza oneri o simili se il consumatore deve pagare un sovrappiù rispetto all'inevitabile costo di rispondere alla pratica commerciale e ritirare o farsi recapitare l'articolo» ([4]) .

La direttiva 2011/83/UE sui diritti dei consumatori ([5]) metterà ulteriormente al bando i costi occulti su Internet. Dal 13 giugno 2014 in poi, i professionisti saranno obbligati a garantire che il consumatore riconosca espressamente che l'ordine implica l'obbligo di pagare. Le informazioni sul prezzo totale da pagare dovranno essere fornite in modo chiaro ed evidente, direttamente prima che il consumatore inoltri l'ordine.

La direttiva 2007/64/CE relativa ai servizi di pagamento nel mercato interno ([6]) stabilisce che, prima che un consumatore sia vincolato da qualsiasi contratto di servizi di pagamento, debbano essergli fornite le informazioni sulle condizioni applicabili. Se un'operazione di pagamento ha già avuto luogo, e se tale operazione non è autorizzata o è stata effettuata in modo inesatto, la direttiva autorizza chi ha pagato a ottenere una rettifica o un rimborso.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 maggio 2005, relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali tra imprese e consumatori nel mercato interno e che modifica la direttiva 84/450/CEE del Consiglio e le direttive 97/7/CE, 98/27/CE e 2002/65/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e il regolamento (CE) n. 2006/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio («direttiva sulle pratiche commerciali sleali»).
([3]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE, allegato I, n. 29).
([4]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE, allegato I, n. 20).
([5]) Gli Stati membri devono recepire tale direttiva entro il 13 dicembre 2013 e applicare le relative norme a decorrere dal 13 giugno 2014.
([6]) Direttiva 2007/64/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 13 novembre 2007, relativa ai servizi di pagamento nel mercato interno, recante modifica delle direttive 97/7/CE, 2002/65/CE, 2005/60/CE e 2006/48/CE, che abroga la direttiva 97/5/CE.

I consumatori che ritengono di essere stati vittime delle pratiche in questione devono continuare a rivolgersi alle autorità nazionali, che sono le principali responsabili delle indagini e della prevenzione delle attività di determinate imprese alla luce della legislazione UE di tutela dei consumatori. Per quanto riguarda le violazioni transfrontaliere, nell'UE, della legislazione di tutela dei consumatori, le autorità nazionali possono lavorare insieme nell'ambito della rete di cooperazione per la tutela dei consumatori creata nel 2006 ([7]).

([7]) Comunicazione della Commissione ai sensi dell'articolo 5, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 2006/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sulla cooperazione tra le autorità nazionali responsabili dell'esecuzione della normativa che tutela i consumatori, concernente le autorità competenti e gli uffici unici di collegamento (2011/C 260/01).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000463/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Free online software fraud

After being offered the possibility of downloading software for free from the site they have accessed, users are then being informed that, having taken advantage of that service, they are tied into a two-year contract for which they are asked to pay EUR 96 per year. Rome Public Prosecutor's Office has initiated legal proceedings against the managers of the company behind the Italia-programmi.net website, which is registered in the Seychelles, for having orchestrated the attempted fraud by providing misleading information.

The enquiries, which for the moment are into persons unknown, are based on ten or so complaints and at least 4 000 reports to the Competition and Markets Authority.

In the last few months, consumer associations have also taken action on this matter, obtaining a statement of 'unfair practice' from the Authority and a subsequent instruction to correctly publicise the conditions applicable to downloading on-line programs. This is something that they have been looking into for some time. According to the investigators, the sum total already obtained illicitly may be as much as EUR 100 000. Enquiries are now centring on identifying the holders of the current account, opened in a bank in Cyprus, where the money paid in response to the demands from the company has ended up.

Since crime is becoming increasingly internationalised and on-line fraud an everyday occurrence, while measures to combat it are predominantly taken at a national level, there are marked differences between the regulations applicable in the Member States and such crime is difficult to combat.

Can the Commission indicate what rules have been adopted to combat fraud in connection with on-line purchases and non-cash payment methods?

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

The Commission is aware of such practices and would like to refer the Honourable Member to its written answer to Question E-9052/2010 ([1]).

Such practices are prohibited by Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices ([2]) which prohibits (in all circumstances) the practice of charging for services which have not been solicited by the consumers ([3]) and describing a product as 'gratis', 'free', 'without charge' or similar if the consumer has to pay anything other than the unavoidable cost of responding to the commercial practice and collecting or paying for delivery of the item ([4]).

Directive 2011/83/EU on Consumer Rights ([5]) will further ban Internet cost traps. From 13 June 2014 on, traders will be obliged to ensure that the consumer explicitly acknowledges that the order implies an obligation to pay. The information about the total price to pay will need to be given in a clear and prominent manner directly before the consumer places his order.

Directive 2007/64/EC on payment services in the internal market ([6]) lays down that before a consumer is bound by any single payment service contract, information on the applicable conditions must be made available to him. Should a payment transaction have already taken place, the directive would entitle a payer to obtain rectification or a refund in case of unauthorised or incorrectly executed payment transactions.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC and 2002/65 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Unfair Commercial Practices Directive).
([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC, Annex I, No 29.
([4]) Directive 2005/29/EC, Annex I, No 20.
([5]) Member States shall transpose this directive 2011/83 by 13 December 2013 and apply the rules by 13 June 2014.
([6]) Directive 2007/64/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2007 on payment services in the internal market amending Directive 97/7/EC, 2002/65/EC, 2005/60/EC and 2006/48/EC and repealing Directive 97/5/EC.

Consumers who feel affected by such practices should continue to involve national authorities on this matter, who are primarily responsible for investigating and preventing the activities of particular companies in the light of EU consumer legislation. As concerns cross-border infringements to consumer legislation within the European Union national authorities may cooperate within the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network established in 2006 ([7]).

([7]) Commission communication pursuant to Article 5(2) of Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws, concerning the competent authorities and single liaison offices (2011/C 260/01).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000465/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti richiesti dalla città di Foggia

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. Tra i fondi disponibili ci sono ad esempio: il programma Cultura, il programma per l'occupazione e la solidarietà sociale Progress, il programma Europa per i cittadini, il programma Life +, il programma di gestione dei flussi migratori, il programma Investire nelle persone, ecc.

In merito a quello citato in oggetto e ad altri programmi disponibili, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se ci sono programmi per i quali la città di Foggia ha fatto richiesta;

2. in caso affermativo, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati sono stati portati a termine?

Risposta data da Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(12 marzo 2012)

La città di Foggia ha ricevuto finanziamenti nell'ambito del programma LIFE+ per i due seguenti progetti:

2007: LIFE+ Avifauna del Lago S. Contributo UE: 1 915 950,00 EUR

Il progetto è ancora in corso e si concluderà il 31 dicembre 2013. La Commissione nota i buoni progressi già realizzati dall'inizio del progetto. Le azioni intraprese fino ad ora hanno generato un impatto concreto in generale sull'avifauna dell'area e specificatamente su determinate specie protette. Tutte le azioni preparatorie si sono concluse, mentre le azioni per il ripristino dell'habitat sono in corso e vengono adattate in base alle conoscenze acquisite man mano che il progetto procede.

2009: LIFE+ Bosco Incoronata. Contributo dell'UE: 585 385,00 EUR

Gli obiettivi del progetto sono la conservazione degli habitat rari o a rischio del «parco naturale regionale del Bosco dell'Incoronata» e l'accrescimento della biodiversità del sito «Valle del Cervaro — Bosco dell'Incoronata» (sito di importanza comunitaria nell'ambito della rete Natura 2000). Il progetto mira inoltre alla sensibilizzazione dei cittadini e a una maggiore partecipazione della comunità locale. Il progetto è iniziato il 1º gennaio e si concluderà il 31 marzo 2015. Ci sono alcuni ritardi nella sua attuazione rispetto ai piani iniziali ed è ancora troppo presto per trarre conclusioni sui risultati.

La provincia di Foggia ha presentato richiesta di finanziamento con esito negativo per due progetti nell'ambito del programma Progress:

2007: SHE Social Housing in Europe

2011: CHEER Children's Empowerment by social Experimentation in Rural structures.

Non risultano altre richieste di finanziamenti diretti da parte della città o della provincia di Foggia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000465/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Direct funding programmes requested by the City of Foggia

Local government authorities, such as municipalities and provinces, are among the first possible beneficiaries of the direct funding planned and allocated by the Commission's Directorates-General. Among the funds available are, for example: the Culture programme, the Progress programme for employment and social solidarity, the Europe for Citizens programme, the Life + programme, the Management of Migration Flows programme, the Investing in People programme, etc.

With respect to these and other available programmes, could the Commission clarify:

1. Whether the City of Foggia has applied for any programmes?

2. If so, which projects received EU funding and what were the results on completion?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The City of Foggia has received funding under the LIFE+ Programme for the following two projects:

— 2007: LIFE+ Avifauna del Lago S; EU contribution: EUR 1 915 950.00

The project is still ongoing and will end on 31 December 2013. The Commission notes good progress achieved since the start of the project. The actions carried out so far already have a concrete impact on the avifauna in the area in general and specifically on the targeted species. All preparatory actions are concluded. Habitat restoration actions are ongoing and being adapted on the basis of knowledge gained as the project progresses.

— 2009: LIFE+ Bosco Incoronata; EU contribution: EUR 585 385.00

The aim of this project are to conserve the rare or endangered habitats of the 'Bosco dell'Incoronata regional natural park' and to increase the biodiversity of the 'Valle del Cervaro — Bosco Incoronata' (site of Community importance within the Natura 2000 network). It also aims at raising public awareness and local community participation. The project started on 1 January 2011 and will end on 31 March 2015. It shows some delay in implementation compared with the initial schedule. It is still early to draw any conclusions on its results.

The Province of Foggia applied unsuccessfully for two projects in the context of the Progress programme:

— 2007: SHE: Social housing in Europe

— 2011: CHEER: Children's empowerment by social experimentation in rural structures.

No other application for direct funding from the City or the Province of Foggia has been recorded.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000466/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Affondamento di una nave da crociera e regole di navigazione europee

Nella notte di venerdì 13 gennaio u.s. la nave da crociera Costa Concordia, appartenente ad un noto gruppo italiano da tempo oramai a gestione americana, si è incagliata a soli 150 metri dalla riva dell'isola del Giglio, nei pressi di Livorno (Italia). La Concordia era salpata alle 19 del giorno 13 gennaio da Civitavecchia (Roma) con 4 229 persone a bordo: oltre tremila ospiti e 1 023 tra camerieri e membri dell'equipaggio. Neanche tre ore dopo la chiglia della nave s'incastrava ad un pezzo di roccia rimasto poi incagliato nel ventre della nave, provocando un taglio lungo 70 metri, che ha sfregiato quasi tutta la chiglia dell'imbarcazione. A quel punto l'equipaggio, compreso che la nave sarebbe affondata di lì a poco, ha invitato ad indossare i salvagente e avvicinarsi alle scialuppe.

L'immenso colosso, lungo 298 metri, largo 36 e alto quasi 52, è adesso adagiato sul fondale delle Scole, una grossa secca a 150 metri dalla riva. Gli inquirenti indagano in questi giorni per comprendere l'errore, molto probabilmente umano, che ha causato la tragedia. L'imbarcazione percorre ormai dal 2006 il tragitto da Civitavecchia al Giglio 52 volte l'anno, ma la distanza incredibilmente vicina con la costa avrebbe potuto provocare il danno irreparabile.

Secondo il procuratore, nel punto dove la Concordia ha urtato lo scoglio il fondale è irregolare, molto scosceso, non piatto, né sabbioso ma denso di rocce e scogli, situazione prevedibile in prossimità della terraferma.

Il bilancio è attualmente di sei morti per annegamento, decine di feriti e 17 dispersi. La nave era attesa a Savona per la prima tappa della crociera mediterranea.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione se:

1. intende indagare su questo caso che ha coinvolto molti cittadini europei, data la composizione internazionale dell'equipaggio, verificando se la nave da crociera rispettava le leggi di navigazione europea ai sensi del regolamento (CE) n. 725/2004, del 31 marzo 2004, relativo alla sicurezza delle navi e degli impianti portuali?

2. ritiene che la manovra di navigazione avvenuta a distanza ravvicinata dalla costa sia lecita in base alla direttiva 98/18/EC, del 17 marzo 1998, sulle regole di sicurezza e gli standard per il trasporto navale dei passeggeri?

3. ritiene opportuno, alla luce dell'incidente descritto, rivedere le regole per la navigazione, in particolare per quanto riguarda le distanze di sicurezza dalle coste per le grandi imbarcazioni?

4. intende vietare le rotte delle navi da crociera ed industriali nei pressi di zone naturali protette o di città d'interesse storico (vedasi i quotidiani sbarchi di navi traghetto e da crociera nei canali della città di Venezia) per evitare che si verifichino pericolosi disastri ambientali, come potrebbe ancora succedere nel caso in cui si versasse il carburante in mare?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2012)

1. La Commissione considera la sicurezza dei cittadini europei come priorità fondamentale, e continua ad essere vigilante e proattiva in tutti gli aspetti della sicurezza marittima. Essa intende trarre tutti gli insegnamenti possibili dal tragico incidente del «Costa Concordia» ma sottolinea che ciò sarà possibile solo alla luce dei risultati della relativa inchiesta. A norma della direttiva 2009/18/CE relativa alle inchieste sugli incidenti nel settore del trasporto marittimo, gli Stati membri devono garantire che in casi come questo sia effettuata un'indagine approfondita da parte di un'autorità indipendente che si adoperi per pubblicare la relazione dell'inchiesta entro un anno, basandosi su una metodologia consolidata.

2. Il regolamento (CE) 725/2004, del 31 marzo 2004, ha l'obiettivo di introdurre e attuare misure volte a migliorare la sicurezza delle navi e degli impianti portuali, di fronte a minacce di azioni illecite intenzionali. La Commissione non che vi fossero problemi relativi alla sicurezza della Costa Concordia.

3-4. Nel quadro della legislazione internazionale e dell'Unione europea, non esistono norme specifiche relative alla distanza di sicurezza dalla costa per navi di grandi dimensioni e tale distanza dipende completamente dal giudizio del comandante, che si basa sui mezzi tecnologici necessari per garantire la sicurezza della navigazione. Tuttavia, il comandante deve stabilire un piano di navigazione per tutta la rotta, tenendo conto della zona di navigazione, delle previsioni meteorologiche e delle altre condizioni essenziali che possono influenzare la navigazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000466/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Sinking of a cruise ship and European navigation regulations

In the night of Friday, 13 January 2011, the cruise ship Costa Concordia, belonging to a well-known Italian group which has been under American management for some time, ran aground just 150 metres from the shore of the island of Giglio near Livorno (Italy). The Concordia had set sail at 7.00 p.m. on 13 January from Civitavecchia (Rome) with 4 229 people on board, including 3 000 passengers and 1 023 service staff and crew members. Just three hours later, the keel of the ship struck a rock which remained lodged in the bowels of the vessel, creating a 70-metre gash nearly the entire length of the ship's keel. At this point, the crew, realising that the ship would soon sink, advised passengers to don lifejackets and proceed to the lifeboats.

The immense structure, which is 298 metres long, 36 metres wide and almost 52 metres high, is now lying on its side on the seabed in Le Scole, a large shallow 150 metres from the shore. In the last few days, investigators have been looking into what — most probably human error — caused the tragedy. Since 2006 the vessel had sailed past Giglio 52 times a year on its way from Civitavecchia, but its amazingly close proximity to the coast could clearly have been the cause of the irreparable damage.

According to the public prosecutor, the seabed at the point where the Concordia ran aground is uneven, very steep and not flat or sandy but peppered with rocks, as one might predict in an area close to dry land.

The death toll currently stands at six people drowned, tens of people injured and 17 unaccounted for. The ship was expected at Savona on the first leg of the Mediterranean cruise.

Bearing all this in mind, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it intends to investigate this case, which involves many European citizens, given the international nature of the crew, and to verify if the cruise ship conformed to European navigation law under Regulation (EC) No 725/2004 of 31 March 2004 relating to the safety of ships and port facilities?

2. Whether it considers that the navigational manoeuvre made so close to the shore was lawful under Directive 98/18/EC of 17 March 1998 on the safety rules and standards for the transportation of passengers by sea?

3. Whether it considers it appropriate, in the light of the incident described, to review navigation rules, in particular as regards safe distances from the coast for large vessels?

4. whether it intends to prohibit cruise and commercial shipping from using routes in the vicinity of protected natural areas or cities of historical interest (to wit the daily berthing of ferries and cruise ships in Venice's canals) in order to prevent harmful environmental disasters occurring, which could still happen in this case if the ship's fuel spills into the sea?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

1. The Commission takes the safety of European citizens as its first priority, and remains vigilant and pro-active in all aspects of maritime safety. The Commission intends to draw all lessons from the tragic accident of the *Costa Concordia* but points out that this will only be possible in light of the results of the relevant investigation. Under Directive 2009/18/EC on the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector, the Member States must ensure that in cases like this a thorough investigation is carried out by an independent authority which has to make every effort to make the report of the investigation available to the public within one year and based on a previously established methodology.

2. The objective of Regulation (EC) 725/2004 of 31 March 2004 is to introduce and implement measures aimed at enhancing the security of ships and port facilities in the face of threats of intentional unlawful acts. The Commission has no cause for particular concern regarding the security of the *Costa Concordia*.

3 and 4. In the framework of international and EU legislation, there is no specific rule regarding the safe navigation distance from the coast for large vessels and it is entirely up to the professional judgment of the Captain, who relies on the necessary technological means for safe navigation. However, a navigation plan for the entire route has to be established by the Captain taking into account the area of navigation, weather forecasts and other essential conditions that may affect navigation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000467/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Interventi per favorire il diritto allo studio

Recentemente sui giornali italiani è stata pubblicata una notizia che denuncia i limiti di una burocrazia scolastica che nega il diritto allo studio ai ragazzi che si trasferiscono da uno Stato membro all'altro.

A Reggio Calabria una ragazza non ha potuto iscriversi all'ultimo anno della scuola media superiore perché tutte le scuole le richiedono il diploma di terza media secondo la normativa italiana. In Belgio, dove ha frequentato tutte le scuole, non esiste però la dicitura «scuola media inferiore». Alla scuola elementare di sei anni segue la scuola secondaria di altri sei anni.

Il risultato è che ora i genitori della ragazza e la ragazza stessa si trovano in un vicolo cieco, non potendo quest'ultima continuare il suo percorso di studi, diritto, peraltro riconosciuto in tutta l'Unione europea.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è al corrente della situazione;

2. se può tracciare un quadro generale sulla materia;

3. quali iniziative intende assumere per difendere il diritto allo studio di bambini e alunni che si trasferiscono con le famiglie da uno Stato all'altro e che vengono penalizzati per una mancata armonizzazione dei vari sistemi scolastici?

Risposta data da A. Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(8 marzo 2012)

1. La Commissione non è a conoscenza di particolari problemi relativi al riconoscimento dei diplomi d'istruzione superiore in Italia.

2. La Commissione desidera innanzitutto ricordare che, a norma dell'articolo 165 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, gli Stati membri sono responsabili del contenuto dell'insegnamento e dell'organizzazione dei loro sistemi scolastici. Essi hanno la facoltà di richiedere, per consentire l'accesso ai loro sistemi d'istruzione, il riconoscimento o la convalida di insegnamenti scolastici seguiti all'estero; tuttavia, nell'esercizio delle loro competenze in tale settore, essi devono rispettare la legislazione dell'UE, in particolare il principio di non discriminazione in base alla nazionalità di cui all'articolo 18 del TFUE. In tale contesto, le condizioni del riconoscimento o della convalida non devono porre gli studenti in una situazione ancora più svantaggiosa e devono essere oggettivamente motivate e proporzionate.

3. Come appena esposto, il riconoscimento o la convalida dell'istruzione seguita all'estero rientra nell'ambito di responsabilità delle autorità competenti di ogni Stato membro. La tutela del diritto allo studio dei cittadini che devono ottenere il riconoscimento o la convalida va garantita prevalentemente attraverso i mezzi disponibili a livello nazionale. La Commissione contribuisce comunque a tale tutela attraverso la sua missione centrale che consente nel garantire che gli Stati membri rispettino i principi della legislazione UE nell'esercizio delle loro competenze in tale settore, in particolare secondo quanto affermato nel precedente paragrafo 2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000467/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Measures to promote the right to education

Italian newspapers recently published a report denouncing bureaucratic restrictions in the education system which are denying children who move from one Member State to another their right to an education.

In Reggio Calabria a girl has been unable to register for the last year of secondary school because all the schools asked her for her middle school diploma, as required by Italian law. However, in Belgium, where she has had all her schooling, the 'middle school' concept does not exist. Six years of primary school is followed by six years of secondary school.

The result is that the girl's parents and the girl herself now find themselves at an impasse, with the girl unable to continue her studies, even though this is a right recognised throughout the European Union.

In light of the above, could the Commission:

1. Say whether it is aware of the situation?

2. Provide a general overview of the matter?

3.Say what measures it will take to protect the right to education of children of school age who move with their families from one State to another and who are penalised by the lack of harmonisation between the various school systems?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2012)

1. The Commission is not aware of particular problems concerning the recognition of secondary education diplomas in Italy.

2. The Commission would first recall that Member States are primarily responsible under Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union for the content of the teaching and the organisation of their education systems. While it is therefore within their discretion to require, prior to granting access to their education systems, the recognition or validation of education previously received abroad, national authorities must respect EC law when exercising their competences in this field, in particular the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality laid down in Article 18 TFEU. In this respect, the requirements of recognition or validation proceedings should not place the pupils undergoing it at an even greater disadvantage than they already face and should therefore be objectively justified and proportionate.

3. As mentioned above, the recognition or validation of education received abroad falls within the responsibility of the competent authorities of each Member State. The protection of the right to education of children undergoing such proceedings must therefore be ensured mainly through the means available at national level. The Commission nevertheless contributes to this protection by way of its central mission of ensuring that Member States comply with the principles of EC law when exercising their competences in this field, in particular along the lines mentioned in paragraph No 2 above.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000468/12
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: VAT on ebooks in Luxembourg

The Luxembourg Government recently announced plans to reduce the rate of VAT on ebooks from the current 15 % to a planned 3 %, with the French Government also planning to reduce the VAT and pay the cost of EU fines from the state budget. Can the Commission confirm that the move would be illegal under EC law and that the Commission will penalise governments who flout the laws?

Given that EU VAT plans will be overhauled over the next year, does the Commission have any plans to exempt VAT on ebooks across the EU?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2012)

The application of VAT reduced rates on e-books is not in line with the current EC law and the Commission is in contact with the Member States concerned on this issue. In its communication adopted on 6 December 2011 ([1]), the Commission has suggested means for a way forward to achieve a simpler, more robust and efficient VAT system adapted to the single market.

The Commission recognised, in the guiding principles for the review of the VAT rates, that the challenge of convergence between the online and physical environments needs to be addressed. Meanwhile, the current VAT legislation needs to be respected.

([1]) COM(2011)851 final — Communication on the future of VAT Towards a simpler, more robust and efficient VAT system tailored to the single market.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000469/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(23 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Salvaguardare subito Venezia dai rischi delle grandi navi da crociera dentro la laguna e richiesta di urgenti interventi per evitare nuove catastrofi come quella dell'isola del Giglio

Sono centinaia le navi da crociera che ogni anno transitano nella laguna di Venezia, dichiarata dall'UNESCO patrimonio mondiale dell'umanità. Queste attraversano tutto il centro storico per arrivare alle banchine portuali di attracco e passano a poche decine di metri da Palazzo Ducale e Piazza San Marco. Solo nel 2010 sono entrate in laguna ben 629 navi per un totale di 1 617 011 passeggeri, dato in forte aumento per il 2011.

Questo traffico crescente causa a Venezia evidenti gravi problemi come: a) spostamenti di enormi volumi d'acqua con effetti su rive, sponde dei canali, fondamenta degli edifici; b) movimentazione dei sedimenti inquinanti depositati nei fondali tramite le grandi eliche, c) inquinamento atmosferico dovuto alle emissioni dei camini delle navi con effetti negativi sulla salute delle persone e sull'ambiente.

Risulta evidente che in caso di incidente, errore umano o sabotaggio, la presenza così ravvicinata di grandi navi agli edifici della città potrebbe causare dei danni incalcolabili, e molto probabilmente irreparabili, al patrimonio storico ed ambientale di Venezia.

I gravissimi fatti relativi al naufragio del 13 gennaio u.s. della nave Costa Concordia nei pressi dell'isola del Giglio (GR), Parco naturale nazionale dell'arcipelago toscano e santuario dei cetacei, sono la dimostrazione che nonostante l'elevata tecnologia e l'altissima professionalità del personale, gli incidenti dalle conseguenze catastrofiche sono all'ordine del giorno.

La direttiva 1999/32/CE ([1]) per il trasporto marittimo consente l'utilizzo di combustibili molto più inquinanti di quelli per autotrazione; nel 2007 Entec (UK) ha pubblicato lo studio IIASA ([2]) in merito alle emissioni marittime, i cui dati evidenziano le problematicità per la salute umana.

Alla luce di quanto precede e in ordine alle navi dentro la città di Venezia, non ritiene la Commissione di:

1. invitare le autorità italiane ad intervenire urgentemente per trovare soluzioni compatibili con il fragilissimo ecosistema lagunare, con la particolarità di questa città storica e con la tutela della salute dei cittadini tramite la realizzazione di una specifica infrastruttura per le navi esterna al centro storico e alla laguna di Venezia?

2. prevedere l'obbligo di combustibili meno inquinanti per le navi che entrano nella città di Venezia e nella sua laguna?

Inoltre, in merito alle grandi navi non ritiene necessario stabilire rigorose normative che prevedano distanze di sicurezza da città storiche e ambiti naturali tali da scongiurare disastri come quello dell'isola del Giglio?

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(2 marzo 2012)

1. La direttiva 2000/60/CE (direttiva quadro sulle acque) ([3]) impone agli Stati membri di raggiungere un buono stato delle acque entro il 2015 e di applicare nel frattempo il principio di non deterioramento. Per quanto riguarda i sedimenti inquinanti cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare, se la questione è tale da provocare un potenziale impatto negativo sullo stato ecologico della laguna occorre affrontarla nel piano di gestione del bacino idrografico a norma dell'articolo 13 della direttiva. Lo stato ecologico è definito all'articolo 2, punto 21, e, per quanto riguarda le acque di transizione, all'allegato V, sezione 1.1.3, che fa riferimento tra l'altro ai parametri di «massa, struttura e substrato del letto». L'impatto delle navi da crociera deve pertanto essere valutato alla luce di tali disposizioni.

La Commissione non può sostituire le autorità locali e nazionali nella valutazione dell'impatto delle navi da crociera in un ecosistema sensibile quale la laguna di Venezia né nella definizione delle misure più appropriate nelle circostanze specifiche.

([1]) modificata dalla direttiva 2005/33/CE.
([2]) European Commission, DG Environment, Unit ENV/C1 Contract No 070501/2005/419589/MAR/C1.
([3]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000.

2. Le autorità italiane possono adottare disposizioni di carattere locale in relazione alle acque interne quali la laguna di Venezia. Tali disposizioni possono comprendere restrizioni del traffico o l'uso obbligatorio di combustibili a basso tenore di zolfo per le navi, purché si tratti di misure proporzionate e non discriminatorie.

Nel quadro della legislazione internazionale e unionale non esistono norme specifiche in merito alla distanza di sicurezza dalla costa per le navi di grandi dimensioni. Tale aspetto rientra esclusivamente nella valutazione professionale del capitano, che si avvale dei mezzi tecnologici disponibili per garantire la sicurezza della navigazione. Il capitano deve tuttavia stabilire un piano di navigazione per tutta la rotta tenendo conto della zona di navigazione, delle previsioni meteorologiche e di altre condizioni essenziali ([4]).

([4]) Quali i pertinenti avvisi, permanenti o temporanei, ai naviganti, gli atlanti delle correnti e delle maree, le tavole delle maree, i dati idrografici e lo spazio minimo sotto la chiglia in zone critiche in cui la profondità ridotta dell'acqua può interferire con la navigazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000469/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Immediate protection for Venice against the risks posed by large cruise ships entering the lagoon and urgent measures to avoid further disasters such as that which occurred off the island of Giglio

Every year hundreds of cruise ships enter the lagoon of Venice, declared a World Heritage Site by Unesco. They sail through the entire historical centre on their way to their moorings and pass within no more than a few dozen metres of the Doge's Palace and St Mark's Square. In 2010 alone, 629 ships with a total of 1 617 011 passengers entered the lagoon, a figure which increased sharply in 2011.

This increasing volume of traffic is obviously causing serious problems for Venice, such as: (a) the displacement of enormous amounts of water is affecting the canal banks and the foundations of buildings; (b) the polluting sedimentary deposits on the canal beds are being stirred up by the movement of the large propellers; (c) the atmospheric pollution caused by emissions from the ships' funnels is having adverse effects on human health and the environment.

It is perfectly clear that, in the event of an accident caused by human error or sabotage, the proximity of large ships to the city's buildings could cause incalculable and probably irreparable damage to Venice's environment and historical heritage.

The devastating shipwreck of the 'Costa Concordia' on 13 January 2012 just off the island of Giglio (Grosseto), which is in the National Park of the Tuscan Archipelago and is a sanctuary for marine mammals, shows that, despite advanced technology and highly professional staff, accidents with disastrous consequences are an everyday possibility.

Under Directive 1999/32/EC ([1]), fuel which is much more polluting than motor vehicle fuel may be used for maritime transport purposes. In 2007 Entec (UK) published the IIASA study on maritime emissions ([2]), which highlights the human health risks involved.

In light of the above and with regard to ships in the city of Venice, would the Commission not agree that:

1. It should ask the Italian authorities to take urgent action to find solutions which are compatible with the extremely delicate ecosystem of Venice's lagoon, the specific features of this historical city and the health of local inhabitants by establishing purpose-built facilities for ships outside the city's historical centre and the lagoon?

2. It should make the use of less polluting fuel mandatory for ships entering Venice and its lagoon?

Furthermore, with regard to large ships, would it not agree that stringent rules establishing a safety distance from historical cities and nature areas should be introduced in order to avoid disasters such as that which occurred off the island of Giglio?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

1. The Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC ([3]) requires Member States to achieve good water status by the year 2015 and to apply the non-deterioration principle in the meantime. As regards the polluting sediments mentioned by the Honourable Member, if the issue is likely to cause a potential adverse impact on the ecological status of the lagoon, it must be addressed in the River Basin Management Plan as required by Article 13 of the directive. Ecological status is defined by Article 2(21) and, as regards transitional waters, by Section 1.1.3 of Annex V, which refers *inter alia* to the 'quantity, structure and substrate of the bed'. With regard to cruise ships, their impact should, therefore, be assessed in the light of the above provisions.

([1]) As amended by Directive 2005/33/EC.
([2]) European Commission, DG Environment, Unit ENV/C1, Contract No 070501/2005/419589/MAR/C1.
([3]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

The Commission cannot replace the local and national authorities in assessing the impact of cruise ships in a sensitive ecosystem such as the Venice lagoon, nor in deciding the measures that are most appropriate in the specific circumstances of the case.

2. The Italian authorities can introduce local provisions in internal waters such as the lagoon of Venice. Such provisions may include traffic restrictions or the mandatory use of low-sulphur fuels for ships provided that these measures are proportionate and not discriminatory.

In the framework of International and EU legislation there is no specific rule regarding the safe navigation distance from the coast for large vessels and it is entirely up to the professional judgment of the vessel's captain assisted by the available technological means for safe navigation. However, a navigation plan for the entire route has to be established by the captain taking into account, the area of navigation, the weather forecast and other essential conditions ([4]).

([4]) Including any relevant permanent or temporary notices to mariners, current and tidal atlases and tide tables, hydrographical data, minimum clearance required under the keel in critical areas with restricted water depth that may affect navigation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000470/12
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(23. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Investitionen in Schutz vor Schienenlärm

Die Stärkung des umweltfreundlichen Verkehrsträgers Schiene, wie sie angesichts der EU-Ziele beim Kampf gegen den Klimawandel unverzichtbar ist, kann nur gelingen, wenn der Schienenverkehrslärm signifikant vermindert wird. Aufgrund der engen Beziehung zwischen dem rollenden Material und den Fahrwegen ist es wie beim Europäischen Eisenbahnverkehrsleitsystem ERTMS sinnvoll, Maßnahmen an der Infrastruktur eng mit Maßnahmen am rollenden Material zu verzahnen. Deshalb frage ich die Kommission, mit Bitte um separate Beantwortung der einzelnen Fragen:

1. Aus welchen EU-Programmen können Lärmschutzmaßnahmen an der Infrastruktur kofinanziert werden?

2. Aus welchen EU-Programmen können Lärmschutzmaßnahmen am rollenden Material kofinanziert werden?

3. In welcher Höhe wurden von der EU bisher insgesamt Finanzmittel für Lärmschutz an der Infrastruktur bereitgestellt und welche Beträge sind bis Ende der aktuellen Förderperiode bereits eingeplant (alle Programme, aktuelle und abgelaufene Förderperioden)?

4. In welcher Höhe wurden von der EU bisher insgesamt Finanzmittel für Lärmschutz am rollenden Material bereitgestellt und welche Beträge sind bis Ende der aktuellen Förderperiode bereits eingeplant (alle Programme, aktuelle und abgelaufene Förderperioden)?

5. Welche Kosten werden nach Schätzung der Kommission insgesamt nötig sein, um einen ausreichenden Schutz vor Schienenlärm in der EU zu erreichen?

6. Welche Maßnahmen und Vorschläge (Richtlinien, Verordnungen, technische Spezifikationen zur Interoperabilität etc.) plant die Kommission zur Reduzierung des Schienenlärms bei Fahrzeugen und Fahrwegen, besonders im Hinblick auf die europäischen Schienengüterverkehrskorridore?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(24. Februar 2012)

1. Lärmschutzmaßnahmen können aus dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE) und dem Kohäsionsfonds kofinanziert werden. Es ist Sache der Mitgliedstaaten, entsprechend den Prioritäten ihrer operativen Programme über die Auswahl und Durchführung der Projekte der Kohäsionspolitik zu entscheiden. Im Rahmen dieser Programme können auch Bahninfrastrukturen und Fahrzeugmodernisierungen, einschließlich Lärmschutzmaßnahmen, finanziert werden, sofern das entsprechende Programm den Schienenverkehr als Investitionsschwerpunkt vorsieht ([1]).

2. Eine Finanzierung solcher Maßnahmen ist auch mit den unter Punkt 1 genannten Mitteln möglich. Darüber hinaus sieht der Vorschlag zur Schaffung der Fazilität „Connecting Europe" ([2]) (CEF) vor, Maßnahmen zur Minderung des Schienenlärms durch Nachrüstung vorhandener Fahrzeuge als förderfähig anzuerkennen. Für den Verkehrsbereich sind in der CEF Mittel in Höhe von 31,7 Mrd. EUR für den Zeitraum 2014-2020 vorgesehen, davon 21,7 Mrd. EUR als Finanzhilfen ([3]).

3. und 4. Die Kommission hat keine Informationen über spezifische Mittelzuweisungen für Lärmschutzmaßnahmen im Rahmen der Kohäsionspolitik (EFRE und Kohäsionsfonds).

5. Die verschiedenen Beteiligten bewerten und interpretieren einen „ausreichenden Schutz vor Schienenlärm" gegebenenfalls in unterschiedlicher Weise, und eine globale Abschätzung der Kosten ist der Kommission nicht möglich, da in der EU keine einheitlichen Lärmgrenzwerte bestehen.

([1]) Eine Liste der Programme mit Beschreibungen und Anlaufstellen ist auf folgender Website verfügbar: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.cfm.
([2]) Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Schaffung der Fazilität „Connecting Europe", KOM(2011)665 endg.
([3]) KOM(2011)665 endg., Artikel 5.

6. Eine entsprechende Maßnahme (CEF) wird unter Punkt 2 genannt. Weitere Maßnahmen sind u. a.:

— Vorschlag für einen Rechtsakt ([4]), der u. a. die obligatorische Einführung lärmabhängiger Trassenpreise vorsieht, um einen Anreiz zur Nachrüstung von Güterwagen mit geräuscharmen Bremsklötzen zu schaffen.

— Die für 2013 vorgesehene Änderung der technischen Spezifikation für die Interoperabilität (TSI) „Lärm“ ([5]), in der Grenzwerte für den Geräuschpegel neuer Schienenfahrzeuge festgelegt werden. Zur Diskussion steht dabei auch eine Absenkung der Grenzwerte.

— Die Kommission wird die Möglichkeit eines Betriebsverbots für Wagen untersuchen, die nicht zu einem bestimmten Termin nachgerüstet wurden, um die in der TSI „Lärm“ festgelegten Grenzwerte einzuhalten.

([4]) Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Schaffung eines einheitlichen europäischen Eisenbahnraums, KOM(2010)475 endg.

([5]) Beschluss 2011/229/EU der Kommission vom 4. April 2011 über die Technische Spezifikation für die Interoperabilität (TSI) zum Teilsystem „Fahrzeuge — Lärm“ des konventionellen transeuropäischen Bahnsystems.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000470/12
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Investment in protection against rail noise

Measures to strengthen the railways as an environmentally-friendly mode of transport, which are absolutely essential if EU targets in the fight against climate change are to be met, can only succeed if levels of rail noise are significantly reduced. Because of the close link between rolling stock and the track it runs on, it makes sense, as in the case of the European Rail Traffic Management System, to coordinate closely measures concerning infrastructure with those concerning rolling stock. I would therefore ask the Commission to answer the following questions individually:

1. Under which EU programmes could noise-protection measures concerning infrastructure be co-financed?

2. Under which EU programmes could noise-protection measures concerning rolling stock be co-financed?

3. What total volume of financial resources has been allocated thus far by the EU to noise-protection measures concerning infrastructure and what amounts have already been set aside until the end of the current funding period (all programmes, current and past funding periods)?

4. What total volume of financial resources has been allocated thus far by the EU to noise-protection measures concerning rolling stock and what amounts have already been set aside until the end of the current funding period (all programmes, current and past funding periods)?

5. In the Commission's view, what is the total volume of expenditure required in order to achieve sufficient protection against rail noise in the EU?

6. What measures and proposals (directives, regulations, technical specifications for interoperability, etc.) concerning both rolling stock and track infrastructure is the Commission planning with a view to reducing rail noise, looking ahead in particular to the future European rail freight transport corridors?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2012)

1. Noise protection measures could be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or the Cohesion Fund (CF). It is up to the Member States to select and implement the projects of the cohesion policy based on the priorities of their operational programmes. Such programmes may finance rail infrastructure and rolling stock improvements, including noise reduction measures, where the relevant programmes include rail as a specific investment priority ([1]).

2. Such measures could be also co-financed by the funds identified in point 1. Moreover, the proposal for the Connecting Europe Facility ([2]) (CEF) identifies 'actions to reduce rail noise by retrofitting of rolling stock' as eligible for co-funding. The CEF has a planned budget earmarked for transport of EUR 31.7 billion for years 2014-2020, out of which EUR 21.7 billion for grants ([3]).

3 and 4. The Commission does not have information on the specific allocations made to noise protection measures in relation to the cohesion policy (ERDF and CF).

5. 'Sufficient protection against rail noise' can be estimated and understood differently by different stakeholders and it is not possible for the Commission to assess it globally, given a lack of common limits setting a maximum level of railway noise in the EU.

6. One measure (CEF) is mentioned under point 2. Other measures include:

— A legal proposal ([4]) which includes a mandatory introduction of noise differentiated track access charges (NDTAC) as an incentive to retrofit freight wagons with low noise brake blocks.

([1]) A list of the programmes, description and contact points are provided on this website: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.cfm.
([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, COM(2011) 665 final.
([3]) Article 5, COM(2011) 665 final.
([4]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a single European railway area, COM(2010) 475 final.

— Technical Specifications for Interoperability on Noise ([5]) (TSI Noise) which sets maximum level of noise for new railway vehicles will be revised in 2013; lowering of the limit is on the agenda.

— The Commission will study the possibility to ban wagons that have not been retrofitted to comply with the maximum noise levels according to TSI Noise as of a particular date.

([5]) 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, 2011/229/EU.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000471/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Καθορισμός της Μέγιστης Βιώσιμης Απόδοσης

Η Επιτροπή, στην πρότασή της επί του βασικού κανονισμού στο πλαίσιο της Κοινής Αλιευτικής Πολιτικής, προβαίνει στον καθορισμό της «Μέγιστης Βιώσιμης Απόδοσης» για κάθε είδος ως βασικού εργαλείου για την βιωσιμότητα του κλάδου και των αλιευτικών αποθεμάτων. Η «Μέγιστη Βιώσιμη Απόδοση» ορίζεται από την Επιτροπή ως ο μεγαλύτερος όγκος που μπορεί να αλιεύεται με ασφαλή τρόπο χρόνο με το χρόνο, «επ' αόριστον» διατηρώντας παράλληλα το μέγεθος του πληθυσμού στο επίπεδο της μέγιστης αποδοτικότητας.

Για τον καθορισμό της «Μέγιστης Βιώσιμης Απόδοσης» η αξιόπιστη συλλογή δεδομένων κρίνεται απαραίτητη.

Με αυτά τα δεδομένα ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σε ορισμένες γεωγραφικές περιοχές, ιδιαίτερα στη Μεσόγειο, εκτός από την έλλειψη στοιχείων, η σημαντική παρουσία μικτής αλιείας καθώς και η υπέρθεση των διεθνών αλιευτικών πεδίων καθιστά δύσκολη την συλλογή δεδομένων για την αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή του μέτρου της «Μέγιστης Βιώσιμης Απόδοσης». Τι προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να κάνει σε αυτή την περίπτωση;

2. Η Επιτροπή ορίζει ως «μέγιστη βιώσιμη απόδοση» την μέγιστη ποσότητα των αλιευμάτων που μπορούν να λαμβάνονται επ' αόριστον σε ένα ιχθυαπόθεμα. Μπορούμε να έχουμε διευκρινίσεις σχετικά με το τι σημαίνει για την Επιτροπή ο όρος «επ' αόριστον», δεδομένου του ότι το θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον και, κατά συνέπεια, οι θαλάσσιοι πόροι εξαρτώνται από ποικίλους περιβαλλοντικούς και άλλους παράγοντες;

3. Με δεδομένη την προσπάθεια που απαιτείται, η ημερομηνία του 2015 ως σημείου αναφοράς για την Μέγιστη Βιώσιμη Απόδοση και για τον ορισμό των μέγιστων ποσοστών αλιεύσεων είναι άραγε ρεαλιστική;

Απάντηση της κ. Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Μαρτίου 2012)

Επιστημονικές γνωμοδοτήσεις σχετικά με τη μέγιστη βιώσιμη απόδοση (ΜΒΑ) διατίθενται για πάνω από το 50 % των 111 αποθεμάτων που αξιολογούνται στη Μεσόγειο. Από τις γνωμοδοτήσεις προκύπτει ότι μόνο το 18 % των εν λόγω αποθεμάτων υφίσταται σε αυτό το στάδιο εκμετάλλευση στο επίπεδο της ΜΒΑ. Η διαθεσιμότητα των δεδομένων δεν διαφέρει πολύ σε σχέση με άλλες περιοχές. Το πλαίσιο συλλογής δεομένων 2014-2020 που βρίσκεται στο στάδιο της κατάρτισης θα προσαρμοστεί ειδικά στη συλλογή δεδομένων για την αξιολόγηση μικτών τύπων αλιείας και για την ενίσχυση της βάσης δεδομένων για τον υπολογισμό της ΜΒΑ. Τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να συντονίσουν τη συλλογή των δεδομένων σε περιφερειακό επίπεδο για να βελτιώσουν την αποτελεσματικότητα των δειγματοληψιών και θα συμμετέχουν σε περιφερειακές βάσεις δεδομένων για να βελτιωθεί η διαθεσιμότητα των στοιχείων. Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει επίσης να ευνοεί τη διεθνή συνεργασία στους τομείς της επιστημονικής συνεργασίας και της συλλογής δεδομένων στο πλαίσιο της Γενικής Επιτροπής Αλιείας για τη Μεσόγειο (ΓΕΑΜ) και μέσω της πρόσκλησης επιστημόνων εκτός ΕΕ στις ομάδες εργασίας εμπειρογνωμόνων της ΕΤΟΕΑ.

Η ΜΒΑ συνεπάγεται την απομάκρυνση από το απόθεμα μόνο της πλεονάζουσας παραγωγής. Η τιμή της υπολογίζεται βάσει της πληθυσμιακής δυναμικής τους αποθέματος, δηλ. τη φυσική του θνησιμότητα, αύξηση και αναπαραγωγική ικανότητα. Εάν τα στοιχεία αυτά μεταβληθούν λόγω περιβαλλοντικών παραγόντων, η τιμή της ΜΒΑ αλλάζει επίσης και κατά συνέπεια πρέπει να επικαιροποιηθεί στις επιστημονικές γνωμοδοτήσεις.

Η διαχείριση των αποθεμάτων σε επίπεδα ΜΒΑ αποτελεί προϋπόθεση εξασφάλισης την μακροπρόθεσμης βιωσιμότητας των αποθεμάτων. Η επίτευξη της ΜΒΑ μέχρι το 2015 αποτελεί στόχο πολιτικής που έχει συμφωνηθεί σε διεθνές επίπεδο στο πλαίσιο των δεσμεύσεων σε επίπεδο ΕΕ και κρατών μελών και η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι επείγει πράγματι η βελτίωση της κατάστασης των αποθεμάτων και του ενωσιακού στόλου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000471/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Determining the maximum sustainable yield

The Commission proposal for a basic regulation on the common fisheries policy provides for a 'maximum sustainable yield' in respect of each species as a means of ensuring the sustainability of the sector and of fish stocks. The Commission defines 'maximum sustainable yield' as the peak volume that can be safely caught year after year, 'indefinitely', while keeping population numbers at peak efficiency levels.

In determining the 'maximum sustainable yield', reliable data collection is deemed necessary.

On this basis, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. In some geographical areas, particularly the Mediterranean, the absence of data, together with the significant presence of mixed fisheries and the overlapping of international fishing areas, makes it difficult to obtain the data necessary for the effective implementation of the 'maximum sustainable yield' measure. What does the Commission intend to do in this case?

2. According to the Commission, 'maximum sustainable yield' is the maximum quantity of catches which can be indefinitely drawn from a fish stock. What exactly does the Commission mean by the term 'indefinitely', as the marine environment and — consequently -marine resources are dependent upon various environmental and other factors?

3. Given the scale of this task, is it realistic to set 2015 as the target date for establishing the maximum sustainable yield or determining maximum fishing rates?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2012)

Scientific advice in relation to maximum sustainable yield (MSY) is available for more than 50 % of the 111 stocks assessed in the Mediterranean. The advice shows that only 18 % of these stocks are at this stage exploited according to MSY. Availability of data differs little from other areas. The data collection framework 2014-2020 currently under preparation would be specifically tailored to obtain data to carry out mixed-fishery assessments and to strengthen the data base for the estimation of MSY. Member States should coordinate data collection regionally to improve sampling efficiency and will participate in regional data bases to improve the availability of data. The Commission will moreover continue to foster international cooperation on scientific advice and data collection under the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and, by inviting non-EU scientists to STECF expert working groups.

MSY implies removing only surplus production from a stock. Its value is calculated according to the population dynamics of the stock, i.e. its natural mortality, growth and reproductive capacity. If these change due to environmental factors, the value of MSY changes too and therefore needs to be updated in the scientific advice.

Managing stocks at the MSY level is a precondition to ensure the long-term viability of the stocks. Reaching MSY by 2015 is a policy objective that is internationally agreed under commitments at EU and Member State level and the Commission considers that it is indeed urgent to improve the situation of the stocks and the EU fleet.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000472/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κοινωνικο-οικονομική ανάπτυξη του κλάδου της αλιείας και της θαλάσσιας πολιτικής

Δεδομένου ότι 23 εκατομμύρια (10 %) των ανθρώπων είναι άνεργοι σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ, οι τομείς της αλιείας και της υδατοκαλλιέργειας θα πρέπει να θεωρούνται ως σημαντικές πηγές δημιουργίας άμεσων και έμμεσων θέσεων απασχόλησης για τις θαλάσσιες περιοχές μας, συμμετέχοντας στην δόμηση της θαλάσσιας οικονομίας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει προγραμματίσει συγκεκριμένες δράσεις για την ενίσχυση της ελκυστικότητας της απασχόλησης στον τομέα της αλιείας για τους νέους; Αν ναι, μπορεί να μας γνωστοποιήσει το σχέδιό της;

2. Με ποιο τρόπο σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να δημιουργήσει πολλαπλασιαστικό αποτέλεσμα στο θέμα των επενδύσεων στον τομέα της αλιείας, (ανάπτυξη των παράκτιων ζωνών, του θαλάσσιου τουρισμού, εκσυγχρονισμός των λιμενικών εγκαταστάσεων) που θα έχει και πολλαπλασιαστικό αποτέλεσμα στα εισοδήματα και στην δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η βελτίωση της ελκυστικότητας, ειδικότερα στον τομέα της αλίευσης, απαιτεί δράσεις για την αύξηση του εισοδήματος και των αμοιβών, καθώς και για τη βελτίωση των συνθηκών εργασίας, της κατάρτισης και της ασφάλειας.

Όπως αναφέρεται στην εκτίμηση των επιπτώσεων που διεξήχθη εν όψει της μεταρρύθμισης της ΚΑΛΠ, η αντιμετώπιση της πλεονάζουσας αλιευτικής ικανότητας και η μεταστροφή προς τη βιώσιμη αλιεία αναμένεται να αυξήσει τόσο το εισόδημα όσο και τις αμοιβές. Σύμφωνα με το μοντέλο που αναπτύχθηκε ως συνοδευτικό της πρότασης μεταρρύθμισης της ΚΑΛΠ, έως το 2022 το εισόδημα αναμένεται να αυξηθεί κατά 20 % και η ακαθάριστη προστιθέμενη αξία κατά 37 % λόγω της συνδυασμένης επίδρασης του χαμηλότερου κόστους αλίευσης και των υψηλότερων τιμών των ψαριών και οι αμοιβές αναμένεται να διπλασιαστούν. Επιπλέον, η πρόταση της Επιτροπής που εγκρίθηκε πρόσφατα σχετικά με το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Θάλασσας και Αλιείας (ΕΤΘΑ) περιλαμβάνει σειρά μέτρων που συμβάλλουν στην αύξηση της οικονομικής βιωσιμότητας της αλιείας ή στην αντιμετώπιση των συνθηκών εργασίας, της κατάρτισης και της ασφάλειας.

Όσον αφορά την ανάπτυξη των παράκτιων περιοχών και το πολλαπλασιαστικό αποτέλεσμα, βάσει της εκτίμησης των επιπτώσεων που διεξήχθη για το ΕΤΘΑ εκτιμάται ότι οι επενδύσεις με βάσει τον πυλώνα του ΕΤΘΑ που αφορά την εδαφική ανάπτυξη μπορεί να συμβάλουν στη δημιουργία 12 500 περίπου θέσεων εργασίας σε παράκτιες περιοχές έως το 2022, στο πλαίσιο της αλιείας ή εκτός αυτού.

Η εργασία στον τομέα της θάλασσας δεν πρέπει να θεωρείται λιγότερο προστατευμένη, σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, σε σχέση με την εργασία στην ξηρά. Η Επιτροπή αξιολογεί εάν δικαιολογείται η εξαίρεση των αλιέων και των ναυτικών από ορισμένες οδηγίες που αφορούν την εργασιακή νομοθεσία ώστε, σε περίπτωση που αυτό δεν ισχύει, να προτείνει συμπληρωματική και διορθωτική νομοθεσία. Η Επιτροπή έχει επίσης προβεί στη σύσταση μιας επιτροπής κοινωνικού διαλόγου στην ΕΕ όσον αφορά τη θαλάσσια αλιεία. Οι κοινωνικοί εταίροι στην ΕΕ διαπραγματεύονται μια συμφωνία για τη μεταφορά σε επίπεδο ΕΕ ορισμένων διατάξεων από την σύμβαση 188 της ΔΟΕ για την καλύτερη προστασία της υγείας και της ασφάλειας των αλιέων. Η Επιτροπή χρηματοδότησε επίσης μελέτη με στόχο να εξεταστεί η εφαρμογή ενός συμβουλίου «δεξιοτήτων και θέσεων εργασίας» που θα μπορούσε να συμβάλει στην αύξηση της απασχολησιμότητας των αλιέων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000472/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Socioeconomic development of the fisheries sector and of maritime policy

Given that 23 million people (10 % the active population) are unemployed across the EU, the major significance of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in terms of direct and indirect job creation in our maritime areas and in helping to develop the maritime economy must not be overlooked.

In view of this:

1. Has the Commission planned specific actions to attract more young people to the fisheries sector? If so, will the Commission communicate its plans to us?

2. How does it intend to create a multiplier effect in fishery sector investments (development of coastal areas and maritime tourism, modernisation of port facilities) that will also have a multiplier effect on revenues and job creation?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

Improving attractiveness, particularly of the catching sector, requires actions to increase income and wages, as well as to improve working conditions, training and safety.

As indicated in the impact assessment carried out in support of for CFP reform, addressing overcapacity and moving to sustainable fishing should increase both income and wages. According to the modelling carried out in support of the CFP reform proposal, by 2022 income should increase by 20 % and gross value added by 37 % due to the combined effect of lower fishing costs and higher fish prices and wages should be twice as high. Moreover, the recently adopted Commission's proposal on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) includes a number of measures increasing the economic viability of fishing or addressing working conditions, training and safety.

In terms of development of coastal areas and the multiplier effect, the impact assessment carried out for the EMFF estimates that investment under territorial development pillar of the EMFF could allow for the creation of some 12 500 jobs in coastal areas by 2022, inside and outside fisheries.

Work at the sea should not be perceived as less protected, at European level, than onshore work. The Commission is assessing whether exclusions of fishermen and seafarers from certain labour law Directives is justified and, if not, to propose complementing and remedial legislation. The Commission has also established an EU social dialogue committee on sea-fisheries. EU social partners are negotiating an agreement to transpose at EU level some provisions from the ILO Convention 188 to better protect fishermen health and safety. The Commission also funded a study with a view to consider the implementation of a 'skills and jobs' Council that should help to increase fishermen' employability.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000473/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μέθοδοι επιλεκτικής αλίευσης

Βασικός στόχος της πρότασης της Επιτροπής για την νέα Κοινή Αλιευτική Πολιτική είναι η προστασία των πόρων και του περιβάλλοντος.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό προτείνονται διάφορα εργαλεία, μεταξύ των οποίων η απαγόρευση των απορρίψεων, οι μεταβιβάσιμες αλιευτικές ποσοστώσεις, η «Μέγιστη Βιώσιμη Απόδοση» κ.α.

Δεδομένου του ότι η πρόληψη είναι προτιμότερη από την θεραπεία,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια μέτρα σκοπεύει να λάβει για την ενίσχυση της επιλεκτικής αλιείας; Ποιά κίνητρα προτίθεται να δώσει στους αλιείς ώστε να υιοθετήσουν πιο επιλεκτικά εργαλεία αλίευσης, που θα σέβονται ταυτόχρονα περισσότερο το περιβάλλον;

2. Με ποιο τρόπο προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να προβεί στη διάδοση αυτών των βέλτιστων πρακτικών στα Κράτη-Μέλη;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Για τη διάδοση και την ενθάρρυνση της εφαρμογής των βέλτιστων πρακτικών, οι εμπλεκόμενοι φορείς διαδραματίζουν ουσιαστικό ρόλο, ιδίως τα Περιφερειακά Γνωμοδοτικά Συμβούλια, οι ΜΚΟ και άλλες αντιπροσωπευτικές ομάδες αλιέων, όπως οι οργανώσεις παραγωγών οι οποίες θα έχουν ενισχυμένα καθήκοντα στο πλαίσιο της προτεινόμενης μεταρρύθμισης της κοινής αλιευτικής πολιτικής (ΚΑΛΠ).

Για την ενθάρρυνση της εφαρμογής των πρακτικών αυτών, υπάρχει ένας αριθμός μηχανισμών στήριξης όσον αφορά την υποχρέωση εκφόρτωσης που περιλαμβάνονται στη δέσμη μέτρων της μεταρρύθμισης και θα αποτελούν κίνητρο για τις «υπεύθυνες πρακτικές» προκειμένου να μην αλιεύονται ανεπιθύμητα αλιεύματα. Επιπλέον, στο πλαίσιο του προτεινόμενου Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Θάλασσας και Αλιείας (ΕΤΘΑ), οι πλοιοκτήτες θα λαμβάνουν χρηματοδοτική στήριξη για τη βελτίωση της επιλεκτικότητας του αλιευτικού εξοπλισμού και τη μείωση των τυχαίων/παρεμπιπτόντων αλιευμάτων καθώς και για τη συμμετοχή σε δοκιμές και έργα σε συνεργασία με επιστήμονες. Οι οργανώσεις παραγωγών θα λαμβάνουν επίσης χρηματοδότηση, η οποία θα προορίζεται για τη διαχείριση ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων και την καλύτερη επισήμανση των προϊόντων έως τη διαφοροποίηση των αλιευμάτων που προέρχονται από υπεύθυνη αλιεία από άλλα προϊόντα καθώς και για την εμπορία νέων προϊόντων.

Η πρόταση για τη μεταρρύθμιση της ΚΑΛΠ προβλέπει επίσης τη δυνατότητα παροχής κινήτρων από τα κράτη μέλη στους αλιείς που αλιεύουν υπεύθυνα, μέσω της χορήγησης μεγαλύτερης ποσόστωσης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000473/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Selective fishing methods

An essential objective of the new common fisheries policy proposed by the Commission is to protect resources and the environment.

In this context, a number of measures are being put forward, including a ban on dumping, transferable fishing quotas and 'maximum sustainable yield'.

Given that prevention is better than cure:

1. What measures does the Commission intend to take to support selective fishing? What incentives does it intend to give fishermen to encourage them to adopt more selective and environmentally-friendly fishing techniques?

2. How does it intend to disseminate these best practices within the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2012)

To disseminate and encourage best practice is a fundamental role of stakeholder groups, particularly the Regional Advisory Councils, NGOs and other fishermen's representative groups such as Producer's Organisations that will have an enhanced mandate under the proposed reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

To encourage these practices, there are a number of support mechanisms to the landing obligation included in the reform package that would incentivise 'responsible practice' so that unwanted fish is not caught in the first place. Furthermore, under the proposed European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) vessel owners would receive financial support for increased gear selectivity and reducing incidental/accidental bycatch as well as for participating in trials and projects in collaboration with scientists. Producers' Organisations would also receive funding, ranging from assistance for handling unwanted catches and better labelling of products, to differentiating responsibly caught fish from other products and for the marketing of new products.

The proposal for the reform of the CFP also provides for the possibility for Member States to give incentives through increased quota allocation to fishermen who fish responsibly.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000474/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Απαγόρευση απορρίψεων στα πλαίσια της νέας Κοινής Αλιευτικής Πολιτικής

Η Επιτροπή προτείνει να έχει ώς το 2016 εξαλειφθεί η πρακτική της απόρριψης ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων στη θάλασσα, καθιερώνοντας την υποχρέωση εκφόρτωσης όλων των αλιευμάτων στα λιμάνια.

Η Επιτροπή προτείνει επίσης την μετατροπή των ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων, που βρίσκονται κάτω από το ελάχιστο προβλεπόμενο μέγεθος, σε ιχθυάλευρα και ζωοτροφές προς πώληση.

Δεδομένου ότι κρίνεται αναγκαίο, κατά την εφαρμογή του μέτρου της απαγόρευσης των απορρίψεων μη επιθυμητών αλιευμάτων, να ληφθούν υπόψη οι διάφορες τεχνικές αλιείας και τα ιδιαίτερα χαρακτηριστικά ορισμένων θαλάσσιων ζωνών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Όσον αφορά τη δημιουργία υποδομών συλλογής και επεξεργασίας των ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων, που θα προκύπτουν από την εφαρμογή του μέτρου της απαγόρευσης των απορρίψεων, τί προβλέπει η Επιτροπή για τις λεκάνες με ειδικά χαρακτηριστικά, όπως στην περίπτωση της Μεσογείου (αλιεία μικρής κλίμακας, μικρά απομονωμένα νησιά, μικρά λιμάνια, δύσκολες συνθήκες υγιεινής λόγω της θερμοκρασίας);

2. Στην πράξη, πώς θα μπορεί να ελέγχεται ότι οι αλιείς όντως συμμορφώνονται με την απαγόρευση της απόρριψης των ανεπιθύμητων ψαριών στη θάλασσα;

3. Όσον αφορά την πρακτική της εκφόρτωσης των αλιευμάτων και τη μετατροπή τους σε ιχθυάλευρα ή ζωοτροφές με ένα χρηματικό αντάλλαγμα, ποιες είναι δυνατό να εξασφαλιστεί η αποφυγή της δημιουργίας ενός συστήματος που μπορεί, παραδόξως, να ενθαρρύνει τους αλιείς να αυξήσουν τα αλιεύματά τους;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Στη μεταρρύθμιση της ΚΑΛΠ προβλέπονται διαφορετικά μέτρα στήριξης όσον αφορά την ανάπτυξη της υποδομής για την αποθήκευση και μεταποίηση ανεπιθύμητων ιχθύων.

Καταρχάς όμως πρέπει να εστιάσουμε στη βελτίωση των εργαλείων και των τεχνικών αλίευσης ώστε να αποφεύγεται η αλίευση ανεπιθύμητων ιχθύων. Στις περιπτώσεις στις οποίες είναι αναπόφευκτο να συλλαμβάνονται ορισμένα ψάρια που δεν έχουν το απαιτούμενο μέγεθος, τα εν λόγω ψάρια πρέπει να εκφορτώνονται αλλά δεν πρέπει να πωλούνται για άμεση ανθρώπινη κατανάλωση. Οι αλιείς θα έχουν τη δυνατότητα να καλύψουν το κόστος της εκφόρτωσης των εν λόγω ιχθύων δίχως όμως αυτό να τους αποφέρει οικονομικό όφελος, ώστε να μην δημιουργούνται εσφαλμένα κίνητρα.

Το προτεινόμενο Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Θάλασσας και Αλιείας (ΕΤΘΑ) προβλέπει σειρά μέτρων χρηματοδοτικής ενίσχυσης, ήτοι τη στήριξη των πλοιοκτητών για τη βελτίωση της επιλεκτικότητας των αλιευτικών εργαλείων και τη χρηματοοικονομική στήριξη στους αλιείς που εργάζονται επί σκαφών που συμμετέχουν ενεργά σε προσπάθειες για την καταπολέμηση των απορρίψεων. Στο πλαίσιο του ΕΤΘΑ θα προβλέπεται επίσης χρηματοοικονομική ενίσχυση για επενδύσεις σε σημεία εκφόρτωσης για τη συνδρομή σε δαπάνες όσον αφορά τον χειρισμό και τη μεταποίηση ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων. Δεδομένων των ιδιαίτερων χαρακτηριστικών της αλιείας και των εγκαταστάσεων εκφόρτωσης, προβλέπεται υψηλότερη ένταση της ενίσχυσης στο πλαίσιο του ΕΤΘΑ για τα ελληνικά νησιά.

Ως προς το θέμα του ελέγχου, η έγκριση συστημάτων παρακολούθησης με τηλεόραση κλειστού κυκλώματος (CCTV) και αυτόματης σύνδεσης για την παρακολούθηση σε πραγματικό χρόνο καθώς και η χρήση σύγχρονων εργαλείων ανίχνευσης για τη διευκόλυνση των ελέγχων από τις αρχές των κρατών μελών θα ενισχύσουν την επιβολή της νομοθεσίας τόσο στη θάλασσα όσο και στις ακτές. Επιπλέον, για να είναι αποτελεσματική η απαγόρευση των απορρίψεων, οι αλιείς πρέπει να διαδραματίζουν ενεργό ρόλο και να τους προσφέρονται κίνητρα ώστε να ενθαρρύνεται η οικειοθελής τήρηση της νομοθεσίας. Για τον λόγο αυτό, οι προτάσεις της Επιτροπής προβλέπουν αυξημένο ρόλο για τις οργανώσεις των παραγωγών όσον αφορά την προώθηση βιώσιμων αλιευτικών δραστηριοτήτων και για να τους δοθεί η δυνατότητα να αντεπεξέλθουν στην περαιτέρω διαχείριση των ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000474/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Prohibition of dumping under the new Common Fisheries Policy

The Commission proposes that the practice of dumping unwanted catches in the sea should be phased out by 2016, making the landing of all catches in port compulsory.

The Commission also proposes the processing of discarded catches below the stipulated minimum size for sale as fishmeal and animal feed.

Given the need to take into account the various fishing techniques and the particular characteristics of certain maritime areas in implementing the ban on the practice of dumping unwanted catches:

1. Regarding the development of collection and processing infrastructure for unwanted catches following implementation of the ban on dumping, what measures are being envisaged by the Commission for basins with special characteristics, such as the Mediterranean (with small scale fishing, small and isolated islands, small ports and difficulties with regard to fish hygiene due to temperature)?

2. In practice, how will it be possible to verify that fishermen actually abide by the ban on dumping unwanted fish in the sea?

3. Regarding the practice of landing catches and processing them for sale as fishmeal or animal feed, how is it possible to avoid creating a system that could — paradoxically — encourage fishermen to increase their catches?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

There are various support measures included in the reform of the CFP to develop infrastructure for the storage and processing of unwanted fish.

The first focus will however be on improving gears and fishing techniques in order to avoid catching unwanted fish in the first place. Where it is inevitable that some undersized fish is caught these fish must be landed but cannot be sold for direct human consumption. Fishermen will be able to cover their costs for landing these fish without generating financial gain so as not to create a wrong incentive.

The proposed European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) foresees a range of financial aid, i.e. to support vessel owners for improving the selectivity of fishing gear, and financial support for fishermen working on board of vessels that participate in active anti discard trials. Under the EMFF there will also be financial aid for investments in landing sites to assist with the costs of handling and processing unwanted catches. Recognising the characteristics of fisheries and landing facilities, higher aid intensities are envisaged under the EMFF for the Greek Islands.

On the issue of control, the adoption of CCTV monitoring and automatic logging systems to provide real time monitoring as well as the use of modern traceability tools to facilitate controls by Member States authorities will enhance enforcement at sea and ashore. In addition, for a discard ban to be effective, fishermen must play an active role and be incentivised to encourage self-compliance. For this reason, the Commission proposals foresee an enhanced role for producers' organisations to promote viable fishing activities and to cope with the handling of unwanted catches.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000475/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνοι απώλειας της εμπιστοσύνης των Ευρωπαίων πολιτών στο ευρώ

Σύμφωνα με την τελευταία έρευνα ([1]) του Ευρωβαρόμετρου για το ευρώ, τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2010, το 67 % των ερωτηθέντων απάντησε πως η ύπαρξη του ευρώ είναι θετική για την ευρωζώνη, σημειώνοντας ωστόσο πτώση 5 ποσοστιαίων μονάδων συγκριτικά με αντίστοιχη έρευνα του 2007. Σύμφωνα με την τελευταία έρευνα, οι ερωτηθέντες από τις υπερχρεωμένες χώρες (Ελλάδα, Πορτογαλία, Ιταλία και Ισπανία) σημειώνουν τα χαμηλότερα ποσοστά θετικής άποψης για το ευρώ (65 %, 61 %, 65 % και 65 % αντίστοιχα), κατώτερα του ευρωπαϊκού μέσου όρου.

Παράλληλα, σύμφωνα με έρευνα που δημοσιεύτηκε πρόσφατα από την εφημερίδα Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, τον Αύγουστο του 2011, η εμπιστοσύνη των Γερμανών πολιτών στο κοινό νόμισμα, παρόλα τα διαφαινόμενα κέρδη της γερμανικής οικονομίας από την υιοθέτηση του ευρώ, έχει φθάσει σε δραματικά χαμηλό επίπεδο, όπου μόνο το 24 % των Γερμανών εμπιστεύονται το ευρώ έναντι του 76 % που δυσπιστούν προς αυτό ([2]).

Με δεδομένα τα συμπεράσματα των ερευνών αυτών, η Επιτροπή ερωτάται:

1. Πώς κρίνει τα αποτελέσματα των ερευνών αυτών στις διάφορες χώρες και τι συμπεράσματα προκύπτουν;

2. Υπάρχει κάποια άλλη έρευνα που να καταγράφει τη στάση των Ευρωπαίων πολιτών απέναντι στο ευρώ, για το ευρώ γενικότερα; Εάν όχι, σκοπεύει να καταγράψει και να αξιολογήσει τις νέες συνολικές τάσεις που διαμορφώνονται επί του θέματος;

3. Ποιες θεωρεί ότι μπορεί να είναι οι επιπτώσεις της δυσπιστίας των πολιτών απέναντι στο ευρώ στην προσπάθεια για περαιτέρω δημοσιονομική ενοποίηση και σύγκλιση;

4. Σχεδιάζεται ενημερωτική εκστρατεία για την στήριξη του ευρώ στην κοινή γνώμη, ώστε να αντιληφθούν οι πολίτες τη σημασία και τα οφέλη του κοινού νομίσματος, τις κοινές προσπάθειες για την στήριξη και τη διατήρησή του και τις προοπτικές που διαγράφονται;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Η κρίση κρατικού χρέους συχνά εκλαμβάνεται εσφαλμένα ως «κρίση του ευρώ». Αυτό επισκιάζει τα οφέλη που προσέφερε το ενιαίο νόμισμα. Ωστόσο, είναι ευδιάκριτη κάποια κόπωση όσον αφορά τη στήριξή του μεταξύ των πολιτών των κρατών μελών τα οποία χρειάζεται να παράσχουν χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή ή εγγυήσεις, καθώς και κάποια κόπωση όσον αφορά τις μεταρρυθμίσεις μεταξύ των πολιτών των χωρών που χρειάζεται να εφαρμόσουν μέτρα μείωσης του κόστους.

Η Επιτροπή βολιδοσκοπεί τακτικά τη στάση των πολιτών της ΕΕ σε θέματα σχετικά με το ευρώ στις έρευνες του Έκτακτου Ευρωβαρομέτρου. Ενώ αληθεύει ότι σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη παρατηρήθηκε πρόσφατα εξασθένηση της στήριξης του ευρώ εν γένει, η συνολική εικόνα είναι ανάμεικτη. Επομένως, είναι δύσκολο να συναχθούν ευρύτερα συμπεράσματα σχετικά με πιθανή σύνδεση μεταξύ της κρίσης και της δημόσιας στήριξης στο ευρώ.

Η βελτιωμένη οικονομική διακυβέρνηση αποτελεί στοιχείο καίριας σημασίας για την ενίσχυση της εμπιστοσύνης των πολιτών στο ευρώ και στην ΟΝΕ. Ορόσημο στον τομέα αυτό αποτελεί η λεγόμενη «εξάδα» νομοθετικών μέτρων. Η νομοθεσία αυτή αποσκοπεί στην ενίσχυση του Συμφώνου Σταθερότητας και Ανάπτυξης και καθιερώνει μια νέα Διαδικασία Μακροοικονομικών Ανισορροπιών με στόχο τη βελτίωση της παρακολούθησης των μακροοικονομικών εξελίξεων.

Η Επιτροπή ενημερώνει τους πολίτες σχετικά με την ΟΝΕ και το ευρώ με διάφορους τρόπους. Μια διαδραστική περιοδεύουσα έκθεση κατευθύνεται τώρα στη Μαδέρα της Πορτογαλίας. Επίσης, ένα ενημερωτικό φυλλάδιο σχετικά με τους ενισχυμένους κανόνες οικονομικής διακυβέρνησης θα διατεθεί προσεχώς στο ευρύ κοινό. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή διοργάνωσε ανοικτό διαγωνισμό μέσω του Διαδικτύου για τον σχεδιασμό του αναμνηστικού νομίσματος της επετείου των 10 ετών από την κυκλοφορία των κερμάτων και χαρτονομισμάτων ευρώ. Τέλος, η ετήσια διάσκεψη της ΓΔ Οικονομικών και Χρηματοδοτικών Υποθέσεων, το Οικονομικό Φόρουμ των Βρυξελλών, που είναι ανοικτή στο κοινό, θα ασχοληθεί στις 31 Μαΐου 2012 με το βασικό ζήτημα της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης υπό τον τίτλο «Πηγές οικονομικής ανάπτυξης — επανεξέταση των αναπτυξιακών μοντέλων στην ΕΕ».

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_306_en.pdf
([2]) Köcher, Renate (2011), «Schicksalsthema Europa», Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 19 Οκτωβρίου, σελ. 5.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000475/12
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Risk of European citizens losing their confidence in the euro

According to the+latest Eurobarometer survey regarding the euro conducted in September 2010 ([1]), 67 % of respondents replied that the euro was a good thing for the eurozone. However, this result was five points down from a corresponding study conducted in 2007. According to the latest study, respondents from over-indebted countries (Greece, Portugal, Italy and Spain) are least in favour of the euro, the percentage of those supporting it (65 %, 61 %, 65 % and 65 % respectively) being below the European average.

At the same time, according to a study published recently by *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, in August 2011, despite the manifest benefits to the German economy resulting from adoption of the euro, the confidence of German citizens in the common currency had fallen to alarmingly low levels, with only 24 % of Germans having confidence in the euro, as opposed to 76 % distrusting it ([2]).

In view of this:

1. What view does the Commission take of the findings of these studies in various countries and what conclusions can be drawn?

2. Have any other surveys been carried out regarding the attitude of European citizens to the euro in general? If not, does the Commission intend to record and evaluate the newly emerging public opinion trends regarding this matter?

3. What does the Commission see as the possible consequences of citizens' distrust of the euro for the attempt to achieve further budgetary unification and convergence?

4. Are there plans for an information campaign to boost public support for the euro, raising awareness of the importance and the benefits of the common currency, the joint efforts being made to support and preserve it and its future prospects?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

The sovereign debt crisis is often incorrectly perceived as a 'euro crisis'. This overshadows the benefits of the single currency. However, a certain support fatigue can be perceived among citizens of MS that need to provide financial assistance or guarantees, as well as a certain reform fatigue among the citizens of countries that need to implement cost-cutting measures.

The Commission regularly gauges the attitudes of EU citizens on matters related to the euro in the Flash Eurobarometer surveys. While it is true that a weakening support for the euro in general has been observed recently in certain MS, the overall picture is mixed. It is therefore difficult to draw any broader conclusions about a possible link between the crisis and public support for the euro.

Improved economic governance is a crucial element in reinforcing citizens' trust in the euro and EMU. A milestone in this respect is the so-called 'six-pack' legislation. It aims at strengthening the Stability and Growth Pact and introduces a new Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure in order to better monitor macroeconomic developments.

The Commission informs citizens about EMU and the euro in a number of ways. An interactive travelling exhibition is now heading for Madeira, Portugal. Furthermore an information leaflet on the reinforced economic governance rules will shortly be made available to the general public. In addition, the Commission organised an open web-based competition for the design of the coin to commemorate 10 years of euro coins and banknotes. Finally, the yearly conference of DG ECFIN, the Brussels Economic Forum, open to the public, will on 31 May 2012 address the key issue of economic growth under the heading of 'Sources of economic growth — revisiting growth models in the EU'.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_306_en.pdf
([2]) Köcher, Renate (2011), 'Schicksalsthema Europa', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 October 19, p. 5.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000476/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Το έργο «Ήλιος»

Το έργο «Ήλιος», αξίας 20 δισ. ευρώ, προβλέπει εγκατάσταση στην Ελλάδα φωτοβολταϊκών πάνελ συνολικής ισχύος 10 GW σε έκταση 200 χιλιάδων στρεμμάτων και εξαγωγή της παραγόμενης ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας στην Γερμανία και σε άλλες δυτικές χώρες. Η ελληνική συμμετοχή εκτιμάται στο 20-30 %. Το έργο προωθείται με συνοπτικές διαδικασίες από το ελληνικό Υπουργείο Περιβάλλοντος. Ωστόσο, αν και έχει προβλεφθεί ότι έσοδα από το σχέδιο θα διατεθούν για την αποπληρωμή του δημοσίου χρέους, ελάχιστα πράγματα έχουν γίνει γνωστά για τη δυνατότητα ουσιαστικής συμμετοχής εκ μέρους της ελληνικής πλευράς και για τις αναπτυξιακές προοπτικές που προσφέρει, τόσο από πλευράς τεχνολογίας όσο και δημιουργίας θέσεων εργασίας.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Τι προβλέπεται από το σχέδιο Ήλιος για την μεταφορά τεχνολογίας προς την Ελλάδα, την ανάπτυξη εγχώριας τεχνογνωσίας και την εγχώρια προστιθέμενη αξία;

2. Πόσες θέσεις εργασίας θα δημιουργηθούν σε εθνικό επίπεδο;

3. Προβλέπεται η (συμ)παραγωγή μέρους των φωτοβολταϊκών πάνελ και λοιπών ηλεκτρομηχανολογικών συστημάτων στην Ελλάδα; Μήπως η ελληνική συμμετοχή θα συνίσταται απλώς στη «φύλαξη» και τον «καθαρισμό» των φωτοβολταϊκών συστημάτων;

4. Πώς θα συμβάλλει το έργο αυτό στην μείωση της ενεργειακής εξάρτησης της Ελλάδας, η οποία εισάγει το 72 % των ενεργειακών αναγκών της; Η παραγόμενη από ΑΠΕ ενέργεια θα προσμετράται στην επίτευξη των στόχων ΑΠΕ της χώρας αποδέκτη ή της Ελλάδας; Τι ποσοστό της παραγόμενης ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας προβλέπεται για εγχώρια κατανάλωση στην Ελλάδα και σε ποιά τιμή;

5. Ποιο αναμένεται να είναι το τελικό κόστος των δικτύων μεταφοράς της παραγόμενης ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας και ποιός θα το αναλάβει; Προβλέπεται ένταξη του έργου στις προτεραιότητες των ευρωπαϊκών ενεργειακών υποδομών ως το 2020;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή έχει συζητήσει διεξοδικά με τις ελληνικές αρχές και με άλλα κράτη μέλη το έργο Ήλιος και, γενικότερα, τον καλύτερο τρόπο αξιοποίησης των ελληνικών πόρων ηλιακής ενέργειας, οι οποίοι είναι γεγονός ότι παραμένουν αναξιοποίητοι.

Οι νομικές, οικονομικές, και τεχνικές επιμέρους πτυχές του έργου, ιδίως δε τα σχετικά κόστη του έργου, η τελική κατανάλωση της ενέργειας που θα παραχθεί και ο ρόλος των διάφορων συντελεστών πρόκειται να καθοριστούν στην πορεία εξέλιξης του έργου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000476/12
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: The 'Helios' project

The 'Helios' project, worth EUR 20 billion, envisages the installation of photovoltaic panels with a total capacity of 10GW in Greece over an area of 20 thousand hectares and the export of the electricity generated to Germany and other Western countries. Greece's contribution is estimated at 20-30 %. The Greek Ministry for the Environment is keen to move ahead swiftly with the project. However, although revenue from it is to be earmarked for repayment of the national debt, very little has been made said about the possibility of substantial participation by Greece or about the growth prospects afforded by the project in terms of both technological development and job creation.

In view of the above, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. What are the provisions of the Helios project regarding the transfer of technology to Greece, the development of domestic know-how and domestic added value?

2. How many jobs will be created at national level?

3. Are there any plans for (co)production of any part of the photovoltaic panels or other electro-mechanical systems in Greece? Is it true that Greece's participation will be limited to the 'surveillance' and 'cleaning' of the photovoltaic systems?

4. How will this project contribute to reducing the energy dependence of Greece, which currently imports 72 % of its energy requirements? Will energy produced from RES count towards achieving the RES objectives of the recipient country or of Greece? What proportion of the electricity produced is expected to be consumed in Greece, and what will it cost?

5. What is the estimated final cost of the transmission networks required for the power generated, and who will meet this cost? Is it intended to include the project in the European energy infrastructure priorities for 2020?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The Commission has been actively discussing the Helios project and, more generally, the better exploitation of Greek solar energy resources with the Greek authorities and other Member States. Greece clearly has a significantly under-exploited solar energy resource.

The legal, financial and technical details of the project, in particular the relative costs of the project, the final consumption of the energy produced and the role of different players will be defined as the project is developing.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000479/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Poste Italiane S.p.A. e aiuti di Stato

Nel contesto dell'apertura dei servizi pubblici alla concorrenza, il decreto legislativo 58/2011, che ha recepito la direttiva 2008/6/CE, ha formalmente liberalizzato i servizi postali sul territorio italiano. Tuttavia, il 90 % del volume d'affari di tale mercato risulta ancora essere nelle mani della società Poste Italiane S.p.A. che mantiene tale posizione dominante anche grazie al fatto di beneficiare, a differenza degli altri operatori del mercato, di un'esenzione I.V.A. dei propri prodotti inclusi nel servizio universale.

1. Ritiene la Commissione che tale fatto costituisca un aiuto di Stato a favore dell'impresa Poste Italiane S.p.A. che falsa le regole della concorrenza a discapito degli altri operatori di mercato?

2. In considerazione del ruolo da essa svolta nella valutazione degli aiuti di Stato compatibili con il mercato comune, intende chiedere ulteriori chiarimenti al riguardo?

Risposta data da Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(1º marzo 2012)

1. Fintanto che l'Italia soddisfa l'articolo 132, paragrafo 1, lettera a) della direttiva 2006/112/CE del Consiglio, del 28 novembre 2006, relativa al sistema comune d'imposta sul valore aggiunto (recepita nella legislazione italiana con l'articolo 10, comma 16, del D.P.R. 633/72), il quale sancisce che: «Gli Stati membri esentano le operazioni seguenti: a) quando sono effettuate dai servizi pubblici postali, le prestazioni di servizi e le cessioni di beni accessori a dette prestazioni, esclusi il trasporto di persone e le telecomunicazioni», la Commissione non ritiene che l'esenzione dall'IVA dei prodotti inclusi nel servizio universale postale costituisca un aiuto di Stato ai sensi dell'articolo 107, paragrafo 1, del TFUE. In effetti, l'articolo 132, paragrafo 1, lettera a) della citata direttiva non lascia alcun margine di discrezione agli Stati riguardo all'esenzione dei servizi postali pubblici dall'IVA. Tale esenzione non è quindi imputabile all'azione dello Stato membro ([1]).

2. Come ha precisato la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea al punto 49 della causa C-357/07 TNT UK, l'esenzione prevista all'art. 13, parte A, n. 1, lett. a), della sesta direttiva [77/388/CEE] «si applica alle prestazioni di servizi e alle cessioni di beni accessori a dette prestazioni, ad eccezione dei trasporti di persone e delle telecomunicazioni, che i servizi pubblici postali effettuano in quanto tali, vale a dire a titolo della loro qualità di operatore che si obbliga a garantire in uno Stato membro la totalità o una parte del servizio postale universale. Essa non si applica alle prestazioni di servizi né alle cessioni di beni accessori a dette prestazioni le cui condizioni siano state negoziate individualmente».

([1]) In questo contesto, si veda la causa T-351/02, Deutsche Bahn AG contro Commissione, Racc. 2006, pag. II-1047, punti 99-104.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000479/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Poste Italiane S.p.A. and state aid

In the context of opening up public services to competition, Legislative Decree No 58/2011, which implemented Directive 2008/6/EC, formally liberalised postal services in Italy. However, 90 % of this market's turnover is still in the hands of *Poste Italiana S.p.A.*, which is able to maintain this dominant position partly as a result of the fact that, unlike other market players, it benefits from a VAT exemption for its products included in the universal service.

1. Does the Commission consider that this constitutes state aid granted to *Poste Italiana SpA*, which distorts the rules of competition to the detriment of other market participants?

2. In view of its role in assessing the compatibility of state aid with the common market, does it intend to seek further clarification on this?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2012)

1. As long as Italy complies with Article 132(1) (a) of Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax (transposed into Italian law as Article 10(16) of D.P.R 633/72), which sets out that 'Member States shall exempt the following transactions: (a) the supply by the public postal services of services other than passenger transport and telecommunications services, and the supply of goods incidental thereto', the Commission does not consider the VAT exemption of the products falling within the universal postal service to constitute a state aid within the meaning of Article 107(1) TFEU. Indeed, Article 132(1)(a) of the 2006/112/EC Directive does not allow any margin of discretion to the State as regards the exemption of public postal services from VAT. Therefore that exemption is not imputable to the action of the Member State ([1]).

2. As clarified by the Court of Justice of the European Union in Case C-357/07 TNT UK, point 49, 'the exemption provided for in Article 13A(1)(a) of the Sixth Directive 77/388 on the harmonisation of the laws of the Member States relating to turnover taxes applies to the supply by the public postal services acting as such — that is, in their capacity as an operator who undertakes to provide all or part of the universal postal service in a Member State — of services other than passenger transport and telecommunications services, and the supply of goods incidental thereto. It does not apply to supplies of services or of goods incidental thereto for which the terms have been individually negotiated'.

([1]) See to that effect Case T-351/02, *Deutsche Bahn* v *Commission*, [2006] ECR II-1047, paragraphs 99-104.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000480/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Accordi per la libera circolazione negli Stati balcanici

Nel 2010, l'Albania e il Kosovo hanno firmato un accordo per facilitare la libertà di movimento dei propri cittadini. Un accordo simile è stato ora firmato anche tra l'Albania, il Montenegro e l'ex Repubblica Iugoslava di Macedonia (ERIM), al fine di creare la cosiddetta «area Schengen» dei Balcani, nella quale sarà possibile circolare con la sola carta d'identità. L'ERIM e la Serbia hanno inoltre annunciato l'intenzione di firmare un accordo analogo. Secondo i governi degli Stati interessati, tale regime permetterà di velocizzare e consolidare l'integrazione socio-politica della regione, in funzione del raggiungimento degli obiettivi richiesti per l'accesso all'UE.

Tuttavia, la comunicazione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio «Strategia di allargamento e sfide principali per il periodo 2011-2012», pubblicata dalla Commissione nell'ottobre 2011, sottolinea che una caratteristica principale del crimine organizzato attivo negli Stati balcanici è la sua natura transfrontaliera, e che è principalmente questo aspetto a impedire lo sradicamento delle organizzazioni criminali.

Alla luce di queste considerazioni, ritiene la Commissione che gli accordi per la libertà di movimento firmati dagli Stati balcanici sopracitati permetteranno anche il protrarsi e l'intensificarsi delle attività criminali denunciate dalla Commissione stessa nella sua comunicazione? Se sì, intende adottare misure al riguardo?

Risposta data da Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(21 marzo 2012)

Gli accordi citati dall'onorevole parlamentare, volti a facilitare la libertà di circolazione nella regione dei Balcani occidentali, non prevedono l'abolizione dei controlli alle frontiere; tali controlli vengono infatti eseguiti sui confini di tutti gli Stati menzionati nell'interrogazione.

Oltre ai controlli alle frontiere, vanno ricordati anche gli accordi bilaterali di cooperazione transfrontaliera tra forze di polizia e gli accordi di cooperazione bilaterale tra le autorità doganali e la polizia di frontiera di vari paesi. Tali accordi mirano a migliorare il monitoraggio delle attività svolte in materia di lotta alla criminalità organizzata, soprattutto transfrontaliera.

La Commissione sorveglia attentamente l'attuazione dei controlli alle frontiere e i relativi accordi, oltre a riferire in merito allo stato di avanzamento in questo ambito attraverso le relazioni annuali. Nella lotta alla criminalità organizzata transfrontaliera, anche la cooperazione regionale ricopre un ruolo fondamentale e viene seguita e fortemente sostenuta dalla Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000480/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Agreements on free movement in the Balkan States

In 2010, Albania and Kosovo signed an agreement to facilitate the freedom of movement of their own citizens. A similar agreement has now also been signed between Albania, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), with the aim of creating a so-called 'Schengen Area' for the Balkans, in which it will be possible to move around just with an identity card. FYROM and Serbia have also announced their intention to sign an agreement of this kind. According to the governments of the states concerned, such a regime will speed up and consolidate the socio-political integration of the region, in line with the objectives that must be met for them to join the EU.

However, the communication to the European Parliament and the Council 'Enlargement Strategy and main challenges for the period 2011-2012', published by the Commission in October 2011, highlighted that a main feature of organised crime activities in the Balkan States is that it is cross-border in nature, and that this is the main impediment to eradicating these criminal organisations.

In light of these considerations, does the Commission consider that the agreements on freedom of movement signed by the Balkan States cited above will also enable the criminal activities condemned by the Commission itself in its communication to continue and intensify? If so, does it intend to take steps against this?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2012)

The agreements referred to by the Honourable Member, regarding facilitation of freedom of movement in the Western Balkan region, do not entail abolishing border controls; in fact border controls are in place at all the borders referred to in the question.

In addition to border controls, it should be noted that there are also bilateral agreements on cross-border police cooperation and on bilateral cooperation between customs authorities and border police of different countries, which aim to improve the track records in the fight against organised crime including, in particular, cross-border organised crime.

The Commission monitors closely the implementation of border controls and all related agreements, and reports on developments in its annual progress reports. Regional cooperation is also of key importance when it comes to addressing cross border organised crime, and is also strongly supported and monitored by the Commission.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000481/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Acquisizione di passaporti comunitari da parte dei cittadini dell'ex Repubblica Iugoslava di Macedonia

A fine dicembre, il Ministero degli Affari Esteri della Bulgaria ha segnalato che un altissimo numero di cittadini dell'ex Repubblica Iugoslava di Macedonia (ERIM) ha recentemente acquisito il passaporto bulgaro. Secondo i dati forniti dal Ministero, nel mese di dicembre sono stati emessi 7 000 nuovi passaporti, portando a 42 000 il numero totale di cittadini macedoni titolari di un passaporto bulgaro. Come emerso dalle domande presentate dai cittadini in questione, la maggior parte di loro è interessata ad acquisire la cittadinanza bulgara al fine di trasferirsi nei paesi occidentali dell'UE quando questi ultimi apriranno i propri mercati lavorativi alla Bulgaria nel 2014.

— La Commissione è al corrente dei fatti sopra esposti?

— Come valuta questa strategia adottata da un così alto numero di cittadini di un paese terzo, non appartenente all'UE, per accedere in massa nell'UE stessa?

— Ritiene che il governo dell'ERIM sia coinvolto nella promozione di tale strategia?

— Inoltre, considerando che il numero di passaporti emessi ammonta a diverse migliaia, e considerando che il fenomeno della corruzione è ancora fortemente radicato negli Stati balcanici (come indicato dalla Commissione nella Comunicazione al Parlamento e al Consiglio sulla Strategia di allargamento 2011-2012), ritiene essa che le procedure di rilascio dei passaporti in questione siano state trasparenti o ritiene possibile che tali procedure siano state viziate da pratiche illegali, e che molti dei passaporti rilasciati possano quindi non essere in regola?

— Infine, la Commissione intende chiedere chiarimenti ai governi dei due Stati in questione in merito al caso qui esposto?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(22 febbraio 2012)

La Commissione non ha alcuna competenza in merito alle condizioni che uno Stato membro applica per concedere la propria cittadinanza, poiché il potere di stabilire le condizioni per l'acquisto e la perdita della cittadinanza spetta agli Stati membri. Secondo una costante giurisprudenza, la determinazione dei modi di acquisto e di perdita della cittadinanza rientra, in conformità al diritto dell'Unione, nella competenza di ciascuno Stato membro (causa C-135/08 del 2.3.2010, *Rottmann/Freistaat Bayern*, punti 39, 45 e 48). Le condizioni per l'ottenimento e la revoca della cittadinanza di uno Stato membro sono, in altri termini, disciplinate esclusivamente dalla legislazione nazionale dei singoli Stati membri, fatto salvo il rispetto del diritto dell'Unione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000481/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Acquisition of Community passports by citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported at the end of December that a very high number of citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) had recently acquired Bulgarian passports. According to the data supplied by the Ministry, 7 000 new passports were issued in December, taking the total number of Macedonian citizens holding a Bulgarian passport up to 42 000. What has emerged from these citizens' applications is that the majority of them are interested in acquiring Bulgarian citizenship in order to move to the western EU countries when the latter open their own labour markets to Bulgaria in 2014.

— Is the Commission aware of the facts stated above?

— How does it rate this strategy adopted by such a high number of citizens of a third country, not a member of the EU, to gain access en masse to the EU itself?

— Does it consider that the FYROM Government may be involved in promoting this strategy?

— Moreover, in view of the fact that the number of passports issued amounts to several thousands and that the phenomenon of corruption is still strongly embedded in the Balkan States (as stated by the Commission in its communication to Parliament and the Council on the Enlargement Strategy 2011-2012), does the Commission believe that the procedures for issuing the passports in question were transparent or does it consider it possible that such procedures have been corrupted by illegal practices, and that many of the passports issued cannot therefore be in order?

— Finally, does the Commission intend to ask the Governments of the two States in question for an explanation of this situation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2012)

The Commission has no competence regarding the conditions applied by a Member State to grant its nationality, because the power to lay down the conditions for the acquisition and loss of nationality lies with the Member States. According to settled case-law, it is for each Member State, having due regard to Union law, to lay down the conditions for the acquisition and loss of nationality (Case C-135/08, 2.3.2010, *Rottmann* v *Freistaat Bayern*, pts 39, 45 & 48). The conditions for obtaining and forfeiting citizenship of the Member States are in other words regulated by the national law of the individual Member States, subject to respect for Union law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000483/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Crisi del settore ippico italiano

Quello ippico è un settore che in Italia e in molti altri Stati membri dell'UE rappresenta una risorsa importante tanto in termini economici ed occupazionali, quanto in termini di rappresentatività della storia e della tradizione di un territorio. In numeri forniscono una chiara fotografia dell'importanza di questo comparto in Italia: 463 961 sono i cavalli censiti e 48 513 operatori del comparto ippico in senso stretto.

La crisi economica e la necessità di operare tagli alla spesa pubblica ha indebolito e precipitato il settore in una situazione di vera e propria emergenza e con esso la filiera imprenditoriale cui è agganciato a partire dall'allevamento fino alle scommesse. In Italia sono 15 mila i cavalli che rischiano di venire macellati, 700 le aziende che rischiano di chiudere; per il 2012 il bilancio del settore passa da 400 a 250 milioni, il che comporta la vendita all'estero dei capi piuttosto che il commercio clandestino gestito dalla malavita o il macello.

— La Commissione è a conoscenza di questo fenomeno?

— Quale è l'andamento registrato da questo settore negli altri Stati membri?

— La Commissione come intende agire per affrontare l'emergenza e garantire la tutela degli animali e il supporto dell'economia e dell'occupazione collegati al settore ippico?

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(22 febbraio 2012)

La Commissione è consapevole del ruolo che le diverse attività equestri svolgono in alcuni Stati membri, le quali, di fatto e come tante altre attività, sono colpite dalla crisi economica. Per quanto riguarda l'entità del sostegno fornito dagli Stati membri a questo particolare settore, essa è di competenza delle amministrazioni nazionali, nel rispetto delle norme dell'UE in materia di aiuti di Stato.

La Commissione prende atto delle preoccupazioni espresse dall'onorevole parlamentare e fa presente che l'allevamento di equini può beneficiare del sostegno allo sviluppo rurale nell'ambito della PAC. Pertanto, potrebbe essere fornito un sostegno nel contesto delle misure FEASR intese a diversificare l'economia rurale (quali la diversificazione delle attività agricole da parte degli agricoltori, la creazione di microimprese e lo sviluppo del turismo rurale), nonché nel contesto del programma LEADER, qualora lo Stato membro o la regione interessata contempli tali possibilità nel proprio programma di sviluppo rurale, rispettivamente nazionale o regionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000483/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Crisis in the Italian equestrian sector

The equestrian sector in Italy and in many other EU Member States is an important resource in economic and employment terms but also represents a country's history and traditions. The following figures provide a clear picture of the importance of this segment in Italy: 463 961 registered horses and 48 513 operators in the equestrian sector as such.

The economic crisis and the need to cut public spending has weakened the sector and plunged it — and the business sectors related to it, from breeding to betting — into a genuine situation of emergency. In Italy 15 000 horses are at risk of being slaughtered and 700 companies could close down; the budget for the sector in 2012 has been reduced from EUR 400 million to EUR 250 million, which means that animals will be sold abroad rather than enter the illegal gangster-run trade or the slaughterhouse.

— Is the Commission aware of this phenomenon?

— How is this sector performing in the other Member States?

— How does the Commission intend to act to tackle the emergency, ensure the protection of animals and provide support for the economy and employment in the equestrian and related sectors?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2012)

The Commission is aware of the role the diverse equestrian activities play in some Member States. It's a matter of fact that the general economic crisis is affecting those activities as many others. As regards the level of Member State's support to this particular sector, it is a responsibility of the national administrations while respecting the EU rules on state aids.

The Commission takes note of the concerns of the Honourable Member and informs that in the light of the CAP, rearing horses could benefit from rural development support. Therefore, support could be given in the context of the EAFRD measures diversifying the rural economy (such as the diversification of agricultural activities by farmers; creation of micro-enterprises; rural tourism) as well as in the context of Leader, if the Member State or region includes such possibilities in its, respectively, national or regional rural development programme.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000484/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Finanziamento Centro di Polizia nella Foresta di Burgos in Sardegna

Con la programmazione 2007-2013 sono stati stanziati circa 350 milioni di euro per interventi strutturali nell'UE. Una parte di questi è stata destinata alla creazione di una scuola in Sardegna, nella Foresta di Burgos, destinata alla formazione dei poliziotti a cavallo. Il progetto è stato completato nel 2009, ma numerose fonti riferiscono che si tratta di un cattivo esempio di utilizzo delle risorse comunitarie. Il centro, infatti, non solo non sarebbe mai stato utilizzato ma nemmeno messo in funzione, pur essendo costato 15 milioni di euro complessivi, dei quali 5,2 erogati dall'UE.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questi fatti? In caso affermativo, come intende procedere? Quali saranno le conseguenze in caso di indebito uso delle risorse erogate?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2012)

Secondo le informazioni fornite dall'autorità di gestione del programma nazionale «Sicurezza per lo Sviluppo» il progetto denominato «Scuola aperta per i servizi di polizia a cavallo per le forze di polizia ad ordinamento civile in Foresta Burgos (SS)» è stato finanziato nel periodo 2000-2006 nel quadro della politica di coesione con un contributo di euro 10 553 383,88, di cui euro 5 276 691,94 dal FESR.

La relazione finale di attuazione 2000-2006 del programma ha effettivamente incluso il progetto tra gli otto non ancora terminati alla data di presentazione dei documenti di chiusura. Secondo le disposizioni in merito, la realizzazione di tali progetti deve essere portata a termine entro il 30 settembre 2012.

L'autorità di gestione ha informato la Commissione con lettera del 5 aprile 2011 che il progetto era stato completato ed era pienamente operativo. La cerimonia di inaugurazione del centro si è tenuta il 7 marzo 2011 con l'avvio del primo corso di specializzazione. La scuola dà lavoro attualmente a circa 40 persone e l'inizio dei prossimi corsi è previsto per il 2 aprile 2012.

Per ulteriori dettagli relativi al progetto la Commissione suggerisce all'onorevole parlamentare di prendere contatto con l'autorità di gestione per il programma nazionale «Sicurezza per lo sviluppo», al seguente indirizzo:

Ministero dell'Interno
Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza
Ufficio Coordinamento e Pianificazione delle Forze di Polizia
Direttore pro-tempore
Piazza del Viminale
Roma
Tel. +39 06 46535585
Fax +39 06 46535453
e-mail: autoritadigestione_pon@ interno.it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000484/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Financing of police training centre in the Forest of Burgos, Sardinia

For the 2007-2013 programming period, approximately EUR 350 million were allocated for structural assistance in the EU. Part of this sum was set aside for the establishment of a school in Sardinia, in the Forest of Burgos, to train mounted policemen. The project was completed in 2009 but many have called it an example of bad use of EU funds. Indeed, not only was the centre never used, but it never even got off the ground, despite costing EUR 15 million overall, EUR 5.2 million of which provided by the EU.

Is the Commission aware of this? If so, what action does it intend to take? What will be the consequences in the event of improper use of allocated resources?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

According to the information provided by the managing authority of the national programme 'Sicurezza per lo Sviluppo', the project named 'Scuola aperta per i servizi di polizia a cavallo per le forze di polizia ad ordinamento civile in Foresta Burgos (SS)' was financed during the 2000-2006 period within the framework of cohesion policy with a contribution of EUR 10 553 383.88, of which EUR 5 276 691.94 from the ERDF.

The 2000-2006 Final Implementation Report of the programme did indeed include the project among the eight projects which were not yet completed at the date of the submission of the closure documents. According to the relevant provisions, the completion of these projects must be finalised before 30 September 2012.

By letter of 5 April 2011, the managing authority informed the Commission that the project had been completed and was fully operational. The opening ceremony of the centre was held on 7 March 2011 with the launch of the first course of specialisation. Currently, the school employs approximately 40 people and the next courses are scheduled to begin on 2 April 2012.

For any further details concerning the project, the Commission would advise the Honourable Member to contact the managing authority for the national programme 'Sicurezza per lo Sviluppo':

Ministero dell'Interno
Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza
Ufficio Coordinamento e Pianificazione delle Forze di Polizia
Direttore pro-tempore
Piazza del Viminale
Roma
Phone +39 0646535585
Fax +39 0646535453
E-mail autoritadigestione_pon@interno.it.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000485/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προκλητικά αλυτρωτική Αψίδα «της Μακεδονίας» από τη ΠΓΔΜ

Όπως αποκαλύπτει ο διαδικτυακός τόπος defencenet.gr σε δημοσίευμα του (10/01), η ΠΓΔΜ για μια ακόμα φορά προκαλεί με τα εγκαίνια της «Αψίδας της Μακεδονίας» (κατά το πρότυπο της Αψίδας του Θριάμβου στο Παρίσι), που κόστισε 4,4 εκατομμύρια ευρώ και εντάσσεται στο σχέδιο εμπνεύσεως του Πρωθυπουργού της χώρας με την ονομασία «Σκόπια 2014», που μεταξύ άλλων προέβλεπε και την κατασκευή του άκομψου αγάλματος του Μεγάλου Αλεξάνδρου.

Η «Αψίδα της Μακεδονίας» παρά την κριτική της αντιπολίτευσης εγκαινιάσθηκε την περασμένη Παρασκευή αλλά λεπτομέρειες των ανάγλυφων παραστάσεων αποκαλύφθηκαν χθες, μετά τις εντονότατες αντιδράσεις της αλβανικής πλευράς.

Σύμφωνα με τα όσα έχουν γίνει γνωστά, η «Αψίδα της Μακεδονίας», η οποία για τον Γκρούεφσκι συμβολίζει τη «νίκη» της ίδρυσης του «Μακεδονικού» κράτους, απεικονίζει ως μέρος της «Μακεδονίας» τη Βόρεια Ελλάδα, την αλβανική περιοχή των Πρεσπών αλλά και όλο το δυτικό μέρος της Βουλγαρίας (την «Αιγαιατική Μακεδονία» και τη «Μακεδονία του Πιρίν»).

Η συγκεκριμένη αψίδα τορπιλίζει τα επιχειρήματα ακόμα και όσων στηρίζουν την ονομασία με γεωγραφικό περιορισμό, αφού βάσει αυτής, η ΠΓΔΜ είναι γεωγραφικά απεριόριστη. Η ίδια η δημιουργός του έργου παραδέχθηκε ότι στην Αψίδα περιλαμβάνονται «όλα τα μέρη της Μακεδονίας» και ότι στις πλευρές της περιέλαβε και αναπαραστάσεις με στοιχεία λαογραφίας, μουσικής και παραδοσιακών φορεσιών από τη «Μακεδονία του Βαρδάρη, τη Μακεδονία του Πιρίν, την Αιγαιατική Μακεδονία και τη Μικρή Πρέσπα».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε οι προκλητικές «αλυτρωτικές αναπαραστάσεις» από το εν λόγω έργο «εθνικής υπερηφάνειας» να αφαιρεθούν από την αψίδα, καθώς προσβάλλουν την πολιτική καλής γειτονίας που οφείλει να δείχνει μια χώρα που επιδιώκει να ενταχθεί στην ΕΕ;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-000621/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(25 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προκλητικά έναντι της Ελλάδας γεγονότα στην ΠΓΔΜ

Χθες, η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση αναγκάστηκε να προβεί σε αυστηρό διάβημα διαμαρτυρίας προς την Κυβέρνηση της ΠΓΔΜ εκφράζοντας την εντονότατη δυσφορία της για τα απαράδεκτα, προκλητικά και προσβλητικά για την Ελλάδα γεγονότα που συνέβησαν πριν μερικές ημέρες στο πλαίσιο του καρναβαλιού της πόλης Βέβτσανι.

Μεταξύ αυτών των γεγονότων, εκείνο που κυρίως οδήγησε στο έντονο αυτό διάβημα κράτους μέλους προς την υποψήφια προς ένταξη ΠΓΔΜ, ήταν το κάψιμο της ελληνικής σημαίας. Πέραν των προαναφερομένων, πρέπει να τονιστεί ιδιαίτερα ότι τα απαράδεκτα αυτά γεγονότα συνέβησαν σχεδόν ταυτόχρονα με την επανεκκίνηση, μετά από πολύ καιρό των υπό την αιγίδα του ΟΗΕ διαπραγματεύσεων μεταξύ της Ελλάδας και της ΠΓΔΜ, με σκοπό την επίτευξη κοινά αποδεκτής λύσης στο ζήτημα της ονομασίας της υποψήφιας χώρας, κατ' εφαρμογή της απόφασης 817/1993 του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας του ΟΗΕ.

Σε συνέχεια αυτών και ενόψει της έγκρισης από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο του ψηφίσματος για την πρόοδο των σχέσεων ΕΕ-ΠΓΔΜ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη για τα εν λόγω γεγονότα;

2. Προτίθεται να θέσει τον απαράδεκτο χαρακτήρα αυτών των γεγονότων με σχετικές παραστάσεις διαμαρτυρίας προς την Κυβέρνηση του κ. Γκρουέφσκι;

3. Αναγνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι τέτοιου είδους προκλητικές ενέργειες και γεγονότα υποσκάπτουν τις προοπτικές επιτυχίας μιας ούτως ή άλλως δύσκολης διαπραγμάτευσης;

4. Ποια γνώμη έχει για τέτοιου είδους προκλητικές ενέργειες που καλλιεργούν και συντηρούν κλίμα φανατισμού, μισαλλοδοξίας και έντασης σε μια τόσο ευαίσθητη περιοχή, όπως τα Δυτικά Βαλκάνια;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000622/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(27 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κάψιμο της Ελληνικής σημαίας στην ΠΓΔΜ

Μεταξύ 13 και 14 Ιανουαρίου, κατά τη διάρκεια εκδηλώσεων που έλαβαν χώρα στο πλαίσιο του καρναβαλιού της πόλης Βέβτσανι στην Πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβική Δημοκρατία της Μακεδονίας, που λαμβάνει επιχορήγηση από το κράτος και εγκαινιάστηκε από την Υπουργό Πολιτισμού, πραγματοποιήθηκε η «κηδεία» της Ελλάδας σε ένα κλίμα εθνικιστικού παροξυσμού που οδήγησε στο δημόσιο εξευτελισμό και το κάψιμο της Ελληνικής σημαίας. Τα γεγονότα, συνεπώς, ξεπέρασαν κάθε μέτρο και αίσθημα χιούμορ που θα μπορούσε να είναι αποδεκτό σε τέτοιου είδους εκδηλώσεις. Δεδομένης της ευαίσθητης φάσης που διέρχονται οι διαπραγματεύσεις μεταξύ των κυβερνήσεων της Ελλάδος και της ΠΓΔΜ στο πλαίσιο του ΟΗΕ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν προτίθεται να προβεί σε διάβημα προς τις αρμόδιες αρχές προκειμένου να τονιστεί ότι παρόμοιες ενέργειες όχι μόνο δε συμβιβάζονται με την έννοια της καλής γειτονίας, η τήρηση της οποίας αποτελεί βασική προϋπόθεση για κάθε υποψήφια προς ένταξη χώρα, αλλά και δυναμιτίζουν οποιαδήποτε βάση συνεννόησης με την Ελλάδα.

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τις ευαισθησίες όλων των πλευρών όσον αφορά τα θέματα που θέτουν τα Αξιότιμα Μέλη, ιδίως τα γεγονότα που έλαβαν χώρα στο Vevčani, και παρακολουθεί στενά τις σχετικές εξελίξεις. Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι είναι σημαντικό οι οποιεσδήποτε ανησυχίες να αποτελούν αντικείμενο εποικοδομητικού διαλόγου μεταξύ των ενδιαφερομένων.

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί αδιάλειπτα εάν οι υποψήφιες χώρες ανταποκρίνονται στα πολιτικά κριτήρια. Οι καλές σχέσεις γειτονίας αποτελούν σημαντικό τμήμα της πορείας της χώρας προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση.

Αυτό υπογραμμίστηκε εκ νέου από την ΕΕ στις 23 Ιανουαρίου 2012, στο πλαίσιο του Συμβουλίου Σταθεροποίησης και Σύνδεσης μεταξύ της ΕΕ και της Πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβικής Δημοκρατίας της Μακεδονίας. Η επόμενη έκθεση προόδου στην οποία θα περιλαμβάνονται οι διαπιστώσεις στην Επιτροπής, θα δημοσιευτεί το φθινόπωρο του 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000485/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Provocative and irredentist implications of the Arch of Macedonia in FYROM

On 10 January the defencenet.gr website revealed that FYROM was engaging in yet another act of provocation by inaugurating the 'Arch of Macedonia' (styled after the Arc de Triomphe in Paris). This edifice cost EUR 4.4 million and is part of the 'Skopje 2014' scheme devised by the country's Prime Minister, which also included the erection of a tasteless statue of Alexander the Great.

Despite criticism from the opposition, the 'Arch of Macedonia' was inaugurated last Friday, details of the reliefs being revealed yesterday, following intense reactions in Albania.

According to the information available, the 'Arch of Macedonia', which, according to Nikola Gruevski, symbolises the 'triumph' of the establishment of the 'Macedonian' State, depicts Northern Greece, the Albanian region of Prespa and the whole western part of Bulgaria (the 'Macedonia of the Aegean' and the 'Macedonia of Pirin') as parts of 'Macedonia'.

This arch undermines the arguments put forward even by those in favour of a name containing a geographical distinction, as it shows FYROM as unlimited in geographical terms. The creator of the work herself admitted that the arch 'incorporates all the parts of Macedonia' and that its sides were also decorated with depictions of folklore, music and traditional costumes 'from Macedonia of Vardar, Macedonia of Pirin, Macedonia of the Aegean and Lesser Prespa'.

In view of this:

What measures will the Commission take to ensure that the provocative 'irredentist depictions' in the said work of 'national pride' are removed from the arch, as they offend the notion of neighbourly relations that should be demonstrated by a country seeking EU membership?

Question for written answer P-000621/12
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Provocation towards Greece in FYROM

Yesterday, the Greek Government was forced to take the serious step of protesting to the Government of FYROM, expressing its intense displeasure about incidents which took place several days ago at the carnival in the city of Vevčani. These incidents were unacceptable, provocative and offensive to Greece.

The main incident which led to a Member State making this serious gesture towards FYROM, a candidate for accession, was the burning of a Greek flag. In addition to the above, special emphasis must be laid on the fact that these unacceptable events occurred almost at the same time as negotiations under the auspices of the UN between Greece and FYROM restarted, after a long hiatus, with a view to reaching a solution to the issue of the name of this candidate country, in application of Decision 817/1993 of the UN Security Council.

In a view the above and in view of the European Parliament's approval of the resolution on the progress of EU-FYROM relations:

1. Is the Commission aware of the incidents in question?

2. Does it intend to mention the unacceptable nature of these incidents in any relevant protests to Mr Gruevski's Government?

3. Does the Commission recognise that such provocative acts and incidents undermine the prospects for success of these negotiations, which are already difficult?

4. What view does the Commission take of such acts of provocation, given that they cultivate and maintain a climate of fanaticism, intolerance and tension in such a sensitive region as the western Balkans?

Question for written answer E-000622/12
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(27 January 2012)

Subject: Burning of the Greek flag in FYROM

As part of the State-funded Vevcani carnival held on 13 and 14 January in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which was inaugurated by the Minister for Culture, a mock funeral for Greece was acted out in a frenzy of nationalist sentiment, culminating in the public dishonouring and burning of the Greek flag. This went far beyond any idea of a joke which might conceivably have been acceptable in the course of such events. Given the sensitive stage now being entered by UN negotiations between the Governments of Greece and the FYROM, does the Commission intend to make representations to the competent authorities in order to make clear that such actions not only fail to comply with the concept of good neighbourliness, the observance of which is a basic condition for any country seeking accession, but also undermine any basis for understanding with Greece?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the sensitivities on all sides concerning the issues raised by the Honourable Members, in particular the events that took place in Vevčani on which it is following the related developments closely. It is important that any concerns are addressed through dialogue between the parties concerned in a constructive spirit.

The Commission constantly monitors candidate countries' continuing fulfilment of the political criteria. Good neighbourly relations form an essential part of the country's process of moving towards the European Union.

On 23 January 2012 at the Stabilisation and Association Council between the EU and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the EU once again stressed this. The next Progress Report outlining the Commission's findings will be published in fall 2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000486/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κατάργηση της πρακτικής των απορρίψεων ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων

Η Επιτροπή προτείνει να έχει έως το 2016 εξαλειφθεί η πρακτική της απόρριψης ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων στη θάλασσα, ορθώς θεωρώντας απαράδεκτες τις απορρίψεις αυτές, ιδίως λόγω του αρνητικού αντικτύπου τους σε ό,τι αφορά την συλλογή δεδομένων και την διενέργεια αξιόπιστων επιστημονικών ερευνών που είναι ζωτικής σημασίας για την βιώσιμη εκμετάλλευση των αποθεμάτων, την παρακολούθηση των θαλάσσιων οικοσυστημάτων και την οικονομική βιωσιμότητα της αλιείας. Το μέτρο αυτό που βασίζεται κυρίως στην υποχρέωση εκφόρτωσης των αλιευμάτων που υπάγονται σε ρυθμίσεις είδους θα πρέπει, σύμφωνα με την Επιτροπή, να συμπληρωθεί από άλλα μέτρα υποστήριξης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιά είναι τα επιπλέον «μέτρα υποστήριξης» για την ενίσχυση της απαγόρευσης της απόρριψης ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων, για τα οποία γίνεται λόγος στην πρόταση της Επιτροπής για την Κοινή Αλιευτική Πολιτική;

2. Η Επιτροπή προτίθεται, πριν τεθεί ευρέως σε ισχύ το μέτρο της απαγόρευσης των απορρίψεων, να αναλάβει δράσεις για την ανάπτυξη «πιλοτικών σχεδίων» για τον εντοπισμό των τεχνικών δυσκολιών καθώς και του πιθανού κόστους της εφαρμογής ενός τέτοιου μέτρου για τον κλάδο;

3. Ποιά μέτρα σκοπεύει να λάβει η Επιτροπή για την αντιμετώπιση των διαφόρων κοινωνικο-οικονομικών επιπτώσεων που συνδέονται με την εκφόρτωση όλων των αλιευμάτων, όπως είναι τα προβλήματα αποθήκευσης στα σκάφη, η ασφάλεια και οι συνθήκες διαβίωσης και εργασίας των αλιέων;

Απάντηση της κ. Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Προβλέπονται διάφορα μέτρα στήριξης για την ενίσχυση της εφαρμογής της υποχρέωσης εκφόρτωσης που προβλέπεται στο πλαίσιο της μεταρρύθμισης της Κοινής Αλιευτικής Πολιτικής (ΚΑΛΠ).

Στόχος της απαγόρευσης των απορρίψεων είναι η παροχή κινήτρων για την επιλεκτική αλιεία με αποτέλεσμα να αποφεύγονται κατ' αρχήν τα αλιεύματα ιχθύων οι οποίοι δεν διαθέτουν το απαιτούμενο μέγεθος. Για την ενίσχυση της διάθεσης των ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων στο πλαίσιο του προτεινόμενου Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Θάλασσας και Αλιείας (ΕΤΘΑ) θα υπάρξει ποικιλία τύπων χρηματοοικονομικής ενίσχυσης, ιδίως για τη στήριξη των πλοιοκτητών που επιθυμούν να βελτιώσουν την επιλεκτικότητα των αλιευτικών εργαλείων. Για εκείνους τους τύπους αλιείας για τους οποίους κάποια ανεπιθύμητα αλιεύματα είναι αναπόφευκτα η πρόταση προβλέπει τη στήριξη για εξοπλισμό επί του σκάφους με τον οποίο θα χρησιμοποιούνται κατά τον καλύτερο δυνατό τρόπο τα ανεπιθύμητα αλιεύματα εμπορικών αποθεμάτων και θα αξιοποιούνται τα υποχρησιμοποιούμενα συστατικά των ψαριών που αλιεύονται. Προβλέπονται επίσης στο σχέδιο του ΕΤΘΑ επενδύσεις για τη βελτίωση των συνθηκών εργασίας επί του σκάφους για τους αλιείς καθώς και για εξοπλισμό υγιεινής και ασφάλειας.

Επιπλέον, το σχέδιο του ΕΤΘΑ περιλαμβάνει τη στήριξη επενδύσεων για εγκαταστάσεις εκφόρτωσης που θα συμβάλλουν στη διαχείριση και επεξεργασία των ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων καθώς και τη στήριξη οργανώσεων παραγωγών για την συμβολή στην αντιμετώπιση της διάθεσης των ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων.

Στο πλαίσιο της εκτίμησης των επιπτώσεων που διεξήχθη για την υποστήριξη της μεταρρύθμισης της ΚΑΛΠ, εξετάστηκαν οι επιπτώσεις επιβολής απαγόρευσης των απορρίψεων. Οι εν λόγω επιπτώσεις μπορούν να αντισταθμιστούν εν μέρει από βελτιώσεις της επιλεκτικότητας των εργαλείων με αποτέλεσμα να αποφεύγονται κατ' αρχήν τα αλιεύματα ιχθύων οι οποίοι δεν διαθέτουν το απαιτούμενο μέγεθος. Από την εκτίμηση των επιπτώσεων προέκυψε ότι παρόλο ότι υπήρχε βραχυπρόθεσμο κόστος αυτό αντισταθμιζόταν από το μακροπρόθεσμο όφελος λόγω αυξημένου εισοδήματος. Αναγνωρίζοντας τις εν λόγω πιθανές βραχυπρόθεσμες επιπτώσεις όσον αφορά το κόστος, υπάρχει πρόβλεψη στο πλαίσιο του ΕΤΘΑ για την ενίσχυση της συμμετοχής των αλιέων σε δοκιμές και πιλοτικά έργα ώστε να αναπτυχθούν περαιτέρω τεχνικές λύσεις με τις οποίες να εξαλειφθούν οι απορρίψεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000486/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Abolition of the practice of dumping unwanted catches

The Commission proposes that the practice of dumping unwanted catches at sea should be abolished by 2016. It rightly considers such dumping to be unacceptable, especially in view of its adverse impact on data collection and the reliability of scientific research, which is essential for the viable exploitation of stocks, the monitoring of marine ecosystems and the economic viability of fishing. According to the Commission, this measure, mainly based on the obligation to land catches subject to regulations applicable to individual species, should be supplemented by further support measures.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. What are the additional 'support measures' intended to strengthen the ban on the disposal of unwanted catches mentioned in the Commission's proposal on the common fisheries policy?

2. Before the measure banning dumping enters fully into force, does the Commission intend to take action to develop 'pilot plans' to identify technical problems as well as the possible cost to the sector of implementing such a measure?

3. What measures does the Commission intend to take to tackle the various socioeconomic consequences of landing all catches, such as the problems of storing catches aboard fishing boats, safety and living and working conditions for fishermen?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2012)

There are various support measures to assist in implementation of the landing obligation envisaged under the reform of the common fisheries policy (CFP).

The discard ban aims at incentivising selective fishing and seeks that the catches of undersized fish are avoided in the first place. To support the disposal of unwanted catches, under the proposed European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) there should be a range of financial aid available, in particular to support vessel owners in improving the selectivity of fishing gear. For those fisheries where some unwanted catches are inevitable the proposal provides for support for the equipment on board to make the best use of unwanted catches of commercial stocks and valorise underused components of fish caught. Investment to improve working conditions on board for fishermen as well as health and safety equipment is also envisaged under the draft EMFF.

In addition, the draft EMFF includes support for investments in landing sites to assist in the handling and processing of unwanted catches, as well as support for Producer Organisations to help deal with the disposal of unwanted catches.

As part of the impact assessment carried out in support of the CFP reform, the impact of moving to a discard ban was considered. These impacts can be partly offset by improvements in gear selectivity resulting in catches of undersize fish being avoided in the first place. The impact assessment showed that while there were short-term costs, these were outweighed by the longer-term benefits from increased revenues. Recognising these likely short-term cost implications, there is provision within the EMFF to provide aid for fishermen to participate in trials and pilot projects for further development of technical solutions to eliminate discarding.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000487/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Συλλογή επιστημονικών δεδομένων στο πλαίσιο της Κοινής Αλιευτικής Πολιτικής

Η καλύτερη διαχείριση του όγκου των ιχθύων που αλιεύονται από τις θάλασσες και τους ωκεανούς είναι σίγουρα μια ανάγκη. Η Επιτροπή, στην πρότασή της για τον βασικό κανονισμό για την Κοινή Αλιευτική Πολιτική, συνιστά προς τον σκοπό αυτό τον καθορισμό μιας «Μέγιστης Βιώσιμης Απόδοσης» για κάθε είδος, που ορίζεται ως ο μέγιστος όγκος που μπορεί να αλιευθεί με ασφαλή τρόπο χωρίς να τίθεται σε κίνδυνο η αναπαραγωγή και η διατήρηση των διαφόρων ειδών ιχθύων.

Μια τέτοια πολιτική δίνει εμφανώς μια θέση πρωταρχικής σημασίας στην αξιοπιστία των επιστημονικών δεδομένων, με βάση τα οποία θα καθοριστεί η Μέγιστη Βιώσιμη Απόδοση. Αυτή η αξιοπιστία των δεδομένων καθώς και η διαθεσιμότητά τους θα πρέπει να αποτελέσουν βασική προτεραιότητα της μεταρρύθμισης.

Πέραν από τις νέες υποχρεώσεις που θα έχουν τα κράτη μέλη για τη συλλογή και διάθεση των δικών τους δεδομένων, κρίνεται απαραίτητο να ενσωματωθούν πλήρως οι ίδιοι οι αλιείς στη διαδικασία, έτσι ώστε μαζί με τους επιστήμονες να μπορούν να τροφοδοτούν την ανάλυση των δεδομένων και να αναπτύσσουν ενεργές εταιρικές σχέσεις με τον τομέα της έρευνας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με ποιούς συγκεκριμένους τρόπους προτίθεται να εντάξει τους αλιείς στην διαδικασία συλλογής, επεξεργασίας και ανάλυσης δεδομένων για τον αξιόπιστο καθορισμό της Μέγιστης Βιώσιμης Απόδοσης;

2. Τι προτείνει συγκεκριμένα η Επιτροπή για να βελτιωθεί η αξιοπιστία και η διαθεσιμότητα των επιστημονικών δεδομένων πάνω στα οποία θα καθοριστεί η Μέγιστη Βιώσιμη Απόδοση;

3. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να προβεί στην δημιουργία ενός πανευρωπαϊκού κέντρου συλλογής δεδομένων, καθώς θα ήταν εκ των ων ουκ άνευ για μια αποτελεσματική Κοινή Αλιευτική Πολιτική να μπορεί να βασίζεται σε ποιοτικά επιστημονικά δεδομένα και να συντονίζονται η συλλογή και η ανάλυση των δεδομένων κάθε κράτους μέλους;

Απάντηση της κ. Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Οι επιστημονικές εκτιμήσεις εξαρτώνται ιδιαίτερα από τις αναφορές αλιευμάτων που υποβάλλουν οι αλιείς. Οι εν λόγω αναφορές βελτιώνουν σημαντικά την ποιότητα και την κάλυψη των εκτιμήσεων εξασφαλίζοντας ότι τα αλιεύματα και οι απορρίψεις αναφέρονται ορθά στις εθνικές αρχές. Κατά συνέπεια, οι αλιείς εμπλέκονται ήδη στενά στη συλλογή στοιχείων. Συμμετέχουν επίσης τακτικά σε έργα στο πλαίσιο των προγραμμάτων-πλαισίων της ΕΕ για την έρευνα. Η προώθηση των εταιρικών σχέσεων επιστήμης-βιομηχανίας περιλαμβάνεται επίσης στην πρόταση για το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Θάλασσας και Αλιείας (ΕΤΘΑ) ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή έχει δρομολογήσει διαδικασία διαβούλευσης με επιστήμονες και τελικούς χρήστες των επιστημονικών στοιχείων με στόχο την κατάρτιση του νέου πλαισίου συλλογής δεδομένων που θα αρχίσει να ισχύει από την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2014. Πρόθεση είναι να δοθεί ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στη συλλογή δεδομένων για μικτούς τύπους αλιείας και να συμπεριληφθούν οι τελευταίες, σύγχρονες μέθοδοι για την ελαχιστοποίηση της μεροληψίας και αύξηση της αξιοπιστίας των δεδομένων. Προκειμένου να βελτιωθεί η συλλογή και η αξιοπιστία των στοιχείων προτείνεται στο πλαίσιο του νέου ΕΤΘΑ η εισαγωγή της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης για την υποστήριξη της συλλογής δεδομένων. Με τον τρόπο αυτό, τα κράτη μέλη θα διαχειρίζονται τη χρηματοδότηση και θα συμπεριλάβουν σε αυτήν τα ίδια επταετή πολυετή προγράμματα, κάτι που θα συμβάλλει επίσης στη βελτίωση της οικονομικής σταθερότητας των επιστημόνων που εκτελούν τις εργασίες συλλογής των δεδομένων.

Η πρόταση για το ΕΤΘΑ περιλαμβάνει μέτρα βελτίωσης της περιφερειακής συνεργασίας συμπεριλαμβανομένης της δημιουργίας περιφερειακών βάσεων δεδομένων μέσω της συνεργασίας δύο ή περισσότερων κρατών μελών. Ένα σχετικό έργο δοκιμαστικής εφαρμογής από τα κράτη μέλη της Βόρειας θάλασσας και της Βαλτικής υποστηρίζεται ήδη σήμερα. Η εν λόγω βάση δεδομένων θα λειτουργήσει κατά το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2012.

([1]) COM(2011)804 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000487/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Collecting scientific data under the common fisheries policy

It is clearly necessary to manage more effectively the volume sea and ocean fish catches. The Commission proposal for a basic regulation on the common fisheries policy accordingly calls for a 'maximum sustainable yield' to be determined for each species; this is defined as the maximum volume that can be safely caught, without endangering the reproduction and preservation of the various species of fish.

Such a policy clearly means that the reliability of scientific data, on the basis of which the maximum sustainable yield will be determined, assumes prime importance. The availability of such data should accordingly be a fundamental priority of the reform.

In addition to the new obligations assumed by the Member States regarding the collection and supply of their own data, it is considered necessary to ensure the full inclusion of fishermen themselves, so that they, together with scientists, can provide data for analysis and cooperate actively in research.

In view of this:

1. In what specific ways does the Commission intend to involve fishermen in data collection, processing and analysis, so as to reliably determine maximum sustainable yield?

2. What specific measures are proposed by the Commission with a view to improving the reliability and the availability of the scientific data on the basis of which the maximum sustainable yield will be determined?

3. Does the Commission intend to establish a pan-European data collection centre, as it would be vitally important for an efficient common fisheries policy based on qualitative scientific data and for the coordination of data collection and analysis by each Member State?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

Scientific assessments depend heavily on catch reports made by fishermen. These reports greatly improve the quality and coverage of assessments by ensuring that catches and discards are correctly reported to national authorities. Fishermen are therefore already closely involved in data collection. They are also regularly involved in projects under the EU framework programmes for research. The promotion of science-industry partnerships is also included in the proposed European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) ([1]).

The Commission has started a consultation process with scientists and end-users of scientific data in view of preparing the new data collection framework which will come into force on 1 January 2014. The intention is to put specific emphasis on the collection of data on mixed fisheries and include the latest, state of the art, methods to minimise bias and increase reliability of data. In order to improve the collection and reliability of data, it is proposed under the new EMFF to introduce shared management for support to data collection. As such, the Member States will manage the funding and include it in their seven-year multi-annual programmes, which will also help improve the financial stability for the scientists carrying out the data collection tasks.

The EMFF proposal contains measures to improve regional cooperation including the establishment of regional databases through cooperation by two or more Member States. A respective pilot project by North Sea and Baltic Sea Member States is already supported today. This database will become operational in the first quarter of 2012.

([1]) COM(2011) 804 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000488/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μετατροπή ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων σε ζωοτροφές και ιχθυάλευρα

Η Επιτροπή προτείνει επίσης να έχει εξαλειφθεί μέχρι το 2016 η πρακτική της απόρριψης ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων στη θάλασσα. Το μέτρο αυτό βασίζεται κυρίως στην υποχρέωση εκφόρτωσης των αλιευμάτων που υπάγονται σε ρυθμίσεις είδους και στην μετατροπή των ανεπιθύμητων αποθεμάτων, που βρίσκονται κάτω από το ελάχιστο μέγεθος, σε ιχθυάλευρα και ζωοτροφές.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποιες είναι οι εγγυήσεις που παρέχονται για την προστασία της υγείας του καταναλωτή στην περίπτωση της μετατροπής των ανεπιθύμητων αλιευμάτων, που βρίσκονται κάτω από το ελάχιστο μέγεθος, σε ιχθυάλευρα και ζωοτροφές; Ιδιαίτερα σε περιοχές όπως η Μεσόγειος, όπου οι υψηλές θερμοκρασίες και η μεγάλη παρουσία αλιείας μικρής κλίμακας καθιστούν το μέτρο αυτό δυσχερές, ποιά μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει η Επιτροπή για να ελέγχεται η χρήση των αλεύρων ιδίως, δε αυτών που προορίζονται για κλάδους άλλους από αυτόν της υδατοκαλλιέργειας;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η πρόταση της Επιτροπής για μεταρρύθμιση της ΚΑλΠ, η οποία αποτελεί σήμερα αντικείμενο διαβούλευσης στο Συμβούλιο και στο Κοινοβούλιο, προβλέπει ότι τα ψάρια τα οποία δεν επιβιώνουν ύστερα από την ελευθέρωσή τους και τα οποία δεν έχουν το απαιτούμενο μέγεθος μπορούν να πωλούνται μόνον ως ιχθυάλευρο ή για την παραγωγή τροφών για ζώα συντροφιάς.

Ο κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1069/2009 ([1]) του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου καθώς και ο εκτελεστικός κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 142/2011 της Επιτροπή περιλαμβάνουν υγειονομικούς κανόνες για ζωικά υποπροϊόντα και παράγωγα προϊόντα που δεν προορίζονται για κατανάλωση από τον άνθρωπο ([2]).

Βάσει των διατάξεων της πρότασης για τη μεταρρύθμιση της ΚΑλΠ και των προαναφερόμενων κανόνων που περιλαμβάνουν προδιαγραφές έγκρισης και παρασκευής τα υλικά της κατηγορίας 3, όπως είναι τα ανεπιθύμητα αλιεύματα ψαριών θα μπορούσαν στο μέλλον να χρησιμοποιούνται για την παραγωγή ιχθυαλεύρων και ιχθυελαίου και τα εν λόγω προϊόντα θα μπορούσαν να χρησιμοποιούνται σε ζωοτροφές για ζώα παραγωγής τροφίμων και για ζώα συντροφιάς. Η ευθύνη για την επιβολή των κανόνων που αφορούν την ασφάλεια των τροφίμων και των ζωοτροφών βαραίνει τα κράτη μέλη, από τα οποία απαιτείται η θέσπιση ενός ολοκληρωμένου συστήματος επίσημων ελέγχων για την εξακρίβωση της τήρησης της νομοθεσίας που διέπει τα τρόφιμα.

Επιπλέον, η σάρκα ψαριών και οι ζωοτροφές πρέπει να τηρούν τις διατάξεις του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 183/2005 Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 12ης Ιανουαρίου 2005 περί καθορισμού των απαιτήσεων για την υγιεινή των ζωοτροφών ([3]).

([1]) ΕΕ L 300 της 14.11.2009, σ. 1.
([2]) ΕΕ L 54 της 26.2.2011, σ. 1.
([3]) ΕΕ L 35 της 8.2.2005, σ. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000488/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Converting unwanted fish catches into animal feed and fishmeal

Commission proposals regarding fisheries include phasing out the practice of discarding unwanted catches into the sea by 2016. Basically it would be compulsory to land catches, which would be subject to species-by-species provisions, and rejected fish below the minimum size would be processed into fishmeal and animal feed.

Will the Commission answer the following:

What consumer health guarantees are provided regarding the processing of discarded catches below the minimum size into fishmeal and animal feed? In areas such as the Mediterranean in particular, where high temperatures and the significant presence of small-scale fishing make this measure difficult to implement, what measures does the Commission intend to take to control the use of meal — especially where it is intended for sectors other than aquaculture?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The CFP reform proposal from the Commission, now under discussion in Council and Parliament, envisages that fish which does not survive following release and which is undersized can only be sold for fish meal or pet food production.

European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 ([1]) lays down health rules as regards animal by-products not intended for human consumption, together with the Commission implementing Regulation (EC) No 142/2011 ([2]).

Under the provisions of the CFP reform proposal and the above rules which include approval and manufacturing requirements, Category C material, such as unwanted catches of fish could in the future be used for fish meal and fish oil production and these products could be utilized in feeds for food producing animals and pets. Responsibility for enforcing food and feed safety rules lies with the Member States, which are required to establish a comprehensive system of official controls to verify compliance with food law.

In addition, fish meat and animal feed have to comply with the provisions in Regulation (EC) No 183/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 January 2005 laying down requirements for feed hygiene ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 54, 26.2.2011, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L 35, 8.2.2005, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000489/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Περιφερειοποίηση

Η πρόταση της Επιτροπής για την μεταρρύθμιση της Κοινής Αλιευτικής Πολιτικής έχει ως σκοπό να θέσει σε εφαρμογή ένα αποτελεσματικό σύστημα πολυεπίπεδης διακυβέρνησης, προσφέροντας στις περιφέρειες την δυνατότητα να συμμετέχουν στον σχεδιασμό και την εφαρμογή της ΚΑΠ.

Η πρόταση της Επιτροπής επιδιώκει να καθιερώσει την περιφερειοποίηση ως ένα από τα κύρια εργαλεία της νέας διακυβέρνησης για να ανταποκριθεί επαρκώς στις ανάγκες της κάθε θαλάσσιας λεκάνης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς προτίθεται να ενισχύσει τις συνέργειες μεταξύ των διαφόρων επιπέδων διακυβέρνησης και να ενθαρρύνει τα κράτη μέλη με διαφορετικές πολιτικές να συνεργαστούν και να ανταλλάσσουν βέλτιστες πρακτικές;

2. Σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί η Επιτροπή ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί η τήρηση σε τοπικό και σε περιφερειακό επίπεδο των κανόνων που θεσπίζονται σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο;

Απάντηση της κ. Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Η μεταρρύθμιση της ΚΑΛΠ αποσκοπεί στην ενίσχυση των πτυχών της διακυβέρνησης μέσω προσέγγισης ανά περιφέρειες για την καλύτερη προσαρμογή της ΚΑΛΠ στις ιδιαιτερότητες των διάφορων θαλάσσιων λεκανών της ΕΕ.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο τα πολυετή σχέδια διατήρησης των ιχθυαποθεμάτων θα δώσουν στα κράτη μέλη μιας θαλάσσιας λεκάνης τη δυνατότητα να καθορίζουν εθνικά μέτρα κοινής αποδοχής προκειμένου να εφαρμοστεί το σχέδιο στην πράξη. θα απαιτηθεί η συμμετοχή των αλιέων, άλλων ενδιαφερόμενων καθώς και των γνωμοδοτικών συμβουλίων για την κατάρτιση μέτρων με τα οποία θα είναι δυνατή η βέλτιστη επίτευξη των στόχων του πολυετούς σχεδίου σε επίπεδο θαλάσσιας λεκάνης. Ο περιφερειακός χαρακτήρας μπορεί να στηριχτεί σε υφιστάμενες μορφές συνεργασίας μεταξύ κρατών μελών όπως το BaltFish Forum στην Βαλτική Θάλασσα ή η ομάδα Scheveningen στην Βόρειο Θάλασσα που αποτελούν αποτελεσματικούς μηχανισμούς συνεργασίας. Παρόμοιοι τύποι μηχανισμών συνεργασίας μπορούν να αναπτυχθούν και σε άλλες θαλάσσιες λεκάνες. Το ίδιο μπορεί να γίνει και με έναν κανονισμό-πλαίσιο για τεχνικά μέτρα που θα εγκριθεί με τη συνήθη νομοθετική διαδικασία ενώ στη συνέχεια τα κράτη μέλη της θαλάσσιας λεκάνης θα πρέπει να λάβουν μέτρα εφαρμογής αφού τα καταρτίσουν σε συνεργασία με τα γνωμοδοτικά συμβούλια και τους ενδιαφερόμενους.

Η πρόταση του νέου βασικού κανονισμού στηρίζεται στους κανόνες του συστήματος ελέγχου της αλιείας, σε βασικά στοιχεία του καθεστώτος ελέγχου και επιβολής του νόμου της Ένωσης ([1]), επειδή η επιτυχία της μεταρρυθμισμένης ΚΑΛΠ εξαρτάται από τη συμμόρφωση των επιχειρήσεων και από την αποτελεσματική επιβολή από τις εθνικές αρχές. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή προτείνει υποχρεώσεις παρακολούθησης και ελέγχου για πλήρως τεκμηριωμένη αλιεία, καθώς και πιλοτικά έργα για νέες τεχνολογίες ελέγχου της αλιείας που συμβάλλουν στη βιώσιμη αλιεία. Επιπροσθέτως, με την πρόταση εισάγεται η αρχή του καθορισμού προϋποθέσεων, σύμφωνα με την οποία η διαθεσιμότητα ορισμένων χρηματοοικονομικών και άλλων πόρων για τα κράτη μέλη ή για μεμονωμένες επιχειρήσεις εξαρτάται από τη συμμόρφωση με τους κανόνες της ΚΑΛΠ.

([1]) ΕΕ L 343 της 22.12.2009, σ. 1 και ΕΕ L 286 της 29.10.2008, σ. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000489/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Regionalisation

The Commission's proposed reform of the common fisheries policy seeks to introduce effective multi-level governance, enabling the regions to participate in the formulation and implementation of the CFP.

The Commission's proposal aims to establish regionalisation as one of the main tools of the new governance in order to fully address the needs of each sea basin.

In view of this:

1. How does the Commission intend to strengthen synergies between various governance levels and encourage Member States with differing policies to collaborate and share best practices?

2. What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the rules adopted at European level are complied with at local and regional level?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

The reform of the CFP aims at strengthening the governance aspect through a regionalised approach, to better adapt the CFP to the specificities of the different sea-basins in the EU.

In this context, multiannual plans for the conservation of fish stocks will empower Member States of a sea basin to set commonly agreed national measures to make the plan operational. The involvement of fishermen, other stakeholders as well as Advisory Councils will be necessary to design the measures that can best achieve the objectives of the multiannual plan at sea basin level. Regionalisation can build on existing types of cooperation among Member States such as Baltfish in the Baltic Sea or the Scheveningen Group in the North Sea, which provide effective cooperation mechanisms. Similar types of cooperation mechanisms could be developed in other sea basins. The same would be done with a framework technical measures regulation which is to be decided in the ordinary legislative procedure and implementing measures then need to be decided by the Member States of a seabasin after designing them in cooperation with Advisory Councils and stakeholders.

The proposal for a new Basic Regulation builds upon the rules of the fisheries control system, basic elements for the Union control and enforcement regime ([1]), as the success of the reformed CFP depends on compliance by operators and effective enforcement by national authorities. Additionally, the Commission proposes monitoring and control obligations for fully documented fishery, as well as pilot projects on new fisheries control technologies that contribute to sustainable fishing. Additionally, the proposal introduces the principle of conditionality, according to which the availability of certain financial or other resources for either the Member States or individual operators is linked to compliance with CFP rules.

([1]) OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 1 and OJ L 286, 29.10.2008, p. 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000490/12
an die Kommission
Thomas Händel (GUE/NGL)
(23. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Korruptionsfälle im Verlauf von Privatisierungen in Serbien

1. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass im Frühjahr/Sommer 2011 von EU-Institutionen ein Brief an die serbischen Regierungsorgane gesandt wurde, um die Untersuchung von Privatisierungen in Serbien zu fordern?

2. Kann dieser Brief den Abgeordneten des EU-Parlaments und der Öffentlichkeit zur Verfügung gestellt werden?

3. Wie beurteilt die Kommission den Privatisierungsprozess in Serbien?

4. Wie beurteilt die Kommission das Vorgehen der serbischen Regierungs- und Justizorgane bei der Aufklärung von Korruptionsfällen im Verlauf des Privatisierungsprozesses in Serbien?

5. In welcher Form haben die serbischen Regierungs- und Justizorgane auf den Brief der Kommission zur Untersuchung der Privatisierungen reagiert?

6. Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob und in welcher Form die serbischen Justizorgane illegale Praktiken im Verlauf von Privatisierungen untersuchen? Hält die EU-Kommission diese Anstrengungen für ausreichend?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(17. Februar 2012)

Die Kommission verfolgt den Privatisierungsprozess in Serbien aufmerksam und steht mit den serbischen Behörden aller Ebenen in regelmäßigem Kontakt. Der Privatisierungsprozess begann 2002 mit dem Verkauf einer Reihe von Staatsunternehmen, verlor dann aber 2009 mit der Wirtschaftskrise insgesamt an Schwung. Korruption im Privatisierungsprozess ist ein Problem, das immer beklagt wird, so auch in der Stellungnahme von 2011 zum Antrag Serbiens auf Beitritt zur EU und im Fortschrittsbericht über Serbien von 2010.

Über die Einleitung strafrechtlicher Ermittlungen entscheidet der Staat. Die Kommission hat allerdings wiederholt, auch im Rahmen der jährlichen Erweiterungspakete, hervorgehoben, dass die geringe Zahl der strafrechtlichen Untersuchungen und rechtskräftigen Verurteilungen insbesondere in Korruptionsfällen auf höchster Ebene ein ernstes Problem darstellt.

Laut Stellungnahme hat der serbische Sonderstaatsanwalt für organisierte Kriminalität und Korruption seine Tätigkeit erheblich ausgeweitet und eine Reihe von Ermittlungen zu Korruptionsfällen eingeleitet. Dazu gehören auch Korruptionsvorwürfe im Zusammenhang mit der Privatisierung. Die Kommission verfolgt die Entwicklungen in diesem Bereich, denn sie sind ein wichtiger Schritt im Aufbau einer soliden Erfolgsbilanz in der Korruptionsbekämpfung.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000490/12
to the Commission
Thomas Händel (GUE/NGL)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Cases of corruption during privatisations in Serbia

1. Can the Commission confirm that EU institutions sent the Serbian Government a letter in spring/summer 2011 calling for privatisations in Serbia to be investigated?

2. Can copies of this letter be made available to the Members of the European Parliament and to the general public?

3. What is the Commission's assessment of the privatisation process in Serbia?

4. What is the Commission's assessment of the approach taken by the Serbian Government and judicial authorities in investigating alleged cases of corruption during the privatisation process in Serbia?

5. How have the Serbian Government and judicial authorities responded to the Commission's letter concerning the investigation of privatisations?

6. Does the Commission know whether the Serbian judicial authorities are investigating illegal practices employed during privatisations and, if they are, what form these investigations are taking? Does the Commission regard these efforts as sufficient?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2012)

The Commission closely monitors the privatisation progress in Serbia and is in regular contact with the Serbian authorities at all level. The privatisation process started in 2002 with the sale of a number of state enterprises but, to a large extent, lost momentum in 2009 during the economic crisis. Corruption in the privatisation process has constantly been reported as an area of concern, for example in the 2011 Opinion on Serbia's application for EU membership and in the 2010 Progress Report on Serbia.

States are independent in launching their criminal investigations. However, the Commission, on numerous occasions, including the annual enlargement packages, highlighted the low number of criminal investigations and final convictions, in particular in high level corruption cases, as a significant problem.

As reported in the opinion, since 2011 the Serbian special prosecutor for organised crime and corruption has significantly increased its activities and launched a number of investigations in corruption cases. These include allegations in relation to privatisation. The Commission monitors progress in this respect, which will be a key step in building up a solid track record in fighting corruption.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000491/12
Tarybai
Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE)
(2012 m. sausio 24 d.)

Tema: Biometrinės pasų kontrolės sistemos taikymo efektyvumas

Lietuvoje įgyvendinant Tarybos reglamentą (EB) Nr. 2252/2004 pereinama prie biometrinės pasų kontrolės, t. y. pasai išduodami nuskaičius dešinės ir kairės rankų dviejų pirštų atspaudus. Tačiau šis reglamentas riboja asmens dokumentų biometrinių duomenų panaudojimą, kadangi 4 straipsnio 3 punkte nustatyta, kad „pagal šį reglamentą biometrinės savybės pasuose ir kelionės dokumentuose naudojamos tik patikrinti dokumento autentiškumą ir savininko asmens tapatybę pagal tiesiogiai prieinamas palyginamas savybes“.

Kaip Taryba vertina galimybę sujungti į vieną sistemą duomenų registrus (gyventojų, policijos ieškomų, neatpažintų palaikų, įtariamųjų, teistų asmenų ir kt.) bei sistemas (biometrinę pasų kontrolės sistemą), kuriose kaupiami, apdorojami ir sisteminami rankų pirštų antspaudai, kad būtų įmanoma atlikti palyginimo bei kitus reikalingus veiksmus, siekiant efektyvesnės nusikalstamų veikų kontrolės ir prevencijos?

Ar Taryba nemano, jog ši sistemų ir registrų sąveika padėtų efektyviau identifikuoti policijos ieškomus, įtariamus ir kaltinamus asmenis?

Atsakymas
(2012 m. kovo 12 d.)

Gerbiamosios Parlamento narės prašoma susipažinti su Tarybos atsakymu į raštu pateiktą klausimą E-012677/2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000491/12
to the Council
Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: The effectiveness of the application of the system of biometric passport controls

Lithuanian is moving over to a system of biometric passports controls, i.e. passports containing a scan of two fingerprints from the left and right hands, for the purposes of implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004. However, this regulation restricts the use of the biometric data on personal documents given that Article 4(3) stipulates that 'for the purpose of this regulation, the biometric features in passports and travel documents shall only be used for verifying the authenticity of the document and the identity of the holder by means of directly available comparable features'.

What is the Council's view concerning the possibility of combining various data records (of population, persons sought by the police, unidentified remains, suspects, convicted persons) and systems (the system of biometric passport controls) involving the storage, processing and filing of fingerprints in one system so that it is possible to make a comparison and perform other necessary actions in order to ensure more effective crime control and prevention?

Does the Council not think that merging these systems and records would help identify persons sought by the police or suspected or accused of crimes more effectively?

Reply
(12 March 2012)

The Honourable Member should refer to the Council's reply to Written Question E-012677/2011.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000493/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Edward McMillan-Scott (ALDE) en Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ALDE)
(26 januari 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Russisch schip met wapens voor het Syrische regime bereikt Syrië via Cyprus

Op 12 januari 2012 werd bericht dat een Russisch schip, de Chariot, met naar verluidt wapens en/of munitie voor de regering van president Bashar Al-Assad aan boord, Syrië bereikt had na ter hoogte van Limassol te zijn geïnspecteerd in de Cypriotische wateren ([1]). Het schip dat op weg was naar de Syrische haven Latakia, werd toen naar verluidt vanwege zijn verdachte lading door de Cypriotische douane verboden om zijn reis voort te zetten ([2]). Hoewel de Cypriotische douaneautoriteiten vier van de op het schip aanwezige containers niet wisten te openen, kwamen zij tot de slotsom dat deze een „gevaarlijke lading" bevatten, oftewel wapens en munitie. Het Cypriotisch Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken gaf het schip evenwel toestemming verder te varen nadat de bemanning van het schip en de Russische eigenaren ervan „de verzekering hadden gegeven" dat het niet naar Syrië zou doorstomen. Het schip schijnt begin december 2011 uit St. Petersburg te zijn vertrokken.

1. Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter (HV/VV) door de Cypriotische (douane-)autoriteiten op de hoogte gesteld van de aankomst van het schip in de Cypriotische wateren? Zo ja, kan de HV/VV mededelen welke instructies of advies er aan de Cypriotische autoriteiten gegeven is?

2. Kan de HV/VV aangeven of de Cypriotische autoriteiten gehandeld hebben overeenkomstig de huidige communautaire wetgeving, met name die ten aanzien van de beperkende maatregelen tegen Syrië zoals neergelegd in artikel 2 van de Verordening van de Raad (EU) nr. 442/2011?

3. Is de HV/VV bereid om met spoed onderzoek in te stellen naar deze zaak, met name ten aanzien van de handelswijze van de Cypriotische autoriteiten, teneinde te kunnen beoordelen of er strafmaatregelen tegen hen getroffen moeten worden? Zo niet, waarom niet?

4. Heeft de HV/VV contact gezocht met de Russische autoriteiten om haar diepe zorgen over dit incident kenbaar te maken en hen aan te sporen het Al-Assad-regime niet te steunen bij de brute onderdrukking van haar burgers? Zo niet, waarom niet?

5. Is de HV/VV het met mij eens dat dit incident het vermogen en de doeltreffendheid van de EU ten aanzien van de tenuitvoerlegging en handhaving van haar eigen wetgeving ernstig ondermijnt?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(7 mei 2012)

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is op de hoogte van de verslagen van de verklaring van het Cypriotisch ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken van 11 januari 2012 over het schip „The Chariot". Los van de verklaring van het Cypriotisch ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken waarin wordt gesteld dat de beperkende maatregelen van de EU niet zijn geschonden, heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter de beschikbare gegevens onderzocht om ze te beoordelen in het licht van het betreffende besluit van het gemeenschappelijk buitenlands en veiligheidsbeleid (GBVB) en de betreffende verordening van de Raad. Op grond van de op dit ogenblik beschikbare gegevens, is de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter van mening dat niet kan worden geconcludeerd dat Cyprus zijn verplichtingen die voortvloeien uit de toepasselijke EU-rechtsinstrumenten, heeft geschonden.

Hoe dan ook blijft de EU betrokken bij de zaak. Deze kwestie is met Cyprus aan de orde gesteld en er zal een besluit worden genomen over de vraag of er al dan niet verdere stappen moeten worden ondernomen. Daarnaast gaat de Commissie verder met de juridische beoordeling van het incident.

Wat Rusland betreft, heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter de kwestie van het beleid van dit land ten opzichte van het Syrische regime in de afgelopen weken verschillende keren aan de orde gesteld met de Russische regering.

([1]) http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/turkey-says-russian-ship-allegedly-carrying-munitions-reached-syria-after-leaving cyprus/2012/01/12/gIQAhZ3HtP_story.html
([2]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan.

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter benadrukt dat de EU groot belang hecht aan de eerbiediging van de beperkende maatregelen en tekortkomingen op dit gebied zeer ernstig zou nemen. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is echter ook van mening dat dit voorval in geen geval aanleiding moet geven tot een algemene invraagstelling van de capaciteit en de effectiviteit van de EU bij de tenuitvoerlegging en handhaving van de eigen wetgeving.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000493/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Edward McMillan-Scott (ALDE) and Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ALDE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Russian ship carrying arms for Syrian regime reaching Syria through Cyprus

On 12 January 2012 it was reported that a Russian ship, the 'Chariot', allegedly carrying arms and/or munitions destined for the government of President Bashar Al-Assad, had reached Syria after having been inspected in Cypriot waters off Limassol ([1]). The ship, destined for the Syrian port city of Latakia, was reportedly prevented by Cypriot customs from continuing its journey because of its suspected cargo ([2]). Although Cypriot custom officials were unable to open four containers on the ship, it was concluded they contained 'dangerous cargo' — i.e. arms and munitions. The Cypriot Foreign Ministry confirmed that the ship was allowed to continue its journey after the crew of the ship and its Russian owners 'provided assurances' that it would not head for Syria. The ship is believed to have set off from St Petersburg in early December 2011.

1. Was the Vice-President/High Representative notified by the Cypriot (customs) authorities of the arrival of the ship in Cypriot waters? If so, can the HR/VP comment on what instructions or advice were communicated to the Cypriot authorities?

2. Can the Vice-President/High Representative confirm that the Cypriot authorities acted in compliance with EU legislation currently in force, in particular the restrictive measures against Syria, as laid down in Article 2 of Council Regulation (EU) No 442/2011?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative willing to conduct an urgent investigation into this matter, in particular regarding the conduct of the Cypriot authorities, with the aim of deciding whether punitive measures are appropriate? If not, why not?

4. Has the Vice-President/High Representative been in contact with the Russian authorities to express her deep concern about this incident and to urge them not to support the Al-Assad regime in its brutal crackdown on its citizens? If not, why not?

5. Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that this incident seriously undermines the EU's capabilities and effectiveness in implementing and enforcing its own legislation?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the reports of the statement of the Cypriot Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of 11 January 2012 in relation to the ship *The Chariot*. Notwithstanding the statement by the Cyprus MFA that EU restrictions have not been violated, her services have examined the available facts to assess them in relation to elements of the relevant Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) Decision and Council Regulation. On the basis of the facts available at this stage, it is the HR/VP's view that it cannot be concluded that Cyprus has violated its obligations under the applicable EU legal instruments.

However, the EU remains concerned by the matter. This issue has been raised with Cyprus and a decision will be taken as to whether or not any further steps may be appropriate. In addition, the Commission is continuing its legal assessment of this incident.

With regard to Russia, the issue of Russia's policy towards the Syrian regime has been raised by the HR/VP with the Russian Government on a number of occasions in recent weeks.

The HR/VP underlines that the EU places considerable emphasis on ensuring respect for its restrictive measures and would consider any non-compliance as deeply disturbing. The HR/VP is, however, also of the opinion that this occurrence is in no way reason to question in general terms the EU's capabilities and effectiveness in implementing and enforcing its own legislation.

([1]) http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/turkey-says-russian-ship-allegedly-carrying-munitions-reached-syria-after-leaving cyprus/2012/01/12/gIQAhZ3HtP_story.html
([2]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000494/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(24 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Pericoloso inquinamento delle aree coltivate con prodotti agroalimentari, causa eccessiva vicinanza a impianti altamente inquinanti (inceneritori, cementifici, ecc.)

L'Unione europea storicamente si è data l'obiettivo di tutelare il diritto alla salute e all'informazione dei consumatori europei.

Coerentemente, nel corso degli anni ha legiferato in materie come la trasparenza dei dati relativi agli ingredienti dei prodotti alimentari (regolamento (UE) n. 1130/2011; regolamento (UE) n. 1161/2011 e altri), la salubrità dei componenti utilizzati per il loro confezionamento (regolamento (UE) n. 1282/2011 e altri), il tenore massimo di inquinanti presenti nei prodotti alimentari (regolamento (UE) n. 1259/2011; regolamento (UE) n. 1258/2011 e altri), la tracciabilità della partita delle derrate alimentari (direttiva 2011/91/UE) e la provenienza dei prodotti agroalimentari.

In alcune regioni d'Europa però, dove è più significativo lo sviluppo industriale (come ad esempio nel Nord-Est in Italia), è sempre più frequente riscontrare situazioni in cui in prossimità di aree coltivate con prodotti agroalimentari che possano fregiarsi dei marchi di qualità (DOC, DOP, IGP, ecc) sorgono stabilimenti industriali quali, ad esempio: impianti di incenerimento di rifiuti, cementifici, fonderie di metalli, impianti nucleari per la produzione di energia, impianti per la produzione di energia alimentati a carbone o a pet-coke, con evidenti rischi di contaminazione per le colture o produzioni alimentari limitrofe.

1. Secondo la Commissione tali situazioni sono atte di fatto a distorcere le informazioni fornite ai consumatori relativamente all'effettiva salubrità dei prodotti?

2. In particolare, ritiene la Commissione opportuno che l'EFSA, l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare, promuova uno studio sugli effetti che le particelle emesse dagli impianti altamente inquinanti come inceneritori e cementifici hanno sulle colture dei campi agricoli vicini a queste strutture e che sia assolutamente necessario stabilire rigorosi criteri circa le distanze che devono essere rispettate tra detti impianti altamente inquinanti e le aree coltivate con prodotti agroalimentari, in particolare se prodotti di qualità (DOC, DOP, IGP, ecc.) e se destinati a determinate categorie di consumatori vulnerabili?

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(2 marzo 2012)

L'attività dei principali impianti industriali dell'UE è disciplinata dalla direttiva 2008/1/CE sulla prevenzione e la riduzione integrate dell'inquinamento ([1]). La direttiva dispone che gli impianti che rientrano nel suo ambito di applicazione debbano operare conformemente ad autorizzazioni che includono valori limite di emissione basati sulle migliori tecniche disponibili (le cosiddette BAT, Best Available Techniques), intese a evitare oppure, ove ciò sia impossibile, a ridurre globalmente le emissioni e l'impatto sull'ambiente nel suo complesso. La direttiva in questione è affiancata da altre direttive che fissano requisiti minimi in tutta l'UE per alcune attività inquinanti, tra cui la direttiva 2000/76/CE sull'incenerimento dei rifiuti ([2]), e la direttiva 2001/80/CE concernente la limitazione delle emissioni nell'atmosfera di taluni inquinanti originati dai grandi impianti di combustione ([3]). Tali direttive sono state fuse nella nuova direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali ([4]) che rafforza ulteriormente l'applicazione delle BAT alle attività industriali.

Non esistono criteri relativi alle distanze da rispettare tra gli impianti industriali e le zone di produzione dei prodotti alimentari poiché la normativa comunitaria definisce il tenore massimo dei contaminanti nei prodotti stessi ([5]). Il regolamento prevede il tenore massimo per i diversi tipi di contaminanti (ad esempio: metalli pesanti, PCB e diossine). La fissazione dei tenori massimi assicura che i cittadini siano tutelati, poiché i prodotti che superano tali limiti non possono essere immessi sul mercato. Garantisce inoltre che negli alimenti si consideri la presenza di contaminanti di

([1]) GU L 24 del 29.1.2008.
([2]) GU L 332 del 28.12.2000.
([3]) GU L 309 del 27.11.2001.
([4]) GU L 334 del 17.12.2010.
([5]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1881/2006 della Commissione, del 19 dicembre 2006, che definisce i tenori massimi di alcuni contaminanti nei prodotti alimentari, GU L 364 del 20.12.2006.

qualsiasi origine, poiché l'attività industriale è soltanto una delle fonti possibili. I tenori massimi sono fissati in base a valutazioni del rischio effettuate dall'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare e le competenti autorità degli Stati membri ne garantiscono il rispetto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000494/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Dangerous pollution of areas cultivated with agri-foodstuffs, caused by excessive proximity to highly polluting facilities (incinerators, cement works, etc.)

The European Union has traditionally given itself the objective of protecting the right of European consumers to health and to information.

Over the course of the years, it has consistently legislated in areas such as transparency of data relating to ingredients in foodstuffs (Regulation (EU) No 1130/2011; Regulation (EU) No 1161/2011 and others), the healthiness of substances used in the packing of foodstuffs (Regulation (EU) No 1282/2011 and others), the maximum content of pollutants present in foodstuffs (Regulation (EU) No 1259/2011; Regulation (EU) No 1258/2011 and others), the traceability of the lot to which the foodstuffs belong (Directive 2011/91/EU) and the origin of foodstuffs.

However, in some regions of Europe where there is more significant industrial development (such as in the North-East of Italy), it is increasingly common for industrial plants, such as waste incineration plants, cement works, metal foundries, nuclear electrical power plants and energy production facilities powered by coal or petroleum coke to be located in the vicinity of areas cultivated for agri-foodstuffs which can boast quality marks (DOC, DOP, IGP, etc.), with the obvious risk of contamination for the foodstuffs cultivated or produced nearby.

1. Does the Commission consider that such situations are likely to distort the information supplied to consumers regarding the actual healthiness of products?

2. In particular, does the Commission agree that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) should promote a study into the effects that particles emitted from highly polluting facilities such as incinerators and cement works have on crops being grown in the vicinity and that it is absolutely necessary for rigorous criteria to be established for the distance which must be respected between such highly polluting facilities and areas cultivated with foodstuffs, in particular if they are quality products (DOC, DOP, IGP, etc.) or intended for specific categories of vulnerable consumers?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The operation of the largest industrial installations in the EU is subject to Directive 2008/1/EC concerning integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) ([1]). This directive requires installations falling under its scope to operate in accordance with permits including emission limit values based on the best available techniques (BAT), designed to prevent and, where that is not practicable, generally to reduce emissions and the impact to the environment as a whole. The IPPC Directive is supported by other directives that set minimum requirements across the EU for certain polluting activities including Directive 2000/76/EC on the incineration of waste ([2]) and Directive 2001/80/EC on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from large combustion plants ([3]). These directives have been merged into the new Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions ([4]) that further strengthens the application of BAT to industrial activities.

Criteria for the distance between industrial facilities and the production areas for foodstuffs do not exist as Community legislation sets maximum levels for contaminants in the foodstuffs themselves ([5]). The regulation contains maximum levels for different types of contaminants (e.g. heavy metals, PCBs and dioxins). The maximum levels ensure that humans are protected since products that exceed these maximum levels cannot be placed on the market. They also ensure that the presence of contaminants in food from all sources is covered since industrial activity is only one possible source. Maximum levels are set on the basis of risk assessments carried out by the European Food Safety Authority and competent authorities in the Member States ensure compliance with these levels.

([1]) OJ L 24, 29.1.2008.
([2]) OJ L332, 28.12.2000.
([3]) OJ L309, 27.11.2001.
([4]) OJ L334, 17.12.2010.
([5]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs, OJ L 364, 20.12.2006.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000496/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(24 stycznia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wzrost liczby ludności na świecie

Według najnowszych danych ONZ do 2050 r. liczba ludności na świecie wzrośnie do 9,3 mld. Największy przyrost ludności występuje obecnie w Afryce subsaharyjskiej. Rodzi to obawy o możliwości wyżywienia mieszkańców Afryki, a także obywateli całego świata. Bank Światowy prognozuje, że pomiędzy rokiem 2005 a 2055 produkcja rolna będzie musiała wrosnąć o ⅔, aby wyżywić rosnącą populację. Już dziś wiadomo, że nowych użytków rolnych jest coraz mniej. Rosnąca liczba ludności wiążę się również z takimi problemami jak zmiany klimatyczne, konflikty zbrojne o dostęp do wody i żywności.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z zapytaniem:

1. Czy Komisja posiada strategię działania dotyczącą rosnącej liczby ludności na świecie?

2. Czy Komisja zamierza podjąć kroki, aby już dzisiaj zacząć prace nad strategią na rzecz rosnącej populacji w Afryce, by w obliczu takich problemów, jak dostęp do wody i żywności, nie dopuścić do rozpowszechniania się zjawiska ubóstwa?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(10 kwietnia 2012 r.)

W swojej polityce UE uwzględnia wyzwania wynikające ze wzrostu liczby ludności na świecie. Zjawisko to, jak i inne ważne zmiany ostatniej dekady, są przedmiotem przyjętego przez Komisję komunikatu na temat Programu działań na rzecz zmian ([1]), który zawiera szereg wniosków dotyczących polityki pomocy na rzecz krajów rozwijających się. Pomoc ta ma na celu osiągnięcie trwałego i zrównoważonego rozwoju, który ma zasadnicze znaczenie dla długoterminowego ograniczenia ubóstwa. UE udziela wsparcia w drodze dwustronnych programów współpracy, którym towarzyszą światowe i regionalne programy tematyczne oraz związane z nimi instrumenty. W listopadzie 2010 r. szefowie państw i rządów Afryki oraz Unii Europejskiej potwierdzili wspólną strategię Afryka-UE, a zwłaszcza milenijne cele rozwoju jako ramy walki z ubóstwem i propagowania zrównoważonego rozwoju. Wspólna strategia Afryka-UE na lata 2011-2013 kładzie wyraźny nacisk na kwestie zdrowia matek i nadanie większej wagi planowaniu rodziny, co stanowi element usprawnienia systemu opieki zdrowotnej. W odniesieniu do wsparcia UE na rzecz planowania rodziny, Komisja odsyła Szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi E-008759/2011 ([2]). W ramach realizacji milenijnych celów rozwoju UE przekazuje dodatkowe 1 mld euro na dalsze wsparcie krajów Afryki, Karaibów i Pacyfiku (AKP). Środki te mają na celu przyspieszenie postępów w kierunku osiągnięcia bezpieczeństwa żywnościowego (pierwszy milenijny cel rozwoju), zdrowia reprodukcyjnego, zdrowia matek i dzieci (czwarty i piąty milenijny cel rozwoju) oraz dostępu do wody i urządzeń sanitarnych (siódmy milenijny cel rozwoju). UE wspiera także kompleksowy program rozwoju rolnictwa w Afryce (ang. Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme – CAADP), a kolejny 1 mld euro przekazuje w ramach instrumentu żywnościowego. W latach 2004-2010 UE przeznaczyła 2,1 mld euro na sektor wodny. Część tych środków została przekazana w ramach Funduszu Wodnego AKP-WE.

([1]) COM(2011) 637 wersja ostateczna z 13.10.2011.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000496/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Increase in world population

According to the latest UN figures the world's population will increase to 9.3 billion by 2050. Currently, the largest population growth is in Sub-Saharan Africa. This raises concerns about the ability to feed the population of Africa and of the entire world. The World Bank forecasts that between 2005 and 2055 agricultural production will have to increase by two-thirds in order to feed the growing population. We already know now that there is less and less new agricultural land available. The population increase is also associated with such problems as climate change and armed conflicts over access to food and water.

In this connection:

1. Does the Commission have an action strategy regarding the growing world population?

2. Does the Commission intend to take steps to begin work immediately on a strategy for the growing population in Africa, so that we can prevent the spread of poverty when confronted by problems such as access to food and water?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

In its policies, the EU takes account of the challenges caused by the growing world population. This and important changes over the past decade have led the Commission to adopt its communication on the Agenda for Change ([1]), which sets out a series of policy proposals to assist developing countries in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth, key to long term poverty reduction. EU assistance is implemented by bilateral cooperation programmes, complemented by global and regional thematic programmes and instruments. In November 2010, the Heads of State and Governments of Africa and the European Union reaffirmed the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) and in particular the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as the framework for eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development. The JAES Action Plan 2011-2013 notably emphasises maternal health which includes the re-positioning of family planning as part of national health systems strengthening. As regards EU support to family planning, the Honourable Member is referred to reply E-008759/2011 ([2]). Through the EU's MDG initiative, the EU is providing an extra EUR 1 billion to further support African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries to accelerate progress towards food security (MDG 1), reproductive, maternal and child health (MDG 4 and 5) and water and sanitation (MDG 7). The EU also supports the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and has been providing another 1 billion support through the Food Facility. Between 2004 and 2010, the EU committed EUR 2.1 billion for the water sector. Part of this aid was delivered through the ACP-EU Water Facility.

([1]) COM(2011) 637 final of 13.10.2011.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000498/12
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Ensuring compliance with Council Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs

Can the Commission provide up-to-date figures on the number of Member States currently using individual sow stalls and the number of pigs currently kept in individual sow stalls? Can the Commission provide an estimate of the number of Member States expected to be still using individual sow stalls after 1 January 2013?

Given the difficulties foreseen in implementing the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive — where it is expected that millions of hens will still be in conventional cages after the 1 January 2012 deadline — what plans does the European Commission have in place to ensure that all Member States are fully compliant with Directive 2008/120/EC, which bans the use of individual sow stalls, when it comes into effect on 1 January 2013?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2012)

From the data received so far from 25 Member States, three Member States already fully implement group housing of sows. Twenty two Member States still keep sows in individual sow stalls. Eleven Member States state that they will fully comply by 31 December 2012.

The Commission does not have an accurate estimate of the number of sows currently kept in individual sow stalls as data have been collected according to the number of production sites keeping 10 sows or more and the capacity of those production sites ([1]).

— Member States are primarily responsible for the implementation of the directive on the protection of pigs ([2]). The Commission has been working for several years with Member States and stakeholders to ensure a progressive implementation of group housing of sows. For 2012, an implementation plan is already in place. The Commission is using all the tools at its disposal to push Member States to reach compliance by 1 January 2013.

— Finally, the Commission will launch infringement procedures against non-compliant Member States as of 1 January 2013.

([1]) Production sites keeping between 10 and 99 sows, production sites keeping between 99 and 249 sows, production sites keeping between 250 and 749 sows, production sites keeping 750 sows and more.
([2]) Council Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs, OJ L 47, 18.2.2009.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000499/12
aan de Commissie
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE) en Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(25 januari 2012)

Betreft: Portugese „brievenbusmaatschappijen" in Nederland

Volgens de Portugese centrale bank zijn de directe buitenlandse investeringen (DBI) het afgelopen jaar met 134 procent toegenomen, midden in een ernstige economische crisis. Deze groei is echter bijna volledig op Nederland gericht, dat momenteel bijna 70 procent van alle Portugese DBI ontvangt. Nader onderzoek doet vermoeden dat dit fenomeen zich heeft voorgedaan vanwege een grote verschuiving binnen de fiscale planning van Portugese ondernemingen. Volgens de Portugese krant *Público* hadden negentien van de twintig grootste Portugese ondernemingen die aan de Portugese beursindex (PSI-20) genoteerd zijn in 2011 een fiscaal adres in Nederland uit overwegingen in verband met belastingplanning. Begin 2012 kondigde het laatste bedrijf van de PSI-20, Jerónimo Martins — een van de grootste kleinhandel- en supermarktketens in Portugal — eveneens aan dat het had besloten om de meerderheid van de aandelen van het bedrijf te verkopen aan een dochteronderneming in Nederland. Een studie die in april 2007 gepubliceerd werd door het Nederlandse onderzoekscentrum SOMO (Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen) met als titel „Nederland: Een belastingparadijs?" concludeerde dat het gebruik van „brievenbusmaatschappijen" in Nederland voor „belastingplanningsdoeleinden aanzienlijke negatieve gevolgen heeft vanwege de daaruit volgende verschuiving van de belastingdruk naar andere vormen van inkomsten, zoals arbeid" in de landen die door dit soort procedures getroffen worden. In dezelfde studie wordt gesuggereerd dat er eveneens duidelijk bewijs bestaat dat minstens de helft van die „brievenbusmaatschappijen" gebruikt wordt als „doorstroomvennootschap" om dividenden naar belastingparadijzen buiten de EU door te sluizen, wat het witwassen van geld zou kunnen bevorderen (op. cit. blz. 48-54).

Vindt de Commissie niet dat dit fenomeen des te schadelijker is in de context van de soberheidsmaatregelen, de besparingen op de overheidsuitgaven en de belastingverhogingen die in sommige EU-landen worden doorgevoerd om de gezamenlijke doelstellingen voor de begrotingstekorten te verwezenlijken, aangezien het leidt tot een onevenredige belasting van individuele belastingbetalers, terwijl ondernemingen die hun belastingen elders betalen middelen wegsluizen uit de landen waar zij actief zijn en zo de begrotingssituatie van lidstaten van de EU die reeds in een moeilijke situatie verkeren, doen verslechteren?

Is de Commissie van plan om voorstellen in te dienen om de gevolgen van dit fenomeen tegen te gaan, op zijn minst in die landen die onder het coördinatie-interventieprogramma van de Commissie, het IMF en de EFSF vallen?

Is de Commissie tot slot niet van mening dat de EU, in afwachting van de toepassing van een harmonisering of op zijn minst convergentie van de belastingvoorschriften, het risico loopt te veranderen in een grote carrousel van wettige belastingontduiking?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(24 februari 2012)

De winsten die een Portugese onderneming maakt, worden belast op grond van de belastingwetgeving van Portugal. Winstuitkering aan een moederbedrijf (houdsteronderneming) in Nederland wordt in Nederland vrijgesteld om zo dubbele economische belasting te vermijden. De Commissie maakt zich zorgen over de gevolgen van agressieve belastingplanning en het optreden van dubbele niet-belasting in de EU. Dit is echter geen geval van dubbele niet-belasting aangezien de onderliggende ondernemingswinst nog steeds in Portugal belast wordt. De vrijstelling van dividenden om een dubbele economische belasting weg te werken is in zowel de communautaire wetgeving (Richtlijn nr. 2011/96/EU van de Raad) als de fiscale wetgeving van Portugal vastgesteld.

De groep Gedragscode, een speciale werkgroep van de Raad die mogelijke schadelijke fiscale maatregelen beoordeelt, heeft besloten dat regelingen voor een gehele belastingvrijstelling voor dividenden tussen ondernemingen niet schadelijk zijn, mits ze gepaard gaan met antimisbruikmaatregelen of gelijkaardige tegenmaatregelen. In 2003 heeft de groep Gedragscode besloten dat het Nederlandse stelsel met betrekking tot houdsterondernemingen geen schadelijke fiscale regeling is. Gelijkaardige regelingen voor houdsterondernemingen gelden in vele andere EU-lidstaten. Meer in het algemeen, is de Commissie voornemens om, teneinde de belastinginkomsten van de lidstaten te beschermen tegen agressieve belastingplanning en dubbele niet-belasting, vóór eind 2012 met een mededeling te komen over een goede governance op fiscaal gebied met betrekking tot belastingparadijzen en agressieve belastingplanning. De Commissie is ook van plan om in het eerste kwartaal van dit jaar een openbare raadpleging te

starten betreffende dubbele niet-belasting. Wat de belastingharmonisatie betreft, is een beperking van mogelijkheden tot fiscale arbitrage en dubbele niet-belasting slechts één van de vele voordelen van het voorstel van de Commissie inzake een gemeenschappelijke geconsolideerde heffingsgrondslag voor de vennootsbelasting (CCCTB).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000499/12
à Comissão
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE) e Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(25 de janeiro de 2012)

Assunto: Empresas fictícias portuguesas nos Países Baixos

De acordo com o Banco de Portugal, o investimento direto estrangeiro (IDE) registou um crescimento de 134 % no último ano, um período marcado por uma profunda crise no país. No entanto, grande parte deste crescimento tem sido direcionado para os Países Baixos, que representa atualmente quase 70 % da totalidade do IDE português. Uma análise mais aprofundada sugere que este fenómeno teve origem num vasto movimento de planeamento orçamental por parte das empresas portuguesas. Em 2011, de acordo com o jornal *Público*, 19 das 20 maiores empresas portuguesas cotadas no índice da Bolsa de Valores de Lisboa (PSI-20) tinham fixado as suas residências fiscais nos Países Baixos para efeitos de planeamento fiscal. No início de 2012, a empresa com pior desempenho no PSI-20, Jerónimo Martins — uma das maiores cadeias retalhistas de supermercados em Portugal — também tornou pública a sua decisão de vender a maioria das ações da empresa a uma subsidiária nos Países Baixos. Um estudo publicado em abril de 2007 pelo centro de investigação holandês SOMO (Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen), intitulado «Países Baixos: Um Paraíso Fiscal?», concluiu que a utilização de «empresas fictícias» nos Países Baixos para efeitos de «planeamento fiscal» tem «um impacto negativo considerável, ao transferir a carga tributária daí resultante para outras fontes de rendimento, tais como o trabalho», nos países afetados por este tipo de procedimento. O mesmo estudo sugere que há também fortes indícios de que pelo menos metade destas «empresas fictícias» é utilizada como «veículo» para a transferência de dividendos para paraísos fiscais fora da UE, o que pode facilitar o branqueamento de capitais (op. cit., pp 48-54).

Concorda a Comissão que este fenómeno é ainda mais pernicioso no contexto de austeridade, reduções nas despesas e aumentos das cargas fiscais introduzidos em alguns países da UE, por forma a respeitar os objetivos orçamentais comuns fixados para o défice, uma vez que sujeita os contribuintes a um encargo desproporcionado permitindo, em simultâneo, que as empresas que pagam os seus impostos noutro país desviem recursos dos países onde operam, agravando, assim, a situação orçamental dos Estados-Membros da UE que já se encontram numa posição difícil?

Tenciona a Comissão apresentar propostas que possam contrariar os efeitos deste fenómeno, pelo menos nos países que se encontram abrangidos pelo seu programa de intervenção em coordenação com o FMI e o FEEF?

Por último, concorda a Comissão que, até à entrada em vigor de regras de harmonização fiscal ou, pelo menos, de regras de convergência fiscal, a UE corre o risco de se ver transformada num grande carrossel de evasão fiscal legal?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(24 de fevereiro de 2012)

Os lucros realizados por uma empresa portuguesa são tributados ao abrigo da legislação fiscal de Portugal. A distribuição de resultados a uma sociedade-mãe (holding) nos Países Baixos está isenta de impostos neste país a fim de evitar a dupla tributação. A Comissão está preocupada com os efeitos do planeamento fiscal agressivo e as situações de dupla não tributação na UE. Contudo, não se trata aqui de dupla não tributação, já que os resultados em causa continuarão a ser tributados em Portugal. A isenção fiscal aplicável aos dividendos, no intuito de eliminar a dupla tributação está consagrada na legislação da UE (Diretiva 2011/96/UE do Conselho), bem como na legislação fiscal de Portugal.

O grupo de trabalho especial (*Code of Conduct Group*) instituído no Conselho para avaliar as medidas fiscais potencialmente prejudiciais, considerou que os regimes fiscais que preveem isenção total de impostos para os dividendos inter-empresas não são prejudiciais desde que sejam acompanhados de medidas eficazes para prevenir os abusos ou contra-medidas equivalentes. Em 2003, o grupo em questão considerou que o regime neerlandês aplicável às holdings não era um regime fiscal prejudicial. Existem regimes análogos em muitos outros Estados-Membros da UE. Em termos gerais e tendo em vista a preservação das receitas fiscais dos Estados-Membros contra o planeamento fiscal agressivo e a dupla não tributação, a Comissão tenciona apresentar antes do final de 2012 uma comunicação sobre boa governação em matéria fiscal relacionada com os paraísos fiscais e o planeamento fiscal agressivo. Entende ainda a Comissão lançar uma consulta pública sobre dupla não tributação, no primeiro trimestre do ano em curso. No que se refere à harmonização fiscal, considera-se que a redução das situações que levam à arbitragem fiscal e à dupla não tributação constitui apenas um dos muitos benefícios da proposta da Comissão relativa a uma Matéria Coletável Comum Consolidada do Imposto sobre as Sociedades (Mcccis).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000499/12
to the Commission
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE) and Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Portuguese 'letterbox companies' in the Netherlands

According to the Portuguese central bank, foreign direct investment (FDI) has grown by 134 % in the last year, in the midst of a serious crisis in the country. Almost all of this growth, however, has been directed to the Netherlands, which now accounts for almost 70 % of all Portuguese FDI. Further research suggests that this phenomenon has occurred because of a vast movement of fiscal planning on the part of Portuguese companies. In 2011, according to the Portuguese daily *Público*, 19 out of the 20 largest Portuguese companies listed in the Lisbon Stock Exchange index (PSI-20) had set up fiscal addresses in the Netherlands for the purpose of tax planning. At the beginning of 2012 the last-placed PSI-20 company, Jerónimo Martins — one of the largest retailing and supermarket chains in Portugal — also announced its decision to sell the majority of the company's shares to a subsidiary company in the Netherlands. A study published in April 2007 by the Dutch research centre SOMO (Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen) entitled 'The Netherlands: A Tax Haven?' concluded that the use of 'letterbox companies' in the Netherlands for 'tax planning' purposes has 'a substantial negative impact through the resulting shift of the tax burden to other sources of income such as labour' in the countries affected by this kind of procedure. The same study suggests that there is also strong evidence that at least half of these 'letterbox companies' are used as a 'conduit' for sending dividends to tax havens outside the EU, which could facilitate money laundering (op. cit., pp 48-54).

Does the Commission agree that this phenomenon is even more pernicious in the context of the austerity, spending cuts and tax increases introduced in some EU countries in order to respect common budgetary deficit goals, as it places a disproportionate burden on individual taxpayers while allowing companies that pay their taxes elsewhere to siphon away resources from the countries where they operate, thereby worsening the budgetary situation of EU Member States that are already in a difficult position?

Does the Commission plan to put forward proposals that may counter the effects of this phenomenon at least in the countries that are under its coordination intervention programme with the IMF and the EFSF?

Finally, does the Commission agree that, pending the implementation of tax harmonisation rules, or at least tax convergence rules, the EU risks being transformed into a large carousel of legal tax evasion?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2012)

Profits realised by a Portuguese company are taxed under the tax laws of Portugal. A distribution of these profits to a parent (holding) company in the Netherlands will be exempt in the Netherlands to avoid double economic taxation. The Commission is concerned about the effects of aggressive tax planning and the occurrence of double non-taxation in the EU. However, this is not a case of double non-taxation as the underlying business profits will still be taxed in Portugal. The exemption of dividends to eliminate double economic taxation is laid down in community legislation (Council Directive 2011/96/EU), as well as the national tax legislation of Portugal.

The Code of Conduct Group, a special Council working group that assesses potentially harmful tax measures, has decided that regimes providing a full tax exemption for intercompany dividends are not harmful, provided they are accompanied by effective anti-abuse measures or similar countermeasures. In 2003 the Code of Conduct Group decided that the Dutch holding company regime was not a harmful tax regime. Very similar holding company regimes are operated by many other EU Member States. More generally, to assist in protecting Member States' tax revenues against aggressive tax planning and double non-taxation, the Commission intends to present before the end of 2012 a communication on good governance in the tax area in relation to tax havens and aggressive tax planning. The Commission also plans to launch a public consultation on double non-taxation in the first quarter of this year. As far as tax harmonisation is concerned, reducing the opportunities for tax arbitrage and double non-taxation is only one of many benefits of the Commission proposal for a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000500/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Introduzione in Europa del reato specifico di omicidio stradale

Attualmente la sicurezza stradale è un tema di grande rilevanza in tutti gli Stati membri tenendo conto soprattutto degli ultimi dati disponibili a livello europeo i quali evidenziano come solo nel 2009 sono stati registrati 35 mila morti ed un milione e mezzo di feriti, spesso con invalidità permanente. Pur considerando che dal 2001 il numero di decessi per incidenti stradali è diminuito del 36 % grazie anche al terzo programma d'azione europeo per la sicurezza stradale, purtroppo questa situazione di mancanza di educazione civica sulle strade continua a comportare costi economici e sociali molto elevati, basti pensare ai 130 miliardi di euro spesi solo nel 2009, cui si sommano la perdita umana, il dolore dei congiunti, le sofferenze dei feriti ed i tragici cambiamenti nella vita delle persone colpite.

Ciò premesso, esiste tuttora una notevole disparità negli Stati membri riguardo alle pene per chi commette un omicidio alla guida di un'automobile. Alcuni Stati membri non considerano questo tipo di omicidio come reato specifico, mentre in altri Stati sono previste pene molto severe che comprendono la perdita definitiva del diritto di guidare, l'arresto senza mandato e la reclusione fino a 14 anni per chi commette un omicidio per guida pericolosa, sotto l'effetto di sostanze stupefacenti o dell'alcool.

Considerando altresì che il 27 settembre 2011 è stata adottata la risoluzione sulla sicurezza stradale in Europa 2011-2020, che ha tra i suoi obiettivi quello di ridurre del 50 % entro il 2020 il numero delle vittime sulla strada, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. In quali Stati membri è previsto il reato relativo all'omicidio stradale?

2. Quali Stati hanno adottato sanzioni per punire i comportamenti pericolosi alla guida (come un'eccessiva assunzione di rischi, scarsa attenzione e mancata comprensione della segnaletica stradale) e quali sono queste sanzioni?

3. Intende impegnarsi affinché il reato specifico di omicidio stradale sia introdotto nella legislazione comunitaria?

4. Quale tipo di assistenza viene offerta dagli Stati membri alle vittime di incidenti stradali?

5. Quali campagne d'informazione sono previste per prevenire gli incidenti stradali e quali per offrire alla cittadinanza un'adeguata educazione civica?

6. Sono disponibili statistiche e studi aggiornati sugli incidenti stradali in Europa e sulle pene correlate?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(7 marzo 2012)

La determinazione della natura delle infrazioni stradali, compresi i casi da considerare omicidi stradali e il tipo di sanzioni applicabili non sono contemplati dalla vigente legislazione UE in materia di sicurezza stradale e sono pertanto di competenza esclusiva delle autorità nazionali interessate.

Al momento la Commissione non prevede di introdurre nella legislazione UE il reato specifico di omicidio stradale.

Le campagne di informazione e le azioni di educazione civica sono di responsabilità degli Stati membri.

L'attuale legislazione UE sull'indennizzo (direttiva 2004/80/CE del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativa all'indennizzo delle vittime di reato ([1])) dispone che gli Stati membri stabiliscano sistemi nazionali di indennizzo dei reati intenzionali violenti, ma non prevede una definizione standard di questi reati.

Le statistiche sugli incidenti stradali a livello UE sono disponibili al seguente sito, accessibile pubblicamente: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/index_it.htm. Le relative sanzioni dipendono dal livello di responsabilità nel caso concreto in esame e quindi non possono essere riportate nelle statistiche aggregate.

([1]) GU L 261 del 6.8.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000500/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Introduction within Europe of the specific offence of vehicular homicide

Road safety is currently a major issue in all the Member States, taking account above all of the most recent data available at European level, which show that the figures for 2009 alone included 35 000 deaths and 1.5 million injuries, often leading to permanent disability. Although the number of road deaths has fallen by 36 % since 2001, partly as a result of the Third European Road Safety Action Plan, the current situation marked by a lack of civic education on the roads unfortunately continues to result in very high economic and social costs, as illustrated by the EUR 130 billion bill in 2009 alone, as well as the human loss, the pain of relatives, the suffering of the injured and the tragic changes in the lives of those affected.

However, there is still significant disparities between the Member States as regards penalties for those who cause death whilst driving a motor vehicle. Some Member States do not consider this type of homicide as a specific offence, whilst others impose very severe penalties, including definitive withdrawal of the driving licence, arrest without a warrant and imprisonment for up to 14 years for anyone who causes death by dangerous driving or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Moreover, in view of Parliament's resolution of 27 September 2011 on European road safety 2011-2020, the objectives of which include a 50 % reduction by 2020 in the number of victims of road accidents, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. In which Member States does the offence of vehicular homicide exist?

2. Which states have imposed penalties to punish dangerous driving (such as excessive risk-taking, carelessness or the failure to understand road signs) and what are these penalties?

3. Does it intend to take steps to ensure that the specific offence of vehicular homicide is introduced into EC law?

4. What type of assistance is offered by Member States to the victims of road accidents?

5. What information campaigns have been planned in order to prevent road accidents and to offer the general public an adequate civic education?

6. Are up-to-date statistics and studies available on road accidents in Europe and the associated penalties?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2012)

The determination of the nature of road traffic offences, including the issue of which cases are considered as vehicular homicide and the type of penalties applicable are not covered by the EU road safety legislation in force and are therefore a matter solely for the national authorities concerned.

The Commission does not envisage at this stage to introduce a specific offence of vehicular homicide into EC law.

Information campaigns and actions in relation with civic education are the responsibility of Member States.

Current EU legislation on compensation (Council Directive 2004/80/EC of 29 April 2004 relating to compensation to crime victims ([1])) requires that Member States establish national schemes to compensate violent intentional crime but it does not provide for a standard definition of what such crimes are.

Statistics are available at EU level on road traffic accidents and are available under the publicly accessible website: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/index_en.htm. The associated penalties depend on the level of responsibility of the concrete case at hand and can therefore not be reproduced in aggregate statistics.

([1]) OJ L 261, 6.8.2004.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000501/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili strumenti per contrastare la crisi delle banche irlandesi

La crisi delle banche irlandesi vede coinvolti non solo piccoli risparmiatori, ma anche facoltose famiglie e noti banchieri che si erano affidati a gestori di patrimoni.

Le cause che hanno provocato il crollo delle banche irlandesi sono da ricercarsi nella ristrutturazione del debito operato dalla Bank of Ireland che ha proposto nuove obbligazioni in cambio dei vecchi bond.

La stessa legge è stata applicata anche da altri istituti come, per esempio, la Allied Irish Bank.

Il meccanismo era il seguente: chi aderiva all'offerta avrebbe avuto le nuove obbligazioni in cambio delle vecchie, mentre, chi non aderiva avrebbe avuto un centesimo di euro per ogni mille euro investiti.

Tuttavia le famiglie italiane hanno, da parte loro, prima comprato titoli che non erano loro destinati e successivamente non sono state informate della ristrutturazione, per cui non hanno potuto aderire allo scambio.

I risparmiatori italiani, dunque, hanno visto improvvisamente svanire i loro risparmi per non aver ricevuto informazioni sulla ristrutturazione in atto.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se esistono possibili risarcimenti per i risparmiatori in casi come quello esposto;

2. se è in grado di fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(8 marzo 2012)

La normativa dell'UE prevede un numero limitato di disposizioni in materia di fallimento delle banche o di perdita di valore degli strumenti finanziari. Ai sensi della direttiva 2001/24/CE in materia di risanamento e liquidazione degli enti creditizi, un estratto della decisione relativa ai provvedimenti di risanamento deve essere pubblicato nella Gazzetta ufficiale dell'Unione europea (GU) e in due quotidiani a diffusione nazionale di ogni Stato membro ospitante, allo scopo di facilitare l'esercizio in tempo utile del diritto di ricorso. Le autorità dello Stato membro di origine ovvero l'amministratore straordinario sono inoltre tenuti a informare i creditori conosciuti aventi il domicilio, la residenza o la sede legale in altri Stati membri. La Commissione ha pubblicato nella Gazzetta ufficiale (GU) varie decisioni connesse al risanamento e alla liquidazione di banche irlandesi. Le decisioni relative all'Allied Irish Bank sono state pubblicate nella Gazzetta ufficiale l'11 febbraio 2011 e il 15 maggio 2011 ([1]).

Occorre aggiungere che la situazione descritta non è disciplinata dalla direttiva 97/9/CE relativa ai sistemi di indennizzo degli investitori. La direttiva sui sistemi di indennizzo non costituisce un rimedio contro la perdita di valore dello strumento in sé, che rientra tra i rischi dell'investimento.

La Commissione sta attualmente preparando una proposta intesa a istituire un quadro normativo per il trattamento delle banche in difficoltà, come l'Allied Irish. L'onorevole parlamentare può trovare tutte le comunicazioni e i documenti relativi alla consultazione pubblica sulla proposta sul sito web della Commissione ([2]).

Per quanto riguarda la vendita di titoli agli investitori italiani, la prestazione dei servizi di investimento nell'UE è disciplinata dalla direttiva 2004/39/CE (MiFID) ([3]). La valutazione del rispetto degli obblighi imposti dalla MiFID in casi concreti è effettuata dalle autorità nazionali competenti e dai giudici. Nell'ottobre 2011 la Commissione ha adottato proposte legislative di revisione della MiFID per rafforzare ulteriormente la tutela degli investitori ([4]).

([1]) L'onorevole parlamentare troverà la pubblicazione dei due avvisi ai seguenti indirizzi internet:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:141:0004:0004:IT:PDF;
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:043:0004:0005:IT:PDF.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/bank/crisis_management/index_en.htm

([3]) Direttiva 2004/39/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 21 aprile 2004, relativa ai mercati degli strumenti finanziari, che modifica le direttive 85/611/CEE e 93/6/CEE del Consiglio e la direttiva 2000/12/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e che abroga la direttiva 93/22/CEE del Consiglio, GU L 145 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1.

([4]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/1219&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000501/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Possible tools with which to counter the Irish banking crisis

The Irish banking crisis does not involve small investors alone, but also wealthy families and well-known bankers who had put their trust in asset managers.

The causes of the collapse of the Irish banks can be found in the debt restructuring carried out by the Bank of Ireland, which offered new bonds in exchange for the old ones.

The same principle was also applied by other institutions, such as the Allied Irish Bank.

The mechanism was as follows: those who accepted the offer would receive new bonds in exchange for the old ones, while those who did not accept it would receive one cent for every thousand euro invested.

However, firstly, Italian families bought securities which were not designed for them and secondly, they were not informed of this restructuring. They were therefore unable to take part in the exchange.

Italian investors, therefore, suddenly saw their savings vanish simply because they had not received any information on the restructuring under way.

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. whether any compensation might be available for investors in cases such as this;

2. whether it is able to give an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2012)

EC law contains a limited number of provisions related to the failure of banks or the loss of financial instruments. Under Directive 2011/24/EC on the reorganisation and winding up of credit institutions, an extract from the decision about reorganisation measures must be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (OJ) and in two national newspapers in each host Member State to facilitate the exercise of the right of appeal in good time. Authorities of the home Member State or the administrator shall also inform known creditors who have their domiciles, normal places of residence or head offices in other Member States. The Commission published in its Official Journal (OJ) several decisions related to the reorganisation and winding-up of Irish banks. In 2011, decisions related to Allied Irish Bank were published in the OJ on 11 February 2011 and 15 May 2011 ([1]).

Further, the situation described is not covered by Directive 99/7 on Investor Compensation Schemes (ICSD). ICSD is not a remedy against the loss of value of the instrument itself, which pertains to investment risk.

The Commission is currently working on a proposal in order to provide a legal framework for dealing with failing banks like Allied Irish. The Honourable Member can find all communication and public consultation documents related to this envisaged proposal on the Commission's website ([2]).

Concerning the sale of securities to Italian investors, Directive 2004/39/EC ([3]) (MiFID) regulates the provision of investment services in the EU. The assessment of compliance with MiFID obligations in concrete cases is carried out by national competent authorities and Courts. In October 2011 the Commission adopted legislative proposals for the review of MiFID in order to further strengthen the protection of investors ([4]).

([1]) The Honourable Member can find these publications under the following addresses: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:043:0004:0005:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/bank/crisis_management/index_en.htm
([3]) Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 on markets in financial instruments amending Council Directives 85/611/EEC and 93/6/EEC and Directive 2000/12/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Directive 93/22/EEC (OJ L 145, 30.4.2004, p. 1).
([4]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/1219&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000502/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per il progetto «Borgo di Montecristo»

Il Borgo di Montecristo è composto da un complesso di strutture a vocazione turistica, religiosa e culturale che si propone come una nuova realtà nel panorama dell'offerta sociale e turistica del territorio del Comune di Atina e di quello della Valle di Comino, in provincia di Frosinone.

Il Borgo di Montecristo ha per statuto lo scopo di far conoscere e promuovere insieme ad altre organizzazioni ed associazioni locali e nazionali, il territorio di Atina e quello limitrofo, ponendosi come tappa intermediaria al flusso di pellegrini che si sposta tra l'Abbazia di Montecassino ed il Santuario del Bambin Gesù nel Comune limitrofo di Gallinaro.

Il Borgo di Montecristo, infatti, avrà un rilevante scopo sociale in quanto, oltre a rappresentare un luogo d'incontro e di socializzazione, con attività dedicate ai bambini e alle persone della terza età, offrirà nuove opportunità di lavoro anche grazie alla creazione di nuove imprese artigiane.

Inoltre, è prevista la creazione di un parco didattico per la riscoperta dei prodotti tipici del territorio che favorirà anche la riscoperta e la valorizzazione degli antichi mestieri.

Ciò premesso può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. sono previsti finanziamenti a favore del progetto suesposto?

2. Esistono progetti analoghi finanziati dall'Unione Europea?

3. Qual è il quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta data da J. Hahn a nome della Commissione
(7 marzo 2012)

Il programma 2007-2013 per il Lazio definisce i tipi di sostegno forniti alla regione dal Fondo europeo per lo sviluppo regionale. Nell'ambito della priorità «Ambiente e prevenzione dei rischi» si possono cofinanziare iniziative volte a migliorare e integrare la promozione del patrimonio naturale, culturale e artistico di zone di particolare valore, che possono comprendere il tipo di progetto cui fa riferimento l'Onorevole Angelilli, a condizione che rispetti le prescrizioni specifiche del programma.

Tuttavia, secondo il principio della gestione condivisa applicato alla gestione della politica di coesione, la selezione e l'attuazione dei progetti competono alle autorità nazionali. La Commissione suggerisce quindi all'Onorevole Angelilli di rivolgersi direttamente all'autorità di gestione del programma:

Autorità di gestione del programma operativo regionale per il Lazio 2007-2013
Via R. R. Garibaldi, 7
00145 Roma
adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000502/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Possible financing for the 'Borgo di Montecristo' project

Borgo di Montecristo consists of a range of tourist, religious and cultural facilities and seeks to provide a fresh alternative to the social and tourist services already provided in the municipalities of Atina and Valle di Comino in the Province of Frosinone.

According to its articles of association, the purpose of Borgo di Montecristo is to publicise and promote Atina and its surrounding areas, alongside other organisations and local and national associations, and act as a staging post for pilgrims travelling between the Abbey of Montecassino and the Bambin Gesù Sanctuary in the neighbouring Municipality of Gallinaro.

Indeed, Borgo di Montecristo will have a significant social purpose since, in addition to being a place for meeting and socialising, which organises activities for children and the elderly, it will also provide new opportunities for employment, thanks also to the establishment of new handicraft businesses.

Moreover, the project will involve the establishment of an educational park, to promote the rediscovery of typical local produce, which will also help people to rediscover and appreciate the traditional trades.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is there any funding available for the above project?

2. Have any similar projects been funded by the European Union?

3. Can it give an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2012)

The 2007-2013 programme for Lazio defines the types of support provided by the European Regional Development Fund for the region. Under the priority 'Environment and Risk prevention', it is possible to co-finance initiatives for the enhancement and integrated promotion of natural, cultural and artistic heritage of areas of particular value which might include the type of project mentioned by the Honourable Member, subject to the compliance with the specific provisions of the programme.

However, in line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. The Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the programme managing authority:

Managing authority regional operational programme Lazio for 2007-2013
Via R. R. Garibaldi, 7
00145 Roma
adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000503/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per il «Laboratorio Leonardo» nella città di Chernovtsy in Ucraina

Nel corso del 2010 grazie alla collaborazione tra un medico ucraino ed uno italiano è stato aperto il «Laboratorio Leonardo», situato nella città di Chernovtsy, nel nord-ovest dell'Ucraina. All'interno di questa struttura vi sono apparecchiature di diagnostica per immagini come ecocolordoppler nonché ecografi vari ed un poliambulatorio specialistico.

L'obiettivo del Laboratorio Leonardo è quello di coprire tutta la zona nord-ovest dell'Ucraina mediante la costruzione di una rete di laboratori satellite, per la quale nel corso del 2011 sono stati costruiti due nuovi laboratori nelle città di Vinnitza e Ternopil.

Attualmente tutte le sedi sono informatizzate e collegate tra di loro in modo che tutti i dati confluiscono nella sede centrale di Chernovtsy in tempo reale. Tuttavia, le strutture costruite finora risultano del tutto insufficienti a coprire il fabbisogno della popolazione locale, dato che occorrerebbero almeno altri sei nuovi laboratori.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se esistono finanziamenti per la costruzione di altre filiali?

2. quali sono i finanziamenti di partenariato tra l'UE e l'Ucraina?

3. qual è il quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta data da Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(14 marzo 2012)

Nell'ambito dello strumento europeo di vicinato e partenariato, le priorità per l'assistenza dell'UE all'Ucraina, come stabilito con il governo e gli Stati membri dell'UE, sono definite nel programma indicativo nazionale 2011-2013. Esse comprendono il buon governo e lo Stato di diritto, l'agevolazione dell'entrata in vigore dell'accordo di associazione UE-Ucraina, compresa la creazione di una zona di libero scambio globale e approfondita, e lo sviluppo sostenibile (con particolare attenzione ai settori dell'energia, dei trasporti e dell'ambiente). I settori sociali, inclusa la sanità, non figurano attualmente tra le priorità della cooperazione UE-Ucraina.

Tuttavia, la Commissione si occupa di questioni relative alla sanità nel mondo attraverso la linea di bilancio tematica «Investire nelle persone», nel quadro dello strumento di cooperazione allo sviluppo, che opera tramite inviti a presentare proposte. Si consiglia agli interessati di consultare periodicamente la pagina web dedicata ([1]).

Questo sostegno viene destinato a quattro ambiti sanitari principali: accesso ai servizi sanitari per i poveri e le altre categorie svantaggiate; le risorse umane nell'assistenza sanitaria (in connessione all'emigrazione); le principali malattie legate alla povertà (HIV/AIDS, malaria e tubercolosi) e infine la salute sessuale e riproduttiva e i relativi diritti. Il sostegno per la costruzione di laboratori dotati di apparecchiature ecografiche / a ultrasuoni non rientra tra le priorità immediate di questi finanziamenti.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000503/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Possible funding for the 'Leonardo Laboratory' in the Ukrainian city of Chernovtsy

In 2010, thanks to the cooperation between a Ukrainian doctor and an Italian doctor, the 'Leonardo Laboratory' was opened in the city of Chernovtsy, north-eastern Ukraine. This facility contains diagnostic imaging equipment such as colour Doppler ultrasound machines as well as various other ultrasound machines and a specialist outpatient clinic.

The aim of the Leonardo Laboratory is to cover the entire area of north-western Ukraine by establishing a network of satellite laboratories: in 2011 two new laboratories were therefore built in the cities of Vinnitza and Ternopil.

At present all the laboratories are computerised and interlinked, so that all data flows to the central laboratory in Chernovtsy in real time. However, the facilities built to date are entirely inadequate to meet the needs of the local population, given that at least six new laboratories would be necessary.

In view of the above, can the Commission:

1. say whether any funding is available to build additional branches;

2. say what partnership funds exist between the EU and Ukraine;

3. give an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2012)

Under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, the priorities for EU assistance to Ukraine, as agreed with the government and with EU Member States, are set out in the National Indicative Programme 2011-2013. These are Good Governance and the rule of law, the facilitation of the entry into force of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, and Sustainable Development (focusing on energy, transport and environment). Social sectors, including health, are not currently a priority in EU-Ukraine cooperation.

However, the Commission addresses health issues worldwide through a thematic budget line —"Investing in People" — under the Development Cooperation Instrument. This works through calls for proposals and interested parties are recommended to consult regularly the following link ([1]).

This support is addressing four key health issues: access to health services for the poor and other disadvantaged groups; human resources in healthcare (linked to migration); the main poverty-related diseases (HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis) and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Support for establishing laboratories with echography/ultrasound equipment is not an immediate priority for such funding.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000504/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Interventi per agevolare i viaggi in treno delle famiglie numerose

Trenitalia, società per azioni con partecipazione statale attraverso il Ministero dell'Economia, offre promozioni per famiglie da 2 a 5 persone. L'«offerta famiglia» — si legge nel sito Internet della società — è rivolta a gruppi familiari composti di 2 fino a 5 persone, in cui siano presenti almeno 1 maggiorenne e 1 bambino fino a 12 anni e prevede i seguenti sconti: 50 % (30 % per cuccette e vagoni letto) per i bambini fino a 12 anni; 20 % per le altre persone.

Questa promozione, però, è applicabile soltanto alle famiglie composte di 5 persone, al massimo di due genitori e tre figli, e di fatto penalizza i nuclei familiari composti di quattro, cinque o più figli.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Quali sono le politiche europee in vigore sulla mobilità pubblica?

2. Se il caso in questione non pare in palese contraddizione con i vari programmi europei volti a incoraggiare gli abitanti a muoversi con mezzi pubblici?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(23 febbraio 2012)

La Commissione informa l'onorevole parlamentare di non avere competenza per occuparsi delle questioni sollevate, che riguardano esclusivamente la politica commerciale dell'impresa ferroviaria interessata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000504/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Measures to facilitate train travel for large families

Trenitalia, which is a part state-owned (via the Ministry of the Economy) joint stock company, is offering promotions for families of two to five people. This 'family offer' is aimed — according to the company's website — at families consisting of two to five people, of whom at least one is an adult and one a child under 12 years of age, and provides the following discounts: 50 % (30 % for couchettes and sleeper carriages) for children up to 12 years of age; 20 % for the other family members.

This promotion, however, is applicable only to families of up to five members and consisting of a maximum of two adults and three children, and in fact penalises families with four, five or more children.

In light of the above, can the Commission indicate:

1. The EU policies in force with regard to public transport?

2. Whether or not the aforementioned situation is manifestly at variance with the various EU programmes designed to encourage people to use public transport?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that it has no jurisdiction to deal with the questions asked, which are related solely to the commercial policy of the railway undertaking in question.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000505/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(26 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Normativa antifumo e sale fumatori negli aeroporti

Negli ultimi anni le norme contro il fumo nei locali pubblici si sono intensificate sempre più, sia in Italia che in tutta Europa. Nel 2003 è stata adottata la legge per la lotta contro il fumo in Italia, uno dei primi paesi in Europa ad applicarla, che disciplina gli esercizi pubblici, i luoghi di lavoro, gli spazi adibiti ad attività ricreative e i circoli privati. Le nuove disposizioni prevedevano che l'uso delle sigarette fosse limitato ad aree ben delimitate da barriere fisiche, ventilate e separate dalle altre nonché rese facilmente riconoscibili da cartelli luminosi.

In quasi tutti gli altri paesi europei si rispettano norme simili che vietano il fumo nel 100 % dei locali pubblici. In Gran Bretagna è vietato fumare in tutti i locali pubblici e non esistono sale fumatori, così come in Irlanda. In Francia vige il divieto assoluto in tutti i locali pubblici, mentre in Spagna il divieto è stato modificato. Esso non esiste più nei bar e nei ristoranti di dimensioni inferiori ai 100 metri quadrati, mentre nei locali normali sono previste sale fumatori. D'altro canto, in Germania il divieto di fumo oltre che in tutti i locali pubblici si applica anche a qualche spazio aperto. Olanda, Svezia e Repubblica Ceca prevedono il divieto in tutti i locali pubblici.

L'obiettivo del regolamento è chiaramente la tutela della salute del cittadino e la libertà del non-fumatore.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se, pur nel pieno rispetto delle leggi summenzionate e comprensione verso tutti coloro che non fumano, la mancanza di sale adibite a tabagisti in molti aeroporti europei, in cui una volta passati i controlli — che sovente durano decine di minuti — non è più possibile uscire all'aperto, non configuri una discriminazione verso i fumatori?

Ritiene essa opportuno prevedere norme che stabiliscano l'istituzione di appositi spazi per fumatori in tutti gli aeroporti europei?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(6 marzo 2012)

La politica UE in tema di ambienti liberi da fumo è stata definita in una raccomandazione del Consiglio ([1]). L'attuazione di tale raccomandazione rientra nella responsabilità esclusiva degli Stati membri.

Anche la realizzazione di apposite sale fumatori negli aeroporti europei è di competenza nazionale.

([1]) Raccomandazione del Consiglio, del 30 novembre 2009, relativa agli ambienti senza fumo (GU C296 del 5.12.2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000505/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Anti-smoking legislation and smoking rooms in airports

Laws against smoking in public places have become increasingly severe over recent years both in Italy and throughout Europe. A ban on smoking was introduced in Italy in 2003, one of the first countries in Europe to apply one, which applies to retail outlets, workplaces, spaces dedicated to recreational activity and private clubs. The new legislation provides that smoking is only allowed in areas which are properly marked out by physical barriers, ventilated and separated from other areas, and readily idenfitiable by means of illuminated signs.

Almost all other European countries have similar rules prohibiting smoking in all public places. The United Kingdom has banned smoking in all public places and there are no smoking rooms, as is also the case in Ireland. In France there is an absolute prohibition in all public places, whilst in Spain the ban has been amended. It no longer applies to bars and restaurants smaller than 100 square metres, whilst in normal establishments smoking rooms are required. On the other hand, the ban on smoking in Germany applies not only to all public places but also any open space. The Netherlands, Sweden and the Czech Republic have banned smoking in public places.

The objective of such legislation is clearly the protection of health and the rights of non-smokers.

Given the above, can the Commission state whether, whilst complying fully with the laws mentioned above and whilst showing understanding towards non-smokers, the lack of dedicated smoking rooms in many European airports and the fact that once passengers have passed through security controls — which often takes ten minutes or more — they are no longer able to go outside the airport building constitutes discrimination against smokers?

Does it consider that legislation should be introduced to require the establishment of dedicated areas for smokers in all European airports?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

EU policy on smoke-free environments has been established in a Council recommendation ([1]). The implementation of this recommendation falls under the exclusive responsibility of Member States.

The issue of the establishment of dedicated smoking areas in European airports falls under national competence.

([1]) Council Recommendation of 30 November 2009 on smoke-free environments (OJ C 296, 5.12.2009).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000506/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Giocattoli cinesi tossici

Durante il periodo natalizio l'Europa è stata «invasa» da giocattoli cinesi meno costosi, ma pericolosi rispetto a quelli certificati dal marchio CE. Nel Paese asiatico, infatti, viene prodotto ben l'80 % dei giocattoli di tutto il mondo.

In passato gli Stati Uniti vietarono la vendita dei giocattoli cinesi per l'uso di vernici contenenti un'eccessiva quantità di piombo. Le produzioni industriali cinesi, infatti, si contraddistinguono per la notevole emissione di gas nocivi. Inoltre, è noto che il basso costo dei giocattoli è dovuto all'utilizzo di lavoro minorile, mascherato come corsi d'istruzione scolastica pratica, spesso sottopagato e svolto in ambienti poco salubri.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è al corrente della situazione,

2. quali misure intende adottare per garantire ai cittadini europei la qualità dei giocattoli acquistati e per verificare le condizioni di lavoro della mano d'opera impiegata nelle industrie cinesi?

Risposta data da Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(13 marzo 2012)

In base alla direttiva 2009/48/CE ([1]) sulla sicurezza dei giocattoli tutti i giocattoli immessi sul mercato UE devono essere sicuri e recare la marcatura CE. Tali norme, compresi i limiti stabiliti per piombo e altre sostanze tossiche nei giocattoli, si applicano a prescindere sia dal Paese di origine dei giocattoli sia dal loro prezzo. È di competenza degli stati membri vegliare affinché sul mercato UE vengano immessi e resi disponibili ai consumatori solo giocattoli sicuri.

Per quanto riguarda le condizioni di lavoro all'interno degli impianti di produzione il settore dei giocattoli, oltre a misure volte ad affrontare nello specifico le condizioni di lavoro in Cina, ha elaborato tramite l'ICTI (Consiglio internazionale per il controllo delle industrie dei giocattoli) il programma «ICTI-Care», che aspira a garantire un ambiente di lavoro sicuro e umano ai lavoratori di tutte le fabbriche di giocattoli al mondo. Per raggiungere tali obiettivi il programma mette a disposizione delle fabbriche di giocattoli iniziative di formazione e istruzione nonché un programma di monitoraggio. Al centro dell'attenzione si trovano Cina, Hong Kong e Macao, sui cui territori viene prodotto circa l'80 % di tutti i giocattoli del mondo.

http://www.icti-care.org/

La Commissione incoraggia le aziende europee ad adottare le norme più rigorose per quanto riguarda una condotta aziendale responsabile e a difendere attivamente il concetto di responsabilità sociale delle imprese (CSR). A questo scopo la Commissione promuove la sensibilizzazione e il ricorso a strumenti quali i Principi guida su imprese e diritti umani delle Nazioni unite oppure le Linee guida OCSE per le imprese multinazionali, aggiornate di recente. Queste ultime raccomandano che le aziende operino in linea con le norme internazionali sul lavoro, tra cui le convenzioni fondamentali OIL volte ad ottenere l'abolizione effettiva del lavoro minorile e l'eliminazione di qualsiasi forma di lavoro forzato od obbligatorio.

([1]) GU L170 del 30.06.2009, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000506/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Toxic toys from China

During the Christmas period, Europe was 'invaded' by Chinese toys that cost little but are dangerous compared to toys certified with the CE mark. In fact, 80 % of all the toys produced in the world are from China.

In the past the United States prohibited the sale of Chinese toys on account of the fact that they comprised paint containing excessive quantities of lead. Chinese industry produces particularly high levels of noxious gas emissions. In addition, it is well known that the low cost of toys is due to the use of child labour, under the guise of practical school exercises, often underpaid and taking place in less than salubrious environments.

In light of the above, will the Commission state:

1. If it is aware of the situation?

2. What measures it intends to adopt to provide European citizens with guarantees regarding the quality of toys they purchase and to check the employment conditions of the workforce employed in Chinese industries?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

According to Directive 2009/48/EC ([1]) on the safety of toys all toys placed on the EU market have to be safe and bear the CE marking. These rules, including the limitations for lead and other toxic substances in toys, apply regardless of the country of origin of the toys, or their price. Member States have the responsibility of checking that only safe toys enter the EU market and are made available to EU consumers.

As regards the labour conditions in the production plants, besides measures to address labour conditions in China, the toy industry set up the 'ICTI-International Council of Toy Industries-Care' programme. It aims at ensuring safe and humane workplace environments for toy factory workers worldwide. To achieve these goals, the programme provides education, training and a monitoring program for toy factories. The initial focus is on China, Hong Kong and Macau, where approximately 80 % of the world's toys are manufactured.

http://www.icti-care.org/

The Commission encourages European businesses to adopt the highest standards of responsible business conduct and actively supports the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). To this end, the Commission promotes the implementation and awareness of instruments such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights or the recently updated OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. The latter recommends that the companies operate in line with international labour standards, including the ILO fundamental conventions on effective abolition of child labour and elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour.

([1]) OJ L170, 30.6.2009, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000507/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Sequestrate 78 tonnellate di prodotti ittici

A Napoli pochi giorni fa l'operazione «Octopus» della Capitaneria di Porto ha portato al sequestro di 45 tonnellate di frutti di mare e 32 tonnellate di altri prodotti ittici oltre che una tonnellata di datteri di mare, per un valore commerciale che ha superato il milione di euro.

In particolare, il blitz ha posto in essere una delicata e vasta operazione di contrasto al commercio abusivo di prodotti ittici pericolosi nella zona del mercato popolare partenopeo, notoriamente controllata da soggetti collusi con famiglie appartenenti alla criminalità organizzata. L'azione, preceduta da una preliminare attività investigativa, ha portato al sequestro di oltre 14 tonnellate di prodotti ittici pronti per essere illecitamente immessi in commercio. I prodotti sequestrati, apparsi in pessimo stato di conservazione e non idonei al consumo umano, come accertato dagli organismi sanitari, risultavano detenuti, nella quasi totalità, in strutture abusive del tutto carenti e non liberamente accessibili.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è al corrente della situazione?

2. quali iniziative intende assumere per contrastare il traffico illecito di prodotti ittici non controllati e pericolosi per la salute umana?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(6 marzo 2012)

La responsabilità di far rispettare le regole in tema di sicurezza alimentare ricade sugli Stati membri che sono tenuti a porre in atto un sistema globale di controlli ufficiali per verificare la conformità alla normativa alimentare. Nel caso menzionato dall'onorevole deputato i controlli ufficiali sembrano effettivamente aver consentito alle autorità competenti di intervenire nei casi di illecito identificati.

La Commissione verifica costantemente se gli Stati membri fanno debitamente fede ai loro obblighi di controllo, anche per il tramite di audit in loco ad opera dell'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario. La Commissione però non si impegna a far rispettare la legislazione in singoli casi.

La Commissione mantiene attivo il sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi dell'UE (RASFF), tramite il quale gli Stati membri riferiscono i casi di rischi diretti o indiretti per la salute umana derivanti dagli alimenti. Non è pervenuta nessuna notifica dei casi in questione, il che starebbe a indicare che l'intervento delle autorità competenti è stato sufficiente per rimuovere dal mercato i prodotti inidonei o non sicuri.

Nel caso specifico dei prodotti della pesca, il regolamento sul regime di controllo ([1]) e le sue modalità di esecuzione semplificano l'applicazione dei controlli, in particolare per quanto concerne le condizioni di accesso alle risorse (licenze di pesca, autorizzazioni di pesca), la marcatura dei pescherecci e degli attrezzi, i sistemi di controllo, i libri di bordo, i sistemi elettronici di registrazione e trasmissione dati e gli ispettori dell'Unione. Queste regole configurano un sistema di tracciabilità per il controllo dei prodotti della pesca che copre ogni fase della filiera, dalle catture allo sbarco, alla consegna del prodotto al mercato e alla vendita e consente agli ispettori di individuare le eventuali infrazioni intervenute nei vari punti della catena della fornitura.

([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.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000507/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: 78 tonnes of fishery products seized

A few days ago in Naples, operation Octopus conducted by the Harbour Master's Office led to the seizure of 45 tonnes of seafood, 32 tonnes of other fishery products and one tonne of date shells, with a total commercial value exceeding EUR 1 million.

Operation Octopus included a delicate, large-scale operation to combat the unlawful trade in hazardous fishery products in a working class district of Naples which is known to be controlled by individuals colluding with organised crime families. The raid that was carried out following preliminary investigations led to the seizure of more than 14 tonnes of fishery products which were about to be placed on the market illegally. The goods seized, which were in a very poor condition and not fit for human consumption, as was ascertained by the health authorities, were almost all stored in illegal facilities which were entirely inadequate and not freely accessible.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the above situation?

2. what steps it intends to take in order to combat the illegal trade in fishery products which are not subject to proper controls and pose a threat to human health?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

Responsibility for enforcing food safety rules lies with the Member States, which are required to establish a comprehensive system of official controls to verify compliance with food law. In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, official controls seem to have indeed allowed the competent authorities to take action to counter identified violations.

The Commission constantly monitors delivery by the Member States of their control duties, including through on-the-spot audits by its Food and Veterinary Office. It has not however engaged itself in enforcement of legislation in individual cases.

The Commission maintains an EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), through which Member States report occurrences of direct or indirect risks to human health deriving from food. No notification of the cases in question was received, which should be taken as an indication that action by the competent authorities was sufficient to eliminate unfit or unsafe products from the market.

In the specific case of fisheries products, the Control regulation ([1]) and its implementing rules simplify the application of control rules, in particular as regards the conditions for access to resources (fishing licences, fishing authorisations), the marking of fishing vessels and fishing gear, the vessel monitoring system, logbooks, electronic recording and reporting system and Union inspectors. These rules set out a traceability system for the control of fisheries products, which covers every stage in the chain that sees fish caught, landed, brought to market and sold and allowing inspectors to detect infringements at any stage of the supply chain.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, establishing a Community control system to ensure compliance with the rules of the CFP.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000508/12
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Distanze minime di sicurezza dalla costa delle rotte internazionali

La tragedia del 14 gennaio 2012 che ha visto l'incagliamento della *Costa Concordia* arenarsi sulle coste dell'Isola del Giglio evidenzia che occorre effettuare tutti gli sforzi possibili per ridurre il numero di sinistri e di incidenti marittimi, per prevenire la perdita di vite umane e l'inquinamento dell'ambiente marino.

Il turismo marittimo e di crociera è in rapida crescita e attira sempre più persone, tuttavia bisogna fare attenzione al dato di fatto che, come ha affermato l'organizzazione ecologista WWF (*World Wide Fund*), seppur il Mediterraneo rappresenti meno dell'1 % della superficie marina, la percentuale di traffico marittimo superi più del 20 % quello globale.

Attualmente le navi da crociera possono passare molto vicine ai centri abitati e a zone costiere di rilevanza ambientale o addirittura nei centri abitati come Venezia. I rischi per la popolazione oltre che per l'ecosistema sono immensi e non sembrano scongiurati da un quadro normativo chiaro.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. Ritiene essa opportuno adottare un regolamento UE che, visto il rischio ambientale delle rotte internazionali e dei vari ordinamenti nazionali coinvolti, imponga distanze minime di sicurezza dai centri abitati per le navi da crociera come criterio di analisi nelle inchieste marittime in aggiunta alla direttiva 2009/18/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio che stabilisce i principi fondamentali in materia di inchieste sugli incidenti nel trasporto marittimo?

2. Ritiene essa opportuno estendere l'assistenza fornita dall'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza marittima (EMSA) oltre il regolamento (CE) n. 725/2004?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2012)

1. Nella legislazione internazionale e in quella dell'Unione europea non esistono norme specifiche relative alla distanza minima di sicurezza dalle coste per le navi di grandi dimensioni; la scelta della distanza è demandata alla valutazione professionale del comandante della nave che si avvale degli strumenti tecnologici disponibili per garantire una navigazione sicura. Il comandante deve tuttavia stabilire un piano di navigazione per l'intero viaggio, tenendo conto della zona in cui avviene la navigazione, delle condizioni meteorologiche e di altre condizioni essenziali, quali i pertinenti avvisi, permanenti o temporanei, ai naviganti, gli atlanti delle correnti e delle maree, le tavole delle maree, i dati idrografici e lo spazio minimo sotto la chiglia in zone critiche, in cui la profondità ridotta dell'acqua può interferire con la navigazione. Tenendo conto di quanto precede, i mercantili seguono nella maggior parte di casi rotte di uso generale o rotte raccomandate nelle zone in cui sono in vigore sistemi di organizzazione del traffico marittimo a norma del diritto internazionale.

A norma della direttiva 2002/59/CE dell'Unione europea relativa all'istituzione di un sistema comunitario di monitoraggio del traffico navale e d'informazione, la navi che entrano nei porti dell'Unione europea devono essere munite di un sistema di identificazione automatica (AIS) che consente agli Stati costieri di monitorare il passaggio delle navi lungo le loro coste.

2. Per quanto concerne il ruolo dell'Agenzia europea della sicurezza marittima (EMSA), la Commissione si richiama alla sua proposta di revisione del regolamento di istituzione dell'EMSA attualmente all'esame del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio. Obiettivo della revisione è, tra l'altro, quello di estendere i compiti e l'assistenza dell'EMSA per tenere conto degli sviluppi della politica di sicurezza marittima nell'Unione europea e a livello internazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000508/12
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Minimum safety distances of international shipping routes from coastlines

The tragedy of 14 January 2012 when the *Costa Concordia* cruise ship ran aground on the island of Giglio highlights the fact that all possible efforts to reduce the number of accidents and incidents at sea need to be made, to prevent the loss of lives and pollution of the marine environment.

Maritime and cruise tourism is growing rapidly and attracting an increasing number of people. However, we need to pay attention to the fact that, as stated by the environmental organisation WWF (World Wildlife Fund), even though the Mediterranean covers less than 1 % of the global sea area, maritime traffic there is 20 % higher than in the rest of the world.

At present cruise ships can pass very close to residential areas and coastal areas of environmental significance, or even through cities like Venice. There are huge risks for populations and ecosystems and there is apparently no clear regulatory framework to help avert those risks.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Given the environmental risk posed by international shipping routes and the wide variety of national laws, would it not consider it appropriate to adopt an EU regulation to lay down minimum safety distances from residential areas for cruise ships, which could be used in maritime investigations in addition to Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector?

2. Does it not think it should extend the assistance provided by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) beyond Regulation (EC) No 725/2004?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

1. In the framework of both international and EU legislation there is no specific rule regarding the safe navigation distance from the coast for large vessels and it is entirely up to the professional judgment of the vessel's captain assisted by the available technological means for safe navigation. However, a navigation plan for the entire route has to be established by the captain taking into account, the area of navigation, the weather forecast and other essential conditions including any relevant permanent or temporary notices to mariners, current and tidal atlases and tide tables, hydrographical data, minimum clearance required under the keel in critical areas with restricted water depth that may affect navigation. Taking into account the above, merchant ships follow in most cases generally used routes or recommended routes in those areas where Ship Routeing is in place under international law.

Under the EU Directive 2002/59/EC establishing a Community Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System, vessels calling at EU ports are required to be fitted with an automatic identification system (AIS) which allows coastal States to monitor ships along their coasts.

2. As far as the role of the European Maritime Safety Agency is concerned, the Commission wishes to recall its proposal for the revision of the EMSA's founding Regulation currently under discussion between the Council and the European Parliament. This revision aims indeed among others in strengthening EMSA's tasks and assistance in order to reflect the development of the maritime safety policy at EU and international level.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000512/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(25 ianuarie 2012)

Subiect: Impactul asupra mediului marin al unei acțiuni propuse de autoritățile italiene

Autoritățile italiene intenționează să realizeze la sfârșitul acestei luni o acțiune de amploare de deratizare a insulei Montecristo, rezervație naturală protejată. În cadrul acestei activități se vor utiliza 26 de tone de produse toxice.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă are cunoștință de un studiu cu privire la eventualul impact al utilizării acestor substanțe asupra mediului marin din regiune.

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(12 martie 2012)

Substanțele utilizate de autoritățile italiene pentru această acțiune de deratizare de amploare trebuie să fie autorizate în conformitate cu dispozițiile Directivei 1998/8/CE ([1]). Această directivă privește autorizarea și introducerea pe piață, în scopul utilizării, a produselor biodestructive în statele membre.

Fără a cunoaște substanțele care urmează a fi utilizate, Comisia nu poate face comentarii asupra disponibilității unor studii specifice privind eventualul impact al acestora.

([1]) Directiva 1998/8/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 16 februarie 1998 privind comercializarea produselor biodestructive. JO L 123, 24.4.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000512/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Impact on the marine environment of an operation proposed by the Italian authorities

The Italian authorities are intending to carry out at the end of this month a large-scale rat extermination operation on the island of Montecristo, which is a protected nature reserve. This operation will include the use of 26 tonnes of toxic substances.

Does the Commission know of any study on the impact that using these substances could have on the region's marine environment?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The substances used in this large scale rat extermination by the Italian authorities must be authorised in accordance with the provisions of Directive 1998/8/EC ([1]). This directive concerns the authorisation and the placing on the market for use of biocidal products within the Member States.

Without knowing which substances are to be used, the Commission cannot comment on the availability of specific studies regarding their potential impacts.

([1]) Directive 1998/8/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 1998 concerning the placing of biocidal products on the market, OJ L 123, 24.4.1998.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000513/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(1 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Cercetarea privind cancerul în UE

O cercetare realizată recent la Universitatea Reading din Marea Britanie atrage atenția asupra riscului asupra sănătății prezentat de unele substanțe chimice folosite în produsele de îngrijire zilnică — parabenii, fiind demonstrat potențialul cancerigen al acestora. O altă cercetare, realizată recent în Suedia sugerează o legătură directă între consumul de carne procesată și dezvoltarea cancerului pancreatic. În ambele cazuri, autorii cercetărilor au precizat că rezultatele constatate ar impune cercetări suplimentare. Comisia este rugată să precizeze în ce mod ar putea sprijini continuarea unor astfel de cercetări, în cadrul unei perspective pe termen mediu și lung.

Răspuns dat de dna Geoghegan-Quinn în numele Comisiei
(6 martie 2012)

Comisia este informată cu privire la studiile care analizează riscurile pentru sănătate generate de expunerea la parabeni (conservanți antimicrobieni folosiți în produsele cosmetice și în produsele alimentare) și de carnea procesată, menționate de distinsul membru ([1]) ([2]).

Deși studiile referitoare la rolul parabenilor și al alimentelor procesate ca factori cancerigeni nu au fost tratate în mod specific, cercetarea în colaborare cu privire la riscurile pentru sănătate cauzate de expunerea la diferite produse chimice din mediu, din alimentație și de la locul de muncă, precum și abordările preventive privind cancerul au fost o prioritate constantă în cadrul celui de-al șaselea și al celui de-al șaptelea Program-cadru pentru cercetare și dezvoltare tehnologică (PC6 2002-2006 ([3]); PC7 2007 — 2013 ([4])).

Ca urmare a acestor eforturi, peste 150 de milioane EUR au fost alocați pentru sprijinirea cercetării privind interacțiunile între gene și mediu, susceptibilitatea genetică, epidemiologia, mecanismele care stau la baza carcinogenezei, markerii biologici de evaluare a riscurilor care pot prognoza riscurile pentru sănătate reprezentate de poluanți, de aditivi alimentari, de radiații, de agenții patogeni și de substanțele chimice care afectează sistemul endocrin, prin intermediul a 40 de proiecte de colaborare.

Mai multe posibilități de cercetare în acest domeniu pot apărea în viitoarele cereri de propuneri. Cererile de cercetare în colaborare depuse în cadrul acestor cereri de propuneri sunt selectate printr-o procedură de evaluare *inter pares*, excelența științifică fiind principalul criteriu de selecție, iar cele mai bune dintre acestea primesc sprijin financiar, indiferent de originea lor geografică.

([1]) Barr et al. (2012) Journal of Applied Toxicology (Jurnalul de Toxicologie Aplicată) doi: 10.1002/jat.1786.
([2]) Larsson și Wolk (2012), British Journal of Cancer (Jurnalul Britanic de Oncologie) doi: 10.1038/bjc.2011.585.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/lifescihealth/home.html
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000513/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Cancer research in the EU

A study conducted recently at the University of Reading in Great Britain highlights the health risk posed by parabens, which are chemicals used in daily care products whose carcinogenic potential has been demonstrated. Another study carried out recently in Sweden suggests a direct link between eating processed meat and developing pancreatic cancer. In both cases, the authors of the studies specified that the results called for further research to be conducted. How might the Commission support the continuation of such research in the medium and long term?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of studies that investigate health risks posed by exposure to parabens (an antimicrobial preservative used in cosmetics and food) and processed meat, as cited by the Honourable Member ([1]) ([2]).

Although studies into the role of parabens and processed food as carcinogens have not specifically been addressed , collaborative research on environmental health risks posed by exposure to various environmental, nutritional and occupational chemicals as well as preventive approaches for cancer, have been a constant priority within the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006 ([3]); FP7, 2007-2013 ([4])).

As a result of these efforts, more than EUR 150 million were devoted to the support of research on gene-environment interactions, genetic susceptibility, epidemiology, mechanisms underlying carcinogenesis, risk assessment biomarkers predictive of health risks posed by pollutants, food additives, radiation, pathogens and endocrine disrupting chemicals, through forty collaborative projects.

Further research opportunities in this area may arise in future calls for proposals. Collaborative research a pplications submitted to these calls are selected through a peer-review's evaluation procedure with scientific excellence as the overriding criterion and financial support awarded to the best applications, irrespective of their geographical origin.

([1]) Barr et al. (2012) *Journal of Applied Toxicology*, doi: 10.1002/jat.1786.
([2]) Larsson and Wolk (2012) *British Journal of Cancer*, doi: 10.1038/bjc.2011.585.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/lifescihealth/home.html
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000514/12
an die Kommission
Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(23. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Dienstrechtsreformgesetz

Durch das Dienstrechtsreformgesetz vom 9.11.2010 (Gesetzblatt für Baden-Württemberg Nr. 19, S. 793) wurden verschiedene Einzelgesetze modifiziert bzw. neu gefasst.

In § 19 Absatz 4 LBG BW wird ausgeführt: „Dienstzeiten im öffentlichen Dienst oder Zeiten, die in einem der Ausbildung entsprechenden Beruf zurückgelegt wurden, können auf die Probezeit angerechnet werden, wenn sie nach ihrer Art und Bedeutung Tätigkeiten in der betreffenden Laufbahn entsprochen haben".

§ 31 Absatz 1 LBesGBW sieht vor: „Die Höhe des Grundgehalts in den Besoldungsgruppen der Landesbesoldungsordnung A wird nach Stufe bemessen. Das Aufsteigen in den Stufen bestimmt sich nach Zeiten mit dienstlicher Erfahrung (Erfahrungszeiten). Erfahrungszeiten sind Zeiten im Dienst eines öffentlich-rechtlichen Dienstherrn im Geltungsbereich des Grundgesetzes in einem Beamten- oder Richterverhältnis mit Anspruch auf Dienstbezüge".

Im Bezug auf § 19 Absatz 4 LBG BW und § 31 Absatz 1 LBesGBW heißt es, dass Zeiten, die beispielsweise ein Fremdsprachenlehrer im Rahmen des aus EU-Mitteln geförderten Comenius-Programms an einer Schule in einem anderen EU-Mitgliedstaat unterrichtet, zwar die Probezeit verkürzen können, aber nicht als Erfahrungszeiten zählen.

Man kann sich daher zwar im Ausland durch eine förderliche Vordienstzeit bewähren, besoldungswirksame Erfahrungen jedoch nur im innerdeutschen öffentlichen Dienst erwerben.

Ich bitte die Kommission, zu klären, ob diese unterschiedliche Bewertung, die insbesondere auch Lehrer/-innen mit nicht deutscher EU-Staatsbürgerschaft benachteiligt, die nach Berufsjahren in ihrem Heimatland in Baden-Württemberg in das Beamtenverhältnis übernommen werden, mit EU-Recht vereinbar ist.

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(14. Februar 2012)

Nach der Rechtsprechung des Gerichtshofs der Europäischen Union ([1]) haben die öffentlichen Arbeitgeber der Mitgliedstaaten im Falle von Wanderarbeitnehmern beim Zugang zu Stellen oder bei der Festlegung der Arbeitsbedingungen (z. B. Gehalt und Dienstgrad) vorangegangene Zeiten vergleichbarer Beschäftigung in anderen Mitgliedstaaten auf gleiche Weise zu berücksichtigen wie Beschäftigungszeiten im System des Aufnahmemitgliedstaats.

Kapitel 3.7 des Arbeitsdokuments der Kommissionsdienststellen „Freizügigkeit der Arbeitnehmer im öffentlichen Sektor" ([2]) enthält weitere Details zu dieser Frage.

Den ihr vorliegenden Quellen entnimmt die Kommission, dass in Baden-Württemberg zur Bemessung des Grundgehalts für Beamte (Besoldungsgruppe A) in anderen Mitgliedstaaten zurückgelegte Beschäftigungszeiten gleich berücksichtigt werden wie Beschäftigungszeiten bei öffentlichen Arbeitgebern in Deutschland (§§ 31, 32 und 33 des einschlägigen Gesetzes des Landes Baden-Württemberg (LBesGBW)). Nach § 33 Abs. 2 Nr. 1 dieses Gesetzes ist gleichartige Tätigkeit von Staatsangehörigen eines EU-Mitgliedstaats im öffentlichen Dienst einer Einrichtung der Europäischen Union oder im öffentlichen Dienst eines Mitgliedstaats der Tätigkeit im Dienst eines öffentlich-rechtlichen Dienstherrn in Deutschland gleichgestellt.

Daher ist die Kommission nicht der Auffassung, dass diese Bestimmungen gegen EU-Recht verstoßen.

([1]) Rechtssachen C-419/92 Scholz, Slg. 1994, I-505; C-15/96 Schöning, Slg. 1998, I-47; C-187/96 Kommission/Griechenland, Slg. 1998, I-1095; C-195/98 Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, Slg. 2000, I-10497; C-224/01 Köbler, Slg. 2003, I-10239; C-278/03 Kommission/Italien, Slg. 2005, I-03747; C-205/04 Kommission/Spanien, Slg. 2006, I-31; C-371/04 Kommission/Italien, Slg. 2006, I-10257.

([2]) SEK(2010)1609 endg. vom 14. Dezember 2010: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=de&catId=457&newsId=956&furtherNews=yes.

Zu beachten ist, dass es sich bei der Comenius-Aktion, auf die sich der Herr Abgeordnete bezieht, um Comenius-Assistentenstellen handelt; dabei erhalten angehende Lehrkräfte, die noch nicht als Vollzeitlehrkräfte beschäftigt waren, eine Finanzhilfe, um im Ausland durch Unterrichtsassistenz Erfahrung sammeln zu können. Es gibt keinen Arbeitsvertrag zwischen der Gastschule und der Assistentin/dem Assistenten.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000514/12
to the Commission
Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: Civil Service Reform Law

The Civil Service Reform Law of 9 November 2010 (Official Journal for Baden-Württemberg No 19, p. 793) modified and recast various individual laws.

Article 19(4) of the Baden-Württemberg Civil Service Law (LBG BW) states the following: 'Periods spent as a civil servant or time spent exercising a profession corresponding to the individual's training may be counted towards the probationary period if they have involved activities consistent, in terms of their nature and level, with the relevant career path.'

Article 31(1) of the Baden-Württemberg Pay Scale Law (LBesGBW) contains the following provision: 'The amount of the basic salary for the grades laid down in State Pay Scale Regulation A shall be calculated by step. Promotion in step shall be by periods of service (periods of experience). Periods spent in the service of a public employer in the area of application of the Basic Law, as a civil servant or judge with an entitlement to official emoluments, shall be regarded as periods of experience.'

With reference to Article 19(4) LBG BW and Article 31(1) LBesGBW, this means, for example, that periods spent by a foreign-language teacher teaching in a school in a EU Member State other than Germany under the auspices of the EU-funded Comenius Programme may shorten the probationary period, but do not count as periods of experience.

Accordingly, although it is possible to gain valuable experience abroad, the experience required to be placed in a specific pay grade can be acquired only through work as a civil servant in Germany.

Can the Commission clarify whether this distinction is compatible with EC law, as it places teachers who are nationals of other EU Member States at a specific disadvantage if they become civil servants in Baden-Württemberg after spending several years working in their profession in their home country?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2012)

In accordance with the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union ([1]), Member State public-sector employers must take account of migrant workers' previous periods of comparable employment completed in other Member States in the same way as working periods acquired in the host Member State's system for the purpose of access to posts and when determining working conditions (e.g. salary and grade).

Chapter 3.7 of the Commission Staff Working Document 'Free movement of workers in the public sector' ([2]) gives more information on this issue.

From the information available, the Commission understands that, for the purpose of determining the basic salary of civil servants (Category A) in Baden-Württemberg, periods of employment completed in other Member States are taken into account in the same way as periods of employment with German public-sector employers (paragraphs 31, 32 and 33 of the relevant Baden-Württemberg law (LBesGBW)). Paragraph 33(2)(1) of the latter provides that comparable work which EU citizens perform in the service of a European Union institution or in the public service of a Member State is equivalent to work for a German public-service employer.

The Commission therefore does not consider that the provisions breach EC law.

It should be noted that the Comenius action to which the Honourable Member refers is Comenius Assistantships, under which future teachers who have never been employed as full time teachers receive grants to assist in teaching abroad. There is no employment contract between the host school and the assistant.

([1]) Cases C-419/92 *Scholz* [1994] ECR I-505; C-15/96 *Schöning* [1998] ECR I-47; C-187/96 *Commission* v *Greece* [1998] ECR I-1095; C-195/98 *Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund* [2000] ECR I-10497; C-224/01 *Köbler* [2003] ECR I-10239; C-278/03 *Commission* v *Italy* [2005] ECR I-03747; C-205/04 *Commission* v *Spain* [2006] ECR I-31; C-371/04 *Commission* v *Italy* [2006] ECR I-10257.

([2]) SEC(2010) 1609 final of 14 December 2010: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=457&newsId=956&furtherNews=yes.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000515/12
aan de Commissie
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(25 januari 2012)

Betreft: Impact van een belasting op financiële transacties

Op woensdag 14 december heeft een ambtenaar van de Europese Commissie tijdens een bijeenkomst in Den Haag gemeld dat de invoering van een financiële transactiebelasting op de lange duur een impact van ongeveer 0 % heeft op het bruto nationaal product van de landen in de Europese Unie ([1]). Dit in tegenstelling tot de impactanalyse van de Commissie van 28 september ([2]), waarin wordt uitgegaan van een afname van de economische productie in de Unie op de lange termijn van -0,53 % tot -1,76 % en het evaluatierapport van het Centraal Planbureau (CPB) ([3]), geschreven in opdracht van de minister van Financiën, dat uitgaat van een langetermijneffect van -0,4 % tot -1,2 %.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de uitspraken van deze ambtenaar? Is de Commissie bekend met de analyse van het CPB?

2. Kan de Commissie opheldering geven over de grote verschillen in cijfermatige uitkomst tussen enerzijds de cijfers van het CPB en de impactanalyse van de Europese Commissie, en anderzijds de recente uitspraken van de Commissieambtenaar?

3. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat de eigen impactanalyse zal worden bijgesteld, zoals aangegeven tijdens de vergadering van de Commissie Economische en Monetaire Zaken van het Europees Parlement op 9 januari 2012? Zo ja, wat is hiervoor de voornaamste reden en wanneer zal de nieuwe impactanalyse worden gepubliceerd?

In de evaluatie van de financiële transactiebelasting acht het CPB het onwaarschijnlijk dat de invoering van een belasting op financiële transacties de risico's voor het financiële systeem vermindert en daardoor bijdraagt aan een stabielere financiële sector.

4. Onderschrijft de Commissie de conclusie van het CPB dat een belasting op financiële transacties geen bijdrage levert aan een stabielere financiële sector? Zo nee, waarom niet? Wat is volgens de Commissie het voornaamste doel van de belasting op financiële transacties?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(2 april 2012)

1. De Commissie is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde uitspraken en de analyse van het CPB.

2. De uitspraak had betrekking op een aanvullende analyse waarin rekening wordt gehouden met de positieve effecten voor het bbp en de werkgelegenheid wanneer gebruik wordt gemaakt van de inkomsten uit een FTT en nieuwe modelspecificaties die uitsluitend kwalitatief werden geanalyseerd (d.w.z. dat het bij de financieringsbronnen slechts voor een klein deel om nieuwe aandelenkapitaal gaat waarop de belasting van invloed zou kunnen zijn, terwijl het grootste deel van de financieringsbronnen niet wordt belast en naar verwachting volledig afgeschermd blijven). Voor het overige bevatten de aanvullende berekeningen min of meer dezelfde waarden als de CPB-analyse.

3. Zoals meestal het geval is tijdens de onderhandelingen over een voorstel van de Commissie voeren de diensten van de Commissie een aanvullende analyse uit om te antwoorden op specifieke vragen of kwesties die door de wetgevende autoriteit of andere belanghebbenden worden opgeworpen. Een en ander is niet bedoeld als formele aanpassing of bijwerking van de effectbeoordeling. In dit geval is het de bedoeling de analyse aan te vullen en bepaalde kwesties te verduidelijken die tot misverstanden over het voorstel lijken te hebben geleid. Zodra deze aanvullende analyse is afgerond, zal zij ter beschikking van alle betrokken partijen worden gesteld.

4. De Commissie is het niet eens met de conclusies van het CPB. Een van de genoemde doelstellingen van de belasting is de volatiliteit van de markten te verminderen. Via het ontmoedigen van bepaalde marktactiviteiten zoals geautomatiseerde supersnelle handel of derivatenhandel met een hoge leverage, zou de daaruit volgende consolidatie van bepaalde marktvolumes en -structuren de diensten die door de financiële markt worden verleend beter in overeenstemming kunnen brengen met de behoeften van de niet-financiële sectoren van de economie.

([1]) Het Financieel Dagblad, 14 december 2011, „Impact transactietaks op de economie nihil".
([2]) SEC(2011)1103.
([3]) Centraal Planbureau Notitie, 21 december 2012, „An evaluation of the financial transaction tax".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000515/12
to the Commission
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Impact of a financial transaction tax

On Wednesday 14 December, a European Commission official said at a meeting in The Hague that the introduction of a financial transaction tax will, in the long term, have an impact of approximately 0 % on the gross national product of the countries in the European Union ([1]). This contrasts with the impact assessment by the Commission of 28 September ([2]), which assumes a decrease in economic production in the Union in the long term of between 0.53 % and 1.76 %, and the evaluation report from the Central Planning Office (CPB) ([3]), which puts the long-term decrease at between 0.4 % and 1.2 %.

1. Is the Commission aware of the statements made by this official? Is the Commission aware of the CPB's evaluation?

2. Can the Commission provide clarification as to the large differences in numerical value between the figures of the CPB and the impact assessment of the European Commission, on the one hand, and the recent statements made by the Commission official, on the other hand?

3. Can the Commission confirm that its own impact assessment will be adjusted, as indicated at the meeting of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs of the European Parliament on 9 January 2012? If so, what is the main reason for this and when will the new impact assessment be published?

In the evaluation of the financial transaction tax, the CPB concludes that it is unlikely that the introduction of a tax on financial transactions will reduce the risks to the financial system and thus contribute to creating a more stable financial sector.

4. Does the Commission agree with the CPB's conclusion that a financial transaction tax will contribute nothing to creating a more stable financial sector? If not, why not? What is, according to the Commission, the main purpose of the financial transaction tax?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the statements and the CPB's evaluation to which the Honourable Member refers.

2. The statement refered to an additional analysis which takes into account the positive effects on GDP and employment when using the revenues generated by an FTT and new model specifications which were only analysed qualitatively(i.e. that the sources of financing are only to a small part new equity, which might be affected by applying the tax, while the larger part of financing is not taxed and is assumed to remain fully ring-fenced). Otherwise the additional calculations contain values similar though not equal to the CPB study.

3. As it is usually the case in the negotiation process of a Commission's proposal, the services of the Commission are conducting additional analysis in order to answer specific questions or concerns raised by the legislative authority or other stakeholders. This is not supposed to formally adjust or update the impact assessment. In this case, it aims at complementing the analysis and at clarifying some issues that seem to have triggered some misunderstandings on the proposal. Once finalised, this analysis will be made available to all interested parties.

4. The Commission does not share the CPB's conclusions. One identified objective of the tax is reduction in markets volatility. By discouraging certain market activities such as automated high frequency trading or much leveraged derivatives, the subsequent consolidation of some market volumes and structures might let fall the services provided by financial market more in line with the needs of the non-financial parts of the economy.

([1]) *Het Financieel Dagblad*, 14 December 2011, 'Impact of transaction tax on the economy amounts to zero'.
([2]) SEC(2011)1103.
([3]) CPB Memorandum, 21 December 2011, 'An evaluation of the financial transaction tax'.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000516/12
an die Kommission
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL) und Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Vorschnelle Aussagen von EFSA-Mitgliedern über die Neubewertung von Aspartam

1. Ist die Kommission darüber informiert, dass der Vorsitzende des Wissenschaftlichen Ausschusses der EFSA, Vittorio Silano, und John Christian Larsen, der ebenfalls Verbindungen zur EFSA hat, letzte Woche erklärt haben, es gebe keinen Grund, an der Sicherheit der zurzeit auf dem Markt angebotenen Süßstoffe (also auch Aspartam) zu zweifeln?

2. Pflichtet die Kommission der Erklärung bei, dass es keinen Grund zu Zweifeln an der Sicherheit von Aspartam gibt?

3. Wenn ja, warum hat sie dann den Auftrag zu einer umfassenden Neubewertung des Süßstoffs gegeben?

4. Wenn die Kommission der abgegebenen Erklärung nicht beipflichtet, beabsichtigt sie dann, Schritte gegen EFSA-Mitglieder zu unternehmen, die die Erklärung unterzeichnet/unterstützt haben? Warum bzw. warum nicht?

5. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Zuverlässigkeit und Objektivität der Neubewertung des Süßstoffs Aspartam vor dem Hintergrund der abgegebenen Erklärung?

6. Stellt die Kommission in Abrede, dass hier eine Voreingenommenheit von Wissenschaftlern vorliegt, die Einfluss auf die Neubewertung von Aspartam haben können?

7. Was wird die Kommission unternehmen, um doch noch eine unabhängige, unvoreingenommene Neubewertung von Aspartam zu erhalten?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(22. Februar 2012)

1.-5. Die Kommission ist über die Äußerungen auf der Konferenz „No-Calorie Intense Sweeteners — Focus on Safety of Use“ informiert, die am 11. Januar 2012 von der italienischen Gesellschaft für Ernährung (Centro Studi dell'Allimentazione, NFI) und dem italienischen Verband für diätetische Nahrungsmittel und Gesundheitsnahrung (Associazione Italiana di Dietetica e Nutrizione Clinica) veranstaltet wurde. Professor Silano und Professor Larsen waren beide als unabhängige Experten zu der Konferenz geladen. Nach Dafürhalten der Kommission ist jede definitive Aussage über Aspartam verfrüht, solange das Ergebnis der derzeitigen umfassenden Neubewertung durch die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) noch nicht vorliegt — dieses wird im Laufe des Jahres 2012 erwartet. Aspartam gehört zu den Lebensmittelzusatzstoffen, die derzeit in der EU verwendet werden dürfen und deren umfassende Neubewertung zur Prüfung von Bedenken infolge neuer wissenschaftlicher Studien zu diesem Süßstoff von 2020 auf 2012 vorverlegt wurde.

6.-7. Die beiden Wissenschaftler sind keine Mitglieder im ANS-Gremium der EFSA und sind nicht an der Ausarbeitung der wissenschaftlichen Stellungnahme zu Aspartam beteiligt. Bezüglich der Unabhängigkeits- und Interessenkonfliktsthematik verweist die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-003538/2011 ([1]) und E-004782/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=DE.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000516/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL) και Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόωρες δηλώσεις μελών της ΕΑΑΤ για την επαναξιολόγηση της ασπαρτάμης

1. Είναι ενήμερη η Επιτροπή για τη δήλωση που έκαναν την περασμένη εβδομάδα ο πρόεδρος της ΕΑΑΤ (EFSA) Vittorio Silano και ο John Christian Larsen — που επίσης έχει δεσμούς με την ΕΑΑΤ — ότι δεν υπάρχει κανένας λόγος να αμφισβητείται η ασφάλεια των γλυκαντικών ουσιών (κατά συνέπεια και της ασπαρτάμης) που διατίθενται σήμερα στην αγορά;

2. Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή με τη δήλωση ότι δεν υπάρχει κανένας λόγος να αμφισβητείται η ασφάλεια της ασπαρτάμης;

3. Εάν ναι, τότε γιατί έδωσε εντολή για μια εκτεταμένη επαναξιολόγηση της εν λόγω γλυκαντικής ουσίας;

4. Εάν η Επιτροπή δεν συμφωνεί με την ανωτέρω δήλωση, προτίθεται να λάβει μέτρα εναντίον των μελών της ΕΑΑΤ που υπέγραψαν/στήριξαν την εν λόγω δήλωση; Και γιατί (ή γιατί όχι);

5. Πώς κρίνει η Επιτροπή την αξιοπιστία και την αντικειμενικότητα της επαναξιολόγησης της γλυκαντικής ουσίας ασπαρτάμη υπό το πρίσμα της εν λόγω δήλωσης;

6. Αρνείται η Επιτροπή ότι πρόκειται για μια μεροληπτική στάση ερευνητών οι οποίοι μπορούν να επηρεάσουν την επαναξιολόγηση της ασπαρτάμης;

7. Σε ποιες ενέργειες θα προβεί η Επιτροπή προκειμένου να γίνει μια ανεξάρτητη, αμερόληπτη επαναξιολόγηση της ασπαρτάμης;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

1.-5. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τις δηλώσεις που πραγματοποιήθηκαν στις 11 Ιανουαρίου 2012, κατά τη διάσκεψη για τα γλυκαντικά έντονης γλυκαντικής ικανότητας και μηδενικών θερμίδων και την εστίαση της προσοχής στην ασφαλή χρήση τους («No-Calorie Intense Sweeteners — Focus on Safety of Use»), που διοργανώθηκε από το Ίδρυμα Διατροφής της Ιταλίας και την ιταλική ένωση διατροφολόγων και κλινικής διατροφής. Οι καθηγητές κ.κ. Silano και Larsen είχαν προσκληθεί στη διάσκεψη με την ιδιότητά τους ως ανεξάρτητων εμπειρογνωμόνων. Η Επιτροπή φρονεί ότι είναι πρόωρο να συναχθεί οποιοδήποτε οριστικό συμπέρασμα σχετικά με την ασπαρτάμη, εν αναμονή του αποτελέσματος της συνεχιζόμενης πλήρους επαναξιολόγησης από την Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή για την Ασφάλεια των Τροφίμων (EFSA), το οποίο αναμένεται να παραδοθεί αργότερα, εντός του 2012. Η ασπαρτάμη εντάσσεται σε μια συνολική επαναξιολόγηση των προσθέτων τροφίμων που επιτρέπεται επί του παρόντος να χρησιμοποιούνται στην ΕΕ. Η εν λόγω επαναξιολόγηση επισπεύστηκε για το 2012 αντί του 2020, ώστε να ληφθούν υπόψη οι ανησυχίες που διατυπώθηκαν όσον αφορά τις νέες επιστημονικές μελέτες σχετικά με τη συγκεκριμένη γλυκαντική ουσία.

6.-7. Οι δύο επιστήμονες δεν είναι μέλη της ομάδας ANS της EFSA και δεν έχουν καμία ανάμειξη στην εκπόνηση της επιστημονικής γνώμης για την ασπαρτάμη. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το αξιότιμο μέλος στις απαντήσεις που έδωσε στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-003538/2011 ([1]) και E-004782/2011 ([1]) σχετικά με την ανεξαρτησία και την αποφυγή της σύγκρουσης συμφερόντων.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000516/12
aan de Commissie
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL) en Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 januari 2012)

Betreft: Voortijdige uitspraken van EFSA-leden over herevaluatie aspartaam

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de verklaring vorige week gegeven door EFSA-voorman Vittorio Silano en John Christian Larsen — die ook banden heeft met EFSA — dat er geen ruimte is om te twijfelen aan de veiligheid van zoetstoffen die momenteel op de markt zijn (dus ook aspartaam)?

2. Is de Commissie het eens met de verklaring dat er geen ruimte is om te twijfelen aan de veiligheid van aspartaam?

3. Zo ja, waarom heeft ze dan opdracht gegeven tot een uitgebreide herevaluatie van de zoetstof?

4. Indien de Commissie het niet eens is met de gedane verklaring, is zij dan van plan om actie te ondernemen tegen leden van EFSA die de verklaring hebben getekend/gesteund? Waarom wel/niet?

5. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de betrouwbaarheid en objectiviteit van de herevaluatie van zoetstof aspartaam in het licht van de gedane verklaring?

6. Ontkent de Commissie dat er hier sprake is van vooringenomenheid van onderzoekers die invloed kunnen hebben op de herevaluatie van aspartaam?

7. Wat gaat de Commissie eraan doen om alsnog een onafhankelijke, niet vooringenomen herevaluatie van aspartaam te verkrijgen?

Antwoord van de heer Dalli namens de Commissie
(22 februari 2012)

1-5. De Commissie is op de hoogte van de verklaringen die zijn afgelegd tijdens de conferentie „No-Calorie Intense Sweeteners — Focus on Safety of Use" die op 11 januari 2012 is georganiseerd door de Nutrition Foundation of Italy en de Associazione Italiana di Dietetica e Nutrizione Clinica. Zowel professor Silano als professor Larsen was als onafhankelijk deskundige uitgenodigd op de conferentie. Volgens de Commissie is het in afwachting van de resultaten van de aan de gang zijnde volledige herbeoordeling door de Europese Autoriteit voor voedselveiligheid (EFSA) die later in 2012 moet zijn voltooid, nog te vroeg om ten aanzien van aspartaam een definitieve conclusie te trekken. Aspartaam is een onderdeel van een algemene herbeoordeling van de levensmiddelenadditieven die momenteel voor gebruik in de EU zijn toegestaan, die wegens de bezorgdheid ten gevolge van nieuwe wetenschappelijke studies over die zoetstof van 2020 naar 2012 is vervroegd.

6-7. Beide wetenschappers zijn geen lid van het ANS-panel van de EFSA en zijn niet betrokken bij de opstelling van het wetenschappelijk advies over aspartaam. De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op de schriftelijke vragen E-003538/2011 ([1]) en E-004782/2011([1]) met betrekking tot de onafhankelijkheid en het vermijden van belangenconflicten.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000516/12
to the Commission
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL), Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL) and Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Premature statements by EFSA members on the re-assessment of aspartame

1. Is the Commission aware of the statement made last week by EFSA chairman Vittorio Silano and John Christian Larsen, who also has links with the EFSA, that there is no room for doubt as to the safety of sweeteners currently available on the market (i.e., including aspartame?

2. Does the Commission agree with the statement that there is no room for doubt as to the safety of aspartame?

3. If so, why has it then commissioned a comprehensive re-assessment of the sweetener?

4. If the Commission disagrees with the statement made, does it intend to take action against EFSA members who have signed/supported the statement? Why/why not?

5. How does the Commission assess the reliability and objectivity of the re-assessment of the sweetener aspartame in the light of the statement made?

6. Does the Commission deny that this constitutes bias on the part of researchers who could influence the re-assessment of aspartame?

7. What is the Commission going to do to ensure that there will be an independent, unbiased re-assessment of aspartame?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2012)

1-5. The Commission is aware of the statements made at the conference 'No-Calorie Intense Sweeteners — Focus on Safety of Use' organised by the Nutrition Foundation of Italy and the Italian Association of Dietetics and Clinical Nutrition on 11 January 2012. Both Professors Silano and Larsen were invited to the conference in their capacities as independent experts. The Commission is of the opinion that it is premature to reach any definitive conclusion on aspartame pending the outcome of the ongoing full re-evaluation by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) which is due to be delivered later in 2011. Aspartame is part of a comprehensive re-evaluation of food additives currently authorised for use in the EU which has been advanced to 2012 from 2020 to take into account concerns raised regarding new scientific studies on this sweetener.

6-7. The two scientists are not members of the EFSA ANS Panel and have no involvement on the preparation of the scientific opinion on aspartame. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-003538/2011 and E-004782/2011 ([1]) with regard to independence and avoidance of the conflict of interest.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000518/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(25 januari 2012)

Betreft: Nederlandse hervorming van de tegemoetkoming koopkrachtcompensatie

Kan de Commissie in aansluiting op haar antwoord op onze eerdere vraag E-007906/2011 meedelen wat de Nederlandse reactie was op de aanmaningsbrief die zij in deze verstuurde?

Meent de Commissie dat er wijzigingen in het vooruitzicht zijn met betrekking tot de geplande hervorming?

Op welke termijn kunnen deze verwacht worden?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(15 februari 2012)

De Commissie herinnert eraan dat het geachte Parlementslid verwijst naar een nog lopende inbreukprocedure. Daarom kan de Commissie niet ingaan op de inhoud van het antwoord van de Nederlandse regering op de aanmaningsbrief.

De Commissie analyseert momenteel uitvoerig het antwoord van de Nederlandse regering en zal een besluit over verdere stappen in de inbreukprocedure nemen zodra zij haar analyse heeft afgerond.

Het is niet aan de Commissie om aan te geven of de Nederlandse regering wijzigingen met betrekking tot de geplande hervorming overweegt of op welke termijn eventuele wijzigingen kunnen worden verwacht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000518/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Dutch reform of the allowance for loss of purchasing power

Following on its answer to my earlier Question E-007906/2011, can the Commission state what the Dutch reaction was to the letter of formal notice it sent in this connection?

Does the Commission believe that there is a prospect of changes with regard to the planned reform?

When can they be expected?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2012)

The Commission would recall that the Honourable Member refers to an infringement procedure which is still ongoing. Therefore, the Commission cannot comment on the content of the Dutch Government's reply to the letter of formal notice.

The Commission is currently analysing the Dutch Government's reply in detail and will take a decision on further action in the infringement procedure once it has completed its analysis.

It is not for the Commission to comment on whether the Dutch Government envisages making any changes to the planned reform or when any changes could be expected.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000521/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Expenditure on public relations

What is the Commission's annual expenditure on public relations?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The European Commission does not have a specific budget for public relations but for communication and information activities in general. The Commission's operational budget for communication under Title 16 of the 2012 budget amounts to EUR 143 095 000, including the Europe for Citizens programme.

This budget is used to inform around 500 million citizens in 27 Member Sates and in 23 languages, covering the communication activities of the Commission Representations and of the information networks in the Member States, among others.

The Honourable Member is informed that the 2012 budget is available publicly and all budget lines can be consulted in detail on the website 'Budget on line' ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/budget/www/index-en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000522/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Expenditure on public relations

What is the Commission's projected annual budget expenditure for the promotion of EU enlargement?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(9 March 2012)

As pointed out in the Commission's answer to the Honourable Member's question related to Croatia's forthcoming accession E-000523/2012 ([1]), information and communication actions on enlargement policy aiming at citizens in the 27 Member States are financed from the PRINCE programme (budget line 22.02.1001). For 2012 the budgetary authority allocated EUR 5 million.

Information and communication actions targeting the general public in the candidate countries and potential candidates are financed from the IPA Programme (budget line 22.02.1002), for which the budgetary authority granted a total of EUR 10 million for the 2012 budget year. The majority of this will be implemented by EU Delegations in the countries of the enlargement region.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000523/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Expenditure on public relations

What is the Commission's past and projected annual public relations expenditure for the promotion of Croatian accession?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

The Commission will implement an information and communication campaign on Croatia's accession to the EU that will start in the second half of 2012 and extend until September 2013. Currently, the Commission is finalising its action plan on communicating Croatia's accession.

The Commission's replies to previous questions by the Honourable Member on this issue (respectively E-005907/2011 and E-005908/2011 ([1])) explained that campaign activities aimed at the general public in Member States will be financed from Directorate-General Enlargement's existing communication budget. The annual budget as allocated by the budgetary authority is EUR 5 million. It is planned to devote approximately EUR 1.5 million from the 2011 budget to information activities related to Croatia's forthcoming accession.

Activities aimed at the general public in Croatia will be covered by the EU Delegation in Croatia's communication budget. Their budget for 2012 is EUR 1.2 million.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000525/12
to the Commission
Godfrey Bloom (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: ILGA-Europe (International Lesbian and Gay Association) funding

According to information published by the organisation ILGA-Europe (International Lesbian and Gay Association) on its own website, its forecast budget for 2011 was EUR 1 824 000, EUR 1 252 600 (i.e. 67.7 %) of which consisted in grants received from the European Commission and a further EUR 50 000 of which was granted by the Dutch Government, bringing the share of public money in ILGA-Europe's budget to more than 70 %.

Was the Commission aware of the figures mentioned above?

Given the proportion of its own contribution to financing ILGA-Europe, does the Commission believe that ILGA-Europe can be described as a 'non-governmental organisation' or as part of 'civil society'?

Question for written answer E-000528/12
to the Commission
Godfrey Bloom (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: ILGA funding and other lobby groups

Are there many other lobby groups that receive a similar proportion of their budget from the Commission? Or is ILGA a unique case?

Joint answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2012)

Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that: '… the Council, acting unanimously … and after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation'.

The Financial Regulation (Article108(1)b) provides that the European Commission may award grants to cover the operating costs of non-profit organisations pursuing an objective of European interest.

ILGA Europe is an independent non-governmental organisation and alongside other networks active in the area of fight against discrimination, is eligible to be a beneficiary of grants according to the rules and procedures of the PROGRESS programme, adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on the basis of Article 19(2) TFEU.

The beneficiaries of such grants are selected on the basis of a call for proposals, followed by standard selection procedures. The Commission is aware of its budget composition and recalls that, according to the call for proposals published in 2010 ([1]), only European level organisations which are non-governmental, non-profit-making and independent of industry, commercial and business or other conflicting interests, whose members are mainly non-profit organisations, were eligible for the award of a financial contribution.

The role of the Commission consists of providing such a financial contribution towards the functioning of the beneficiary organisation, whereas the implementation of the activities and the ownership of their results remain with the beneficiary.

([1]) Call for proposals VP/2010/012, Establishment of 3 year framework partnership agreements with EU-level NGO networks in the areas of social inclusion, non-discrimination, gender equality, the integration of persons with disabilities and the representation of the Roma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000526/12
to the Commission
Godfrey Bloom (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: ILGA-Europe funding and UN standards

Is the Commission aware that among the requirements for NGOs that seek accreditation to obtain consultative status at the UN (http://csonet.org/?menu=83), one is that 'the major portion of the organisation's funds should be derived from contributions from national affiliates, individual members, or other non-governmental components'?

Does the EU apply similar requirements to NGOs? If so, does the Commission agree that this requirement is not met by ILGA-Europe?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

The Commission has not established an accreditation system for civil society organisations comparable with the UN system and, therefore, has not defined any generally applicable requirements to be met by organisations wishing to participate in its consultation processes.

Indeed, any such restrictions to participation would run counter the Treaty obligation to give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action; to maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society; and to carry out broad consultations with the parties concerned ([1]).

At the same time, as set out in the 'General principles and minimum standards for consultation of interested parties by the Commission' ([2]), interested parties must themselves offer transparency so that the public is aware of the parties involved in the consultation processes and how they conduct themselves. Therefore entities that wish to submit comments on a policy proposal must provide the Commission and the public at large with information about themselves. The Commission considers that this requirement is fulfilled through registration (including through subscribing to the code of conduct) in the Transparency Register ([3]) set up together with the Parliament since June 2011. If this information is not provided, submissions are to be considered as individual contributions.

([1]) Article 11 of the TEU.
([2]) COM(2002) 704 final.
([3]) http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000527/12
to the Commission
Godfrey Bloom (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: ILGA funding via EuropeAid

Is the Commission aware that, according to the organisation's budget forecast for 2012, a further grant request by ILGA (for EUR 1 million spread over three years) is pending with EuropeAid?

How does the Commission intend to reply to this request?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2012)

Funding under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) is mainly provided to civil society organisations through competitive calls for proposals where projects are selected through a transparent and impartial evaluation based on a number of criteria. These include the relevance, effectiveness, feasibility and sustainability of the project, as well as the financial and operational capacity of the applicant and the cost-effectiveness of the action.

The evaluation of the project proposals under the two current calls for proposals launched under the EIDHR in 2011 is ongoing and will only finish in April 2012.

Under these two calls as well as under the ones planned for the first semester of 2012, such as the one to support human rights defenders, particular emphasis will be given to actions that aim at fighting discrimination, including on the grounds of sexual orientation, and to protect those individuals and organisations who are persecuted for their sexual orientation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000529/12
to the Commission
Godfrey Bloom (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: ILGA funding

Is the Commission aware that of the remaining EUR 521 400 in ILGA's budget, EUR 402 400 were donated by three wealthy individuals (George Soros/OSI, Sigrid Rausing and an anonymous donor)?

Does the Commission know of any significant contribution to ILGA's budget being made by those whom the organisation claims to represent, i.e. gay and lesbian persons?

Also, how does the Commission view the influence that wealthy individuals may exert over the NGOs they are subsidising?

Is there a risk that persons such as George Soros could 'buy' themselves one or more NGOs that are economically dependent on their donations?

How does the Commission view the impact of this particular type of 'philanthropy' on democracy?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-00524/2012, E-00525/2012 and E-00528/2012 ([1]).

In addition, the Commission would like to emphasise that the Financial Regulation (Article 113) provides that the grant may not finance the entire operating expenditure of the beneficiary body. Subsequently, the PROGRESS Decision limits the maximum amount of Community co-funding to 80 % of the total expenditure incurred by the recipient, unless exceptional circumstances duly justified.

The beneficiary is obliged to supply evidence of the co-financing provided either by way of own resources or in the form of financial transfers from third parties. The Commission is not authorised to prohibit any forms of donations.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000533/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Situación de la morosidad en España

En la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta E-005655/2011 se dice que la Directiva 2000/35/CE será reemplazada por otra Directiva 2011/7/EU más estricta, que será de aplicación, a más tardar, el 16 de marzo de 2013, para combatir la morosidad en operaciones comerciales.

Según un estudio presentado por PMcM, (http://www.pmcm.es/), el plazo medio de cobro de las empresas a los proveedores del sector privado fue de 98 días en 2011, mientras que en el público fue de casi medio año, 162 días.

Según el Presidente de PMcM, más de un tercio de las 600 000 empresas que han cerrado en el Reino de España desde que empezó la crisis lo han hecho a causa de la morosidad. Desde el año 2009, en el sector público el plazo medio en el sector público no ha parado de crecer, llegando al récord antes citado. Respecto a la *ratio* de morosidad, en lo que se refiere al porcentaje de impagos sobre el total de la facturación en 2011 llegó al 7,1 %, frente al 5,1 % de 2010.

Teniendo en cuenta que en el ámbito público la diferencia entre la media europea y el Reino de España es de 100 días, con los costes financieros y de tesorería que esto acarrea para las empresas,

1. ¿No piensa la Comisión que en Estados como el Reino de España urge que dicha Directiva sea traspuesta lo antes posible y, por lo tanto, antes del año 2013?

2. ¿Ha evaluado la Comisión el coste económico y social que tiene para la UE en general y, en particular, para el Reino de España, el pago cada vez más dilatado por parte de las administraciones públicas para la economía productiva y la creación de empleo?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de marzo de 2012)

La rápida transposición de la Directiva 2011/7/UE, por la que se establecen medidas de lucha contra la morosidad en las operaciones comerciales, sería, en efecto, una importante medida para ayudar a las empresas en un momento de crisis económica.

En consecuencia, la Comisión ha invitado a todos los Estados miembros a estudiar, de manera voluntaria, la posibilidad de proceder a una rápida transposición de la Directiva para ayudar a los agentes económicos a sobrevivir en este periodo de dificultad económica.

Con el propósito de ayudar a los Estados miembros en esta difícil tarea, la Comisión convocó una primera reunión del Grupo de Expertos sobre Morosidad para el 3 de febrero de 2012. Sin embargo, en este momento, la Comisión solo puede animar a los Estados miembros, incluido el Reino de España, a anticipar la transposición.

De cara a facilitar la transposición en 2012, la Comisión organizará en todos los Estados miembros —en cooperación con European Enterprise Network (red europea de empresas), las cámaras de comercio y las organizaciones profesionales— una campaña informativa sobre la lucha contra la morosidad en las operaciones comerciales destinada a las empresas. Esta campaña contribuirá, entre otras cosas, a sensibilizar acerca de las consecuencias de la morosidad para las PYME y a informar a estas empresas sobre el nuevo derecho que les otorga la legislación europea.

La propuesta de Directiva iba acompañada de una evaluación de impacto ([1]) en la que se analizaron todas las opciones posibles sobre la base de la información económica disponible en ese momento.

([1]) SEC(2009) 315 de 8.4.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000533/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Late payment situation in Spain

The Commission's answer to Question E-005655/2011 states that directive 2000/35/EC will be replaced by the more stringent Directive 2011/7/EU, which will have to be transposed by 16 March 2013 at the latest, in order to combat late payment in commercial transactions.

According to a study presented by the Plataforma Multisectorial contra la Morosidad (PMcM — http://www.pmcm.es/), in 2011 the average period for collection by companies from suppliers in the private sector was 98 days, while in the public sector it was almost six months (162 days).

According to the president of the PMcM, more than a third of the 600 000 companies that have gone out of business in the Kingdom of Spain since the crisis began have done so because of late payments. Since 2009, the average period for payment in the public sector has grown continuously, reaching the record level mentioned above. With respect to the late payment *ratio*, which refers to the level of non-payment as a percentage of total invoicing, in 2011 this reached 7.1 %, compared to 5.1 % in 2010.

Given that the difference between the average in the public sector in Europe and in the Kingdom of Spain is 100 days, and taking account of the associated financial and cash flow costs for companies,

1. Does the Commission not believe that in Member States such as the Kingdom of Spain it is urgent for this directive to be transposed as soon as possible and, therefore, before the year 2013?

2. Has the Commission evaluated the economic and social cost that increasingly late payment by public bodies is having on the productivity of the economy and employment creation in the EU in general, and in the Kingdom of Spain in particular?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

An early transposition of Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions would indeed be a significant measure to support businesses in a period of economic downturn.

Therefore the Commission invited all Member States to consider, on a voluntary basis, an early transposition of the directive to help economic operators to survive this period of economic difficulty.

With a view to assisting Member States in this difficult task, the Commission called a first meeting of the Expert Group on Late Payment on 3 February 2012. However at this stage the Commission can only encourage Member States, including the Kingdom of Spain, to implement early.

With a view to smooth transposition in 2012 the Commission will organise — in cooperation with the European Enterprise Network, Chambers of commerce and professional organisations — an information campaign directed at enterprises on combating late payment in commercial transactions in all Member States. The campaign will contribute *inter alia* to raising awareness of the effects of late payment on SMEs and to inform them about the new right conferred by the European legislation.

The proposal for this directive was accompanied by an impact assessment ([1]) which considered all possible options on the basis of the economic information available at that moment.

([1]) SEC(2009) 315 of 8.4.2099.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000534/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Banning of boats with a Falkland Islands flag from docking at ports of Mercosur member states

Does Vice-President/High Representative Baroness Ashton agree that the banning of boats with a Falkland Islands flag from docking at ports of Mercosur member states will only damage the local economy of the sovereign territory of an EU Member State? Further, does the EEAS agree that such a ban is essentially an attack on free trade and a crude Argentine attempt at a commercial blockade, pandering towards domestic political consumption?

In the light of this, can the EEAS give guarantees that it will suspend negotiations on the EU-Mercosur association agreement until all Falkland Islands-flagged ships, with their 150-year-old tradition of docking in those countries' ports, are allowed to proceed unhindered?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President has followed with attention the events referred to in the Honourable Member's question. The language of the Declaration by Mercosur mirrors a declaration adopted in 2010 by UNASUR Summit which also called upon all members to prevent the entry into their ports of ships flying the flag of the Falkland Islands.

The High Representative/Vice-President's services are in close contact with the UK and other Member States to monitor very closely, together with the Commission services, the implications of the recent Mercosur statement and the evolution of this issue.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000535/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Greek, Irish, Portuguese, Spanish and Italian economic reports

Given that the 1997 Stability and Growth Pact makes it mandatory for each Member State to submit an annual report on its performance under the stability and convergence programmes, and that these reports are intended to help the Commission to evaluate the financial and economic position of the eurozone members, can the Commission state if, how and why these reports failed to forewarn it of the current difficulties in Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Italy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

Since the inception of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), all EU Member States (including Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Italy), have regularly submitted an annual update of the Stability or Convergence Programme in line with the provisions of EC Regulation 1466/97. The Commission examined the appropriateness of the fiscal targets in every programme against the SGP rules, as well as the risks to the implementation, and on this basis issued recommendations for a Council opinion.

The Commission has frequently raised concerns about the appropriateness of the policy plans and in particular pointed out specific risks to their timely and full implementation. For instance, in its recommendations for a Council opinion in 2008, the Commission concluded that the budgetary outcomes could be worse than expected by all the Member States concerned. Also in 2009, the Commission considered that the budgetary outcomes were subject to (significant) downside risks throughout the programme period, for all these countries.

On top of assessing annual national budgetary plans, the Commission has also monitored their implementation. In this context it has applied all instruments offered by the SGP in case national policies where not in line with the SGP rules. A complete account of the surveillance activities under the SGP can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000537/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Taxpayers' money and speculation

The Sunday Times of 15 January 2012 quotes a trader as saying that: 'Every Eurozone country was more than happy to pay big fees for anything that could make its debt look smaller … In every case we were taking future income streams and turning them into capital that was used to pay down debts. That's what's happening again in countries like Italy and Spain, which are back looking at privatisations and securitisations to help them out of the mess'.

Does the Commission plan to stop such practices in the future and would it accept that when Member States are condemning much trading activity as 'speculation', they have often been using taxpayers' money to pay for the very activity they condemn?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

The Commission does not comment on the content of articles in the press.

The privatisation and selling of government owned assets is the prerogative of Member States. EC law does not prescribe the privatisation of public undertakings and the Treaty is strictly neutral as regards private or public ownership. However, the impact on long term fiscal sustainability and economic efficiency and competitiveness would deserve to be considered before selling government-owned assets.

Moreover, securitisation of future government revenues and off-market swaps, which typically involve a lump-sum payment to the government in exchange for a future stream of payments, are treated by Eurostat as loans to the government and therefore they can no longer be used to reduce the government debt figure.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000538/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Eurozone hidden liabilities

Has the Commission made any estimates of the concealed or hidden liabilities of the eurozone Member States which are currently still 'off balance-sheet' but which nonetheless represent debt obligations which will have to be met?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The Maastricht debt measure, used in the context of the excessive deficit procedure, includes all debt obligations of the general government related to currency and deposits, loans, and securities other that shares, except for liabilities which arise from financial derivatives.

Other categories of liabilities (not part of the Maastricht debt) include 'other accounts payable', financial derivatives, future obligations and contingent liabilities.

A large share of 'other accounts payable' is made up by short-term trade credit that is generated by the lag in payments after the delivery of the products and services purchased by the government. Both the change in such liabilities and the relevant stocks are reported to Eurostat and published in its database. The changes in 'other accounts payable' are particularly closely monitored by Eurostat as part of its analysis of stock-flow adjustments.

Naturally, future obligations are not reflected in the historical debt data and thus have to be estimated. Such estimates are prepared by the Commission, in the context of its Sustainability Report. However, long-term investment projects or long-term lease contracts, *inter alia*, may also generate obligations for the government. A prudent, multi-annual budgetary planning relies on estimates for these liabilities and thus the implementation of the Council Directive 2011/85/EU should improve transparency in this regard. It should be noted that obligations related to Public-Private Partnerships and leases are duly included on the government's balance sheet when appropriate, based on an analysis of the transfer of risks.

Also excluded from Maastricht debt are contingent liabilities, such as guarantees. Nevertheless, data on contingent liabilities linked to the financial crisis are regularly reported to and published by Eurostat.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000539/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Fees for eurozone debt manipulation

The Sunday Times of 15 January 2012 quotes a trader as saying that: 'Every Eurozone country was more than happy to pay big fees for anything that could make its debt look smaller'.

Has the Commission investigated or does it have plans to investigate the extent to which Eurozone Member States have behaved in this way and has it estimated any liabilities arising?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

The role of the Commission is to ensure that all EU Member States, including euro area countries, are recording their government debt in line with the rules as detailed in the European System of National Accounts (ESA1995). The framework applies equally to all Member States and the Commission (Eurostat) cooperates with the National Statistical Institutes in this context.

The Commission has no comment on the possible relationship and activities between debt managers and investment banks, as long as the ESA95 rules are complied with.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000540/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Eurozone securitisation and debt

Which Member States in the eurozone have used securitisation in order to bring forward future payments and thus lower publicly reported debt levels? What are and have been the consequences of their doing so?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(16 March 2012)

Securitisation is where a unit, named the originator, transfers the ownership rights over financial or non-financial assets, or the right to receive specific future cash flows, to another unit (named the securitisation unit) that pays in exchange the originator from its own sources of financing. Securitisation units set up specifically for a securitisation are often called special purpose vehicles (SPV), but other types of existing entities can also undertake such arrangements. In order to finance the purchase of the financial or non-financial assets, or the right to receive specific future flows, the securitisation unit borrows on its own account and not on behalf of the originator. The rules on the recording on securitisations in national accounts are defined in the ESA95 Manual on government deficit and debt (part V.5).

Securitisation operations have been undertaken by several euro area Member States in the past, in particular in Greece, Portugal and Italy, but also in Belgium, Germany, France, Finland and Ireland. It should be noted that in a large majority of cases, the securitisation operations have been recorded as government borrowing, increasing government debt. Only in a few cases, the operations were recorded as sale of assets, decreasing government deficit (and debt).

In 2007, the rules for the recording of securitisation operations in government finance statistics were changed. Since then, the Commission has not encountered any securitisation operations conducted by government in euro area Member States.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000541/12
an die Kommission
Silvana Koch-Mehrin (ALDE)
(23. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Die Richtlinie zur Kraftstoffqualität und spezielle Vorgabewerte für Teersand

Am 3. Oktober 2011 nahm die Kommission einen Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie „laying down calculation methods and reporting requirements pursuant to Directive 98/70/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels (FQD)" [über Berechnungsmethoden und Berichtsanforderungen gemäß der Richtlinie 98/70/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über die Qualität von Otto- und Dieselkraftstoffen (Richtlinie zur Kraftstoffqualität)] an.

In dieser Richtlinie gibt die Kommission für Kraftstoffe, die in der EU in Kraftfahrzeugen sowie mobilen Maschinen und Geräten zum Einsatz kommen, bis 2020 eine obligatorische Reduzierung der Treibhausgasemissionen über den gesamten Lebenszyklus um 6 % vor.

Die Richtlinie schlägt spezielle Vorgabewerte für Kraftstoffe aus Teersand vor, die sich von den Werten für aus herkömmlichem Mineralöl gewonnenen Kraftstoffen unterscheiden. Die Richtlinie der Kommission wird über das Ausschussverfahren mit Prüfung angenommen werden.

Eine Folgenabschätzung (FA) der Richtlinie zur Kraftstoffqualität wurde 2007 zwar vorgenommen, dabei wurde allerdings nicht die genaue Verfahrensweise thematisiert, mit der die Reduzierungsvorgaben erreicht werden sollten. Solche Maßnahmen werden nun über das Ausschussverfahren beschlossen. Wenn der aktuelle Vorschlag umgesetzt wird, ist zu erwarten, dass er deutliche Auswirkungen auf die globale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der EU-Industrie haben wird. Ferner könnte er Fragen hinsichtlich der Zuverlässigkeit der EU als Handelspartner aufwerfen und die administrativen Verpflichtungen von Mitgliedstaaten vergrößern.

Wird die Kommission angesichts der Ausführungen oben eine Folgenabschätzung unter Berücksichtigung der vorgeschlagenen Durchführungsmaßnahmen vornehmen? Falls nicht, warum nicht?

Gemäß den Leitlinien für die Folgenabschätzung SEK(2009)0092 der Kommission müssen bei einer FA auch die wirtschaftlichen Auswirkungen einer bestimmten politischen Option auf die Handelspolitik der EU und ihre internationalen Verpflichtungen sorgfältig berücksichtigt werden. Da der aktuelle Vorschlag von erheblicher internationaler Bedeutung ist, hat die Kommission die Auswirkungen auf die EU-Handelspolitik gebührend berücksichtigt?

Ist sich die Kommission der Möglichkeit bewusst, dass die kanadische Regierung nach Annahme des Vorschlags ein WTO-Streitbeilegungsverfahren dagegen eröffnen könnte? Worauf beruht die Einschätzung der Kommission, dass sie im Fall eines derartigen WTO-Rechtsstreits gewinnen könnte?

Antwort von Frau Hedegaard im Namen der Kommission
(17. Februar 2012)

Die Daten für die vorgeschlagene Richtlinie der Kommission zur Festlegung von Berechnungsverfahren und Berichterstattungspflichten gemäß Artikel 7a der Richtlinie 98/70/EG lagen bereits größtenteils vor, weil im Zusammenhang mit dem ursprünglichen Vorschlag, der zur Annahme der Richtlinie 2009/30/EG führte, eine Folgenabschätzung vorgenommen worden war und grundlegende Verpflichtungen zur Verringerung der Treibhausgasintensität fossiler Kraftstoffe eingeführt worden waren.

Zur Vorbereitung des Vorschlags hat die Kommission 2009, 2010 und 2011 ([1]) Interessenträger konsultiert und von Sachverständigen geprüfte wissenschaftliche Studien zur Treibhausgasintensität von Ölsand und Ölschiefer in Auftrag gegeben ([1]). Deshalb wurde eine weitere Folgenabschätzung nicht für angebracht gehalten.

Die Fragen zu den Auswirkungen auf den Handel wurden in den Vorarbeiten zum Kommissionsvorschlag angesprochen und berücksichtigt. Der Kommission ist sich der Tatsache bewusst, dass künftige Rechtsvorschriften zur Umsetzung von Artikel 7a der Richtlinie zur Kraftstoffqualität im Rahmen der WTO angefochten werden könnten, aber die jetzige Fassung des Vorschlagsentwurfs enthält keine Diskriminierung auf der Grundlage des Ursprungslandes, sondern unterscheidet bei den Einsatzstoffen auf Erdölbasis anhand einer technischen Bewertung der jeweils typischen Treibhausgasintensität.

([1]) https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000541/12
to the Commission
Silvana Koch-Mehrin (ALDE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: The fuel quality directive and specific default values for tar sands

On 3 October 2011 the Commission adopted a proposal for a Commission directive 'laying down calculation methods and reporting requirements pursuant to Directive 98/70/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels (FQD)'.

In this directive, the Commission introduces a mandatory reduction target of 6 % by 2020 for the life-cycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of fuels used in the EU by road vehicles and non-road mobile machinery.

The directive proposes specific default values for fuel produced from tar sands, which differ from those for fuel obtained from conventional mineral oil. The Commission directive will be adopted using the commitology procedure with scrutiny.

While an impact assessment (IA) of the FQD was undertaken in 2007, it did not address the exact methodology which would be applied to reach the reduction targets. Those measures are now decided through the commitology procedure. The current proposal, if implemented, is expected to have a significant impact on the global competitiveness of EU industry. Furthermore, it may raise questions as regards the EU's reliability as a trading partner and increase the administrative obligations of Member States.

Considering the above, will the Commission undertake an impact assessment taking into account the proposed implementing measures? If not, why not?

According to the Commission's impact assessment guidelines (SEC(2009) 0092), an IA should also carefully consider the economic impact of a particular policy option on the EU's trade policy and its international obligations. As the current proposal has significant international relevance, has the Commission given due consideration to its implications for EU trade policy?

Is the Commission aware of the possibility that the Canadian government could start a WTO dispute settlement procedure against the proposal after its adoption? On what grounds does the Commission believe it could win in case of such WTO litigation?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2012)

The evidence base for the proposed Commission directive laying down calculation methods and reporting requirements pursuant to Article 7a of Directive 98/70/EC was already largely established through the preparation of an Impact Assessment accompanying the original proposal that led to the adoption of Directive 2009/30/EC and the introduction of the basic obligations to reduce the greenhouse gas intensity of fossil transport fuels.

In order to prepare the proposal, the Commission consulted stakeholders in 2009, 2010 and 2011 ([1]) and commissioned peer-reviewed scientific studies regarding the greenhouse gas intensities of oil sands and oil shales ([1]). Therefore, an additional Impact Assessment was not considered proportionate.

The issues of impacts on trade have been raised and considered as part of the elaboration of the Commission's proposal. The Commission is aware of the possibility that any future legislation implementing Article 7a of the Fuel Quality Directive might be challenged within the context of the WTO but the proposal, as currently drafted, does not discriminate on the basis of country of origin but differentiates between petroleum feedstocks on the basis of a technical assessment of their typical greenhouse gas intensity.

([1]) https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-000542/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej / Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(23 stycznia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Przedstawicielstwo Europejskiej Służby Działań Zewnętrznych na Kubie podczas prezydencji Danii i Cypru w 2012 r.

Utrzymanie odpowiedniej reprezentacji UE w kluczowych państwach powinno mieć zasadnicze znaczenie dla ESDZ. Kuba jest obecnie jednym z państw, w których władze i społeczeństwo stoją przed poważnymi wyzwaniami, i istnieją duże szanse na to, że dojdzie w nim do istotnych zmian. W związku z tym potrzebne jest stałe monitorowanie sytuacji gospodarczej i politycznej przez UE, zwłaszcza w odniesieniu do praw człowieka. W tym roku Kubę odwiedzi papież Benedykt XVI, zwierzchnik Kościoła katolickiego.

Dania, która obecnie sprawuje prezydencję w Radzie Europejskiej, nie ma przedstawicielstwa dyplomatycznego w Hawanie, a następne państwo przewodniczące Radzie – Cypr – ma bardzo niewielki zespół dyplomatyczny w stolicy Kuby. Ponadto państwa sprawujące prezydencję w 2013 r.: Irlandia i Litwa, nie mają stałego przedstawicielstwa dyplomatycznego na Kubie. Jednocześnie przedstawiciel UE, Irene Horejs, która jest akredytowana na Kubie i w Dominikanie, obecnie przebywa w drugim z tych państw i swoje obowiązki na Kubie wypełnia z konieczności podczas wizyt na wyspie.

Czy z uwagi na to, że należy wspierać przedstawicielstwo dyplomatyczne na Kubie państw sprawujących prezydencję w bieżącym i następnym roku, nie byłoby lepiej, gdyby przedstawiciel UE zmieniła miejsce urzędowania z Dominikany na Kubę, aby umożliwić podniesienie statusu UE w kluczowym państwie w regionie?

Jaka jest opinia wysokiej przedstawiciel w tej sprawie i co jest według niej potrzebne, aby usprawnić działania przedstawicielstwa UE na Kubie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(13 marca 2012 r.)

Mimo że szef delegatury UE w Republice Dominikańskiej jest odpowiedzialny zarówno za Republikę Dominikańską, jak i Kubę, istnieje również delegatura UE w Hawanie, na której czele stoi chargé d'affaires. On sam i podległy mu personel udzielają wszelkiego niezbędnego wsparcia lokalnego. Obecność szefa delegatury w Republice Dominikańskiej jest niezbędna z uwagi na wagę stosunków politycznych i gospodarczych z tym krajem, jak również znaczenie współpracy rozwojowej.

W ramach nowych kompetencji delegatur UE wynikających z traktatu lizbońskiego Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych wraz z państwami członkowskimi i Komisją analizują obecnie możliwość zmiany statusu szeregu delegatur regionalnych. Przypadek Kuby zostanie przeanalizowany w stosownym czasie.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000542/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(23 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Representation of the European External Action Service in Cuba during the Danish and Cypriot presidencies in 2012

The maintenance of an adequate representation of the EU in key countries should be of paramount importance to the EEAS. Cuba is currently one of the countries where major political and economic challenges face the authorities and society and significant changes could well become a real prospect. Thus constant monitoring by the EU of the economic and political situation is needed, with particular regard to human rights issues. This year too Pope Benedict XVI, the head of the Roman Catholic Church, will be visiting Cuba.

Denmark, which currently holds the Presidency of the European Council, has no diplomatic representation in Havana, and the next holder of the Presidency, Cyprus, has an extremely small diplomatic team in the Cuban capital. Furthermore, the holders of the Presidency in 2013, Ireland and Lithuania, have no permanent diplomatic representation in Cuba. At the same time the EU representative, Irene Horejs, who is accredited in both Cuba and the Dominican Republic, currently resides in the Dominican Republic and performs her duties in Cuba, of necessity, during visits to the island.

Given that the diplomatic representation in Cuba of the Presidency countries this year and next year needs to be supported, would it not be better for the EU representative to move her place of residence from the Dominican Republic to Cuba, to enable the EU to raise its profile in a key country in the region.

What is your opinion on this matter and what do you believe is needed in order to improve the EU representation in Cuba?

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

Although the EU Head of Delegation based in Dominican Republic is responsible for both Dominican Republic and Cuba, there is an EU Delegation in Havana headed by a Chargé d'affaires. The Chargé d'affaires and his staff provide all the necessary local support. The presence of the Head of Delegation in Dominican Republic is indispensable in view of the important political, economic and development relations with that country.

Within the framework of the new responsibilities of the EU Delegations arising from the Lisbon Treaty, an analysis is currently underway by the European External Action Service together with the Member States and the Commission on the eventual change of status of a number of regionalised Delegations. The case of Cuba will be analysed in due course.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000543/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μολυσμένα εμφιαλωμένα νερά

Σε πρόσφατη έρευνα που διενήργησε το Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών (Τμήμα Γεωλογίας και Γεωπεριβάλλοντος), διαπιστώθηκε η ύπαρξη εξασθενούς χρωμίου σε εμφιαλωμένα νερά.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι ο κύριος στόχος οποιασδήποτε ρύθμισης για τα φυσικά μεταλλικά νερά θα πρέπει να είναι η προστασία της υγείας των καταναλωτών και η πρόληψη της παραπληροφόρησης των καταναλωτών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει λάβει γνώση για την έρευνα αυτή του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών; Θεωρεί ότι τα συμπεράσματά της είναι ανησυχητικά για τους καταναλωτές;

2. Προτίθεται, από κοινού με τις αρμόδιες αρχές ελέγχου της Ελλάδας, να προβεί σε δειγματοληψίες και αναλύσεις προκειμένου να εξετάσει εάν υπάρχει κίνδυνος για τη δημόσια υγεία;

3. Σε τι μέτρα σκοπεύει να προβεί ώστε να διασφαλιστεί ότι οι καταναλωτές δεν θα είναι εκτεθειμένοι σε αυτή την καρκινογόνο ουσία,

4. Υπάρχουν όρια στην κοινοτική νομοθεσία για τα εμφιαλωμένα νερά και το πόσιμο νερό όσον αφορά το εξασθενές χρώμιο;

5. Θεωρεί ότι υπάρχει πλημμελής εφαρμογή εκ μέρους της Ελλάδας της οδηγίας 2009/54/ΕΚ σχετικά με την εκμετάλλευση και την διάθεση στο εμπόριο των φυσικών μεταλλικών νερών;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει την έρευνα που πραγματοποίησε το Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών για την παρουσία εξασθενούς χρωμίου στο εμφιαλωμένο νερό.

Όσον αφορά τα φυσικά μεταλλικά νερά, η οδηγία 2003/40/ΕΚ της Επιτροπής ([1]) ορίζει ως όριο συγκέντρωσης ολικού χρωμίου, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του εξασθενούς χρωμίου, τα 0,050 mg/L, για την προστασία της δημόσιας υγείας. Για άλλα πόσιμα νερά, η οδηγία 98/83/ΕΚ ([2]) ορίζει παραμετρική τιμή για το ολικό χρώμιο, αλλά όχι για το εξασθενές χρώμιο, καθώς στην περίπτωση του εξασθενούς χρωμίου στα εν λόγω νερά οι επιπτώσεις για την προστασία της υγείας έχουν τοπική και περιφερειακή σημασία και, ως εκ τούτου, καλύπτονται από τις υποχρεώσεις των κρατών μελών στο πλαίσιο της υπάρχουσας οδηγίας, η οποία υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να καθορίζουν τιμές για πρόσθετες παραμέτρους όταν το απαιτεί η προστασία της υγείας των ανθρώπων στο εθνικό τους έδαφος ή σε μέρος αυτού ([3]).

Κατά συνέπεια, είναι υποχρέωση των κρατών μελών να αξιολογούν κατά πόσον είναι απαραίτητη μια παράμετρος για το εξασθενές χρώμιο στο πόσιμο νερό και, ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή δεν σκοπεύει να προτείνει επί του παρόντος τέτοια τιμή.

Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με τις γενικές αρχές που καθορίζονται στο άρθρο 17 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 178/2002 ([4]), εναπόκειται στον υπεύθυνο της επιχείρησης τροφίμων να διασφαλίζει ότι σε όλα τα στάδια παραγωγής, μεταποίησης και διανομής, το εμφιαλωμένο νερό πληροί τις απαιτήσεις της νομοθεσίας σχετικά με τα τρόφιμα και τις σχετικές ειδικές διατάξεις που καθορίζονται από τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ που αναφέρεται ανωτέρω, και να επαληθεύει ότι πληρούνται οι εν λόγω απαιτήσεις. Η αρμόδια αρχή του κράτους μέλους έχει την ευθύνη να επιβάλλει τη νομοθεσία σχετικά με τα τρόφιμα καθώς και να παρακολουθεί και να επαληθεύει κατά πόσον τηρούνται οι σχετικές απαιτήσεις της νομοθεσίας αυτής από τους υπεύθυνους επιχειρήσεων τροφίμων, διατηρώντας ένα σύστημα επίσημων ελέγχων και άλλων δραστηριοτήτων ανάλογα με τις ανάγκες.

([1]) ΕΕ L 126 της 22.5.2003.
([2]) ΕΕ L 330 της 5.12.1998.
([3]) Αιτιολογικές σκέψεις 13 και 17 και άρθρα 4 και 5.
([4]) ΕΕ L 31 της 1.2.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000543/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Contaminated bottled water

In a recent study conducted by the University of Athens (Department of Geology and Geoenvironment) the presence of hexavalent chromium was detected in bottled water.

Given that the key objective of any provisions concerning natural mineral water must be to protect the health of consumers and ensure that they are not misinformed:

1. Has the Commission been notified of this research by the University of Athens? Does it consider that its findings provide grounds for consumer concern?

2. Does it propose, in conjunction with the responsible authorities in Greece, to undertake sampling and analysis so as to determine the existence of any threat to public health?

3. What measures does it plan to take to ensure that consumers are not exposed to this carcinogenic substance?

4. Does Community legislation provide for legal limits regarding the hexavalent chromium content of bottled water and drinking water?

5. Does the Commission consider that Greece is failing to implement properly Directive 2009/54/EK on the exploitation and marketing of natural mineral waters?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the research carried out by the University of Athens on the presence of hexavalent chromium in bottled water.

Regarding natural mineral waters, Commission Directive 2003/40/EC ([1]) lays down a concentration limit for total chromium, including hexavalent chromium, of 0.050mg/L, in order to protect public health. For other drinking waters, Directive 98/83/EC ([2]) sets a parametric value for total chromium, but not for hexavalent chromium, as in the case of hexavalent chromium in those waters the health protection implications are of local and regional importance and are thus covered by the obligations of Member States under the existing Directive, which obliges Member States to set values for additional parameters where the protection of human health within their national territory or part of it so requires ([3]).

Consequently, it is the obligation of Member States to assess whether there is a need for a parameter for hexavalent chromium in drinking water, and therefore, the Commission currently does not intend to propose such a value.

Furthermore, in accordance with the general principles laid down by Article 17 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([4]), it is the responsibility of the food business operator to ensure that at all stages of production, processing and distribution, bottled water satisfies the requirements of food law and the relevant specific provisions laid down by the EU legislation mentioned above, and to verify that such requirements are met. It is the responsibility of the competent authority of a Member State to enforce food law, and to monitor and verify that the relevant requirements of food law are fulfilled by the food business operators, by maintaining a system of official controls and other activities as necessary.

([1]) OJ L 126 , 22.5.2003.
([2]) OJ L 330, 5.12.1998.
([3]) Recitals 13 and 17 and Articles 4 and 5.
([4]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000545/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(1 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Embarcações de pesca incluídas nos sistemas de concessões de pesca transferíveis proposto pela Comissão

A Proposta de Regulamento relativo à Política Comum das Pescas, apresentada pela Comissão em julho de 2011, prevê o estabelecimento de sistemas de concessões de pesca transferíveis, de caráter obrigatório, em todos os Estados-Membros, para todos os navios de pesca de comprimento de fora a fora igual ou superior a 12 metros (Artigo 27.°, n.° 1, alínea a), e para todos os navios de pesca com menos de 12 metros de comprimento de fora a fora que pescam com artes rebocadas (Artigo 27.°, n.° 1, alínea b)).

Tendo em conta a necessidade indispensável de avaliação do impacto desta proposta, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual o número total de navios de pesca de comprimento de fora a fora igual ou superior a 12 metros e qual a sua percentagem relativamente ao total de embarcações, em cada Estado-Membro?

2. Qual o número total de navios de pesca com menos de 12 metros de comprimento de fora a fora que pescam com artes rebocadas e qual a sua percentagem relativamente ao total de embarcações, em cada Estado-Membro?

3. Qual o volume de pescado desembarcado pelos navios referidos nas perguntas 1 e 2, relativamente ao volume total de pescado desembarcado, em cada Estado-Membro?

4. Qual o volume de negócios pelo qual são responsáveis os navios referidos nas perguntas 1 e 2, relativamente ao volume de negócios total, em cada Estado-Membro?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(2 de março de 2012)

A Comissão envia diretamente ao Senhor Deputado e ao Secretariado do Parlamento um quadro com as informações solicitadas.

Não há disposições que exijam que os Estados-Membros declarem separadamente os desembarques dos navios com mais ou com menos de 12 metros. Assim sendo, a Comissão não pode fornecer informações sobre as capturas deste segmento relativamente ao total.

Os navios de 12 metros, ou mais, de comprimento de fora a fora representam 17 % dos navios de pesca na UE, aproximadamente 60 % dos postos de trabalho no setor de capturas e cerca de 80 % em termos de valor das mesmas. Os navios que utilizam artes rebocadas têm menos de 12 metros de comprimento de fora a fora e representam 7 % dos navios de pesca na UE, aproximadamente 3-4 % dos postos de trabalho no setor de capturas e cerca de 1-2 % em termos de valor das mesmas. Representam cerca de 8 % da frota de pequena pesca.

As frotas de pequena pesca representam 83 % dos navios de pesca da UE, 40 % dos postos de trabalho no setor das capturas e aproximadamente 18 % em termos de valor das mesmas. Os navios de pequena pesca constituem uma parte muito importante do setor das pescas, não só pelo número, mas também pela contribuição para a economia das áreas costeiras dependentes da pesca.

Esta importância é reconhecida no pacote de reforma da PCP proposto pela Comissão, em especial na proposta do Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas, que inclui medidas específicas para os navios de pequena pesca (tais como serviços de aconselhamento às empresas). Acresce ainda a existência da possibilidade de intensidades de auxílio mais elevadas para os navios de pequena pesca. Por último, salienta-se ainda que a percentagem de navios de pequena pesca nas frotas nacionais será tida em consideração na atribuição do FEAMP aos Estados-Membros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000545/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Fishing vessels included under the system of transferable fishing concessions proposed by the Commission

The proposal for a regulation on the common fisheries policy, tabled by the Commission in July 2011, makes provision for the establishment of compulsory transferable fishing concessions in all Member States for all fishing vessels that are equal to or more than 12 meters in length (Article 27(1a)), and for all fishing boats that are less than 12 meters in length with towed gear (Article 27(1b)).

Given the vital need to assess the impact of this proposal, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How many fishing vessels in total are equal to or more than 12 meters in length, and what proportion do they represent of the total number of vessels in each Member State?

2. How many fishing boats in total with towed gear are less than 12 meters in length, and what proportion do they represent of the total number of vessels in each Member State?

3. How many fish are caught by the vessels mentioned in questions 1 and 2 as a proportion of the total volume of fish caught in each Member State?

4. How high is the turnover of the vessels mentioned in questions 1 and 2 as a proportion of total turnover in each Member State?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The Commission is sending directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat a table containing the information requested.

No requirement exists for Member States to declare landings separately for vessels above and below 12 meters. For this reason the Commission is not in a position to provide information on the catches of this segment as proportion of the total catches.

Vessels equal to or more than 12 meters in length represent 17 % of the fishing vessels in the EU, approximately 60 % of the employment in the catching sector and around 80 % in terms of value of catches. The vessels with towed gear are less than 12 meters in length represent 7 % of the fishing vessels in the EU, approximately 3-4 % of the employment in the catching sector and around 1-2 % in terms of value of catches. They represent around 8 % of the small scale fleet.

Small scale fleets represent 83 % of the fishing vessels in the EU, 40 % of the employment in the catching sector and around 18 % in terms of value of catches. Small scale vessels are an extremely important part of the fishing sector not only because of their numbers but also because of their contribution to the economy of coastal areas dependent on fishing.

That importance is acknowledged in the CFP reform package proposed by the Commission, particularly in the proposal for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund which includes dedicated measures for small scale vessels (such as business advisory services). In addition, a higher aid intensity will be permitted when beneficiaries would be small scale vessels. Finally, it is important to note as well that the share of small scale vessels on national fleets will be a factor to be taken into account for the allocation of the EMFF to Member States.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000546/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(25 de janeiro de 2012)

Assunto: Avaliação da sobrecapacidade das frotas pesqueiras

O debate sobre a reforma da Política Comum de Pescas tem sido marcado pela questão da «sobrecapacidade da frota». Ora, a realidade do setor das pescas na União Europeia é consabidamente complexa, sendo grande a diversidade existente entre Estados-Membros ao nível das características das frotas pesqueiras, das artes de pesca utilizadas e mesmo dos recursos pesqueiros e do seu estado de conservação. Esta realidade é incompatível com definições genéricas de «sobrecapacidade», que não reconheçam a referida complexidade e diversidade. Todavia, com frequência, insiste-se nesta definição genérica, não se concretizando, de forma detalhada e quantificada, onde existe essa sobrecapacidade — em que Estados-Membros, em que segmentos de frota e para que pescarias.

Em resposta uma pergunta anterior (E-4317/2010) sobre este mesmo tema, a Comissão Europeia referiu que tinha encomendado «um relatório que procurará fazer uma estimativa da sobrecapacidade com base nos dados de que dispõe». Mais acrescentava que «esse relatório criará compilações de dados a partir dos dados fornecidos pelos Estados-Membros no âmbito do quadro para a recolha de dados».

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Quais as conclusões do referido relatório e qual o seu contributo para uma avaliação rigorosa da adequação das diferentes frotas aos recursos disponíveis?

2. Dispõe a Comissão dos elementos necessários a uma avaliação detalhada e quantificada de «sobrecapacidade», tendo em conta os Estados-Membros, os segmentos de frota e as pescarias em questão?

3. Que critérios estiveram na base da definição dos limites máximos de capacidade de pesca para os diferentes Estados-Membros, constante do anexo II da proposta de regulamento relativo à Política Comum das Pescas (COM(2011)0425 final)?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(12 de março de 2012)

A Comissão pôs termo ao estudo relativo à sobrecapacidade a que o Senhor Deputado se refere, antes de o mesmo ter sido concluído. A decisão foi tomada, porque os estudos preliminares não eram coerentes e enfermavam de erros na metodologia de cálculo da sobrecapacidade [«Diretrizes para avaliar o equilíbrio entre a capacidade da frota e as possibilidades de pesca», adotadas pelo Comité Científico, Técnico e Económico das Pescas (CCTEP)].

Para obter uma análise melhor, solicitou-se ao CCTEP que revisse a metodologia. A nova abordagem vai combinar indicadores de rentabilidade económica e de sustentabilidade ambiental (determinação da sustentabilidade das unidades populacionais) por segmento da frota. O CCTEP reapreciará igualmente quais os dados necessários para a obtenção de conclusões firmes e rigorosas. Esperam-se resultados no outono de 2012.

O mau estado ecológico de muitas das unidades populacionais da UE, associado ao desempenho económico incipiente de muitas das frotas, indiciam a existência de níveis consideráveis de sobrecapacidade das frotas dos Estados-Membros. Por enquanto, o principal instrumento utilizado para contrariar a sobrecapacidade tem sido a demolição. Mas é um método ineficaz: o relatório especial do Tribunal de Contas Europeu ([1]) conclui que (ao invés do esperado), a capacidade de pesca na realidade aumentou no período de 1996/2008. Por esse motivo, na proposta de reforma da Política Comum de Pescas, a Comissão propõe o abandono da atual abordagem de financiamento público para reduzir a sobrecapacidade.

Os limites máximos de capacidade de pesca previstos na proposta da Comissão resultam da aplicação do regime de entradas/saídas vigente, definido no Regulamento (CE) n.° 2371/2002 do Conselho. Refletem os limites máximos de 31 de dezembro de 2010 e serão atualizados no momento da entrada em vigor do novo regulamento.

([1]) As medidas da UE contribuíram para adaptar a capacidade das frotas de pesca às possibilidades de pesca disponíveis? Tribunal de Contas Europeu, Relatório Especial n.° 12/2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000546/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Assessing fishing fleet overcapacity

The debate on the reform of the common fisheries policy has been dominated by the 'fleet overcapacity' issue. It is widely known that the situation in the EU fisheries sector is complex; there is a high degree of diversity among the Member States as regards the characteristics of fishing fleets, fishing gear and even fishery resources and their state of conservation. This situation does not fit in with generic definitions of 'overcapacity', which do not acknowledge its complexity and diversity. However, this general definition is frequently used, without providing any detailed and quantified information as to where this overcapacity lies, i.e. which Member States, fleet segments and fisheries.

In response to a previous question (E-4317/2010) on this matter, the Commission stated that it had ordered a report that would 'try to estimate overcapacity on the basis of the data available to it'. It added that this report would 'build data collections on the data provided by Member States under the data collection framework'.

The Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. What are the report's conclusions and how do they contribute towards the stringent assessment of how well matched the different fleets are to the resources available?

2. Does the Commission have the information required for a detailed and quantified assessment of 'overcapacity', taking into account the Member States, the fleet segments and the fisheries involved?

3. What criteria were used as a basis for defining the fishing capacity ceilings for the different Member States, contained in Annex II to the proposal for a regulation on the common fisheries policy (COM(2011)0425)?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The Commission terminated the study about overcapacity to which the Honourable Member refers before it was concluded. This decision was taken because the preliminary results were not consistent and indicated errors in the methodology for the calculation of overcapacity ('Guidelines for the assessment of the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities') adopted by Scientific Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF).

To come to a better analysis, the STECF has been requested to revise the methodology. The new approach will combine indicators of economic profitability and of environmental sustainability (how far are stocks from being sustainable) at fleet segment level. The STECF will also be revising what data would be necessary to have a sound, robust conclusion. Results are expected around autumn 2012.

The bad environmental status of many EU stocks combined with the poor economic performance of many fleets point in the direction of the existence of significant levels of overcapacity in the fleets of the Member States. So far, the main tool to deal with overcapacity has been scrapping. It has proven to be ineffective: the special report of the European Court of Auditors ([1]) concludes that fishing capacity has actually increased in the period 1996-2008. For that reason, in its proposals to reform the common fisheries policy, the Commission proposes to eliminate the current, publicly funded approach to reduction of overcapacity.

The fishing capacity ceilings in the Commission proposal are the result of the application of the existing entry-exit regime as defined in Council Regulation 2371/2002. They reflect the ceilings of 31 December 2010 and will be updated at the moment of entry into force of the new regulation.

([1]) Have EU measures contributed to adapting the capacity of the fishing fleets to available fishing opportunities? European Court of Auditors, Special Report No 12//2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000547/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(26 de janeiro de 2012)

Assunto: Utilização para fins militares do Galileo e do GMES

Alguns investigadores têm vindo a abordar a problemática da utilização para fins militares do Sistema Europeu de navegação por Satélite (Galileo), do Sistema de Monitorização Global do Ambiente e da Segurança (GMES) e da Agência Espacial Europeia (ESA). Afirmam este investigadores que a monitorização das alterações climáticas, o fornecimento de serviços à industria e ao setor dos transportes, entre outros, — objetivos em si mesmo positivos — constituem também uma camuflagem para a utilização desses satélites como espiões, servindo objetivos militares. E denunciam que o desenvolvimento destas tecnologias, financiadas pelo orçamento da UE, é um negócio bastante lucrativo para a indústria militar europeia, que recebe a parte leonina do financiamento dos projetos de investigação com uma dimensão frequentemente militar e de segurança.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual a sua posição face às denúncias de utilização militar destes sistemas e da ESA?

2. Que programas e verbas comunitárias estão associadas a projetos de desenvolvimento ou funcionamento de satélites-espião com objetivos militares?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(9 de março de 2012)

1. O programa Galileo, cuja gestão é da responsabilidade da Comissão, estabeleceu o primeiro sistema europeu de navegação por satélite, que é um sistema civil que se encontra sob controlo civil. Esta realidade foi repetidas vezes reafirmada pelo Conselho e diz respeito a todos os serviços gerados pelo sistema, incluindo o serviço público regulamentado (*Public Regulated Service* PRS). Contudo, a Decisão 1104/2011/UE relativa ao PRS, estabelece que cada Estado-Membro decide de forma independente sobre o uso que faz do PRS, podendo o mesmo incluir utilizações ligadas à segurança, desde que sejam cumpridas as normas mínimas de segurança.

O GMES é um programa civil que fornece serviços de observação terrestre e informação de valor acrescentado, com forte incidência nos aspetos relacionados com a saúde do planeta Terra. Para além de serviços ligados ao ambiente, o GMES Emergency incide sobre as necessidades da proteção civil e o GMES Security concentra-se nas necessidades dos utilizadores da segurança civil, como é o caso dos serviços de fronteiras. A definição de serviços de observação ou de produtos de valor acrescentado assenta exclusivamente nas exigências dos utilizadores civis. O Regulamento 911/2010 estabelece uma política de acesso livre e pleno à informação, o que significa que os dados estão à disposição do público. Daí que a Comissão não possa impedir que utilizadores militares tenham acesso aos dados GMES se tais dados forem do seu interesse.

2. A Comissão não tem conhecimento da existência de programas ou verbas comunitárias associados a tais projetos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000547/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Use of Galileo and GMES for military purposes

A number of researchers have raised the issue of the use of the European satellite navigation system (Galileo), the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) system and the European Space Agency (ESA) for military purposes. These researchers confirm that the monitoring of climate change and the provision of services, *inter alia*, to industry and to the transport sector — which are, in themselves, positive objectives — are also used to camouflage the use of these satellites as spies, for military purposes. They criticise the fact that the development of these technologies, financed by the EU budget, is a very profitable business for Europe's military industry, which receives the lion's share of funding for research projects, which often comprise a military and security dimension.

The Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. What is its position regarding the criticism that these systems and the ESA are being used for military purposes?

2. What programmes and EU funding are linked to projects for the development or use of spy satellites for military purposes?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(9 March 2012)

1. The Galileo programme, managed by the Commission, is establishing the first Global Navigation Satellite System that is a civil system under civil control. This has been restated by the Council on a number of occasions and concerns as well all the services generated by the system, including the Public Regulated Service (PRS). However, the PRS Decision 1104/2011/EU states that each Member State decides independently on the use it makes of PRS, and that such uses may include security-related uses, provided that the minimum security standards applicable are met.

GMES is a civil programme delivering earth observation data and added value information with a strong focus on information regarding the health of the earth. Apart from the environmental services, the Emergency service focuses on the needs of civil protection users and the Security service focuses on the needs of civil security users such as border guards. Definition of observation data or added value products are based exclusively on the requirements of civil users. The GMES Regulation 911/2010 defines a full and open access data policy for the programme, meaning that the data will be available widely to the public. Consequently, the Commission cannot prevent military users to access GMES data if deemed interesting for them.

2. The Commission is not aware of links to such projects.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000550/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(26 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Utilizzazione dei fondi strutturali comunitari in ambito sanitario

La situazione dell'HIV richiede una specifica attenzione sia in sede comunitaria che in sede nazionale.

Recenti studi hanno messo in evidenza una serie di dati preoccupanti in Italia: il 25 % delle persone affette da HIV non è a conoscenza del proprio stato. Inoltre, il 60 % delle diagnosi avviene quando ormai la malattia è in uno stato troppo avanzato per poter permettere l'inizio della terapia antiretrovirale. In tale contesto, investire nella prevenzione e favorire la sottomissione volontaria al test di sieropositività è sicuramente di fondamentale importanza. Efficaci campagne di prevenzione non solo impediscono alla malattia di propagarsi ulteriormente, ma permettono anche di poter tutelare al meglio il diritto alla salute e la dignità delle persone affette da HIV.

Come è noto, circa il 36 % del budget comunitario (circa 335 milioni nel periodo 2006-2013) è impiegato per fondi strutturali a sostegno di progetti di integrazione territoriale e regionale. In tale contesto, all'enormità delle risorse fornite dall'Unione non sempre fa seguito un loro uso completo all'interno di progetti. In effetti, gran parte dei fondi strutturali rimangono inutilizzati, quando potrebbero invece essere convogliati in altri tipi di interventi.

Considerata l'importanza di politiche che favoriscano la lotta e la prevenzione dell'HIV si chiede alla Commissione:

— è possibile prevedere il riutilizzo dei fondi strutturali comunitari non utilizzati per progetti che si occupano di prevenzione dell'HIV e di promuovere una più ampia diffusione del test di sieropositività?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(6 marzo 2012)

La Commissione informa l'onorevole parlamentare che il notevole ammontare delle risorse fornite dall'UE come finanziamento alla politica di coesione è effettivamente utilizzato totalmente per una vasta gamma di progetti di sviluppo regionale e di coesione sociale, destinati a raggiungere gli obiettivi della strategia Europa 2020.

Le azioni in campo sanitario cofinanziate dalla politica di coesione sono anzitutto strutturali e non destinate ai costi di test, diagnosi o trattamenti.

La Commissione ha di recente stimato che alla fine del 2011 82 miliardi di euro dell'FSE, dell'FESR e del Fondo di coesione non sono stati ancora destinati a progetti specifici. Peraltro, tale somma è già stata totalmente programmata e assegnata a priorità chiave nel quadro di programmi nazionali o regionali. Il Consiglio europeo ha invitato la Commissione ad esaminare in che modo gli importi non ancora assegnati possano servire a sostenere misure per l'occupazione dei giovani e per le PMI, al fine di rafforzare la crescita. Di conseguenza, non è previsto di utilizzare parte di tali fondi per cofinanziare le azioni di cui parla l'onorevole parlamentare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000550/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Use of EU structural funds in the field of health

The HIV situation calls for special attention at both EU and national level.

Recent studies have highlighted a series of worrying data in Italy: 25 % of those suffering from HIV are unaware of it. In addition, 60 % of diagnoses occur when the disease is already too advanced to be able to begin antiretroviral therapy. Investing in prevention and promoting voluntary HIV testing is therefore surely of fundamental importance. Effective prevention campaigns not only prevent the disease from spreading further, but also allow the right to health and the dignity of the person affected by HIV to be better protected.

As is well known, around 36 % of the EU budget (approximately 335 million in the 2006-2013 period) is spent on structural funds supporting regional and local government integration projects. In this context, the vast amount of resources provided by the Union is not always fully used within projects. In reality, a large proportion of structural funds remains unused, when they could be channelled towards other types of intervention.

Given the importance of policies to combat and prevent HIV, could the Commission state:

— if it is possible to provide for the reuse of EU structural funds that are not used for projects dealing with HIV prevention and to promote wider distribution of HIV tests?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that the vast amount of resources provided by the EU as cohesion policy funding is indeed fully used for the successful delivery of a range of regional development and social cohesion projects, aimed at delivering the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.

Health actions co-funded by cohesion policy are primarily structural and are not directed towards the running costs of testing, diagnosis or treatment.

The Commission has recently estimated that at the end of 2011 EUR 82 billion from the ESF, the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund have not yet been allocated to specific projects. However, this money is already fully programmed and allocated to key priorities under national or regional programmes. The European Council has called the Commission to examine how still unallocated amounts could support youth employment and SME measures to boost growth. Therefore, there are no plans to use part of these funds to co-fund actions referred to by the Honourable Member.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000551/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: PIP implants

Around 300 000 PIP implants made from sub-standard silicone have been sold around the world, mainly in Europe, with 40 000 fitted in the UK. It is estimated that 95 % of women in the UK were treated in private clinics. French, German and Dutch health authorities have all recommended that women fitted with PIP implants should have them removed as a precaution.

— In the light of these events, does the Commission intend to increase vigilance on medical devices implanted in the body?

— Will this issue be looked at in greater depth in the review of the Medical Devices Directive?

— What is the Commission's stance on pre-market assessment of products similar to the PIP implant?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-000582/2012 ([1]).

As pointed out in its answer to the abovementioned question, the Commission has analysed the PIP case to identify possible shortcomings in the medical device legislation. During this analysis, the possibility of having *ex ante* authorisation for certain medical devices has been assessed but from the available evidence it must be concluded that an *ex ante* authorisation would not have prevented the case of fraud at hand.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000552/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(26 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Violencia y represión continuas del Gobierno de Marruecos contra activistas saharauis

Según informa el Colectivo de Defensores Saharauis de los Derechos Humanos (Codesa), el pasado viernes 17 de enero, medio centenar de ciudadanos saharauis resultaron heridos como consecuencia de la violenta represión llevada a cabo por las fuerzas de seguridad del Gobierno de Marruecos en El Aaiún. Según informa Codesa, varios heridos graves tuvieron que ser trasladados al hospital Elhasan Belmehdi de la ciudad.

La protesta, que discurría de forma pacífica y tranquila hasta la brutal agresión de las fuerzas de seguridad públicas, pretendía llamar la atención sobre la injusta situación en la que se encuentran los 23 encarcelados por su participación en el campamento de Gdem Izik («de la dignidad») que fue desmantelado violentamente por las fuerzas marroquíes en noviembre de 2010 y que sirvió de germen del resto de protestas que derivaron en lo que se ha calificado como «la primavera árabe». Finalmente, el juicio, que iba a desarrollarse ante un tribunal militar y después de un año de la detención, fue aplazado.

Igualmente, según informa la agencia de noticias saharaui SPS, el sábado y el domingo se reprodujeron las protestas en la ciudad de Esmara, en el sur del Sáhara Occidental, y de nuevo las fuerzas de seguridad marroquíes disolvieron violentamente las legítimas concentraciones.

Esta violencia y represión de las fuerzas de seguridad de Marruecos, lejos de ser aislada, es permanente y sistémica y deja en evidencia el nulo respeto del Gobierno de Marruecos por los derechos humanos y los principios democráticos.

Teniendo en cuenta el artículo segundo del Acuerdo de Asociación preferencial que la UE mantiene con Marruecos,

1. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante exigir la congelación de este Acuerdo hasta que las autoridades marroquíes cumplan con lo establecido en el mismo sobre el respeto de los principios democráticos y la garantía de los derechos humanos?

2. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante exigir responsabilidades y justicia al Gobierno de Marruecos por estos actos de brutalidad represiva contra los activistas saharauis?

3. ¿Se ha interesado la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante por la situación de los presos políticos saharauis y, concretamente, por la injusta situación de los 23 encarcelados tras el violento desmantelamiento del campamento Gdem Izik?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de abril de 2012)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton lamenta profundamente los incidentes registrados e insta a todas las partes a abstenerse del recurso a la violencia.

La cuestión del respeto de las obligaciones internacionales en materia de derechos humanos se aborda periódicamente en las relaciones UE-Marruecos, en particular, en el marco del Subcomité UE-Marruecos sobre Derechos humanos, Democracia y Gobernanza. Con dicho diálogo, la UE se propone contribuir al compromiso de Marruecos con los principios de democracia y derechos humanos. El problema del Sahara Occidental figura en el programa de trabajo de los órganos de ejecución del Acuerdo de Asociación entre la UE y Marruecos, así como en el del próximo Consejo de Asociación previsto para principios de 2012.

En lo que respecta a la situación de los 23 defensores de los derechos humanos, el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior está en contacto con la Delegación de la UE en Rabat y con ONG internacionales a fin de investigar el estado de salud de los detenidos así como sus condiciones de detención en un sentido más amplio.

En cuanto a posibles sanciones, por lo que se refiere al Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Marruecos, los servicios de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta son de la opinión de que suspender el Acuerdo no sirve a los intereses ni de la UE ni de Marruecos. Las relaciones UE-Marruecos han progresado mucho en estos últimos años y han contribuido a un amplio proceso de reformas democráticas en ese país.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000552/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Continued violence and repression against Sahrawi activists by the Moroccan Government

According to a report by the Collective of Sahrawi Human Rights Defenders (Codesa), last Friday, 17 January around a hundred Sahrawi citizens were wounded in violent repression by Moroccan Government security forces in El Ayoun. Codesa reported that some of the most seriously injured had to be transferred to the Elhasan Belmehdi hospital in the city.

The protest, which was taking place in a calm and non-violent atmosphere until the brutal attack by state security forces, was to draw attention to the unjust fate of the 23 people imprisoned for taking part in the Gdem Izik camp (Camp of Dignity) which was violently dismantled by Moroccan forces in November 2010 and which acted as the spark for further protests in what has been called 'the Arab Spring'. Eventually, the court case, which was due to be heard by a military tribunal after the 23 had been in detention for over a year, was postponed.

Again, according to the Sahrawi press agency SPS, there were further protests on Saturday and Sunday in the town of Esmara, in the south of the Western Sahara, and once again the Moroccan security forces violently dispersed the legitimate gatherings.

This violence and repression carried out by Moroccan security forces, far from being an isolated instance, is permanent and systemic, and illustrates the Moroccan Government's total disregard for human rights and democratic principles.

Taking into account the second article of the preferential Association Agreement that the EU has signed with Morocco,

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to demand that this Agreement be frozen until the Moroccan authorities comply with its provisions on respect for democratic principles and the guarantee of human rights?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to require the Moroccan Government to accept responsibility for and ensure the punishment of these brutal acts of repression against Sahrawi activists?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative concerned about the situation of Sahrawi political detainees, in particular the unjust situation of the 23 people imprisoned after the violent dismantling of the Gdem Izik camp?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) Ashton deeply regrets the incidents that have taken place and has called on all parties to restrain from violence.

The issue of respect for international human rights obligations is addressed regularly in EU-Morocco relations notably in the framework of the EU-Morocco Subcommittee on Human Rights, Democracy and Governance. With such a dialogue, the EU aims to support Morocco's commitment to principles of democracy and human rights. The Western Sahara issue is on the agenda of the implementing bodies of the Association Agreement between the EU and Morocco, including the next Association Council scheduled for early 2012.

Referring to the situation of the 23 human rights defenders, the European External Action Service is in contact with the EU Delegation in Rabat and international NGOs in order to enquire into the health situation of the detainees, as well as their more general conditions of detention.

In terms of possible sanctions, as regards the EU-Morocco Association Agreement, the HR/VP services are of the opinion that suspending the Agreement will not serve the interests of either the EU or Morocco. EU-Morocco relations have made significant progress in recent years and have contributed to a wide process of democratic reform in that country.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000555/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(25 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διαρροή εγκεφάλων και ταλέντων από την ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με άρθρο που δημοσιεύτηκε στη Wall Street Journal με τίτλο «Exodus of European Workers Reverses Continent's Patterns» («Η έξοδος των εργαζομένων από την Ευρώπη αντιστρέφει τα συνήθη δεδομένα της ηπείρου»), οι αντίξοες οικονομικές συνθήκες οδηγούν δεκάδες χιλιάδες ικανούς επαγγελματίες να εγκαταλείψουν την Ευρώπη. Πολλοί προσελκύονται από τις ακμάζουσες πρώην ευρωπαϊκές αποικίες στη Λατινική Αμερική και την Αφρική, αντιστρέφοντας τη συνήθη κατεύθυνση της μεταναστευτικής κίνησης. Κάποιοι άλλοι που εγκαταλείπουν τη δυσχερή κατάσταση στην ευρωζώνη απορροφώνται από την Ασία και την Αυστραλία, καθώς και τις ΗΠΑ και τον Καναδά. Παράλληλα, η εισροή μεταναστών από τον τρίτο κόσμο, των οποίων η εργασία τροφοδότησε την ανάπτυξη της Ευρώπης κατά την περασμένη δεκαετία, υποχωρεί. Εκατοντάδες χιλιάδες από αυτούς, συμπεριλαμβανομένων ορισμένων υπαλλήλων, έχουν ξεκινήσει να επιστρέφουν στις πατρίδες τους. Η εν λόγω έξοδος αυξάνει τις ανησυχίες σχετικά με ένα ενδεχομένως μακροπρόθεσμο κόστος της οικονομικής κρίσης: μια διαρροή ταλέντων που θα μπορούσε να παρακωλύσει τις πιο αδύναμες οικονομίες της ευρωζώνης στην προσπάθειά τους να εξέλθουν από την ύφεση.

Χώρες όπως η Ισπανία και η Πορτογαλία χάνουν ειδικευμένους εργάτες οι οποίοι μεταναστεύουν στις πρώην αποικίες τους. Περισσότεροι πολίτες εγκαταλείπουν χώρες όπως η Ισπανία, η Πορτογαλία, η Ιρλανδία, η Σλοβενία και η Κύπρος από αυτούς που εγκαθίστανται σε αυτές, ενώ στην Ελλάδα οι αρμόδιοι ανησυχούν ότι μια αντίστοιχη τάση εδραιώνεται κι εκεί, με την Αυστραλία να βρίσκεται ανάμεσα στους βασικούς προορισμούς των Ελλήνων που προσπαθούν να διαφύγουν από τις πολιτικές αναταραχές και τα οικονομικά προβλήματα της πατρίδας τους. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση δεν έχει στη διάθεσή της συνολικά στοιχεία σε σχέση με τη μετανάστευση. Οι ανησυχίες σχετικά με τις επιπτώσεις των σημαντικών περικοπών του προϋπολογισμού εντείνονται στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο, στη Γαλλία, στη Γερμανία και στην Ιταλία, όλες χώρες οι οποίες πλήττονται από απώλειες κορυφαίων ερευνητικών ταλέντων.

1. Έχει εξετάσει η Επιτροπή τις μεσοπρόθεσμες καθώς και τις μακροπρόθεσμες επιπτώσεις της διαρροής εγκεφάλων και ταλέντων από την Ευρώπη (μέσω κάποιας έρευνας ή εκτίμησης επιπτώσεων) και τι είδους μέτρα έχει λάβει προκειμένου να αποτρέψει μια τέτοιου είδους εξέλιξη;

2. Αναγνωρίζει το γεγονός ότι η άσκηση μεγαλύτερης πίεσης στις κυβερνήσεις των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ να αυξήσουν τη φορολογία, να περικόψουν τον προϋπολογισμό και τους μισθούς προκειμένου να συγκρατήσουν το κόστος δανεισμού θα αποδυναμώσει την ανάπτυξη της Ευρώπης;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η οικονομική κρίση επηρεάζει χωρίς αμφιβολία τις τάσεις για οικονομική μετανάστευση. Οι περισσότερες παραδοσιακές χώρες προορισμού της ΕΕ σημείωσαν επιβράδυνση ως προς τη μετανάστευση εργατικού δυναμικού. Παράλληλα, η Επιτροπή διακρίνει ενδείξεις ανάκαμψης της κινητικότητας εντός της ΕΕ από το 2010 και μετά. Ωστόσο, υπάρχουν σημαντικές εκροές πολιτών της ΕΕ προς τρίτες χώρες. Το 2008 οι εκροές αυτές ξεπέρασαν τα 2,3 εκατομμύρια άτομα. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει ακόμη αξιόπιστα στοιχεία για πιο πρόσφατα έτη, αλλά από τα υπάρχοντα στοιχεία προκύπτουν αρκετά διαφορετικές καταστάσεις σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ.

Η Επιτροπή είναι πεπεισμένη ότι η οικονομική ανάπτυξη, η καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας, καθώς και οι κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις της κρίσης, και η δημιουργία περισσότερων θέσεων εργασίας είναι τα κύρια μέσα για να αντιστραφεί η τάση αυτή. Η στρατηγική «Ευρώπη 2020» θέτει το πλαίσιο των πολιτικών και δράσεων που έχουν ως στόχο να οδηγήσουν την ΕΕ σε μια έξυπνη, βιώσιμη και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς οικονομία. Στην Ετήσια Επισκόπησή της για την Ανάπτυξη 2012 ([1]), η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή κάλεσε τα κράτη μέλη να επιδιώξουν μια διαφοροποιημένη και φιλική προς την ανάπτυξη οικονομική εξυγίανση. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι, μεταξύ άλλων, τα κράτη μέλη θα πρέπει να δίνουν προτεραιότητα σε δαπάνες που ευνοούν την ανάπτυξη, δίνοντας ιδιαίτερη προσοχή στη συντήρηση ή την ενίσχυση της κάλυψης και της αποτελεσματικότητας των υπηρεσιών απασχόλησης και των προγραμμάτων κατάρτισης για τους ανέργους ([2]). Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ως κύριες προτεραιότητες τη δημιουργία περισσότερων θέσεων εργασίας και τη διασφάλιση της ανάκαμψης που θα συνοδεύεται από πλούτο θέσεων εργασίας. Οι προτεραιότητες αυτές θα αναπτυχθούν με τη «δέσμη μέτρων για την απασχόληση» που θα εκδοθεί την επόμενη άνοιξη. Μέτρα για την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας των νέων είναι επίσης ιδιαίτερα σημαντικά στο πλαίσιο αυτό. Η Επιτροπή έχει συστήσει οκτώ ομάδες δράσης για να επισκεφτούν τα κράτη μέλη με τα υψηλότερα ποσοστά ανεργίας των νέων και συνεχίζει τις διμερείς επαφές με επτά άλλα κράτη μέλη για την επανεστίαση κεφαλαίων στην καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας των νέων.

([1]) 23 Νοεμβρίου 2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/youthonthemove/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000555/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: European brain and talent drain

According to an article in the *Wall Street Journal* entitled 'Exodus of European Workers Reverses Continent's Patterns', economic hardship is driving tens of thousands of skilled professionals from Europe. Many are being lured to thriving former European colonies in Latin America and Africa, reversing well-worn migration patterns. Asia and Australia, as well as the US and Canada, are absorbing others leaving the troubled eurozone. At the same time, the influx of Third World immigrants whose labour has helped to fuel Europe's growth over the past decade is subsiding. Hundreds of thousands of them, including some white-collar professionals, have been returning home. This exodus is raising concerns about one potential long-term cost of the economic crisis-a talent drain that could hinder the eurozone's weakest economies as they struggle to climb out of recession.

Countries such as Spain and Portugal are losing skilled workers to their former colonies. More people are emigrating from Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Slovenia and Cyprus than are moving to those countries, and in Greece officials are worried that a similar trend is taking hold there, with Australia becoming the prime destination for Greeks looking to escape political turmoil and economic woes at home. The European Union has no overall data on migration. Concern about the impact of severe budget cuts is growing in the UK, France, Germany and Italy, all countries which are grappling with losses of top research talent.

1. Has the Commission considered the medium- to long-term effects of a European brain and talent drain (through a study or impact assessment), and what measures has it taken to prevent such a development?

2. Will it acknowledge the fact that putting EU governments under greater pressure to raise taxes, trim budgets and slash payrolls in order to hold down borrowing costs will weaken European growth?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The economic crisis clearly impacts on economic migration trends. Most of the traditional EU destination countries experienced a slowdown of labour immigration. At the same time the Commission observes signs of recovery for intra-EU mobility since 2010. However, there are considerable outflows of EU citizens towards third countries. They exceeded 2.3 million in 2008. The Commission does not yet dispose of reliable data for most recent years but the existing evidence reveals a quite diverse situation across the EU.

The Commission is convinced that economic growth, combating unemployment, as well as the social consequences of the crisis, and creating more jobs are the main levers to reverse this trend. The Europe 2020 strategy set out a framework of policies and actions aiming at turning the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. In its 2012 Annual Growth Survey ([1]), the European Commission called on Member States to pursue differentiated growth-friendly fiscal consolidation. This implies *inter alia* that they should prioritise growth friendly expenditure, paying particular attention to maintaining or reinforcing the coverage and effectiveness of employment services and training schemes for unemployed persons ([2]). The Commission considers that creating more jobs and ensuring a job-rich recovery are key priorities. These priorities will be developed in the 'Employment Package' to be issued later this spring. Measures for combating youth unemployment are also particularly relevant in this context. The Commission has set up eight Action Teams to visit Member States with the highest youth unemployment rates and is pursuing bilateral contacts with seven other Member States to re-focusing funds on combating youth unemployment.

([1]) 23 November 2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/youthonthemove/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000556/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Regolamentazione dell'attività delle potenti agenzie di rating

L'agenzia *Standard and Poor's* ha annunciato ufficialmente il 13 gennaio scorso di aver ridotto il rating sovrano dell'Italia di due livelli portandolo da «A» a «BBB+». L'outlook sul merito di credito è negativo.

L'Italia scende così, secondo *Standard & Poor's*, all'ottavo dei dieci livelli «investment grade».

Il declassamento dell'Italia avviene nel contesto di una revisione generale del merito di credito dei paesi dell'area dell'euro che ha portato al taglio di due livelli anche per i rating di Spagna, Portogallo e Cipro, tutti con outlook negativo.

Declassate anche Francia, Austria, Malta, Slovacchia e Slovenia, seppur di un solo livello, anch'esse con outlook negativo. Francia e Austria, in particolare, perdono la «tripla A» per scendere ad «AA+».

Confermato invece il merito di credito più elevato per la Germania, con outlook stabile.

Le tre agenzie che hanno ormai il monopolio delle approvazioni o bocciature dei regimi finanziari mondiali sono *Moody's*, *Standard & Poor's* e *Fitch*, giudici inappellabili dei destini di Stati, megacorporation, piccole società e persino singoli mutui cartoralizzati. Il loro voto sul merito di credito di tutto e di tutti, al pari di una loro promozione o bocciatura, ha evidenti ripercussioni sui mercati, come si è avuto modo di osservare negli ultimi giorni in relazione a Grecia, Spagna e Italia, vittime delle speculazioni finanziarie.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti l'interrogante chiede dunque alla Commissione:

1. se intende regolamentare lo status di «agenzia di rating», in quanto soggetto tuttora non inquadrato da disposizioni internazionali;

2. come intende contrastare l'oligopolio delle tre agenzie internazionali che, da sole, giudicano la stabilità finanziaria dei paesi di tutto il mondo;

3. se intende avviare misure di controllo nei confronti delle agenzie che in passato hanno commesso evidenti errori nei giudizi provocando perdite economiche da parte di istituti bancari e piccoli risparmiatori.

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(13 marzo 2012)

L'UE ha già adottato misure regolamentari relative alle agenzie di rating del credito (CRA). Nel 2009 è stato adottato un primo regolamento che ha introdotto l'obbligo di registrazione delle agenzie di rating nonché una serie di norme in materia di trasparenza e conflitto di interessi. Nel maggio 2011, un secondo regolamento ha affidato la vigilanza delle CRA alla nuova Autorità europea degli strumenti finanziari e dei mercati (AESFEM) ([1]). Proprio tale autorità ha ora il potere di esaminare la condotta delle agenzie e sanzionare con ammende le eventuali infrazioni al regolamento.

Inoltre, il 15 novembre 2011, la Commissione ha adottato una proposta legislativa che modifica la normativa vigente ([2]). Con detta proposta, la Commissione ha presentato alcune misure intese a aumentare le possibilità di scelta sul mercato delle agenzie di rating del credito, prevenire l'eccessivo affidamento sui rating da parte degli istituti finanziari e attenuare il conflitto di interesse derivante dal modello «issuer-pays» (pagamento da parte dell'emittente) e dalla struttura azionaria delle agenzie di rating del credito. Per promuovere una più ampia scelta sul mercato, la Commissione ha proposto un sistema di rotazione obbligatoria tra agenzie di rating, che porterebbe gli emittenti a ricorrere anche ai pareri di agenzie più piccole. La proposta prevede altresì una disposizione sulla responsabilità civile delle agenzie di rating del credito in caso di violazione intenzionale o negligenza evidente del regolamento dell'UE relativo alle agenzie di rating del credito (regolamento CRA).

([1]) Regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 settembre 2009, relativo alle agenzie di rating del credito (GU L 302 del 17.11.2009), modificato dal regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 maggio 2011, relativo alle agenzie di rating del credito (GU L 145/30 del 31.5.2011).

([2]) Proposta COM(2011)747 def.; 2011/0361 (COD), disponibile al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/docs/agencies/COM_2011_747_it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000556/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Regulating the powerful credit rating agencies

On 13 January 2012 the credit rating agency Standard and Poor's officially announced it had reduced Italy's sovereign credit rating by two levels, from 'A' to 'BBB +'. The outlook is negative.

According to Standard & Poor's, Italy has therefore descended to the eighth of ten 'investment grade' levels.

Italy's downgrading comes against the background of a general review of the creditworthiness of eurozone countries, which has resulted in a two-level drop in the credit ratings of Spain, Portugal and Cyprus, too, all of which have a negative outlook.

France, Austria, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia have also been downgraded, though only by one notch, and they too have a negative outlook. France and Austria, more specifically, have lost their 'AAA' rating and have gone down to 'AA +'.

The highest level of creditworthiness has been confirmed for Germany, which has a stable outlook.

The three agencies that now have the monopoly on the approval or rejection of the world's financial systems are Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch, which, with their definitive judgments, determine the destinies of states, mega-corporations, small companies and even individual securitised mortgages. Their judgments on the creditworthiness of just about everyone and everything — tantamount to passing or failing them — is having clear repercussions on the markets, as we have seen recently in relation to Greece, Spain and Italy, which are the victims of financial speculation.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Will it regulate the status of credit rating agencies, given that they are not yet governed by international rules?

2. How does it intend to counter the oligopoly of the three international agencies that, by themselves, deliver judgments on the financial stability of countries around the world?

3. Will it take measures to monitor those agencies which have previously committed clear errors of judgment resulting in economic losses for banks and small investors?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

The EU has already adopted regulatory measures as regards credit rating agencies (CRAs). In 2009, the first EU legislation requiring registration of rating agencies and rules on transparency and conflicts of interest was adopted. In May 2011, a second CRA regulation transferred the supervision of CRAs to the new European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) ([1]). This agency now has the power to investigate the behaviour of the agencies and, if an infringement of the regulation is detected, impose fines.

Moreover, on 15 November 2011, the Commission has adopted a legislative proposal amending the existing rules ([2]). In this proposal, the Commission proposed certain measures that aim at increasing the diversity of choice in the CRA market, preventing overreliance on ratings by financial institutions and mitigating the conflict of interest due to issuer-pays model and with regard to CRAs' shareholders. In order to promote an increased choice in the market, the Commission proposed a system of mandatory rotation between CRAs that would require issuers to eventually seek opinions also from smaller CRAs. The proposal also includes a provision imposing civil liability on CRAs if they infringe the EU CRA Regulation with intent or gross negligence.

([1]) Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on credit rating agencies of 16 September 2009, OJ L 302, 17.11.2009, as amended by Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011, OJ L 145/30, 31.5.2011.

([2]) Proposal COM(2011) 747 final; 2011/0361 (COD), available on: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/docs/agencies/COM_2011_747_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000557/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Valutazione degli effetti delle agenzie di rating sui mercati

La scorsa settimana l'agenzia *Standard&Poor's* ha operato il declassamento di diversi paesi europei a tripla A e ha effettuato la stessa operazione in riferimento al Fondo europeo di stabilità finanziaria (EFSF), ovvero il fondo salva Stati. Come sottolineato in diverse sedi anche dal Presidente della Banca centrale europea, si tratta di un'operazione che avrà ripercussioni non indifferenti sull'economia reale: non solo il fondo salva Stati potrà prestare meno e/o a costi più elevati, ma dovrà altresì essere previsto un contributo maggiore a carico dei paesi a tripla A.

Premesso che dovrebbe essere indispensabile tenere ben presenti gli squilibri che le agenzie di valutazione determinano sui mercati, a prescindere dalla situazione di difficoltà economico-finanziaria che sta attraversando l'Europa, si chiede alla Commissione se, nei limiti delle competenze a essa spettanti, ritiene che un aumento della concorrenza nel settore possa eventualmente ridimensionare il potere nella configurazione dell'attuale triade *S&P-Moody's-Fitch*.

Inoltre, alla luce degli effetti della situazione sopra descritta e in considerazione dell'andamento dell'attuale ciclo economico, come valuta la Commissione la possibile creazione di un'agenzia di valutazione europea?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(2 marzo 2012)

Il 15 novembre 2011 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta che modifica il regolamento vigente sulle agenzie di rating del credito ([1]). Uno degli obiettivi della proposta consiste nel migliorare le condizioni del mercato del rating in modo da renderle più propizie alla produzione di rating di elevata qualità e ad una più ampia scelta sul mercato. In particolare, la rotazione obbligatoria darà a nuovi potenziali operatori l'opportunità di accedere al mercato. La Commissione ha inoltre proposto di agevolare il raffronto dei rating emessi da diverse agenzie di rating del credito introducendo una scala di rating armonizzata, nonché di dare un maggior riconoscimento ad agenzie di rating meno conosciute istituendo una base dati pubblica gratuita contenente tutti i rating. La Commissione ritiene che ciò porterà a ridurre la dipendenza dai rating emessi delle agenzie più grandi.

L'eventualità di istituire una nuova agenzia di rating indipendente era una delle opzioni avanzate nel documento di consultazione dei servizi della Commissione del 5 novembre 2010 ed è stata discussa con le parti interessate nel corso di una tavola rotonda il 6 luglio 2011. Nella valutazione d'impatto che accompagna la sua ultima proposta legislativa, la Commissione ha valutato la fattibilità della creazione di una fondazione europea di rating del credito indipendente e di un'agenzia europea di rating del credito indipendente. Dall'analisi è emerso che l'istituzione di un'agenzia di rating con fondi pubblici, a prescindere dalla sua impostazione, sarebbe onerosa (con un costo stimato di circa 300-500 milioni di euro per un periodo di 5 anni) e potrebbe risultare problematica in termini di credibilità e indipendenza.

Per questi motivi la Commissione ha deciso, al momento, di abbandonare questa ipotesi.

([1]) Regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 settembre 2009, relativo alle agenzie di rating del credito (GU L 302 del 17.11.2009), modificato dal regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 maggio 2011, relativo alle agenzie di rating del credito (GU L 145/30 del 31.5.2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000557/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Assessing the impact of ratings agencies on the markets

Last week the ratings agency Standard & Poor's downgraded several AAA-rated European countries and did the same thing to the European Financial Stability Fund (EFSF), i.e. the state rescue fund. As highlighted by various different sources and by the President of the European Central Bank, this is an event which will have a considerable impact on the real economy: not only will the EFSF be obliged to lend less and/or at a higher cost, but also a larger contribution from the triple-A rated countries will be needed.

Given that it is essential to bear in mind the destabilising effect which the ratings agencies have on markets, and regardless of the economic and financial difficulties that Europe is going through, can the Commission, within the limits of its responsibilities, say whether it believes that an increase in competition in the sector could reduce the power currently wielded by the trio of S&P, Moody's and Fitch?

Furthermore, in light of the effects of the situation described above and of current economic trends, what does the Commission think of creating a European ratings agency?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

On 15 November 2011, the Commission adopted a proposal amending the existing regulation on credit rating agencies (CRAs) ([1]). Indeed, one of the objectives of the proposal is to improve credit rating market conditions in order to make them conducive to high quality ratings and more choice in the market. In particular, mandatory rotation will give an opportunity for new potential players to enter the market. Moreover, the Commission proposed to facilitate comparison of ratings issued by different credit rating agencies via a harmonised rating scale and to provide more recognition to less known CRAs via a free public database of all ratings. It is the Commission's belief that this will lead to less reliance on the ratings of the bigger CRAs.

The setting up of a new independent CRA was one of the options outlined in the Commission services' consultation paper of 5 November 2010 and was also discussed with stakeholders at a round table on 6 July 2011. The Commission assessed the feasibility of establishing a new independent European credit rating foundation and independent European CRA in the impact assessment accompanying its latest legislative proposal. This analysis showed that setting up a credit rating agency with public money, irrespective of its particular model, would be costly (estimated EUR 300-500 million over five years) and it could raise concerns regarding the CRA's credibility and independence.

For these reasons, the Commission has decided not to pursue this idea further at this stage.

([1]) Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on credit rating agencies of 16 September 2009, OJ L 302, 17.11.2009, as amended by Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011, OJ L 145/30, 31.5.2011.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-000559/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(24 januari 2012)

Betreft: Westerschelde

Op 13 oktober stuurde commissaris Potocnik een brief aan staatssecretaris Bleker waarin hij verzocht werd te reageren op kritische opmerkingen die de wetenschappelijke gemeenschap over de alternatieve plannen voor de Westerschelde had gemaakt.

Kan de Commissie meedelen op welke manier de Nederlandse regering op deze opmerkingen heeft gereageerd?

Kan de Commissie uit de reactie afleiden hoe de Nederlandse regering zal optreden met betrekking tot de tekortkomingen die de Commissie aanhaalt?

Is de Nederlandse regering bereid om terug te keren naar maatregelen die in lijn zijn met de geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsschets 2010, zoals overeengekomen met Vlaanderen?

Kan de Commissie meedelen hoe lang de Nederlandse regering nog respijt krijgt om haar verplichtingen uit de Vogel- en Habitatrichtlijn na te komen? Op welke termijn overweegt de Commissie over te gaan tot een ingebrekestelling, indien er in deze geen vooruitgang geboekt wordt?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(23 februari 2012)

Het Nederlandse ministerie van Economische Zaken, Landbouw en Innovatie heeft geantwoord en heeft een afschrift van zijn schrijven toegezonden aan de Nederlandse Tweede Kamer ([1]).

De autoriteiten geven toe dat de staat van instandhouding van de Westerschelde slecht is, dat dit al twintig jaar het geval is en dat het gebied zal blijven achteruitgaan indien geen passende maatregelen worden getroffen. Zij herhalen dat, terwijl de aannames die als grondslag hebben gediend voor de Ontwikkelingsschets 2010 geldig blijven, zij wel nog steeds overtuigd zijn dat dankzij de instandhoudingsmaatregelen die de regering in juni 2011 heeft vastgesteld, er voldoende gebieden voor nieuwe estuariene habitats zullen kunnen worden gecreëerd om de negatieve trend een halt toe te roepen.

Gezien de urgentie van de situatie zal de Commissie zo snel mogelijk haar evaluatie afronden van alle relevante informatie die haar door de Nederlandse overheid is verstrekt en zal zij dan beslissen welke stappen zij zal ondernemen.

([1]) http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/eleni/documenten-en-publicaties/kamerstukken/2012/01/20/kamerbrief-over-natuurherstel-westerschelde.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000559/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(24 January 2012)

Subject: Western Scheldt

On 13 October, Commissioner Potočnik sent a letter to State Secretary Bleker, urging him to react to critical comments made by the scientific community with regard to the alternative plans for the Western Scheldt.

Can the Commission disclose the manner in which the Dutch Government has reacted to these comments?

Can the Commission deduce from that reaction how the Dutch Government will act with regard to the shortcomings cited by the Commission?

Is the Dutch Government prepared to return to a line of action which complies with the Integrated Development Plan 2010, as agreed with Flanders?

Can the Commission say for how long the Dutch Government will still be able to enjoy respite from its obligations under the Wild Birds and Habitats Directives? When does the Commission think it will issue a formal notice, if no progress is made in this matter?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

The Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure, Agriculture and Innovation replied with a copy to the Dutch parliament ([1]).

The authorities admit that the conservation status of the Western Scheldt is bad; that it has been so for 20 years already and that the site will continue deteriorating if no appropriate measures are taken. They confirm that, while the assumptions that were at the basis of the Development Plan 2010 remain valid, they also remain convinced that the conservation measures decided by the government in June 2011 will allow for creating sufficient areas of new estuarine habitats to halt the negative trend.

Given the urgency of the situation, the Commission will finalise as soon as possible its assessment of all relevant information provided by the Netherlands and then decide on the appropriate next steps.

([1]) http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/eleni/documenten-en-publicaties/kamerstukken/2012/01/20/kamerbrief-over-natuurherstel-westerschelde.html

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000563/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(25 ta' Jannar 2012)

Suġġett: L-Intaxxar tas-Settur Finanzjarju

Intqal illi waħda mir-raġunijiet prinċipali għall-proposta ta' taxxa fuq tranżazzjonijiet finanzjarji hija sabiex jiġi żgurat illi s-settur finanzjarju iġorr il-piżijiet maħluqa mill-kriżi finanzjarja. Uħud mill-kritiċi tal-industrija li jikkritikaw l-FTT proposta jgħidu li filwaqt li jopponu FTT, huma lesti jikkontribwixxu għall-irkupru iżda l-FTT mhix l-aħjar mod kif jintlaħaq dan il-għan.

Alternattiva possibbli għall-FTT hija taxxa fuq l-attività finanzjarja. Il-Kummissjoni esploratha din il-possibilità? Jekk iva, tista' tipprovdi r-raġunijiet għalfejn tagħżel li ddaħħal FTT u mhux din l-alternattiva?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šemeta f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(9 ta' Marzu 2012)

Tinġibed l-attenzjoni tal-Onorevoli Membru għall-valutazzjoni tal-impatt annessa mal-proposta tal-Kummissjoni (SEC 2011/1102) li fiha jitqabblu l-FTT u t-taxxa fuq l-attività finanzjarja (FAT). Wara li analizzat il-vijabbiltà tagħha, il-Kummissjoni qieset li armonizzazzjoni tal-FTT kienet l-aħjar azzjoni li setgħet tittieħed. Deher partikolarment probabbli r-riskju li miżuri nazzjonali mhux ikkoordinati setgħu jxekklu l-funzjonament xieraq tas-suq intern fir-rigward tat-taxxi fuq it-tranżazzjonijiet finanzjarji. Dan fil-kuntest tat-taxxi diġà eżistenti u l-fatt li fuq il-livelli kollha għaddejjin dibattiti dwar dawn it-taxxi. Bl-istess mod, FTT armonizzata fuq il-livell tal-UE x'aktarx tippromwovi soluzzjoni globali bil-għan li jiġi żgurat kontribut ġust tas-settur finanzjarju għall-finanzi pubbliċi. Fl-aħħar nett, FTT għandha potenzjal ogħla ta' ġbir ta' flus u effetti sekondarji pożittivi fuq id-dinamika ta' xi setturi tas-suq.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000563/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Taxing the financial sector

It has been claimed that one of the main reasons for proposing a tax on financial transactions is that of ensuring that the financial sector carries the burdens created by the financial crisis. Some industry critics of the proposed FTT claim that while they object to an FTT, they are ready to contribute to recovery but an FTT is not the best way to achieve this objective.

One possible alternative to an FTT is a tax on financial activity. Has the Commission explored this option? If so, can it provide the reasons for choosing to introduce an FTT rather than this alternative?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(9 March 2012)

The Honourable Member is referred to the impact assessment annexed to the Commission proposal (SEC(2011) 1102) in which FTT and a tax on financial activity (FAT) are compared. After analysing the feasibility, the Commission has considered that FTT harmonisation was the most appropriate course of action. In particular, the risk that uncoordinated national measures could undermine the proper functioning of the internal market appeared particularly likely in regard to financial transaction taxes, in view of the already existing taxes and the debates on such taxes that are ongoing at all levels. By the same token, a harmonised FTT at EU level was more likely to promote a global solution with a view to ensure a fair contribution of the financial sector to the public finances. Lastly, FTT has a higher revenue raising potential and positive side effects on the dynamics of some market segments.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000564/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(25 ta' Jannar 2012)

Suġġett: Alternattivi għall-FTT

Il-Kummissjoni kkunsidrat alternattivi għall-Imposta Globali fuq it-Tranżazzjonijiet Finanzjarji (FTT) li jkollhom l-effett li jiżguraw illi s-settur finanzjarju jikkontribwixxi għall-ispiża tal-kriżi finanzjarja? Jekk iva, il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi lista eżawrjenti tal-alternattivi kkunsidrati?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šemeta f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Marzu 2012)

L-Onorevoli Membru huwa indirizzat lejn il-volumi 8, 12, 15 u 16 tal-valutazzjoni tal-impatt annessa mal-proposta tal-Kummissjoni (SEC 2011/1102) ([1]) li fiha Taxxa fuq it-Tranżazzjoni Finanzjarja u Taxxa fuq l-Attivitajiet Finanzjarji huma ppreżentati u mqabbla. Barra minn hekk, fit-taqsima 2.3.1, id-Dokument ta' Ħidma tal-Persunal tal-Kummissjoni "Innovative Finance at Global level" (Finanzi Innovattivi f'Livell Globali) (SEC(2010) 409 finali) ([2]), jiddiskuti l-imposti bankarji, it-taxxi fuq il-bonusijiet kif ukoll is-sopprataxxa fuq il-kumpaniji għall-istituzzjonijiet finanzjarji bħala miżuri alternattivi.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/other_taxes/financial_sector/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/international/2010-04-06-global_innovative_financing_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000564/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Alternatives to the FTT

Has the Commission considered alternatives to the Financial Transaction Tax that would have the effect of ensuring that the financial sector contributes to the cost of the financial crisis? If so, can the Commission provide an exhaustive list of the alternatives considered?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2012)

The Honourable Member is referred to Volumes 8, 12, 15 and 16 of the impact assessment annexed to the Commission proposal (SEC 2011/1102) ([1]) in which a Financial Transaction Tax and a Financial Activities Tax are presented and compared. In addition to this, the Commission Staff Working Document 'Innovative Finance at Global level' (SEC(2010) 409 final) ([2]) discusses in Section 2.3.1 bank levies, bonus taxes as well as a surcharge on the corporate income tax for financial institutions as alternative measures.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/other_taxes/financial_sector/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/international/2010-04-06-global_innovative_financing_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000565/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(25 ta' Jannar 2012)

Suġġett: Inizjattivi dwar l-Impjiegi u l-Affarijiet Soċjali

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi lista eżawrjenti ta' inizjattivi ġodda fil-qasam tal-impjiegi u l-affarijiet soċjali mnedija wara Jannar 2010?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(6 ta' Marzu 2012)

Fl-20 ta' Jannar 2012 ([1]), il-Kummissjoni bagħtet it-tweġiba tagħha direttament lill-Onorevoli Membru u lis-Segretarjat tal-Parlament, flimkien ma' tabella bit-tagħrif mitlub.

([1]) Referenza Ares (2012) 71096.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000565/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Initiatives on employment and social affairs

Could the Commission provide an exhaustive list of new initiatives in the field of employment and social affairs launched after January 2010?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The Commission sent its answer directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat, together with a table containing the information requested, on 20 January 2012 ([1]).

([1]) Ares reference (2012)71096.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000566/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(25 ta' Jannar 2012)

Suġġett: Ir-responsabbiltà tal-aġenziji ta' klassifikazzjoni tal-kreditu

Ir-rwol li l-aġenziji ta' klassifikazzjoni tal-kreditu (CRAs) kellhom fil-kriżi finanzjarja huwa ċar. Madankollu, minkejja l-oġġezzjonijiet li tqajmu mill-Kummissjoni, is-CRAs qegħdin ikomplu jieħdu deċiżjonijiet li għandhom konsegwenzi b'firxa wiesgħa. Il-Kummissjoni temmen li r-Regolament riċenti dwar is-CRAs u r-reviżjoni sussegwenti tiegħu huma biżżejjed sabiex jiggarantixxu t-trasparenza u r-responsabbiltà tas-CRAs?

Qegħdin jiġu kkontemplati miżuri ulterjuri?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(29 ta' Frar 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni tikkondividi l-opinjoni tal-Onorevoli Membru li l-aġenziji li jikklassifikaw il-kreditu għandhom ikunu trasparenti għalkollox u responsabbli. F'dan ir-rigward, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta leġislattiva fil-15 ta' Novembru 2011, li temenda r-regolament eżistenti dwar l-aġenziji li jikklassifikaw il-kreditu (ir-Regolament dwar Aġenziji ta' Klassifikazzjoni tal-Kreditu (CRA)) ([1]) Il-proposta tipprevedi firxa wiesgħa ta' miżuri sabiex tiżgura r-responsabbiltà u ttejjeb it-trasparenza tal-aġenziji li jikklassifikaw il-kreditu (CRAs). Fir-rigward tar-responsabbiltà, il-proposta tal-Kummissjoni għandha l-għan li tiżgura li l-investituri jkollhom dritt ta' rimedju adegwat kontra s-CRAs li jiksru r-Regolament dwar Aġenziji ta' Klassifikazzjoni tal-Kreditu (CRA) u jagħmlulhom il-ħsara. Fir-rigward tat-trasparenza, is-CRAs ikunu mitluba, pereżempju, li jippubblikaw rapport sħiħ tar-riċerka dwar klassifika sovrana maħruġa u li jipprovdu lill-Awtorità Ewropea tat-Titoli u s-Swieq (ESMA) b'lista ta' ħlasijiet riċevuti minn servizzi ta' klassifikazzjoni u servizzi anċillari provduti lil klijenti individwali.

Il-Kummissjoni hija konfidenti li l-miżuri fil-proposta leġislattiva għall-assigurazzjoni tar-responsabbiltà u t-titjib tat-trasparenza tas-CRAs huma adegwati sabiex jittrattaw it-tħassib imqajjem mill-Onorevoli Membru.

([1]) Ir-Regolament tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill dwar l-aġenziji li jiggradaw il-kreditu tas-16 ta' Settembru 2009, ĠU L 302, 17.11.2009, kif emendat bir-Regolament tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-11 ta' Mejju 2011, ĠU L 145/30, 31.5.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000566/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Accountability of credit rating agencies

The role that credit rating agencies (CRAs) have played in the financial crisis is clear, but despite the objections that have been raised by the Commission CRAs continue to take decisions with wide-ranging consequences. Does the Commission believe that the recent regulation on CRAs and its subsequent revision are sufficient to guarantee the transparency and accountability of CRAs?

Are further measures being contemplated?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that credit rating agencies should be fully transparent and accountable. In this regard, the Commission adopted a legislative proposal on 15 November 2011, which amends the existing regulation on credit rating agencies (CRA Regulation) ([1]). The proposal provides for a wide range of measures to ensure the accountability and enhance transparency of credit rating agencies (CRAs). As regards the accountability, the Commission's proposal aims to ensure that investors have an adequate right of redress against CRAs that infringe the CRA Regulation and cause damage to them. As regards transparency, CRAs would be, for example, required to publish a full research report on an issued sovereign rating and to provide the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) with a list of fees received from rating and ancillary services provided to individual clients.

The Commission is confident that the measures in the legislative proposal to ensure the accountability and enhance transparency of CRAs are adequate to deal with the concerns raised by the Honourable Member.

([1]) Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on credit rating agencies of 16 September 2009, OJ L 302, 17.11.2009, as amended by Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011, OJ L 145/30, 31.5.2011.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000567/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(25 ta' Jannar 2012)

Suġġett: Bejgħ bin-nieqes

Il-MEMO/11/713 tal-Kummissjoni jgħid li l-Kummissjoni tagħraf li l-bejgħ bin-nieqes għandu benefiċċji ekonomiċi u li dan jikkontribwixxi għall-effiċjenza tas-swieq tal-UE. Sar xi studju komprensiv sabiex niftiehmu aktar dawn il-benefiċċji? Fil-futur, il-Kummissjoni ser tagħmel xi forma ta' valutazzjoni sabiex taċċerta ruħha jekk ir-Regolament dwar il-Bejgħ bin-Nieqes u l-Iswaps ta' Inadempjenza tal-Kreditu llimitax dawn il-benefiċċji b'xi mod jew ieħor?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(2 ta' Marzu 2012)

Bħala parti mill-ħidma preparatorja għall-abbozzar tal-proposta tagħha għal Regolament dwar il-Bejgħ bin-Nieqes u ċerti aspetti tas-Swaps ta' Inadempjenza tal-Kreditu ([1]), il-Kummissjoni Ewropea wettqet valutazzjoni tal-impatt li identifikat l-benefiċċji kif ukoll ir-riskji li jista' jiġġenera l-bejgħ bin-nieqes. Ir-Regolament miftiehem bejn il-Parlament Ewropew u l-Kunsill u approvat mill-Parlament Ewropew fl-ewwel qari fil-15 ta' Novembru 2011 ([2]) jeħtieġ li l-Kummissjoni tagħmel rapport lill-koleġiżlaturi li janalizza diversi aspetti tar-Regolament sat-30 ta' Ġunju 2013. Bħala parti minn din l-analiżi, il-Kummissjoni ser tevalwa kif ir-regolament ħadem fil-prattika u l-impatt li kellu fuq il-bejgħ bin-nieqes, is-Swaps ta' Inadempjenza tal-Kreditu u t-tħaddim tas-swieq. Din l-evalwazzjoni ser titwettaq fid-dawl tad-diskussjonijiet li saru mal-awtoritajiet kompetenti u tal-Awtorità Ewropea tat-Titoli u s-Swieq (European Securities and Markets Authority — ESMA) kif ukoll tas-sejbiet tal-istudji akkademiċi ppubblikati.

([1]) COM(2010) 482 finali, 15.9.2010.
([2]) Ir-riżoluzzjoni leġiżlattiva tal-Parlament Ewropew tal-15 ta' Novembru 2011 dwar proposta għal regolament tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill dwar il-Bejgħ bin-Nieqes u ċerti aspetti tas-Swaps ta' Inadempjenza tal-Kreditu (COM(2010)0482 — C7-0264/2010 — 2010/0251(COD)).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000567/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Short selling

Commission MEMO/11/713 states that the Commission acknowledges that short selling has economic benefits and contributes to the efficiency of EU markets. Has a comprehensive study been conducted in order to understand these benefits further? Will the Commission conduct an assessment in the future for the purpose of ascertaining whether the regulation on Short Selling and Credit Default Swaps has curtailed these benefits in any way?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

As part of the preparatory work for drafting its proposal for a regulation on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps ([1]), the European Commission carried out an impact assessment which identified the benefits as well as the risks that short selling can generate. The regulation agreed by the European Parliament and the Council and endorsed by the European Parliament at first reading on 15 November 2011 ([2]) requires the Commission to carry out, by 30 June 2013, a report to the co-legislators reviewing several aspects of the regulation. As part of this revision, the Commission will evaluate how the regulation has functioned in practice and the impact it has had on short selling, Credit Default Swaps and the functioning of markets. This evaluation will be conducted in light of discussions held with the competent authorities and ESMA as well as the findings of published academic studies.

([1]) COM(2010) 482 final, 15.9.2010.
([2]) European Parliament legislative resolution of 15 November 2011 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Short Selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps (COM(2010) 0482 — C7-0264/2010 — 2010/0251(COD)).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000568/12
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA)

The Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) has begun work on the planned national park that will be called the Mount Scopus Slopes Park. The planned park may be built on land belonging to Palestinian residents of A-Tur and Issawiya. There are concerns that Palestinian homes may be disturbed and that the political ramifications of this park could lead to further tensions in the region.

Is the Commission aware of this situation, and what actions are being taken to ensure stability in the region?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the situation referred to. Representatives of EU Member States' missions and of the EU Delegations in Tel Aviv, East Jerusalem and Ramallah made a field visit to the planned site of the park on 25 January 2012. It was assessed that the planned national park would prevent the natural growth of the Isawiyeh and at-Tur neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem.

This initiative is part of the broader issue of Israeli developments in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem, on which the Commission has had discussions with and formal demarches to the Israeli authorities. A number of civil society organisations together with local residents have appealed in court against the planned national park. The Israeli court has issued an injunction until 18 February 2012, according to which all work on the national park must cease pending a final decision on the complaint. The EU Delegations in East Jerusalem and Tel Aviv are monitoring closely further developments.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000569/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Visite mediche e dentistiche a prezzi scontatissimi su siti online

Groupon, Groupalia, Letsbonus e altri siti simili di outlet online stanno rivoluzionando il modo di acquistare dei cittadini europei. Tramite questi siti online possono essere acquistati prodotti e/o servizi con sconti che arrivano fino al 90 %, comprese le visite mediche e, tra queste, anche le visite dentistiche.

Il sistema è semplice: lo studio dentistico offre un servizio scontato sul portale, un'offerta limitata nel tempo che al paziente costa il 60-70 % in meno rispetto al prezzo iniziale. Le offerte riguardano visite, pulizia e sbiancamento dei denti e, in aggiunta, una lastra o la sostituzione di un'otturazione. Il tutto a prezzi competitivi: circa 30 EUR, al posto del tariffario di mercato che può andare dai 150 ai 300 EUR a seconda dello studio. Va sottolineato che, poiché non esistono tariffari imposti, non si configura alcuna violazione della legge.

Il risultato di questo sistema è che sono sempre maggiori le persone che acquistano su Internet i pacchetti offerti da studi medici e dentistici.

Premesso che la tutela della salute dei cittadini europei deve essere una priorità e considerato che essi acquistano prestazioni mediche a bassissimo costo, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza del proliferare di questi pacchetti offerti su Internet da studi medici?

2. Se condivide le preoccupazioni circa i rischi che corrono i cittadini europei affidando la cura della propria salute a studi medici che praticano prezzi molto bassi e che, pertanto, fanno legittimamente dubitare della qualità delle prestazioni offerte?

3. Se infine può rendere noto quali strumenti ha a disposizione il cittadino per difendersi da eventuali truffe derivanti da prestazioni mediche vendute online a basso costo?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2012)

Rientra nelle competenze degli Stati membri definire il quadro in forza del quale gli operatori della sanità forniscono servizi, compresa la legislazione sulla fornitura o la commercializzazione di cure sanitarie on line, nonché definire gli standard di qualità e sicurezza applicabili agli operatori sanitari.

La direttiva 2011/24/UE ([1]) sui diritti dei pazienti relativi all'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera, che deve essere recepita entro il 25 ottobre 2013, fa obbligo agli Stati membri, nel contesto dell'erogazione di assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera, di fornire informazioni in tema di standard di qualità e sicurezza. I punti nazionali di contatto forniranno ai pazienti tali informazioni e confermeranno se l'operatore prescelto non sottostà ad eventuali restrizioni all'esercizio dell'assistenza. Gli Stati membri devono assicurare che siano poste in atto le procedure per il trattamento dei reclami e i meccanismi per consentire ai pazienti di essere tutelati se subiscono nocumento a seguito dell'assistenza sanitaria ricevuta. In caso di frode i pazienti dovrebbero poter chiedere riparazione in forza del diritto dello Stato membro in cui hanno ricevuto il trattamento.

La direttiva 2000/31/CE sul commercio elettronico ([2]) fa obbligo ai fornitori di servizi on line di riportare sul loro sito web un minimo di informazioni, vale a dire prezzo del servizio, particolari sul fornitore del servizio e sua registrazione presso un'organizzazione di categoria. Ciò serve ai pazienti per verificare che il fornitore sia legalmente accreditato per la prestazione di tali servizi.

La direttiva 2005/29/CE relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali ([3]) vieta le pratiche commerciali sleali tra imprese e consumatori, vale a dire le pratiche che vengono meno agli obblighi di diligenza professionale o che siano false o idonee a falsare il comportamento economico del consumatore medio in relazione a un prodotto specifico.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:088:0045:0065:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2000:178:0001:0001:EN:PDF.
([3]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/system/files/2005_29_EC.pdf

Il regolamento (CE) n. 861/2007 che istituisce un procedimento europeo per le controversie di modesta entità, vale a dire quelle al di sotto di 2 000 euro, aiuta a introdurre una domanda di riparazione contro un fornitore assicurando una rapida risoluzione delle controversie ([4]).

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:199:0001:0022:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000569/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Visits to the doctor and dentist at highly reduced prices on websites

Groupon, Groupalia, Letsbonus and other similar online outlet websites are revolutionising the way the European public makes purchases. On these websites, products and/or services can be purchased at discounts of up to 90 %, including visits to the doctor and also visits to the dentist.

The system is simple: the dental surgery offers a discounted service on the portal, an offer with a time limit, that costs the patient 60-70 % less than the initial price. The offers cover visits, teeth cleaning and whitening and, in addition, an X-ray or replacing a filling. All at competitive prices: around EUR 30, as opposed to the going market rate which can be as much as EUR 150 to EUR 300 depending on the dentist. It should be stressed that as there are no fixed rates, this does not break the law in any way.

The outcome is that there are increasingly more people who purchase packages offered by doctors' and dentists' surgeries on the Internet.

Given that protecting the health of EU citizens must be a priority and that they are buying medical services at very low cost, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of the proliferation of these packages offered on the Internet by doctors' surgeries?

2. Whether it shares these concerns regarding the risks EU citizens are running in entrusting the care of their own health to doctors' surgeries which charge very low prices, giving rise as a consequence to legitimate doubts as to the quality of the services offered?

3. Finally, which instruments do citizens have at their disposal to protect themselves against potential fraud deriving from low-cost medical services sold online?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2012)

It is within Member States' competence to set the framework within which health professionals provide services including legislation on the provision or marketing of healthcare online, and quality and safety standards applicable to healthcare providers.

Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]) on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, to be transposed by 25 October 2013, requires Member States, in the context of the provision of cross-border healthcare, to make available information on quality and safety standards. National Contact Points will provide patients of other Member States with this information and confirm whether a chosen provider has any restrictions on its practice. Member States need to ensure that there are complaints procedures and mechanisms for patients to seek remedies if they suffer harm from the healthcare they receive. In cases of fraud patients would be able to seek remedies under the law of the Member State of treatment.

Directive 2000/31/EC on electronic commerce ([2]) obliges online service providers to provide a minimum set of information on their website, i.e. price of service, details of service provider, and registration with a professional body. This helps patients to verify whether the provider is legally accredited to perform such services.

Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices ([3]) prohibits unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices, i.e. practices that are contrary to professional diligence or which distort or are likely to distort the behaviour of an average consumer in relation to a specific product.

Regulation (EC) No 861/2007 on a European small claims procedure for cross-border claims below EUR 2 000 helps lodging a claim against a provider by ensuring a swift conflict resolution ([4]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:088:0045:0065:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2000:178:0001:0001:EN:PDF.
([3]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/system/files/2005_29_EC.pdf
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:199:0001:0022:EN:PDF.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000570/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πολιτικές λιτότητας στην ευρωζώνη

Η εφαρμογή σε όλη την ευρωζώνη σκληρών πολιτικών λιτότητας και περιορισμού των ελλειμμάτων και της ζήτησης, έχει οδηγήσει πλέον σε αρνητικές οικονομικές εξελίξεις, σχεδόν στο σύνολο της ΕΕ. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, σύμφωνα με πρόσφατη έρευνα του ΟΟΣΑ, οι οικονομίες της ευρωζώνης θα έχουν για το 2012 αρνητικές προοπτικές ανάπτυξης, ενώ οι κοινωνικοί δείκτες της ανεργίας, της φτώχειας, της υποαπασχόλησης, έχουν ήδη μπει σε ιδιαίτερα αρνητική τροχιά.

Όσον αφορά τις χώρες της περιφέρειας, η οικονομική και κοινωνική κατάσταση είναι κάτι παραπάνω από αρνητική. Είναι εκρηκτική. Στην Ελλάδα, τη χώρα που έχει χαρακτηριστεί από πολλούς ως το ευρωπαϊκό πειραματόζωο, η επίσημη ανεργία έχει φτάσει στο 17,7 %, που υπολείπεται κατά πολύ της πραγματικής, η επίσημη ανεργία στους νέους στο 43 %, οι φόροι και οι μειώσεις μισθών είναι συνεχείς, τα ελλείμματα και το χρέος παραμένουν υψηλά παρά τις θυσίες του ελληνικού λαού, λόγω των αναγκών εξυπηρέτησης του χρέους, ενώ η φτώχεια, οι άστεγοι και οι άποροι αποτελούν τη νέα καθημερινή εικόνα στις ελληνικές πόλεις και χωριά. Με δεδομένο ότι η πολιτική επιλογή της εφαρμογής πανευρωπαϊκών προγραμμάτων δημοσιονομικής λιτότητας, που προωθούν κυβερνήσεις αλλά και θεσμικά όργανα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, δεν καταφέρνει ούτε να δώσει «μηνύματα» στις χρηματαγορές, ούτε να επιστρέψει την ευρωζώνη σε τροχιά διατηρήσιμης ανάπτυξης, ούτε να μειώσει τα ελλείμματα και το χρέος των κυβερνήσεων, αλλά αντίθετα δημιουργεί υφεσιακές καταστάσεις, φτώχεια και ανεργία, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Εξετάζει το ενδεχόμενο, η οικονομική πολιτική λιτότητας που εφαρμόζουν τα κράτη μέλη και προωθεί η Επιτροπή, να αποτελεί την λάθος συνταγή στην παρούσα οικονομική και πολιτική συγκυρία; Εάν ναι, τι σκοπεύει να προτείνει προς το κράτη μέλη; Εάν όχι, αναγνωρίζει τους κινδύνους κοινωνικής, πολιτικής και οικονομικής διάλυσης της Ευρώπης και κυρίως των κρατών μελών της;

2. Συγκεκριμένα για την Ελλάδα, το Μνημόνιο που θα συνοδεύει τη νέα δανειακή σύμβαση, υπό την προϋπόθεση ολοκλήρωσης των διαπραγματεύσεων για το PSI, θα έχει τις ίδιες πολιτικές και κοινωνικές στοχεύσεις με το προηγούμενο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει πολύ καλά πόσο κοινωνικά επώδυνα είναι τα μέτρα εξυγίανσης σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει επίσης ότι οι πολιτικές για τη μείωση του δημοσιονομικού ελλείμματος και συνδρομής των επιχειρήσεων ώστε να καταστούν ανταγωνιστικές στις εξωτερικές αγορές μπορεί να οδηγήσουν βραχυπρόθεσμα σε συρρίκνωση της εσωτερικής ζήτησης, της οικονομικής δραστηριότητας και της απασχόλησης. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή είναι της άποψης ότι η αποτυχία αντιμετώπισης του υψηλού δημόσιου χρέους σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη, ή η έλλειψη ανταγωνιστικότητας (όπως υποδηλώνεται από τα μη βιώσιμα μεγάλα ελλείμματα ισοζυγίου τρεχουσών συναλλαγών) θα συνέβαλλαν μόνο στην επιδείνωση της μεσοπρόθεσμης προοπτικής των εν λόγω οικονομιών.

Όσον αφορά τις οικονομικές πολιτικές που θα αποτελέσουν προϋπόθεση για τη χορήγηση νέων δανείων στην Ελλάδα, το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου αναφέρεται στα έγγραφα που ψηφίστηκαν από τη Βουλή των Ελλήνων στις 12 Φεβρουαρίου 2012. Αν και η μείωση του δημοσιονομικού ελλείμματος, ώστε να καταστεί βιώσιμη η κατάσταση, εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί προτεραιότητα του νέου προγράμματος προσαρμογής, οι δημοσιονομικοί στόχοι (από πλευράς πρωτογενούς πλεονάσματος) έχουν αναθεωρηθεί σημαντικά. Ενώ πριν από μερικούς μήνες, η Ελλάδα απέβλεπε σε πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα +0,2 % του ΑΕΠ το 2012, ο στόχος αυτός αναθεωρήθηκε σε πρωτογενές έλλειμμα 1 % του ΑΕΠ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000570/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Austerity policies in the euro area

The implementation in the entire euro area of harsh austerity policies, deficit reduction and lower demand has had an unfavourable economic impact on almost the entire EU. Specifically, according to a recent OECD survey, the economic prospects for the euro area in 2012 indicate negative growth, while the trend now followed by social indicators regarding unemployment, underemployment and poverty is already particularly unfavourable.

For the EU Member States, economic and social conditions are worse than negative, they are explosive. In Greece, the country that has been characterised by many as the guinea-pig of Europe, official unemployment figures have reached 17.7 %, which very much understates the reality, with official unemployment among young people standing at 43 %, taxes and wage cuts being imposed continually, and deficit and debt figures remaining high, despite the sacrifices being made by the Greek people, because of the need for debt servicing, while poverty, homelessness and destitution have become an everyday reality in Greek towns and villages. Given that the political option of implementing pan-European programmes of fiscal austerity promoted by both national governments and EU institutions is not succeeding in sending 'the right message' to the money markets and is neither bringing the Eurozone back on a course of sustainable development, nor reducing deficits or government debt, but is, on the contrary, leading to recession, poverty and unemployment:

1. Is the Commission investigating the possibility that the economic austerity policies being implemented by the Member States and promoted by the Commission are the wrong prescription for our current economic and political woes? If so, what recommendations will it make to the Member States? If it is not, does it recognise the danger of political and economic disintegration in Europe and in particular the Member States?

2. Specifically with regard to Greece, will the Memorandum accompanying the new loan agreement, assuming that PSI negotiations are completed, pursue the same policies and social objectives as its predecessor?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

The Commission is very well aware how socially painful the consolidation measures are in a number of Member States. The Commission is also aware that policies to reduce the government deficit, and to help firms to gain competitiveness in the external markets, may lead in the short term to a contraction in internal demand, in economic activity and in employment. However, the Commission is of the view that failing to address the high level of public debt in a number of Member States, or the lack of competitiveness (as illustrated by the unsustainable large current account deficits) would only contribute to aggravating the medium-term prospects of those economies.

Concerning the economic policies that will be a condition for the new loans to Greece, the Honourable Member is referred to the documents voted by the Hellenic Parliament on 12 February 2012. Although the reduction in the government deficit, to restore a sustainable situation, remains a priority of the new adjustment programme, the fiscal targets (in terms of primary surplus) have been substantially revised. While a few months ago, Greece aimed a primary surplus of +0.2 % of GDP in 2012, this target was revised to a primary deficit of 1 % of GDP.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000572/12
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D), Guido Milana (S&D) e Silvia Costa (S&D)
(26 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Imbarcazioni passeggeri

L'incidente della nave da crociera naufragata davanti all'isola del Giglio è stato causato da una modifica non autorizzata della rotta: la nave navigava ad una distanza di un miglio dalla costa e ha urtato le Scole, una formazione di scogli a 500 metri dalle coste dell'isola di Giglio. Nel naufragio hanno perso la vita 11 passeggeri e ne rimangono dispersi 24.

Può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. tra i compiti dell'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza marittima (EMSA) vi sia quello di definire i parametri minimi necessari per garantire la sicurezza delle imbarcazioni destinate al trasporto di passeggeri, anche relativamente alle distanze da osservare in fase di navigazione, con particolare riguardo alle aree di rilievo ambientale e paesaggistico?

2. L'agenzia possa stabilire parametri minimi di sicurezza relativamente alle procedure da adottare a bordo delle navi passeggeri, anche per quanto riguarda la formazione e l'aggiornamento del personale di bordo?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(29 febbraio 2012)

1. L'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza marittima (EMSA) è stata istituita al fine di assicurare un livello elevato, uniforme ed efficace di sicurezza marittima, di protezione marittima, di prevenzione dell'inquinamento e di intervento contro l'inquinamento causato dalle navi nell'Unione europea.

Tuttavia, il compito dell'EMSA non è quello di definire i requisiti minimi di sicurezza per le imbarcazioni destinate al trasporto di passeggeri, ma di assistere gli Stati membri e la Commissione ad assolvere i loro obblighi in merito all'attuazione della pertinente legislazione dell'Unione, al suo monitoraggio e alla valutazione della sua efficacia.

Per quanto riguarda la questione specifica della distanza minima dalla costa da osservare in fase di navigazione, la Commissione intende chiarire che a questo proposito non esiste una norma specifica né nella legislazione internazionale né nella legislazione dell'Unione. Tale aspetto rientra esclusivamente nella valutazione professionale del capitano, che si affida ai mezzi tecnologici necessari per una navigazione sicura.

2. Il diritto dell'Unione europea contiene già norme obbligatorie particolareggiate per la formazione e l'abilitazione della gente di mare ([1]), che rispecchiano rigorosamente quelle concordate a livello internazionale ([2]). La Commissione verifica l'attuazione di tali norme da parte degli Stati membri per mezzo di ispezioni effettuate dall'EMSA. Inoltre, la Commissione, assistita dall'EMSA, valuta la conformità dei sistemi di istruzione marittima e di abilitazione dei marittimi dei paesi che non appartengono all'Unione con le norme internazionali in materia.

([1]) Direttiva 2008/106/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 19 novembre 2008, concernente i requisiti minimi di formazione per la gente di mare (rifusione) (testo rilevante ai fini del SEE), GU L 323 del 3.12.2008, pagg. 33-61.

([2]) Convenzione sulle norme relative alla formazione della gente di mare, al rilascio dei brevetti ed alla guardia (convenzione STCW).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000572/12
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D), Guido Milana (S&D) and Silvia Costa (S&D)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Passenger ships

The accident that caused the shipwreck of the cruise liner off the island of Giglio was due to an unauthorised course change: the ship was sailing at a distance of one nautical mile from the coast when it struck Le Scole, a rock formation 500 metres off the coast of the island of Giglio. 11 passengers lost their lives in the shipwreck and 24 remain unaccounted for.

Can the Commission state if:

1. among the tasks of the European Maritime Safety Agency is that of defining the minimum requirements to guarantee the safety of passenger transport ships, including those relating to the distance to observe during navigation, with particular attention to areas of environmental importance and scenic beauty?

2. the Agency is able to establish minimum safety standards relating to the procedures to adopt on board passenger ships, including as regards the training and retraining of the crew aboard?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

1. The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has been established for the purpose of ensuring a high, uniform and effective level of maritime safety, maritime security and prevention and response of pollution by ships within the EU.

However, EMSA's task is not to define the minimum safety requirements for the safety of passenger ships, but to assist Member States and the Commission in their obligations on the implementation of relevant Union legislation, its monitoring and the evaluation of its effectiveness.

Regarding the specific issue of minimum navigation distance from the coast, the Commission wishes to clarify that there is no specific rule in both International or the EU legislation in that respect. It is entirely up to the professional judgment of the captain who relies to necessary technological means for safe navigation.

2. EC law already contains detailed mandatory standards for the training and certification of seafarers ([1]), which strictly reflect the ones agreed upon at international level ([2]). The Commission verifies the implementation of these rules by Member States by means of inspections carried out by EMSA. Furthermore, the Commission assisted by EMSA assesses the compliance of maritime education and seafarers certification systems of non-EU countries with the applicable international rules.

([1]) Directive 2008/106/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on the minimum level of training of seafarers (recast) (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 323, 3.12.2008, p. 33-61.

([2]) Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers ('STCW Convention').

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000573/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Consecuencias penales para los gobernantes que incumplan el objetivo de déficit

Posteriormente a la reunión del Consejo de Política Fiscal y Financiera que reúne a todos los responsables autonómicos de política económica y al gobierno central, el Ministro español de Hacienda, Cristóbal Montoro, ha anunciado en una entrevista radiofónica que el gobierno central introducirá la posibilidad de que los gobernantes que gasten más de lo que indican los presupuestos respondan ante la justicia y se enfrenten a responsabilidades penales ([1]).

Teniendo en cuenta que los actuales responsables del gobierno central han tenido que revisar el déficit del año 2011 desde el 6 % hasta el 8 % debido a la mala praxis del gobierno anterior y que, por otro lado, el pasado otoño fue aprobado el paquete de gobernanza económica europea, que pone las bases para el nuevo marco de control de déficits excesivos en la Unión, y que ninguna de las medidas aprobadas prevé la posibilidad de condenar penalmente a las personas que encabecen las instituciones que incumplan el objetivo de déficit,

1. ¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre la posibilidad de aplicar una medida semejante?

2. ¿Trabaja la Comisión con alguna propuesta legislativa que siga esta línea de razonamiento?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de marzo de 2012)

El tipo de sanciones que un Gobierno aplica a sus funcionarios que autorizan gastos por encima de los límites presupuestarios es competencia exclusiva de cada Estado miembro.

La Comisión no prepara actualmente propuestas legislativas encaminadas a introducir responsabilidad penal para los funcionarios que autoricen gastos por encima de los límites presupuestarios.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120118/54245048113/gobierno-exigira-responsabilidades-penales-gobernantes-incumplan-deficit.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000573/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Criminal liability for government officials who fail to meet deficit targets

Following the meeting of the Spanish Fiscal and Financial Policy Council, in which all the economic policy authorities from the autonomous regions meet with central Government, the Spanish Finance Minister, Cristóbal Montoro, announced in a radio interview that the Government intends to introduce the possibility of public officials who spend beyond their budget limits being held responsible before the law and subject to criminal liability ([1]).

In view of the fact that the current leadership of the Spanish Government has had to revise the deficit for 2011 from 6 % to 8 %, due to poor management by the previous Government, and that the European economic governance package, which establishes the basis for the new framework to monitor excess deficits in the EU, was approved in autumn 2011, and that none of the measures approved includes the possibility of taking criminal proceedings against the heads of institutions which fail to meet deficit targets:

1. What view does the Commission take of the possibility of such a measure being implemented?

2. Is the Commission working on any legislative proposal which follows this line of thought?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2012)

The form of sanctions that a government takes vis-à-vis public officials that authorise spending beyond budgetary limits is entirely in the responsibility of each Member State.

The Commission does not currently work on legislative proposals which introduce criminal liability for public officials authorising spending beyond budgetary limits.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120118/54245048113/gobierno-exigira-responsabilidades-penales-gobernantes-incumplan-deficit.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000574/12
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Sicurezza della navigazione

Nel settore della navigazione il verificarsi di incidenti che hanno avuto, purtroppo, conseguenze molto rilevanti, comportando perdite di vite umane, pregiudizi all'ambiente e notevoli danni economici, rendono cruciale e attuale rafforzare l'approccio comunitario alla tutela della sicurezza marittima.

La direttiva 59/2002/CE persegue il fine di istituire un sistema comunitario di monitoraggio e di informazione sul traffico navale VST (Vessel Traffic Service). Il VTS è un servizio finalizzato a migliorare la sicurezza della navigazione, l'efficienza del traffico marittimo e la prevenzione dell'inquinamento causato da navi.

Con il decreto legislativo 196/2005 l'ordinamento italiano ha recepito la suddetta direttiva al fine di adempiere alle prescrizioni comunitarie. Il sistema di monitoraggio nazionale è gestito e utilizzato dal Corpo delle Capitanerie di Porto, sulla base di diversi livelli organizzativi. Spetta quindi alla Guardia Costiera il controllo del sistema di monitoraggio VTS.

Alla luce del recentissimo incidente della Costa Concordia, avvenuto il 13 gennaio 2012 nei pressi dell'isola del Giglio, a soli 96 metri dalla riva e a 8 metri di profondità, è emerso che l'attivazione del sistema VST non copre efficientemente tutto il territorio italiano, ma soltanto il 40-45 %.

Un corretto funzionamento del sistema VST contribuirebbe senza dubbio alle indagini da effettuarsi in seguito a simili incidenti in mare o a violazioni delle norme relative alle rotte navali.

Si tratta, pertanto, di uno strumento di indiscutibile valore ed importanza sotto il profilo della prevenzione della sicurezza marittima.

Non ritiene la Commissione che:

1. sarebbe opportuno adottare una normativa UE che imponga distanze minime di sicurezza dai centri abitati per le navi da crociera al fine di tutelare la sicurezza delle persone e la protezione del nostro patrimonio ambientale?

2. In particolare, come crede la Commissione di responsabilizzare gli Stati al fine di colmare le eventuali lacune operative del sistema VST, soprattutto al fine di prevenire situazioni di pericolo?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(23 febbraio 2012)

1. Nel quadro normativo internazionale e dell'UE non esistono norme specifiche relative alla distanza di sicurezza di navigazione dalla costa per navi di grandi dimensioni. La sua valutazione spetta dunque interamente al comandante, che fa affidamento sulle apparecchiature tecnologiche necessarie per garantire la sicurezza della navigazione. Il comandante deve tuttavia stabilire un piano di navigazione per tutta la rotta tenendo conto della zona di navigazione, delle previsioni meteorologiche e di altre condizioni essenziali che possono influenzare la navigazione.

2. Ai sensi della direttiva 2002/59/CE, relativa all'istituzione di un sistema comunitario di monitoraggio del traffico navale e d'informazione ([1]), tutte le navi passeggeri che fanno scalo nei porti dell'UE devono essere dotate di un sistema di identificazione automatica (AIS — Automatic identification system), che consente agli Stati costieri di monitorare le navi lungo la propria costa. Per quanto concerne l'applicazione del diritto dell'UE in relazione al sistema VTS, la Commissione ha assegnato all'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza marittima (EMSA — European Maritime Safety Agency) il compito di svolgere visite di ispezione presso gli Stati membri per monitorare l'attuazione della direttiva 2002/59/CE. La Commissione ha l'intenzione di prendere ulteriori misure adeguate in seguito a tali ispezioni.

([1]) GU L 208 del 5.8.2002, pagg. 10-27.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000574/12
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Maritime safety

The occurrence of accidents in the shipping sector, which unfortunately have had major consequences including loss of human life, damage to the environment and significant economic repercussions, make strengthening the EU approach to maritime safety a crucial and timely exercise.

Directive 2002/59/EC promotes the establishment of the Community VTS (Vessel Traffic Service) monitoring and information system. The VTS service should improve the safety of shipping, the efficiency of maritime traffic and prevent pollution by ships.

This directive was transposed into Italian legislation through Legislative Decree 196/2005 in order to comply with EU requirements. The national monitoring system is managed and used by the port authorities at various organisational levels. The coastguard is the body that runs the VTS monitoring system.

In light of the very recent Costa Concordia accident on 13 January 2012 near the island of Giglio, just 96 metres from the shore and in waters 8 metres deep, it has emerged that the VTS system does not cover all of Italian territory effectively, but only 40-45 % of it.

A correctly functioning VTS system would no doubt contribute to the investigations conducted following similar accidents at sea or violations of the regulations on shipping routes.

Consequently, this is an instrument of unquestionable value and importance from the point of view of maritime safety and accident prevention.

1. Would the Commission not agree that EU legislation should be adopted which prescribes minimum safe distances from populated centres for cruise ships, with the aim of keeping people safe and protecting our environmental heritage?

2. How, in particular, will the Commission ensure that States take responsibility for plugging any operational gaps in the VTS system, in order above all to prevent dangerous situations?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

1. In the framework of international and EU legislation there is no specific rule regarding the safe navigation distance from the coast for large vessels and it is entirely up to the professional judgment of the Captain who relies to necessary technological means for safe navigation. However, a navigation plan for the entire route has to be established by the Captain taking into account the area of navigation, weather forecasts and other essential conditions that may affect navigation.

2. Under the EU Directive 2002/59/EC establishing a Community Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System ([1]) all passengers ship calling at EU ports are required to be fitted with an automatic identification system (AIS) which allow coastal States to monitor ships along their coast. Regarding the enforcement of EC law in relation with the VTS system, the Commission has assigned to the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) the task of conducting inspection visits to the Member States in order to monitor the implementation of Directive 2002/59/EC. Appropriate follow-up action is taken by the Commission further to these inspections.

([1]) OJ L 208, 5.8.2002, p. 10-27.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000575/12
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(25 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Distribuzione carburanti

I recenti aumenti del costo del carburante determinati dall'andamento del mercato internazionale e dalle ultime imposizioni fiscali necessarie nell'ambito del «Decreto Salva Italia» hanno reso insostenibile la situazione di difficoltà economiche in cui versano gli operatori della distribuzione carburanti, arrecando al contempo un grave pregiudizio pecuniario per i cittadini italiani costretti a pagare le tariffe più care d'Europa.

Si rende fortemente necessario elaborare e realizzare un progetto di riforma capace di intervenire sui «blocchi di sistema» ancora effettivamente esistenti nel settore del mercato petrolifero, al fine di adottare una configurazione più competitiva e concorrenziale. Per questo si propone di dare un nuovo assetto al mercato petrolifero nel suo complesso, definendo modalità di partecipazione di tutti gli operatori del mercato all'ingrosso al fine di assicurare condizioni più competitive ai gestori degli impianti di rifornimento, con l'obiettivo ultimo di garantire la riduzione del costo dei carburanti e apportare sicuri vantaggi ai consumatori. È questo l'obiettivo della proposta di legge sulla riorganizzazione ed efficienza del mercato petrolifero presentato dalla Confesercenti Nazionale attraverso la FAIB (Federazione Autonoma Italiana Benzinai), la maggiore associazione di categoria del settore della distribuzione carburanti in rete stradale ed autostradale e la FEGICA — CISL, con il sostegno delle associazioni dei consumatori.

Attraverso l'abrogazione del vincolo di fornitura in esclusiva che, attualmente costringe i gestori a rifornirsi da un unico petroliere, si incrementerebbe la capacità concorrenziale di un numero per ora contenuto di impianti «no logo». Ciò consentirebbe di rendere più trasparenti le condizioni di approvvigionamento all'ingrosso dei carburanti e di contenere in misura maggiore le situazioni dominanti sul mercato. Per effetto di tali provvedimenti, secondo una prudente stima, il prezzo dei carburanti si abbasserebbe mediamente di 6 cent, con un risparmio medio di 415 euro all'anno per famiglia.

1. Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione verificare l'esistenza di eventuali barriere che pregiudichino la capacità concorrenziale sul mercato petrolifero?

2. La Commissione reputa necessario intraprendere iniziative volte a sostenere il disegno di legge «Libera la benzina»?

Risposta data da Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(1º marzo 2012)

La Commissione osserva con attenzione i mercati e il settore del petrolio nell'UE e ne esamina il livello di concorrenza, in particolare per quanto riguarda la vendita al dettaglio dei carburanti. Nel 2006 la Commissione ha reso vincolante l'impegno sottoscritto da Repsol, principale fornitore sul mercato spagnolo, di rescindere i suoi contratti di fornitura a lungo termine, permettendo così a centinaia di stazioni di servizio di scegliere liberamente tra i fornitori all'ingrosso disponibili e dando ai concorrenti maggiori possibilità di entrare sul mercato e di competere in modo efficace con Repsol ([1]).

Dal momento che i mercati al dettaglio dei carburanti hanno per lo più una portata nazionale, le attività delle autorità nazionali garanti della concorrenza rivestono una grande importanza. Molte di loro hanno di recente realizzato o avviato indagini di settore sul mercato dei carburanti, alcune delle quali hanno permesso di aprire casi in materia di concorrenza.

L'autorità italiana garante della concorrenza ha di recente avviato un'indagine sui distributori indipendenti di carburante ([2]) e il 5 gennaio 2012 ha presentato al governo una serie di proposte a favore della concorrenza, che riguardano tra l'altro anche il settore della distribuzione dei carburanti ([3]). La Commissione è al corrente del fatto che il governo italiano ha accolto alcune di queste proposte nel decreto legge del 20 gennaio 2012 ([4]).

([1]) Caso COMP/B-1/38348 — REPSOL C.P.P., decisione della Commissione del 12 aprile 2006 pubblicata sul sito Internet della DG Concorrenza.
([2]) Indagine n. IC44, disponibile all'indirizzo: http://www.agcm.it.
([3]) Documento n. AS901, disponibile all'indirizzo: http://www.agcm.it.
([4]) Decreto-legge: Disposizioni urgenti per la concorrenza, lo sviluppo delle infrastrutture e la competitività, disponibile all'indirizzo: http://www.governo.it/Governo/Provvedimenti/dettaglio.asp?d=66305.

Per quanto concerne il disegno di legge «Libera la benzina» cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento, alla Commissione risulta che sia tuttora all'esame del parlamento e, pertanto, a questo stadio, non può esprimere il suo parere al riguardo.

La Commissione continua a monitorare con attenzione le dinamiche del mercato della vendita al dettaglio dei carburanti e non esiterà ad intervenire qualora emergano prove concrete di violazioni delle norme antitrust.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000575/12
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Fuel distribution

The recent rises in the cost of fuel occasioned by developments on the international market and by the latest tax measures under the 'Save Italy' Decree have made the difficult economic situation in which fuel distribution operators find themselves unsustainable and have also had a serious and unjust financial impact on the Italian public, who are being forced to pay the highest prices in Europe.

There is a glaring need to develop and implement a reform project to tackle the systemic blockages that still effectively exist in the petroleum sector, with the aim of reconfiguring the sector in order to encourage competition. To this end, it is proposed that the entire petroleum market be restructured and that the way in which wholesale market operators participate in that market be defined in order to guarantee more competitive conditions for fuelling facility managers, with the ultimate aim being to reduce the cost of fuel and pass on those clear benefits to consumers. That is the objective of the proposal for legislation on the reorganisation and efficiency of the petroleum market ('Libera la Benzina' draft act) that was presented by the Confesercenti business and trade association via the FAIB (Italian Autonomous Federation of Petrol Station Managers), which is the main association of road and motorway petrol station managers, and FEGICA — CISL, with the support of consumer associations.

Abolishing the exclusive supply link that currently forces petrol station managers to obtain their petrol from a sole supplier would increase the competitiveness of the currently limited number of 'no brand' facilities. This would increase the transparency of wholesale fuel supply conditions and afford greater control over dominant positions on the market. According to conservative estimates, these measures would result in an average 6 cent decrease in the price of fuel, and an average annual saving of EUR 415 per family.

1. In light of the above, can the Commission ascertain whether there are any barriers to competition on the petroleum market?

2. Does the Commission consider it necessary to take action in support of the 'Libera la Benzina' draft act?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2012)

The Commission closely observes oil markets and the petroleum sector in the EU and scrutinises the level of competition in this sector and, in particular, in the retail fuel sector. In 2006, the Commission made binding commitments whereby Repsol, the largest supplier on the Spanish market, undertook to release hundreds of stations from its long-term supply contracts. This allowed service stations to choose freely between wholesale suppliers, thereby enhancing the possibility for competitors to enter the market and compete effectively with Repsol ([1]).

Since the retail fuel markets are mostly national in scope, the activities of national competition authorities are of great importance. Many national competition authorities have recently carried out or started sector inquiries into the fuel sector. Some of the investigations have resulted in initial competition cases.

The Italian Competition Authority has recently opened an investigation on independent fuel distributors ([2]) and, on 5 January 2012, it addressed to the Italian Government a series of pro-competitive proposals, including on fuel distribution ([3]). The Commission understands that the Italian Government has taken on board some of these proposals in its Decree-Law of 20 January 2012 ([4]).

With regard to the 'Libera la benzina' draft act, to which the Honourable Member refers in his question, the Commission understands that it is currently pending before the Italian Parliament; therefore, at this stage, it cannot give its opinion.

The Commission remains vigilant over the market dynamics in the European retail fuel market and will not hesitate to intervene whenever there are substantiated indications of infringements of antitrust rules.

([1]) Competition case COMP/B-1/38348 REPSOL C.P.P., decision adopted by the Commission on 12 April 2006 and published on the DG COMP website.
([2]) Investigation No IC44, available at http://www.agcm.it.
([3]) Document AS901, available at http://www.agcm.it.
([4]) Decreto-Legge: Disposizioni urgenti per la concorrenza, lo sviluppo delle infrastrutture e la competitività, available at http://www.governo.it/Governo/Provvedimenti/dettaglio.asp?d=66305.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000576/12
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(25 januari 2012)

Betreft: Strijd tegen plastic micro- en nanodeeltjes in zee

De oceanen zijn bezaaid met afval. Een groot deel daarvan is plastic afval. Verschillende acties worden ondernomen om de hoeveelheid afval te verminderen en te voorkomen. Toch lijkt de hoeveelheid afval in zee toe te nemen met alle gevolgen van dien voor mens en milieu.

Één aspect van plastic afval is momenteel nog te veel onderbelicht. Veel plastic verpakkingen en plastic zakjes vallen uiteen in micro- en nanodeeltjes. Steeds meer bedrijven verwerken micro- en nanodeeltjes plastic in producten die uiteindelijk in rivieren en oceanen terechtkomen. Een voorbeeld hiervan zijn micro plasticdeeltjes in scrubcreams, of nanodeeltjes die vrijkomen bij het wassen van synthetische kleren. Deze deeltjes zijn te klein om uit de zee te vissen, ze zijn vaak even klein als plankton. Deze deeltjes worden opgenomen door planten en dieren en worden uiteindelijk een onderdeel van de voedselketen. De gevolgen hiervan zijn onbekend voor het milieu en de volksgezondheid.

1. Is de Commissie bewust van het probleem van nanodeeltjes in de oceaan en de rivieren?

2. Welke onderzoeken verricht de Commissie om inzicht te krijgen in de gevolgen van de plastic micro- en nanodeeltjes in de zee?

3. Welke acties onderneemt de Commissie om de toename van plastic micro- en nanodeeltjes in de zee te voorkomen en te verminderen?

4. Welke verantwoordelijkheid krijgen bedrijven en consumenten toebedeeld door de Commissie in de oorzaak en aanpak van het probleem van micro- en nanodeeltjes in de zee?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(5 maart 2012)

Zoals vermeld in het antwoord op vraag E-010065/2011 van de heer Arsenis en vraag E-012385/2011 ([1]) van de heer Rossi, is de Commissie op de hoogte van het probleem van de aanwezigheid van micro- en nanodeeltjes in oceanen en rivieren en heeft zij initiatieven genomen zoals het houden van een aanbesteding voor onderzoek naar het beheer en de mogelijke gevolgen van afval in het mariene milieu en het kustmilieu. Bovendien heeft de Commissie een dialoog op gang gebracht met de voornaamste belanghebbenden, onder meer de kunststofindustrie en consumentenverenigingen, om mogelijke maatregelen en acties aan te geven en te evalueren. De resultaten van deze dialoog zullen later dit jaar worden bekendgemaakt. De Commissie zal bestaande initiatieven in aanmerking nemen zoals het mondiaal initiatief voor de chemische industrie in het kader van het Responsible Care-programma.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000576/12
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Fight against plastic micro/nanoparticles in the sea

The oceans are littered with waste. Much of it is plastic waste. Various measures are being taken to reduce the volume of waste and to prevent it. Nevertheless, the volume of waste in the sea seems to be increasing, with all the consequences this has for people and the environment.

One particular aspect of plastic waste has been neglected so far. Many plastic packages and plastic bags decompose into micro/nanoparticles. More and more companies are incorporating plastic micro/nanoparticles in their products, which end up in rivers and oceans: for example, plastic microparticles in scrub creams or nanoparticles which are released during the washing of synthetic clothes. These particles are too small to be fished out of the sea. They are often no larger than plankton. These particles are absorbed by plants and animals, eventually becoming part of the food chain. The impact this has on the environment and human health is unknown.

1. Is the Commission aware of the problem of nanoparticles in the ocean and rivers?

2. What studies is the Commission conducting to understand the effects of plastic micro/nanoparticles in the sea?

3. What actions is the Commission taking to prevent and reduce the accumulation of plastic micro/nanoparticles in the sea?

4. What responsibility does the Commission assign to companies and consumers for causing and solving the problem of micro/nanoparticles in the sea?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2012)

As outlined in reply to Question E-010065/2011 of Mr Arsenis and Question E-012385/2011 ([1]) of Mr Rossi, the Commission is aware of the problem of nano and micro-particles in oceans and rivers and has taken initiatives such as the launch of a research call on management and potential impacts of litter in the marine and coastal environment Moreover, the Commission has initiated a dialogue with the main stakeholders, including the plastic industry and consumer organisations to identify and assess what measures and actions could be undertaken. The results of this dialogue will be disseminated later this year. The Commission will take into consideration existing initiatives such as Responsible Care global chemical industry initiative.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000577/12
an die Kommission
Thomas Händel (GUE/NGL)
(25. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Beihilfeverfahren C 16/2009 (ex N 254/2009)

1. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass es im Herbst 2011 offizielle Gespräche mit der Bayerischen Landesregierung hinsichtlich des oben genannten Beihilfeverfahrens gegeben hat?

2. Welche Mitteilungen wurden der Bayerischen Landesregierung übermittelt hinsichtlich weiterer als der im „Umstrukturierungsplan bis 2013" angegebenen notwendigen Veräußerungen, insbesondere von Immobilienbeteiligungen der BayernLB?

3. Trifft es zu, dass die Kommission der Bayerischen Landesregierung mitgeteilt hat, eine Veräußerung kommunaler Immobilienbeteiligungen als nicht zum Kerngeschäft der BayernLB gehörend sei entgegen dem im Restrukturierungsplan vorgesehenen Portfolio „Immobilien, öffentliche Hand und Sparkassen" zwingend?

4. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Äußerungen des bayerischen Finanzministers Fahrenschon, die Beteiligung an kommunalen Immobilienunternehmen gehörten nach Ansicht der Kommission nicht zum Kernbereich der Aufgaben der BayernLB und seien deshalb anders als noch in dem der Kommission übermittelten „Umstrukturierungsplan 2013" vorgesehen zwingend zu veräußern?

5. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass anstelle einer Veräußerung im Ausschreibungs- und Bieterverfahren auch eine Rückübertragung der Beteiligungen an kommunalen Wohnungsunternehmen in kommunales Eigentum durch die BayernLB möglich ist, und wenn ja, welche Voraussetzungen dafür gegebenenfalls erfüllt sein müssen bzw. geschaffen werden müssten.

6. Sieht die Kommission Möglichkeiten, dass die Bayerische Landesregierung den Verbleib des Immobilieneigentums in öffentlicher Hand sicherstellen kann, und wenn ja, welche?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(27. Februar 2012)

1. Die Kommissionsdienststellen stehen seit Beginn des Beihilfeverfahrens im Dezember 2008 in laufendem Kontakt mit Vertretern der Bayrischen Landesregierung. Insbesondere im Herbst 2011 haben mehrere Spitzengespräche zwischen der Generaldirektion Wettbewerb und dem bayrischen Landesregierung stattgefunden.

2. bis 6. Beim Beihilfeverfahren BayernLB handelt es sich um ein laufendes Verfahren, in dem noch keine abschließende Entscheidung getroffen wurde. Die Kommission kann sich zu laufenden Verfahren grundsätzlich nicht äußern. Allerdings kann die Kommission ohne abschließende Entscheidung dem Mitgliedstaat grundsätzlich keine Verpflichtungen auferlegen. Dies tut sie im Übrigen auch in ihrer abschließenden Entscheidung nur selten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000577/12
to the Commission
Thomas Händel (GUE/NGL)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: State aid procedure C 16/2009 (ex N 254/2009)

1. Can the Commission confirm that in the autumn of 2011 official discussions were held with the Bavarian State Government regarding the abovementioned procedure?

2. What notifications have been sent to the Bavarian State Government regarding additional required sales in addition to those listed in the 'Restructuring Plan until 2013', especially sales of real estate interests of BayernLB?

3. Is it true that the Commission informed the Bavarian State Government that a sale of municipal real estate interests was urgently needed as they were not part of the core business of BayernLB contrary to the portfolio 'Real Estate, Public Authority and Savings Banks' provided in the restructuring plan?

4. How does the Commission assess the comments of the Bavarian Minister of Finance, Mr Fahrenschon, that participation in municipal real estate enterprises was, in the Commission's opinion, not part of BayernLB's core area of responsibilities, and that therefore they should be sold urgently despite what was provided for in the 'Restructuring Plan 2013' that was conveyed to the Commission?

5. Can the Commission confirm that rather than proceeding with the sale through a call for tenders BayernLB may also re-transfer its interests in municipal housing enterprises to municipal property, and if so, which requirements need to be met should the occasion arise or need to be created?

6. Does the Commission see any possibility of the Bavarian State Government being in a position to guarantee that the real estate property remains in public ownership and, if so, what are those possibilities?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

1. The Commission has been in constant contact with representatives of the Bavarian State Government since the beginning of the state aid procedure. In autumn 2011 in particular there were a number of high-level talks between DG Competition and the Bavarian State Government.

2 to 6. The Bayern LB state aid case is an ongoing state aid procedure and no final decision has yet been made. The Commission cannot pronounce on these matters while proceedings are under way. In any case, the Commission cannot impose obligations on a Member State before a final decision is taken and only rarely does so in its final decision.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000578/12
an die Kommission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(25. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Beschränkung der Auswahl von Boxmaterial

Der Internationale Amateur-Boxverband (AIBA) umfasst Mitglieder aus 194 Ländern, 45 davon befinden sich in Europa. Dieser hat nun vorgesehen, dass ab Januar 2012 bei allen nationalen und internationalen Veranstaltungen nur noch Boxmaterial verwendet werden darf, das von der AIBA anerkannt ist. Dabei verweist er auf fünf verschiedene Lieferanten, die diese von der AIBA anerkannten Produkte vertreiben. Diese befinden sich in Frankreich, Thailand, China, Deutschland und Australien.

Die Normen für die Produkte, die bei Boxkämpfen benutzt werden dürfen, wie die Breite und Höhe etc., waren festgelegt und wurden nunmehr abgeändert. Folglich können nur noch diejenigen Lieferanten Boxmaterial für Amateur-Wettkämpfe vertreiben, die eine Lizenz von der AIBA innehaben, da nur noch diese von der AIBA zugelassen sind.

1. Ist es mit europäischem Recht vereinbar, dass die AIBA den Markt für Boxmaterial so stark einschränkt, dass weltweit nur noch 5 verschiedene Lieferanten, von denen sich zwei in Europa befinden, das bei nationalen und internationalen Boxveranstaltungen erlaubte Material liefern können?

2. Besteht bei dieser Verpflichtung, die AIBA seinen Mitgliedern aufzwingt, nicht die Gefahr der Schaffung eines Oligopols?

3. Falls die ersten beiden Fragen bejaht werden sollten, was wird die Kommission unternehmen, um den einheitlichen europäischen Binnenmarkt auch weiterhin für Boxprodukte zu wahren?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(6. März 2012)

Die Kommission und die Gerichte der Europäischen Union haben festgestellt, dass Sport, wenn er eine wirtschaftliche Tätigkeit darstellt, unter EU-Recht fällt, u. a. unter die Vorschriften zu den Grundfreiheiten und unter die EU-Wettbewerbsvorschriften, nach denen wettbewerbswidrige Absprachen (Artikel 101 AEUV) und die missbräuchliche Ausnutzung einer marktbeherrschenden Stellung (Artikel 102 AEUV), durch die der Handel zwischen Mitgliedstaaten beeinträchtigt werden könnte, verboten sind.

Die Ernennung von Materiallieferanten durch Sportverbände sollte von Fall zu Fall beurteilt werden. Im Hinblick auf die Wettbewerbsvorschriften der EU kann Folgendes festgestellt werden: Auch wenn solche Vereinbarungen eine Beschränkung des Wettbewerbs zur Folge haben (z. B. durch die Auswahl eines exklusiven Lieferanten), kann diese Beschränkung durch den Effizienzgewinn gerechtfertigt und im Rahmen des EU-Wettbewerbsrechts zulässig sein, wenn alle in Artikel 101 Absatz 3 AEUV festgelegten Voraussetzungen erfüllt sind.

In der Vergangenheit war die Kommission in bestimmten Fällen ([1]) zu dem Schluss gelangt, dass die Ernennung von Lieferanten (insbesondere exklusiven Lieferanten) durch Sportverbände im Rahmen des EU-Wettbewerbsrechts annehmbar ist, wenn die Lieferanten auf transparente, offene und nichtdiskriminierende Weise im Rahmen eines Ausschreibungsverfahrens ausgewählt wurden. Zudem war Voraussetzung, dass der Vertrag zwischen den ausgewählten Lieferanten und dem Sportverband zeitlich begrenzt war.

Wie bereits oben erwähnt, ist die Auswahl der Lieferanten durch Sportverbände im Kontext der jeweiligen rechtlichen und wirtschaftlichen Rahmenbedingungen zu beurteilen. Auf der Grundlage der wenigen Informationen, die vom Herrn Abgeordneten zu den vom Internationalen Amateur-Boxverband (AIBA) eingeführten neuen Regeln vorgelegt wurden, ist es nicht möglich, das endgültige Ergebnis einer solchen Beurteilung vorherzusagen.

([1]) COMP/38316 Vega SpA/CIK-FIA; COMP/35266 FIFA; COMP/33.055 und 35.759 Danish Tennis Federation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000578/12
to the Commission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Restrictions in the choice of boxing materials

The International Amateur Boxing Association (AIBA) has members in 194 countries, 45 of them in Europe. The organisation has now stipulated that from January 2012 onwards all boxing materials used in national and international events must be approved by the AIBA. It refers to five different suppliers who sell these AIBA-approved products. These are located in France, Thailand, China, Germany and Australia.

The standards for the products permitted in boxing competitions, such as width, height, etc., were previously fixed but have now been changed. As a consequence, only those suppliers who have a license from the AIBA can sell boxing materials for amateur competitions, as only these suppliers are approved by the AIBA.

1. Is it compatible with European law that the AIBA should restrict the market for boxing materials to such an extent that only five different suppliers worldwide, two of whom are located in Europe, can supply the approved materials for national and international boxing competitions?

2. Is there not a danger that this obligation imposed by the AIBA on its members will establish an oligopoly?

3. If the answer to the first two questions is in the affirmative, what does the Commission intend to do to maintain the single European market for boxing products?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

It has been long established by the Commission and the Courts of the European Union that insofar as sport constitutes an economic activity, it falls within the scope of EC law, including the fundamental freedoms and EU competition rules which prohibit collusion (Article 101 TFEU) and the abuse of a dominant position (Article 102 TFEU) where trade between Member States may be affected.

The appointment of equipment suppliers by sports federations should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. With regard to EU competition rules the following can be stated: even where these arrangements would result in a restriction of competition (e.g. a selection of an exclusive supplier), the restriction could be justified by their efficiencies and accepted under the EU competition rules if all the conditions set out in Article 101(3) TFEU were met.

Specifically, in past cases ([1]) the Commission has considered that the appointment of suppliers by sports federations (notably exclusive suppliers) would be acceptable under the EU competition rules provided a call for tender was organised whereby suppliers were selected in a transparent, open and non-discriminatory way. Moreover, the agreement between the selected suppliers and the sports federation had to be limited in time.

As mentioned above, the selection of suppliers by sports federations would have to be assessed in the context of the concrete legal and economic circumstances. On the basis of the limited information available concerning the new rules introduced by AIBA (International Amateur Boxing Association) provided by the Honourable Member, it is not possible to determine the final outcome of such an assessment.

([1]) COMP/38316 Vega SpA/CIK-FIA; COMP/35266 FIFA; COMP/33.055 and35.759 Danish Tennis Federation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000579/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Rechtsextremismus in der EU und Europol

In letzter Zeit gab es innerhalb Europas und der Europäischen Union vermehrt Fälle von rechtsextremistischem Terrorismus. Der Terror, der vor allem in Deutschland und Norwegen zu spüren war, ist Medienberichten zufolge „ein Angriff auf die Grundfeste der freiheitlichen demokratischen Gesellschaft gewesen". Europol hat nach den Terroranschlägen in Norwegen angekündigt, ein „genaues und aktuelles Porträt des Rechtsextremismus in Europa vorzulegen".

Wird Europol durch die neuesten Ereignisse in Deutschland den bestehenden Bericht um einen Anhang ergänzen oder sogar einen neuen Bericht zum erstarkenden rechtsextremen Terror in Deutschland erstellen?

Liegt der Kommission eine Studie zu Kontakten zwischen rechtextremen Gruppierungen untereinander und innerhalb der EU vor? Wenn ja, was ist das Ergebnis? Wenn nicht, zieht die Kommission in Erwägung, eine derartige Studie in Auftrag zu geben?

Liegen der Kommission Informationen zur Zusammenarbeit der unterschiedlichen Polizeibehörden der Mitgliedstaaten im Bezug auf Bekämpfung des rechtsextremen Terrors innerhalb der EU vor?

Liegen der Kommission Informationen zur Zusammenarbeit zwischen den unterschiedlichen Polizeibehörden der Mitgliedstaaten und anderen europäischen Staaten in Bezug auf die Bekämpfung des rechtsextremen Terrors innerhalb der EU vor?

Liegen der Kommission Zahlen über die Anzahl von rechtsextrem motivierten Morden und Straftaten vor? Wenn ja, wie lauten diese jeweils für die Jahre 2000 bis 2010?

Hat die Kommission einen Überblick über die Anzahl an rechtsextremen Gruppierungen innerhalb der EU?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(20. Februar 2012)

Das Polizeiamt Europol wird voraussichtlich Ende 2012 seine Einschätzung der rechtsextremistischen Bedrohungslage vorlegen, die auf der Grundlage von Beiträgen einer Taskforce für Rechtsextremismus verfasst wird. Ein Bericht über den erstarkenden rechtsextremen Terror in Deutschland ist derzeit nicht geplant.

Die Kommission betrachtet jede Form der Radikalisierung mit Besorgnis und stuft Maßnahmen dagegen im Bereich der inneren Sicherheit als Priorität ein, gleich, welche Gründe der Radikalisierung zugrunde liegen oder in welcher Form sie auftritt. Wie in den Antworten auf die parlamentarischen Anfragen E-9410/2011, E-11087/2011 und E-11307/2011 ([1]) dargelegt, überwacht die Kommission selbst nicht die Aktivitäten extremistischer Gruppierungen. Vielmehr informiert sie sich durch die auf EU-Ebene verfügbaren Instrumente, wie durch den EU-Tendenz- und Lagebericht, den Europol auf der Grundlage von überprüften Informationen der zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten, darunter auch Deutschland, verfasst. Im letzten Tendenz- und Lagebericht (2011) warnte Europol davor, dass Rechtsextremisten zunehmend professionell agieren. So nutzen sie das Internet zur Verbreitung ihrer Propaganda und soziale Medien, um mit jüngeren Leuten in Kontakt zu treten und um Unterstützung auf breiterer Basis zu werben.

Europol unterhält feste Kooperationsverbindungen zu Rechtsdurchsetzungsbehörden in Europa und anderswo. Das Amt versorgt diese mit Informationen, die es zusammengetragen, ausgewertet und verbreitet hat, und koordiniert Einsätze. Europol ist mit Experten und Analysten in gemeinsamen Ermittlungsteams vertreten, die bei der Aufklärung von Straftaten in EU-Ländern vor Ort mithelfen.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=DE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000579/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Right-wing extremism in the EU and Europol

Numerous acts of right-wing extremist terrorism have recently been perpetrated in Europe and the European Union. These terrorist acts, which took place chiefly in Germany and Norway, have been described in press reports as 'an attack on the foundations of free democratic society'. Europol has announced that it will 'prepare an accurate and timely portrait of right-wing extremism in Europe'.

In the light of recent events in Germany, will Europol add an annex to its report, or even draw up a new report, on the rise of far-right terrorism in Germany?

Does the Commission have at its disposal any research into contacts between far-right groups within the EU? If so, what are its conclusions? If not, does the Council intend to commission such research?

Does the Commission have information on cooperation among the various police authorities in the Member States regarding the fight against far-right terrorism in the EU?

Does the Commission have information on cooperation between the various police authorities in the Member States and other European countries regarding the fight against far-right terrorism in the EU?

Does the Commission have any statistics on the incidence of far-right motivated murders and crimes? If so, what are the figures for each year from 2000 to 2010?

Does the Commission have an idea of the number of right-wing extremist groups in the EU?

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

Europol's threat assessment on right-wing extremism is scheduled to be issued at the end of 2012, based on the contributions it will receive from a dedicated task force. There are no specific plans to draw up a report on the rise of far-right terrorism in Germany.

The Commission is concerned about and addresses all forms of radicalisation regardless of their motivation and modus operandi as one of the priorities for the internal security. As explained in response to parliamentary questions E-9410/2011, E-11087/2011 and E-11307/2011 ([1]), the Commission does not monitor the activities of extremist groups itself. It relies on tools available at the EU level, such as the EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report produced by Europol on the basis of information provided and verified by the competent authorities of the Member States including Germany. The latest annual EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report of 2011 of Europol warned of increasing levels of professionalism among right-wing extremists, for example in their use of the Internet to spread propaganda, and of social media to attract younger people and mobilise wider support.

Europol enjoys cooperation arrangements with law enforcement partners in Europe and beyond. It supports them by gathering, analysing and disseminating information and coordinating operations. Europol experts and analysts take part in Joint Investigation Teams which help solve criminal cases on the spot in EU countries.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000580/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 janvier 2012)

Objet: Programme Dolceta d'éducation des consommateurs

Dans sa réponse à ma question E-010784/2011, la Commission reconnaît avoir dépensé 9 904 486 euros pour le programme Dolceta d'éducation des consommateurs qui «ne répond pas aux normes actuelles en matière d'accessibilité du web».

La Commission peut-elle préciser:

1. pourquoi a-t-elle attendu huit ans avant de se rendre compte de l'inutilité de ce programme, alors que ce budget considérable aurait pu aider et développer les associations de consommateurs, notamment dans le domaine de l'éducation?

2. pourquoi a-t-elle a lancé en 2010 un nouvel appel d'offre Dolceta pour deux ans et quel est l'objectif de cette nouvelle initiative?

3. pourquoi a-t-elle a inscrit un montant de 1 million d'euros au point 4.2.3. (action 11) du budget 2012 en mentionnant à nouveau le programme Dolceta?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(15 février 2012)

Disponible en vingt et une langues, Dolceta ([1]) est un site *web* dédié à l'information et à l'éducation des consommateurs dans tous les États membres.

Il a été développé sous contrat en 2003 et 2004, avant la conclusion d'un contrat-cadre pour la période 2006-2010. Au fil du temps, les publics auxquels il s'adresse et ses objectifs se sont diversifiés, tandis que l'utilisation de l'Internet s'orientait vers des sites interactifs et les réseaux sociaux. Simultanément, l'information en ligne des consommateurs s'est améliorée de manière significative dans les États membres, et Dolceta s'est alors élargi pour couvrir davantage de sujets.

Des recommandations ont été formulées à la suite d'une évaluation approfondie effectuée en 2011 ([2]); il s'agissait notamment de revoir les informations présentes sur Dolceta, de mettre en place une source d'information paneuropéenne, de garantir une adéquation des ressources aux besoins des publics visés, de communiquer avec les utilisateurs et de collaborer étroitement avec les autres services de la Commission.

L'appel d'offres de 2010 ([3]) pour un contrat-cadre a été lancé dans la perspective d'une refonte du site Dolceta en fonction des besoins des publics visés.

La somme d'un million d'euros inscrite dans le programme de travail de 2012 et réservée à l'éducation des consommateurs et au renforcement des capacités est destinée à couvrir les coûts de l'élaboration et de la publicité de ce nouveau site communautaire interactif voué à l'éducation des consommateurs. D'autre part, Dolceta assistera les enseignants en mettant des informations à la disposition de ceux-ci selon un mode de travail collectif fondé sur le partage d'informations et les bonnes pratiques.

([1]) http://www.dolceta.eu.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/strategy/docs/evaluation_consumer_education_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/consumers/tenders_2010_cons_03.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000580/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Dolceta consumer education programme

In its answer to my Question E-010784/2011 the Commission acknowledges that it has spent EUR 9 904 486 on the Dolceta consumer education programme, which does not meet the 'current standards for Web accessibility'.

Can the Commission explain:

1. Why it took it eight years to realise the futility of this programme, when this considerable budget could have been used to help and develop consumer associations, especially in the field of education?

2. Why in 2010 it launched a new Dolceta call for tenders for a two-year period, and the purpose of this new initiative?

3. Why it has entered an amount of EUR 1 million under point 4.2.3 (action 11) of the 2012 budget, mentioning the Dolceta programme once again?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2012)

Dolceta ([1]) is a website dedicated to consumer information and education in all EU Member States in 21 languages.

Dolceta was developed under contract in 2003 and 2004, followed by a framework contract from 2006-2010.Over time its target groups and objectives have diversified while the use of the Internet has evolved towards using interactive websites and social media. Simultaneously online consumer information in Member States has improved significantly .During this time Dolceta expanded to provide coverage of more subjects.

An in-depth evaluation in 2011 ([2]) made recommendations which included reviewing the information held in Dolceta, setting up a pan-EU information source, ensuring that the resources address the needs of the target groups, engaging with the user community and working closely with other Commission departments.

The 2010 tender ([3]) for a framework contract was launched with a view to a redevelopment of the Dolceta website in the light of the needs of its target groups.

The amount of EUR 1 million for consumer education and capacity building earmarked in the 2012 work programme is designed to cover the costs of developing and promoting this new interactive community website for consumer education. It will provide feedback to help teachers through a collaborative mode of working, based on sharing information and best practice.

([1]) http://www.dolceta.eu/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/strategy/docs/evaluation_consumer_education_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/consumers/tenders_2010_cons_03.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000581/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(25. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Weltraumstrategie der EU KOM(2011)0152, Galileo, GMES

1. Lassen die oben genannten Programme auch eine gegebenenfalls militärische Nutzung zu?

2. Ist diese gegebenenfalls mögliche militärische Nutzung von der Kommission beabsichtigt?

3. Wenn nein: Was beabsichtigt die Kommission zu unternehmen, um eine mögliche militärische Nutzung zu verhindern? Welche Kontrollmechanismen bestehen?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(13. März 2012)

Durch das von der Kommission verwaltete Programm Galileo wird das erste zivile globale Satellitennavigationssystem unter ziviler Kontrolle eingerichtet. Dies wurde vom Rat mehrfach bekräftigt und betrifft ebenso alle vom System bereitgestellten Dienste, auch den öffentlichen regulierten Dienst.

Nach dem Beschluss Nr. 1104/2011/EU über die Regelung des Zugangs zum öffentlichen regulierten Dienst darf jeder Mitgliedstaat eigenständig darüber entscheiden, in welcher Weise er den öffentlichen regulierten Dienst nutzen möchte. Die Nutzung kann auch im Sicherheitsbereich erfolgen, sofern die entsprechenden Sicherheitsstandards erfüllt werden.

Gemäß der Definition der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 911/2010 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates ist das Europäische Erdbeobachtungsprogramm (GMES) ein ziviles Programm, das Erdbeobachtungsdaten und Mehrwert-Informationen liefert, wobei der Schwerpunkt eindeutig auf Informationen zum Zustand der Erde liegt. Neben den Umweltdiensten gibt es den Dienst zum Katastrophen- und Krisenmanagement, der auf den Bedarf der Nutzer aus dem Bereich des Zivilschutzes zugeschnitten ist, und den Sicherheitsdienst, der auf den Bedarf der Nutzer aus dem Bereich der zivilen Sicherheit, beispielsweise Grenzschützer oder europäische Diplomaten, ausgerichtet ist. Bei der Festlegung von Beobachtungsdaten oder Mehrwert-Produkten orientierte man sich einzig am Bedarf von zivilen Nutzern.

Nach der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 911/2010 gilt für das Programm eine Politik des uneingeschränkten und freien Datenzugangs, d. h. die Daten werden der breiten Öffentlichkeit zur Verfügung stehen. Daher kann die Kommission Nutzern aus dem militärischen Bereich den Zugang nicht verwehren, wenn GMES-Daten für sie von Interesse sein sollten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000581/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: European Space Strategy (COM(2011) 0152), Galileo and GMES

Can the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. Do the abovementioned programmes also allow, where relevant, for military use?

2. Is this possible military use intended by the Commission?

3. If not, what does the Commission intend to do in order to prevent possible military use? What monitoring mechanisms exist?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

The Galileo programme, managed by the Commission, is establishing the first Global Navigation Satellite System that is a civil system under civil control. This has been restated by the Council on a number of occasions and concerns as well all the services generated by the system, including the Public Regulated Service (PRS).

Decision 1104/2011/EU on the rules of access to the public regulated service (PRS) states that each Member State may decide independently on the use it may make of PRS. Such use may be security-related, provided that the minimum security standards applicable are met.

As defined in Regulation 2011/911 of the Parliament and the Council, GMES is a civil programme that is delivering Earth observation data and added value information with a strong focus on information regarding the health of the Earth. Apart from the environmental services, the Emergency service is focusing on the needs of civil protection users and the Security service is focusing on the needs of civil security users such as border guards or European diplomats. Definition of observation data or added value products has been done exclusively to serve the needs of civil users.

Regulation 2011/911 defined for the programme a full and open access data policy, meaning that the data will be available widely to the public. Consequently, the Commission cannot prevent military users to access GMES data if deemed interesting for them.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000582/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(26. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Die Reaktion der Kommission auf den Silikonimplantatskandal

Zehntausende von Frauen in der gesamten Europäischen Union sind von dem aktuellen Skandal im Zusammenhang mit Silikonimplantaten von Poly Implant Prothèse (PIP) betroffen, obwohl Implantate von PIP das Europäische Konformitätszeichen (CE) erhielten, bei dem es sich um ein obligatorisches Konformitätszeichen für Produkte handelt.

1. Welche Maßnahmen wurden von der Kommission bereits vor dem Skandal ergriffen, um derartige Gesundheitsrisiken für europäische Bürger auszuschließen?

2. Wer ist für die Qualitätskontrolle derartiger Medizinprodukte verantwortlich?

3. Welche Maßnahmen werden von der Kommission ergriffen, um weitere Gesundheitsrisiken im Hinblick auf Silikonimplantate auszuschließen?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(22. Februar 2012)

Seit 2003 ([1]) werden Brustimplantate als Medizinprodukte der höchsten Risikoklasse eingestuft und werden durch eine benannte Stellen vor der Markteinführung der strengsten Überprüfung unterzogen, um ihre Qualität und Sicherheit zu gewährleisten. Inbesondere muss die benannte Stelle die Auslegungsdokumentation entweder bezüglich des Produkts oder des Produkttyps untersuchen und das Qualitätssystem überprüfen. Die benannte Stelle muss in regelmäßigen Abständen Inspektionen beim Hersteller durchführen und kann dabei auch unangemeldete Besuche abstatten.

Der Hersteller muss sicherstellen, dass seine Produkte sicher sind. Diese Sicherheit muss im Rahmen des Konformitätsbewertungsverfahrens von der benannten Stelle überprüft werden. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen die Marktaufsicht wahrnehmen, um unsichere oder nicht ordnungsgemäße Produkte vom Markt zu nehmen oder andere korrigierende Maßnahmen zu ergreifen.

Im Falle von PIP hat der Hersteller in betrügerischer Absicht Gebrauch von minderwertigem Silikon gemacht, welches sich von dem im Zuge des Konformitätsbewertungsverfahrens bei der benannten Stelle angemeldeten Silikon unterscheidet.

Der Wissenschaftliche Ausschuss „Neu auftretende und neu identifizierte Gesundheitsrisiken“ (SCENIHR) ([2]) hat am 1. Februar 2012 eine Stellungnahme zur Sicherheit der Silikon-Brustimplantate von PIP abgegeben und wird seine Ermittlungen auf Veranlassung der Kommission fortsetzen.

Die Kommission hat den Fall PIP auf mögliche Unzulänglichkeiten der Rechtsvorschriften für Medizinprodukte untersucht. Die Ergebnisse werden in die für 2012 vorgesehenen Vorschläge zur Überarbeitung dieser Vorschriften einfließen, die bereits vor diesem Fall in Angriff genommen worden war. Die Kommission hat zudem eine Reihe von Maßnahmen zur Stärkung des bestehenden Systems vorbereitet, die unverzüglich im Rahmen der geltenden Rechtsvorschriften ergriffen werden könnten. Hierzu gehören insbesondere unangemeldete Besuche, die Überprüfung von Stichproben sowie besserer Datenaustausch. Diese Maßnahmen werden mit dem Parlament und den Mitgliedstaaten erörtert werden.

([1]) Richtlinie 2003/12/EG (ABl. L 28 vom 4.2.2003, S. 43).
([2]) Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000582/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Commission's response to the silicone implants scandal

Tens of thousands of women throughout the European Union are affected by the current scandal concerning silicone implants supplied by Poly Implant Prothèse (PIP) despite the fact that PIP implants were given the European Conformity (CE) mark, which is a mandatory conformity mark for products.

1. What action had already been taken by the Commission, before the scandal, with a view to ruling out such health risks to European citizens?

2. Who is responsible for the quality control of such medical devices?

3. What action is being taken by the Commission to rule out further health risks with regard to silicone implants?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2012)

Since 2003 ([1]), breast implants are classified in the highest risk class of medical devices and are submitted to the most stringent pre-market review by a notified body to ensure their quality and safety. In particular, the notified body must examine either the design dossier regarding the device or a type of a device and must audit the quality system. The notified body shall periodically carry out inspections of the manufacturer and may also pay unannounced visits.

The manufacturer must ensure that its products are safe. This safety shall be verified by the notified body as part as the conformity assessment procedure. Member States must perform market surveillance to withdraw unsafe or non-compliant products from the market or to take other corrective actions.

In the PIP case, the manufacturer fraudulently made use of low-quality silicone different from the one declared to the notified body during the conformity assessment procedure.

The SCENIHR ([2]) has adopted an opinion on the safety of PIP silicone breast implants on 1 February 2012 and at the request of the Commission will pursue its investigation.

The Commission has analysed the PIP case to identify possible shortcomings in the medical device legislation. The findings will be taken into account in the proposals foreseen in 2012 for the revision of this regime which was already underway before this case. The Commission has also prepared a list of measures that could be taken immediately under existing legislation to reinforce the system, in particular with regard to unannounced audits, sample testing and better data sharing. These measures will be discussed with the Parliament and the Member States.

([1]) Directive 2003/12/EC — OJ L 28/43, 4.2.2003.
([2]) Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000583/12
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(26 janvier 2012)

Objet: Rapport d'audit sur l'EMA et conflits d'intérêts

Un rapport d'audit interne de l'Agence européenne des médicaments (EMA) en date du 30 avril 2009, communiqué après des démarches auprès du Médiateur européen, fait état d'une série de manquements dans l'application des dispositions de l'EMA en matière de conflits d'intérêts.

Se fondant sur l'évaluation de huit autorisations de mise sur le marché (AMM) de médicaments non identifiés dans le rapport, de 36 dossiers d'experts et des déclarations d'intérêts de 15 «*Product team leaders*», l'audit a identifié une série d'irrégularités portant notamment sur l'actualisation de certaines déclarations d'intérêts et sur l'association d'experts ayant travaillé pour les laboratoires postulant pour l'AMM.

1. Dès lors, la Commission peut-elle préciser quelles sont les huit molécules retenues dans l'échantillon d'AMM examiné par le service d'audit interne (IAS) dans son évaluation en date du 30 avril 2009?

2. Au regard des irrégularités constatées, la Commission a-t-elle fait procéder à une réévaluation de ces médicaments qui n'avaient pas été évalués selon le code de procédure?

3. La Commission peut-elle me communiquer les mesures mises en place pour améliorer le fonctionnement de l'Agence et corriger les graves manquements identifiés dans le rapport du 30 avril 2009?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(14 mars 2012)

1 et 2. Le rapport du 30 avril 2009 du service d'audit interne, qui concernait l'audit effectué en 2008, a relevé des défaillances systémiques, c'est-à-dire non limitées à des produits spécifiques. Les incidences de ces défaillances sur le résultat des évaluations ayant été jugées «potentielles», la Commission n'a pas insisté pour que les produits concernés soient réévalués.

3. Les recommandations fournies par le service d'audit interne étaient tournées vers l'avenir et mettaient l'accent sur l'application des contrôles prévus par les propres procédures de l'Agence européenne des médicaments (EMA). Celle-ci a entre-temps pris des mesures pour se conformer à ces recommandations. Les nouvelles règles de l'EMA ainsi que sa nouvelle politique de gestion des conflits d'intérêts des membres des comités scientifiques et des experts, qui ont été adoptées en 2010, sont devenues applicables en septembre 2011. De nouvelles règles concernant les conflits d'intérêts du personnel de l'EMA ont également été adoptées, et le conseil d'administration de l'Agence devrait entériner sous peu une révision de ses dispositions sur ce type de conflits. De façon générale, la Commission examine la question des conflits d'*intérêts dans le cadre du groupe de travail interinstitutionnel sur les agences décentralisées*. La direction générale de la santé et des consommateurs a quant à elle créé en son sein une *task force* sur les déclarations d'intérêts/conflits d'intérêts dans les agences sous sa tutelle, en vue de déterminer les bonnes pratiques.

En outre, la nouvelle législation sur la pharmacovigilance, qui deviendra applicable en juillet 2012, renforcera et rationalisera le système de pharmacovigilance actuellement en vigueur dans l'Union européenne en améliorant la notification des effets indésirables des médicaments et en garantissant un suivi réglementaire approprié des évaluations ultérieures des notifications.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000583/12
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: EMA audit report and conflicts of interest

A European Medicines Agency (EMA) internal audit report dated 30 April 2009, disclosed following applications to the European Ombudsman, reveals a series of failures to comply with the EMA's own provisions on conflicts of interest.

Based on a study of eight marketing authorisation applications (MAAs) for medicines not identified in the report, 36 expert reports and declarations of interest from 15 product team leaders, the audit identified a series of irregularities relating specifically to the updating of certain declarations of interest and the involvement of experts previously employed by laboratories applying for MAAs.

1. Can the Commission give details of the eight molecules which were the subject of the sample MAAs considered by the Internal Audit Service (IAS) in its study dated 30 April 2009?

2. In view of the irregularities brought to light, has the Commission insisted that the medicines which were not evaluated in accordance with the code of practice be re-tested?

3. Will the Commission say what measures have been taken to improve the EMA's working methods and to remedy the serious failings identified in the report of 30 April 2009?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2012)

1 and 2. The report of the Internal Audit Service (IAS) of 30 April 2009 which concerned the audit conducted in 2008 identified some systemic shortcomings, i.e. not limited to certain specific products. The impact of these shortcomings on the result of the evaluations was assessed as being 'potential'. Hence, the Commission did not insist that the products involved be re-evaluated.

3. The IAS provided recommendations that were future-oriented and with emphasis on the application of controls that were foreseen in EMA's own procedures. EMA has in the meanwhile taken steps in order to comply with these recommendations. EMA's new rules and policy on handling conflicts of interests of scientific committees' members and experts, which were adopted in 2010, have become applicable as of September 2011. Also new rules on handling EMA staff conflict of interests have been adopted and the Management Board of EMA is expected shortly to adopt its revised rules on conflict of interests. In general terms, the Commission is addressing the issue of conflicts of interest in the context of the *Interinstitutional Working Group on decentralised agencies*. *At the level of the* Directorate-General for Health and Consumers, a Task Force has been set up on declarations of interest/conflict of interest of Agencies for which it is the parent Directorate-General in order to identify best practices.

Moreover, the new pharmacovigilance legislation, which will become applicable in July 2012, will strengthen and rationalise the current pharmacovigilance system in the EU by improving the adverse drug reaction reporting and ensuring that subsequent assessments of such reporting lead to appropriate regulatory follow-up.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000584/12
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Listing of heritage seeds

Is the Commission aware that rules on listing of heritage seeds might contribute to the disappearance of vegetable varieties in the EU, since only registered vegetable varieties can be sold, and genetic variability might not be preserved?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

Directive 2002/55/EC ([1]) on the marketing of vegetable seed foresees that seed of 37 listed species and rootstocks may be marketed if it respects requirements for variety registration and lot inspection. However, for genetic resource conservation the directive allows the Commission to adopt measures on less stringent acceptance criteria.

Therefore, the Commission introduced in 2009, through Directive 2009/145/EC ([2]), derogations for acceptance of vegetable landraces/varieties traditionally grown in particular regions and threatened by genetic erosion and of varieties with no intrinsic value for commercial production but developed for growing under particular conditions, which authorise Member States to adopt provisions as regards distinctness, stability and uniformity. No official examination is required if the applicant provides a landrace/variety description based on results of unofficial tests, knowledge from practical experience or information from genetic resource authorities. The variety must be identified in the variety catalogues as 'conservation variety' or 'variety with no intrinsic value' and marketed with a label mentioning this status.

For plant species not covered by the Council Directive 2002/55/EC, national rules apply.

Questions about genetic resources have recently grown in importance and the Commission is carefully examining the rules in the context of the review of the seed legislation.

([1]) OJ L 193, 20.7.2002.
([2]) OJ L 312, 27.11.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000586/12
alla Commissione
Guido Milana (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D) e Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(26 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Incidente della nave da crociera Costa Concordia

Considerando che l'incidente della nave da crociera Costa Concordia avvenuto il 13 gennaio scorso nelle acque antistanti l'Isola del Giglio rischia di trasformarsi in un disastro ecologico di enormi dimensioni, con eventuali risvolti negativi per l'economia costiera toscana e in particolare per il settore ittico,

considerando che la fuoriuscita, anche parziale, del carburante stivato nei serbatoi della Costa Concordia, soprattutto IFO 380 CST, comporterebbe ripercussioni per i prossimi decenni su tutta la catena alimentare dell'ecosistema marino così come sulla riproduttività delle specie ittiche,

considerando che nella regione Toscana operano 600 imbarcazioni adibite alla pesca, con 1 200 addetti, una produzione di 10 600 tonnellate di pesce e un valore di 45 milioni di euro,

considerando che nella regione Toscana è in corso un'ulteriore emergenza ambientale dovuta alla perdita, il 17 dicembre a sud di Gorgona, di 198 bidoni di metalli pesanti da parte di un rimorchiatore della Grimaldi Lines,

può la Commissione indicare quali misure urgenti intende intraprendere affinché si possa evitare un ulteriore disastro ecosistemico?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(6 marzo 2012)

Gli Stati membri hanno la responsabilità primaria della risposta agli incidenti ecologici provocati da navi che si trovino in acque soggette alla loro giurisdizione. In virtù di strumenti internazionali da essi sottoscritti al riguardo, quale ad esempio la Convenzione internazionale sulla preparazione, la lotta e la cooperazione in materia di inquinamento da idrocarburi (OPRC 1990), gli Stati membri devono anche mettere a punto piani nazionali di risposta alle emergenze e adeguati meccanismi di risposta per far fronte agli incidenti ecologici.

A livello UE, la decisione 2007/779/CE ha stabilito un meccanismo per agevolare la cooperazione rafforzata tra l'Unione e gli Stati membri negli interventi di soccorso della protezione civile, che può essere attivato, su richiesta degli Stati membri interessati, anche in caso di inquinamento marino dovuto a cause accidentali. Inoltre, l'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza marittima (EMSA) può dotare gli Stati membri, su loro richiesta, di altri strumenti anti-inquinamento, per integrare i meccanismi di risposta di cui già dispongono. L'ESMA ha attualmente contratti per 16 navi completamente equipaggiate pronte ad intervenire in caso di sversamenti di idrocarburi, che stazionano in varie aree marine critiche in tutta l'Europa. Dopo l'incidente della nave da crociera Costa Concordia, per l'evacuazione dei combustibili per uso marittimo presenti a bordo è stata utilizzata una di queste navi, affiancata da una nave anti-inquinamento di appoggio.

La Commissione desidera sottolineare che già esistono norme UE che sanzionano gli incidenti ambientali provocati dalle imbarcazioni. Più specificamente, la direttiva 2005/35/CE relativa all'inquinamento provocato dalle navi e all'introduzione di sanzioni per violazioni, così come modificata, disciplina i casi di scarico accidentale o intenzionale in tutte le aree marine nell'UE, comprese quelle di alto mare, e si applica a tutte le navi, a prescindere dalla bandiera che battono.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000586/12
to the Commission
Guido Milana (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D) and Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Costa Concordia cruise liner accident

The *Costa Concordia* cruise liner accident, which took place on 13 January in the waters off the island of Giglio, threatens to become a large-scale ecological disaster with potential negative implications for Tuscany's coastal economy, particularly the fishing sector.

Even partial spillage of the fuel held in the tanks of the *Costa Concordia*, which consists mainly of IFO 380 CST, would have repercussions throughout the entire food chain of the marine ecosystem as well as on the ability of fish species to reproduce for decades to come.

600 fishing boats operate in the Tuscany region, with 1 200 employees, a production of 10 600 tonnes of fish and a value of EUR 45 million,

An additional environmental emergency is currently underway in the Tuscany region as a result of the loss of 198 containers of heavy metals by a Grimaldi Lines tugboat on 17 December, south of Gorgona.

Given the above, what emergency measures does the Commission intend to take in order to prevent a further ecosystem disaster?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

Member States have the prime responsibility regarding response to pollution incidents caused by ships in the waters under their jurisdiction. Under relevant international instruments to which Member States are signatories, such as the International Convention on Oil Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC 1990), they also have to put in place **national emergency response plans and a**ppropriate pollution response mechanisms to face such incidents.

At EU level, Decision 2007/779/EC has established a Mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation between the Union and the Member States in civil protection assistance intervention, which can be activated also in case of accidental marine pollution at the request of the Member State(s) concerned. Furthermore, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) can provide Member States with additional anti-pollution means at their request, topping up their pollution response mechanisms. The Agency currently maintains contracts for 16 fully equipped stand-by oil spill response vessels, stationed in various critical sea areas around Europe. Following this accident one of their fully equipped and one back-up oil spill response vessels are used for the evacuation of the bunker fuels on board of the Costa Concordia cruise liner.

The Commission wishes to highlight that EU rules are already in place sanctioning environmental pollution by ships. More specifically, Directive 2005/35/EC on ship-source pollution and on the introduction of sanctions for pollution offences, as amended, covers accidental or deliberate discharges in all sea areas around the EU, including the high seas, and is enforceable to all ships irrespective of their flag.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000587/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Incumplimiento de la Directiva MiFID en el Estado Español con la venta de participaciones preferentes

La Directiva 2004/39/CE relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros (MiFID), la Directiva 2006/73/CE relativa a los requisitos organizativos y las condiciones de funcionamiento de las empresas de inversión, y la Directiva 2006/49/CE sobre la adecuación del capital de las empresas de inversión y las entidades de crédito fueron incorporadas al ordenamiento jurídico español por la Ley 47/2007, de 19 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley 24/1988, de 28 de julio, del Mercado de Valores. Estos cambios legales, entre otras cosas, pretendían proteger a los pequeños inversores ante productos financieros complejos, que en la mayoría de los casos coinciden con los de elevado riesgo.

En el Estado español estos productos derivados complejos y de elevado riesgo, como es el caso de las participaciones preferentes, han sido ofertados a usuarios que mostraban en los test de conveniencia un profundo desconocimiento de los productos financieros, así como su voluntad de no adquirir productos con riesgo. A pesar de ello, diversas entidades financieras omitieron información y les ofrecieron productos que, en algunos casos han perdido más del 50 % de su valor. Ni la Comisión Nacional del Mercado de Valores (CNMV) ni el Banco de España han supervisado que las entidades ofrecieran productos adecuados a los test requeridos por la MiFID.

¿Considera la Comisión que está garantizado el cumplimiento efectivo de la Directiva MiFID por parte de las entidades financieras?

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión respecto a que miles de clientes minoristas —ahorradores que pretendían depositar sus rentas del trabajo en la mayoría de los casos— hayan perdido cantidades sustanciales de sus ahorros fruto de la opacidad e información deficiente ofrecida por las entidades financieras que comercializaban las participaciones preferentes?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de marzo de 2012)

Establecer un sistema sólido y coherente de protección de los inversores era uno de los principales objetivos de la Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros (DMIF) ([1]). Las normas definidas tienen en cuenta el tipo de servicios y la clasificación de los clientes, concediéndose mayor protección a los clientes minoristas. Las normas de conducta empresarial de la DMIF también disponen que las empresas de inversión recojan la información suficiente para garantizar que los productos ofrecidos siempre sean adecuados para el cliente.

La Comisión está al corriente de los riesgos aludidos por Su Señoría en relación con la venta de participaciones preferentes. Sin embargo, compete principalmente a las autoridades nacionales ejecutar y controlar la aplicación de las normas de la DMIF.

No obstante, la Comisión ha considerado que deben hacerse más rigurosos los requisitos a fin de aportar una protección suplementaria a los inversores en sus propuestas de revisión de la DMIF, adoptadas el 20 de octubre de 2011 ([2]). Estas propuestas se basan en las normas existentes, y, en particular, establecen requisitos más estrictos sobre la gestión de carteras, el asesoramiento en materia de inversión y la oferta de productos financieros complejos, tales como los productos estructurados, sobre todo a los pequeños inversores. La actividad de la Autoridad Europea de Valores y Mercados (AEVM) ([3]) también debería contribuir a garantizar una aplicación uniforme de los requisitos de protección de los inversores en toda Europa.

([1]) Directiva 2004/39/CE (DO L 145 de 30.4.2004, p. 1).
([2]) COM(2011) 656 final y COM(2011) 652 final.
([3]) Reglamento (UE) n° 1095/2010 (DO L 331 de 15.12.2010, pp. 84-119).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000587/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Spain's failure to comply with the MiFID Directive on the sale of preference shares

Directive 2004/39/EC on Markets in Financial Instruments (MiFID), Directive 2006/73/EC on organisational requirements and operating conditions for investment firms, and Directive 2006/49/EC on the capital adequacy of investment firms and credit institutions were transposed into Spanish law by Law 47/2007 of 19 December, which amended Law 47/2007 of 28 July on the Securities Market. The principal aim of these changes to the law was to protect small investors faced with complex financial products which in most cases also involved the highest levels of risk.

In Spain these complex derived, high-risk products, such as preference shares, were offered to investors who, in suitability tests, demonstrated both their profound ignorance of these financial products and their unwillingness to buy risky products. In spite of this, various financial institutions failed to disclose information and offered investors products which in some cases lost over 50 % of their value. Neither the Spanish Securities and Investments Board (CNMV) nor the Bank of Spain checked that these institutions were offering products that passed the tests required by MiFID.

Does the Commission believe that financial institutions are complying adequately with the MiFID Directive?

What does the Commission think about the thousands of small customers — savers who wished to deposit their salaries in most cases — who have lost substantial amounts of their savings because of the unclear and inadequate information they were given by the financial institutions selling preference shares?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

Establishing a consistent and robust system of investor protection was one of the key objectives of the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) ([1]). The defined rules take into account the type of services and the classification of clients, with higher protection granted to retail clients. Conduct of business rules in MiFID also require that investment firms collect sufficient information to ensure that any products provided are suitable or appropriate for the client.

The Commission is aware of the issues of risks described by the Honourable Member surrounding the sale of preference shares. However, it lies primarily within the competence of the national authorities to implement and monitor the application of the MiFID rules.

Nonetheless, the Commission has considered that requirements should be enhanced in order to grant additional protection to investors in its proposals to revise MiFID, adopted on 20 October 2011 ([2]). These proposals build on the existing rules, and, in particular, set stricter requirements for portfolio management, investment advice and the offering of complex financial products such as structured products, in particular to retail investors. The activity of the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) ([3]) should also help to ensure an equal application of investor protection requirements across Europe.

([1]) Directive 2004/39/EC, OJ L 145, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([2]) COM(2011) 656 final and COM(2011) 652 final.
([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1095/2010, OJ L 331, 15.12.2010, p. 84-119.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000590/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Incidentes en El Cairo e incendio en el Instituto de Egipto

La situación en Egipto sigue siendo convulsa y los enfrentamientos entre manifestantes y el ejército se han incrementado de nuevo en las últimas fechas, a causa sobre todo de la represión del ejército sobre manifestantes pacíficos en la Plaza Tahir el pasado 19 de diciembre.

El mismo día, el Instituto de Egipto, un centro de investigación creado por Napoleón Bonaparte durante la invasión de Francia en el siglo XVIII, se incendió durante los enfrentamientos entre manifestantes y el ejército de Egipto. El fondo de la biblioteca, que contaba con 192 000 artículos se destacaba por un valor cultural incalculable, entre los que destacan los 24 volúmenes de la *Description de l'Égypte*, que comenzó durante la ocupación francesa 1798-1801, una de las descripciones más completas de los monumentos de Egipto, su antigua civilización y la vida contemporánea a la vez.

El conflicto entre manifestantes y ejército se mantiene vivo debido a que diversos grupos políticos piden a la Junta Militar que gobierna el país que se retire y permita la celebración de elecciones presidenciales libres para formar un nuevo gobierno.

A la luz de lo anterior,

¿Pedirá la Alta Representante alguna explicación al ejército egipcio sobre los hechos ocurridos, que han significado una destrucción de un patrimonio cultural de alto valor para toda la humanidad?

¿Qué acciones lleva a cabo la Alta Representante para tratar de que el patrimonio cultural de Egipto no se vea afectado por la grave situación política que vive el país?

¿Qué acciones lleva a cabo la Alta Representante para tratar de que un gobierno plenamente democrático pueda tomar el mando de Egipto con la máxima celeridad?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta, Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de mayo de 2012)

La protección del patrimonio cultural egipcio debe estar garantizada por las autoridades nacionales. En sus contactos periódicos con las autoridades egipcias, la UE ha subrayado en numerosas ocasiones la importancia económica y cultural de salvaguardar las manifestaciones de la historia milenaria de Egipto, que atrae a millones de turistas cada año. Durante este delicado periodo transitorio bajo el régimen militar del Consejo Supremo de las Fuerzas Armadas, la UE mantiene su llamamiento a las autoridades egipcias para que mantengan el orden y combatan la delincuencia respetando los derechos fundamentales; la UE espera que los delitos cometidos contra el patrimonio egipcio sean investigados correctamente y que los culpables comparezcan ante la justicia civil.

La Vicepresidenta y Alta Representante ha subrayado en repetidas ocasiones la necesidad de que se realice una rápida transferencia de poder a un Gobierno civil elegido democráticamente. Esta preocupación se ha suscitado recientemente en varias declaraciones de la Vicepresidenta y Alta Representante (25 de enero de 2012, 23 de enero de 2012 y 26 de noviembre de 2011) y en las conclusiones del Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de 1 de diciembre de 2011 y 27 de febrero de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000590/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Incidents in Cairo and the fire at the Institute of Egypt

The situation in Egypt is still unstable and confrontations between demonstrators and the army have flared up again over the last few days, mainly due to the repression of peaceful demonstrators by the army in Tahir Square on 19 December.

On the same day, the Institute of Egypt, a research centre created by Napoleon Bonaparte when the country was invaded by France in the eighteenth century, caught fire during confrontations between demonstrators and the Egyptian army ([1]). The contents of the back of the library, consisting of around 192 000 articles were of incalculable cultural worth, including in particular the 24 volumes of the *Description de l'Égypte*, commenced during the French occupation of 1798-1801, and providing one of the most detailed descriptions of Egypt's monuments, its ancient civilisation and contemporary life.

The conflict between demonstrators and the army has been fuelled by demands from various political groups for the resignation of the governing military junta, thereby paving the way for free Presidential elections with a view to forming a new government.

In view of this:

Will the High Representative seek an explanation from the Egyptian army concerning the events which have led to a destruction of a cultural patrimony of great value to humanity?

What actions will the High Representative take to ensure that Egypt's cultural patrimony is not affected by the grave political situation in the country?

What actions will the High Representative take to encourage a fully democratic government to take office in Egypt as soon as possible?

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

The protection of Egyptian cultural heritage must be assured by the national authorities. In its regular contacts with the Egyptian authorities, the EU has stressed at many occasions the cultural and economic importance of safeguarding the expressions of Egypt's millennial history which attract millions of tourists each year. During this delicate transitory period under the military rule of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the EU keeps calling on the Egyptian authorities to maintain order and to fight crime in a manner respectful of fundamental rights; the EU expects that the crimes committed against Egypt's heritage will be properly investigated and that the culprits will be brought before civilian justice.

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) has repeatedly stressed the need for a swift transfer of power to a democratically elected civilian rule. This concern has been raised recently in several statements of HR/VP (on 25 January 2012, 23 January 2012 and 26 November 2011) and in the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of 1 December 2011 and of 27 February 2012.

([1]) http://.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/dec/19/cairo-institute-burned-during-clashes.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000591/12
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(26. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Beschränkung der Freizügigkeit

Bei dem Fußballspiel zwischen Standard Lüttich und Hannover 96 am 30. November 2011 ist es zu erheblichen Restriktionen der Freizügigkeit in der EU gekommen. Dies äußerte sich u. a. durch die Verbote, die Anreise mit dem Zug durchzuführen und früher als zwei Stunden vor Spielbeginn in Lüttich anzukommen, wobei die Reisebusse deutscher Fans ab der belgischen Grenze von einer Polizeieskorte begleitet wurden. Eine weitere deutliche Beschränkung der Freizügigkeit bestand darin, dass den Fans von Hannover 96 der Zutritt zur Innenstadt untersagt wurde. Der Busveranstalter wurde zudem angehalten, einen sofortigen Aufbruch nach Spielende sicherzustellen.

Dies vorausgeschickt frage ich die Kommission:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die gegenüber deutschen Fußballfans entwickelten Beschränkungen der Freizügigkeit im Lichte der europäischen Verträge?

2. Liegt nach Ansicht die Kommission durch die unterschiedliche Behandlung von belgischen und deutschen Fußballfans eine Ausländerdiskriminierung vor, und wie wird sie die belgischen Behörden ermahnen, eine Ungleichbehandlung in Zukunft zu unterlassen?

3. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um zukünftig eine Ausländerdiskriminierung im Kontext europäischer Fußballveranstaltungen generell zu verhindern?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(8. März 2012)

Gemäß Artikel 21 Absatz 1 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union hat jeder EU-Bürger das Recht, sich vorbehaltlich der in den Verträgen und in den Durchführungsvorschriften vorgesehenen Beschränkungen und Bedingungen frei im Hoheitsgebiet der Mitgliedstaaten zu bewegen und aufzuhalten. Die entsprechenden Beschränkungen und Bedingungen sind der Richtlinie 2004/38/EG ([1]) zu entnehmen. Da Belgien mit seinen Maßnahmen die Einreise in belgisches Hoheitsgebiet nicht untersagt hat, ist ein Verstoß gegen die Richtlinie 2004/38/EG nicht gegeben.

Zur Bewertung etwaiger Risiken bei Sportveranstaltungen tauschen die nationalen Fußballinformationsstellen ([2]) Daten über Risikofans aus. Den belgischen Behörden lagen vor dem Spiel zwischen Standard Lüttich und Hannover 96 Risikobewertungen vor, die sie veranlassten, Präventivmaßnahmen zu ergreifen, um mögliche Störungen der öffentlichen Ordnung im Stadtzentrum oder in der Nähe von Sportanlagen zu verhindern.

Die Kommission wird die Mitgliedstaaten auch künftig dabei unterstützen, das Arbeitsprogramm 2011-2013 der EU zur weitestmöglichen Verringerung der Gefahren für die Sicherheit und die öffentliche Ordnung bei Sportveranstaltungen — insbesondere Fußballspielen — von internationaler Dimension ([3]) umzusetzen. Die Entwicklung einer europaweiten Schulung im Umgang mit Menschenmassen und sonstigen Sicherheitsproblemen bei Sportveranstaltungen fördert sie mit einer bedeutenden finanziellen Unterstützung.

([1]) Richtlinie 2004/38/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 29. April 2004 über das Recht der Unionsbürger und ihrer Familienangehörigen, sich im Hoheitsgebiet der Mitgliedstaaten frei zu bewegen und aufzuhalten, ABl. L 158 vom 30. April 2004, S. 77.
([2]) Eingerichtet durch den Beschluss 2002/348/JI des Rates, geändert durch den Beschluss 2007/412/JI, ABl. L 155 vom 15.6.2007, S. 76.
([3]) 16421/10, ENFOPOL 337.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000591/12
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Restriction of freedom of movement

Significant restrictions on freedom of movement in the EU took place at the football match between Standard Liège and Hannover 96 on 30 November 2011. These restrictions included a ban on travelling to the match by train or arriving in Liège more than two hours before the start of the match. This meant that the German fans' coaches were escorted by the police from the Belgian border. A further clear example of the restriction of freedom of movement was the fact that the fans of Hannover 96 were denied access to the city centre. The coach operator was also encouraged to ensure immediate departure after the end of the match.

In the light of this, I should like to ask the following questions:

1. How does the Commission view the restriction of free movement of German football fans in the light of the European treaties?

2. Does the Commission consider that the different treatment of Belgian and German football fans constitutes discrimination against foreigners, and how does it intend to warn the Belgian authorities to refrain from unequal treatment in the future?

3. What action will the Commission take in the future in order to prevent discrimination against foreigners in the context of European football events in general?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2012)

Article 21(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union stipulates that every EU citizen has the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down in the Treaties and by the measures adopted to give them effect. The respective limitations and conditions are to be found in Directive 2004/38/EC ([1]). As the Belgian measures did not deny entry to the Belgian territory, there is no violation of Directive 2004/38/EC.

To assess threats at sport events, the National Football Information Points ([2]) exchange relevant data on risk supporters. On the basis of threat assessments available before the mentioned match between Standard Liège and Hannover 96, the Belgian authorities took preventive measures to avoid risks of disruptions of the public order in city centre or around sport premises.

The Commission will continue to support Member States to implement the EU Work Program 2011-2013 on safety and security around international football matches ([3]). An important financial support is provided to develop a Pan-European training on crowd management and other security issues at sport events.

([1]) Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77.
([2]) Established by the Council Decision 2002/348/JHA, amended by 2007/412/JHA; OJ L 155/76, 15.6.2007.
([3]) 16421/10, ENFOPOL 337.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000592/12
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(26. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Umsetzung der REACH-Verordnung

REACH ist die Verordnung zur Registrierung, Bewertung, Zulassung und Beschränkung chemischer Stoffe, die darauf abzielt, die vorherige Chemikaliengesetzgebung in der Europäischen Union zu vereinfachen und zu verbessern. Zurzeit befindet sich die REACH-Verordnung in der Umsetzung. Es wird ein Anhang-XV-Dossier erstellt, das darüber entscheidet, welche Substanzen im Anhang XIV aufgenommen werden.

Kann die Kommission, dies vorausgeschickt, folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wie ist in diesem Rahmen der aktuelle Stand für Chromtrioxid und Chromsäure?

2. Ist es möglich, dass die Daten und Untersuchungen in Anhang-XV-Dossiers nicht veröffentlicht werden und sich damit einer kritischen Würdigung entziehen?

3. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um sicherzustellen, dass alle zu einer Bewertung eines Stoffes führenden Informationen der Öffentlichkeit zur Verfügung gestellt werden?

4. In welcher Form wird die Kommission tätig werden, um gegenüber den deutschen Behörden die Veröffentlichung aller Informationen über Chromtrioxid und Chromsäure im Rahmen der REACH-Bewertungen sicherzustellen?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(5. März 2012)

1. Chromtrioxid und Chromsäure wurden gemäß dem Verfahren in Artikel 59 Absätze 3 bis 10 von REACH ([1]) als besonders besorgniserregende Stoffe eingestuft und im Dezember 2010 in die Liste der für eine Aufnahme in Anhang XIV infrage kommenden Stoffe übernommen. Im Dezember 2011 empfahl die ECHA, diese beiden Stoffe sowie elf weitere besonders besorgniserregende Stoffe in Anhang XIV von REACH aufzunehmen. Die Kommission kann nach dem Regelungsverfahren mit Kontrolle eine Änderung von Anhang XIV im Hinblick auf die Aufnahme der empfohlenen Stoffe in diesen Anhang vorschlagen.

2. Gemäß Artikel 59 Absatz 4 von REACH muss ECHA auf ihrer Website einen Hinweis veröffentlichen, aus dem hervorgeht, dass ein Dossier nach Anhang XV erstellt wurde, und alle interessierten Kreise auffordern, Stellungnahmen abzugeben. Seit dem Beginn der öffentlichen Konsultation wurden die Berichte nach Anhang XV für diese beiden Stoffe in der Form auf der ECHA-Website ([2]) zugänglich gemacht, in der die deutschen Behörden, die für REACH zuständig sind, diese übermittelt haben. Die meisten der in diesem Bericht enthaltenen Bezugnahmen und genannten Studien können über die im Bericht gelegten Links konsultiert werden.

3. ECHA hat bestätigt, dass sich sowohl sämtliche Informationen, die für die Bewertung der beiden Stoffe hinsichtlich ihrer Einstufung als besonders besorgniserregende Stoffe verfügbar sind, als auch die ECHA-Empfehlung hinsichtlich ihrer Aufnahme in Anhang XIV auf der ECHA-Website befinden. Vertrauliche Informationen wie z. B. Angaben zu den in Verkehr gebrachten Mengen oder technische Details in Bezug auf die Verwendung werden jedoch nicht mitgeteilt, da dies weder für die Bewertung der Eigenschaften besonders besorgniserregender Stoffe noch für die Angemessenheit der ECHA-Empfehlung in Bezug auf die Aufnahme in Anhang XIV von Belang ist.

4. Der Kommission ist nicht bekannt, dass die deutschen Behörden irgendwelche zusätzlichen Informationen über diese Stoffe im Zusammenhang mit den Dossiers nach Anhang XV zurückhielten. Sie bittet deshalb den Herrn Abgeordneten um die Übermittlung weiterer Einzelheiten.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1907/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 18. Dezember 2006 zur Registrierung, Bewertung, Zulassung und Beschränkung chemischer Stoffe (REACH), zur Schaffung einer Europäischen Agentur für chemische Stoffe, zur Änderung der Richtlinie 1999/45/EG und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EWG) Nr. 793/93 des Rates, der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1488/94 der Kommission, der Richtlinie 76/769/EWG des Rates sowie der Richtlinien 91/155/EWG, 93/67/EWG, 93/105/EG und 2000/21/EG der Kommission (ABl. L 396 vom 30.12.2006, S. 1).

([2]) http://echa.europa.eu/web/guest/proposals-to-identify-substances-of-very-high-concern-previous-consultations/-/substance/1165/search/%20/del/20/col/substancename/type/asc/pre/2/view.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000592/12
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Implementation of the REACH Regulation

REACH is the regulation on the Registration, Evaluation, Approval and Restriction of Chemicals, which is aimed at simplifying and improving the previous chemicals legislation in the European Union. The REACH Regulation is currently being implemented. An Annex XV dossier is being created to determine which substances will be included in Annex XIV.

That being so, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What is the current status of chromium trioxide and chromic acid in this context?

2. Is it possible that the data and studies in the annex XV dossiers will not be published and will thus evade a critical appraisal?

3. What measures will the Commission take to ensure that all information that leads to an evaluation of a substance will be made available to the public?

4. What action will the Commission take in order to secure from the German Government the publication of all information concerning chromium trioxide and chromic acid in the context of the REACH assessments?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2012)

1. Chromium trioxide and chromic acid have been identified in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 59(3) to (10) of REACH ([1]) as substances of very high concern (SVHC) and in December 2010 included in so called Candidate list of substances for eventual inclusion in Annex XIV. In December 2011, these two substances have been recommended by ECHA, together with eleven other SVHCs, for inclusion in Annex XIV to REACH. The Commission may propose an amendment of Annex XIV with a view of including the recommended substances in this Annex, following the regulatory procedure with scrutiny.

2. According to Article 59(4) of REACH, ECHA has to publish on its website a notice that an Annex XV dossier has been prepared, and invite all interested parties to submit comments. Since the beginning of the public consultation, the annex XV reports for these two substances, in the form as submitted by the German authority for REACH, were made available on the website of ECHA ([2]). Most references and studies quoted in this report are accessible using links indicated therein.

3. ECHA has confirmed that all information available for the evaluation of the two substances with regard to their SVHC properties as well as ECHA's recommendation to include them in Annex XIV are on ECHA's website; while confidential information, e.g. on volumes placed on the market or technical details on uses, has not been disclosed, this was not relevant for assessing the SVHC properties or the appropriateness of ECHA's recommendation for inclusion.

4. The Commission is not aware of any additional information retained by the German Government in the context of the annex XV dossiers for these substances. The Commission would ask the Honourable Member to provide more details.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC (OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p.1).

([2]) http://echa.europa.eu/web/guest/proposals-to-identify-substances-of-very-high-concern-previous-consultations/-/substance/1165/search/%20/del/20/col/substancename/type/asc/pre/2/view .

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000594/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D) e Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(26 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Condotta discriminatoria nello stabilimento della FIAT di Pomigliano (NA)

In data 22.6.2010, presso lo stabilimento Fiat di Pomigliano D'Arco (NA), i lavoratori, attraverso un referendum, venivano chiamati ad accettare il nuovo accordo produttivo per la costruzione della Panda, siglato tra i vertici aziendali ed alcune sigle sindacali. Il cosiddetto «modello Pomigliano», vedeva, tuttavia, la forte opposizione della Fiom (sindacato dei metalmeccanici della Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro e maggioritario nello stabilimento), la quale non compariva tra i firmatari dell'intesa, considerandola un chiaro ricatto aziendale in deroga al Ccnl (Contratto collettivo nazionale). Il referendum veniva approvato con il 63,4 % dei voti, attestando di fatto un'insoddisfazione diffusa tra i lavoratori.

Nel corso del 2011, la Newco Fabbrica Italia Pomigliano, nuova società controllata al 100 % da Fiat, procedeva quindi al riassorbimento graduale di buona parte dei lavoratori cassintegrati del gruppo Fiat. Tuttavia, degli oltre 800 lavoratori ad oggi assunti, non vi è di fatto alcun iscritto Fiom, nonostante fossero più di 850 i dipendenti che al momento del referendum aderivano a tale organizzazione sindacale.

Inoltre, la nuova intesa sottoscritta il 13 dicembre scorso tra la Fiat e le medesime sigle sindacali firmatarie dell'accordo di Pomigliano, ha di fatto esteso tale modello produttivo a tutti gli stabilimenti del gruppo. In conseguenza di tale firma, le Rsu (rappresentanze sindacali unitarie) sono state sostituite dalle Rsa (rappresentanze sindacali aziendali), le quali vengono nominate dalle organizzazioni sindacali che hanno sottoscritto l'intesa. La Fiom che non è firmataria non potrà, pertanto, avere più alcun rappresentante nei singoli stabilimenti. Quest'ultimo importante aspetto, oltre a violare la Costituzione italiana, appare chiaramente in contrasto con due convenzioni internazionali dell'ILO, l'Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro: in particolare, la n. 87, sulla «libertà di associazione e protezione del diritto all'azione sindacale» e la numero 98, che sancisce il «diritto ad organizzarsi e alla contrattazione collettiva».

Stante le considerazioni sovra esposte e considerando i dettami di cui agli articoli 12 (libertà di associazione), e 28 (diritto di negoziazione e di azioni collettive) della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'UE, ed altresì le Convenzioni internazionali dell'ILO nn. 87 e 89, si chiede alla Commissione:

— ritiene che la condotta posta in essere dalla Newco — Fabbrica Italia Pomigliano, possa considerarsi come discriminatoria ed antisindacale nei confronti della Fiom e di tutti i suoi iscritti?

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(12 marzo 2012)

Non esiste alcuna legislazione nell'Unione relativa alla discriminazione sul posto di lavoro per motivi di associazione a un sindacato. Peraltro, la Commissione rammenta la direttiva 95/46/CE ([1]) che riguarda il trattamento dei dati personali dei lavoratori da parte del datore di lavoro. Essa prevede che gli Stati membri vietino il trattamento di dati personali che indicano, tra l'altro, l'iscrizione a un sindacato ([2]) a meno che, tra l'altro, la persona interessata abbia dato un consenso esplicito al trattamento o che il trattamento sia necessario per l'adempimento degli obblighi e dei diritti specifici del responsabile del trattamento in materia di diritto del lavoro. L'Italia ha recepito la direttiva mediante il decreto legislativo n. 196/2003. Quanto al problema delle rappresentanze sindacali aziendali (RSA) negli stabilimenti del gruppo Fiat, la Commissione rammenta che non è di sua competenza prendere posizione su una presunta violazione della costituzione italiana o delle convenzioni dell'OIL.

Conformemente alla direttiva 2002/14/CE ([3]), i lavoratori hanno diritto all'informazione e alla consultazione, diritto che può essere esercitato attraverso i loro rappresentanti sul posto di lavoro. Il decreto legislativo n. 25/2007, che ha recepito la direttiva in Italia, prevede che il termine «rappresentanti dei lavoratori» indichi i rappresentanti eletti secondo le disposizioni in vigore, gli accordi interconfederali del 20 dicembre 1993 e del 27 luglio 1994 e successivi emendamenti, o i contratti nazionali collettivi applicati nei casi in cui non siano applicabili gli accordi interconfederali.

([1]) Direttiva 95/46/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 ottobre 1995, relativa alla tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali, nonché alla libera circolazione di tali dati, GU L 281 del 23.11.1995.
([2]) Cfr. altresì risposta del 9.8.2010 all'interrogazione scritta E-4144/2010 sulla lista nera.
([3]) Direttiva 2002/14/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 marzo 2002, che istituisce un quadro generale relativo all'informazione e alla consultazione dei lavoratori nella Comunità europea, GU L 80 del 23.3.2002.

Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti, tra cui i tribunali, garantire che la legislazione nazionale che recepisce le direttive di cui sopra sia applicata correttamente ed efficaciemente in linea con i requisiti UE, tenuto conto delle circostanze specifiche di ogni caso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000594/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D) and Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Discrimination at the Fiat factory at Pomigliano (Naples)

On 22 June 2010, workers at the Fiat factory in Pomigliano D'Arco (Naples) were asked to vote in a referendum on the new manufacturing agreement on the production of the Fiat Panda, which had been signed by the heads of the company and some of the unions. However, the so-called 'Pomigliano model' met with strong opposition from the metalworkers union FIOM (which is part of the Italian General Labour Confederation, to which most of the workers in the factory belong) which had not signed the agreement, considering it to be outright blackmail on the part of the company, and that it infringed the CCNL (National Collective Labour Agreement). The agreement was approved by a majority of 63.4 % of the votes in the referendum, which showed that there was widespread dissatisfaction among the workers.

During 2011, Newco Fabbrica Italia Pomigliano, a new company 100 % controlled by Fiat, gradually started re-employing many redundant workers from the Fiat Group. Nevertheless, of the more than 800 workers re-employed to date, not one belongs to FIOM, despite the fact that, at the time of the referendum, more than 850 were members of this union.

Furthermore, the new agreement signed on 13 December 2011 by Fiat and the same unions which signed the Pomigliano agreement extended this production model to all the Group's factories. As a result of this agreement, the Unitary Workplace Union Structure (RSU) has been replaced by a structure consisting of company-specific union representatives (RSA), nominated by the unions which signed the agreement. This means that FIOM, which did not sign the agreement, can no longer have a representative in any individual factory. This final important development not only violates the Italian Constitution but also appears to contravene two of the ILO's international conventions: in particular, No 87 on the freedom of association and protection of the right to organise union action and No 98, which enshrines the right to organise and to collective bargaining.

Bearing in mind these considerations and in view of the precepts of Articles 12 (freedom of association) and 28 (right to negotiate and to collective action) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, as well as international ILO Conventions Nos 87 and 89, can the Commission state:

Whether it believes that the conduct of Newco-Fabbrica Italia Pomigliano towards FIOM and all its members could be considered discriminatory and anti-trade unionist?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

There is no Union legislation on discrimination at the workplace on the grounds of trade union membership. However, the Commission recalls that directive 95/46/EC ([1]) covers processing of workers' personal data by the employer. It provides that Member States shall prohibit the processing of personal data revealing, among others, trade-union membership ([2]) unless, *inter alia,* the data subject has given his explicit consent to the processing, or the processing is necessary for the purposes of carrying out the obligations and specific rights of the controller in the field of employment law. Italy transposed this directive by way of Legislative Decree No 196/2003.As regards the issue of the trade union representation (RSA) in Fiat group's factories, the Commission recalls that it does not have the competence to take position on an alleged violation of the Italian Constitution nor of ILO's conventions.

According to Directive 2002/14/EC ([3]), workers have the right of information and consultation, which can be exercised through their representatives at the workplace. Legislative Decree No 25/2007 which transposed the directive in Italy, provides that the term 'workers representatives' means those representatives who are elected in accordance with the provisions in force, the interconfederal agreements of 20 December 1993 and 27 July 1994, and subsequent amendments, or the national collective agreements applied in cases where these interconfederal agreements do not apply.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995.
([2]) See also reply of 9.8.2010 to Written Question E-4144/2010 on blacklisting.
([3]) Directive 2002/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2002 establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community, OJ L 80, 23.3.2002.

It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the above directives is correctly and effectively applied in line with the EU requirements, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000597/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(26 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Norme europee di soggiorno ed espulsione di cittadini di paesi terzi

L'autore del duplice omicidio del commerciante cinese e della figlioletta, morti alcuni giorni fa in Italia in una rapina poi degenerata in delitto, è ancora in fuga. Secondo gli investigatori è probabile che il killer, un trentenne di origine marocchina, sia riparato all'estero, chi dice in Francia e chi in Spagna.

L'assassino è reduce da molteplici espulsioni, essendo stato più volte controllato, arrestato, liberato e infine espulso con almeno un altro paio di identità: una volta ha dichiarato di essere nato nel 1990, un'altra nel 1988. La sua storia è simile a quella di tanti altri immigrati che, clandestini o meno, entrano e escono di galera. Sono i clienti che ogni giorno passano attraverso le porte girevoli delle prigioni, nel senso che entrano, finiscono davanti al giudice che convalida l'arresto e poi escono, scarcerati in attesa del processo, o dell'arresto successivo.

Il primo fermo di questo cittadino marocchino in Italia risale al 2006, a Roma, con l'accusa di rissa aggravata. Fu identificato come clandestino, ma se la cavò con un affidamento ai centri di accoglienza. Un anno dopo fu nuovamente controllato dalle forze dell'ordine e, accertata la clandestinità, scattò l'espulsione. Ma non se ne andò, restò in Italia e collezionò altri arresti per i soliti reati: furti e rapine. Dal 2009, però, gli ordini di espulsione si bloccano perché il giovane marocchino presenta la domanda per ottenere il permesso di soggiorno attraverso la sanatoria. Le peripezie giuridiche continuano poi fino all'omicidio dei due cinesi.

Le ricerche ora proseguono senza sosta, così come le indagini dei carabinieri su eventuali favoreggiatori nella fuga, ma il killer è evaso e di lui finora non c'è nessuna traccia.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se alla luce dei gravi fatti accaduti a Roma ritiene che le norme che regolano, tra l'altro, le ragioni e i metodi di espulsione di cittadini di paesi terzi in uno Stato membro (direttiva 2003/109/CE del Consiglio del 25 novembre 2003 relativa allo status di cittadini di paesi terzi soggiornanti di lungo periodo) debbano essere riviste essendone dubbia l'efficacia, stante la facilità per alcuni individui di aggirare le regole e ritornare da criminali sul territorio dello Stato membro da cui erano stati espulsi?

Risposta data da Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2012)

Sulla base delle informazioni trasmesse la Commissione non è in grado di valutare se, in questo specifico caso, il migrante goda o meno dello status di soggiornante UE di lungo periodo in Italia.

Scopo della direttiva 2003/109/CE del Consiglio relativa allo status dei cittadini di paesi terzi soggiornanti di lungo periodo è conferire uno status giuridico più sicuro agli immigrati che abbiano soggiornato legalmente e ininterrottamente per cinque anni in un dato Stato membro e che soddisfino altre condizioni (relative ad es. alle risorse finanziarie e alle misure di integrazione). Gli Stati membri possono negare tale status per ragioni di ordine pubblico e pubblica sicurezza.

La protezione contro l'espulsione non è assoluta. Gli Stati membri possono espellere un soggiornante di lungo periodo se costituisce una minaccia effettiva e sufficientemente grave per l'ordine pubblico e la pubblica sicurezza. Nell'emanare un provvedimento occorre prendere in considerazione l'età dell'interessato, i vincoli o l'assenza di vincoli con il paese d'origine e la gravità del reato commesso. L'aver perpetrato un reato può anche avere conseguenze sulle procedure di rimpatrio: ai sensi dell'articolo 11 della direttiva «Rimpatri» gli Stati membri possono emettere, insieme alle decisioni di rimpatrio, un divieto d'ingresso relativo a tutto il territorio dell'UE per i cittadini di paesi terzi rimpatriati. La durata del divieto d'ingresso non deve superare di norma i cinque anni. Il divieto d'ingresso può comunque coprire periodi più lunghi se la persona rimpatriata costituisce una grave minaccia per l'ordine pubblico, la pubblica sicurezza o la sicurezza nazionale.

Nella relazione d'attuazione della direttiva 2003/109/CE del Consiglio ([1]), la Commissione non ha segnalato la necessità di rivedere le norme relative alla protezione contro l'espulsione.

([1]) COM(2011)585.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000597/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: European residency rules and deportation of third-country nationals

The perpetrator of the recent double murder of a Chinese shopkeeper and his young daughter in Italy, in a robbery that got out of hand, is still on the run. According to police investigators, it is likely that the killer, a thirty-year-old man of Moroccan origin, has fled abroad, either to France or to Spain.

The killer has already been deported a number of times, having been repeatedly stopped, arrested, released and eventually deported with at least a couple of different identities; he once claimed to have been born in 1990 and another time in 1988. His story is similar to that of so many other immigrants, whether illegal or not, who are continually in and out of jail. These customers pass through the revolving doors of prisons every day — they go in, end up before the judge who validates their arrest, and leave, awaiting their trial or their next arrest.

The first time this Moroccan citizen was arrested in Italy was in 2006, in Rome, when he was charged with aggravated assault. He was identified as being an illegal immigrant but was let off and placed in the custody of a migrant accommodation centre. A year later he was once again checked by the police and, once his illegal status had been established, was deported. But instead of leaving, he remained in Italy and was repeatedly re-arrested for his usual offences — theft and burglary. In 2009, however, the deportation orders were suspended when the young Moroccan took advantage of an amnesty and applied for a residence permit. His judicial mishaps continued right up to the murder of the two Chinese nationals.

Although the searches are continuing, as are the carabinieri police enquiries into who, if anyone, might have helped the killer to flee, he remains at large and has disappeared without a trace.

In the light of these serious events in Rome, does the Commission not agree that the rules governing, *inter alia*, the reasons for and methods of deportation of third-country nationals in a Member State (Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of *third-country nationals* who are *long-term residents*) should be reviewed, given their dubious effectiveness and the ease with which some individuals are able to circumvent them and return to commit crimes in the Member State from which they were deported?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission is not in the position to assess whether, in this specific case, the migrants benefits of an EU long-term residence status in Italy or not.

The objective of Council Directive 2003/109 on the status of third-country nationals who are long term residents is to give a more secure legal status for those immigrants who have resided legally and continuously for five years in a given Member State and fulfil other conditions (e.g. financial resources, integration measures). Member States can refuse the acquisition of this status on grounds of public policy and public security.

The protection against expulsion is not absolute. Member States may expel a long-term resident if he/she constitutes an actual and sufficiently serious threat to public policy and public security. When making a decision, the duration of residence, the age of the person, the links or absence of such links with the country of origin must be taken into account as well as the severity of the offence committed. The fact of having committed a criminal offence may also have an impact on return procedures: Article 11 of the Return Directive states that Member States may issue, together with return decisions, an EU-wide entry ban to returned third-country nationals. The length of the entry ban must normally not exceed five years. It may, however, be issued for longer periods if the returnee represents a serious threat to public policy, public security or national security.

The Commission in its implementation report on Council Directive 2003/109 ([1]) has not identified the expulsion protection rules as in need of reform.

([1]) COM(2011) 585.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000600/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(26 de janeiro de 2012)

Assunto: Conferência de Durban, mecanismos de flexibilidade e mercado do carbono

Da Conferência de Durban sobre as Alterações Climáticas saiu um protocolo de Quioto ainda mais fragilizado, cobrindo menos de um quinto das emissões mundiais de gases de efeito de estufa.

Na sua abordagem à problemática das alterações climáticas, a UE continua a defender os chamados instrumentos de flexibilidade e o mercado de carbono. Trata-se de instrumentos que já demonstraram, por um lado, a sua ineficácia e, por outro lado, a sua perversidade. No atual contexto económico, a utilização destes instrumentos pode bloquear o investimento em processos e tecnologias que efetivamente reduzam a emissão de gases de efeito de estufa para a atmosfera, promovendo antes a compra de licenças de emissão a quem delas não pode fazer uso.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Não considera que a utilização dos chamados mecanismos de flexibilidade e o funcionamento do mercado do carbono poderão levar ao efeito perverso acima enunciado, ou seja, na prática, à manutenção de um cenário «business as usual»?

2. Que medidas vai tomar para o impedir?

Resposta dada por Connie Hedegaard em nome da Comissão
(12 de março de 2012)

1. A Comissão considera que instrumentos flexíveis como o regime de comércio de licenças de emissão da UE (RCLE-UE) são fundamentais no leque de instrumentos da UE e mundiais em matéria de política climática. Se forem corretamente concebidos e aplicados, esses instrumentos permitem alcançar os objetivos de redução das emissões ao menor custo. Por exemplo, a utilização de mecanismos de flexibilidade como o Mecanismo de Desenvolvimento Limpo (MDL) da Organização das Nações Unidas permitiu uma redução dos custos da conformidade para as empresas da UE abrangidas pelo RCLE-UE.

Contudo, com o tempo, o MDL deve ser cada vez mais orientado para os países menos desenvolvidos (PMD). Os outros países em desenvolvimento devem utilizar novos mecanismos de mercado que permitam obter créditos resultantes de reduções de emissões com base em cenários mais ambiciosos do que a manutenção do *statu quo*. Para facilitar esta transição, os projetos MDL registados após 2012 devem, de acordo com a legislação da UE, ter origem num PMD para serem elegíveis para utilização no âmbito do RCLE-UE.

2. A Comissão esforça-se continuamente por melhorar o funcionamento dos mecanismos de flexibilidade no âmbito da Convenção-Quadro das Nações Unidas sobre as Alterações Climáticas. Se tal não for possível, a Comissão tem a possibilidade de propor requisitos suplementares aplicáveis à utilização. Fê-lo em 2011 para proibir os créditos de determinados projetos relativos a gases industriais (HFC-23 e ácido adípico N_2O) no RCLE-UE. Havia efetivamente indícios de que as características desses tipos de projetos pudessem conduzir a resultados que estariam em contradição com os objetivos iniciais subjacentes ao apoio da UE ao mecanismo, razão pela qual a UE adotou medidas para evitar a proliferação de eventuais incentivos perversos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000600/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: The Durban Conference, flexible instruments and the carbon market

An even more fragile version of the Kyoto Protocol resulted from the Durban Climate Change Conference, covering less than one-fifth of global emissions of greenhouse gases.

In its approach to the problems of climate change, the EU continues to protect the so-called flexible instruments and the carbon market. We are dealing with instruments that have already been shown to be both ineffective and counterproductive. In the current economic context, the use of these instruments can block investment in processes and technologies that can effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promoting, instead, dealing in emissions trading licenses with those who cannot use them.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it believes that use of these so-called flexible instruments and the operation of the carbon market may lead to the perverse effect mentioned above, i.e., in practice, result in a 'business as usual' scenario;

2. what measures it will take to prevent this?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

1. The Commission believes that flexible instruments such as, the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), are key in both the EU and the global climate policy toolbox. If properly designed and implemented, such instruments allow emission reduction objectives to be achieved at least cost. For example, use of flexibility mechanisms such as the UN Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allowed a reduction in compliance costs for EU companies covered by the EU ETS.

However, over time the CDM should increasingly be focused on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Other developing countries should use new market mechanisms that credit emission reductions based on more ambitious baselines than business as usual. To facilitate this transition, CDM projects registered after 2012 need to originate from an LDC to be eligible for use in the EU ETS according to EC law.

2. The Commission continuously strives to improve the functioning of the flexibility mechanisms through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Where this is not possible, the Commission has a possibility to propose additional use requirements. This was done in 2011 to ban the credits from certain industrial gas projects (HFC-23 and adipic acid N2O) in the EU ETS. In this case, there was indeed evidence suggesting that the characteristics if these types of projects lead to outcomes which were at odds with the original objectives behind the EU's support for the mechanism, and the EU therefore acted to prevent the proliferation of any perverse incentives.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000601/12
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(26 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Protección de las destinatarias y destinatarios de prótesis mamarias

A la vista del escándalo producido por el uso de siliconas industriales en la producción de prótesis mamarias implantadas a miles de personas en la Unión Europea, fundamentalmente mujeres, y de los graves perjuicios para la salud y económicos que esta negligencia puede suponer por su uso y necesaria extirpación,

¿Considera la Comisión que la normativa vigente en la Unión Europea (Directiva 2003/12/CE sobre la Clasificación de los Implantes Mamarios y Directiva 93/42/CE relativa a los Productos Sanitarios) es suficiente para garantizar a las consumidoras y consumidores de prótesis mamarias una apropiada información sobre su composición, procedencia y los posibles riesgos que conlleva su implantación?

¿Cree la Comisión que los controles de calidad sobre las prótesis mamarias y de las prácticas médicas ligadas a su implantación (información previa, operación y seguimiento postoperatorio), aplicados hasta la fecha por los Estados miembros, han sido los adecuados y suficientes para garantizar la salud y minimizar las incidencias postoperatorias a sus destinatarias y destinatarios?

La normativa vigente en la Unión Europea anima a los Estados miembros a transmitir a la Comisión las medidas de control y seguimiento que adopten para poder efectuar una evaluación a nivel comunitario de las incidencias ligadas a la implantación de prótesis mamarias.

¿Podría aclarar la Comisión qué información ha recibido de los Estados miembros hasta la fecha y qué tipo de evaluación y valoración ha podido realizar con los datos obtenidos?

¿Prevé la Comisión proponer a los Estados miembros una normativa que refuerce de manera vinculante y efectiva las garantías de protección ofrecidas a las destinatarias y destinatarios de prótesis mamarias?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de marzo de 2012)

La Directiva 2003/12/CE ([1]) clasifica los implantes mamarios en la clase de riesgo más elevado de los productos sanitarios, que se someten a las revisiones más rigurosas por un organismo notificado antes de su comercialización. Sin embargo, quizá sea preciso insistir más en la información a las pacientes.

De conformidad con el artículo 168 del Tratado, la organización y prestación de servicios sanitarios y atención médica, la información preoperatoria de los pacientes, los aspectos relacionados con la cirugía y el seguimiento posoperatorio son responsabilidad de los Estados miembros.

El 30 de marzo de 2010, los Estados miembros comenzaron a compartir información sobre los ensayos efectuados en los implantes fraudulentos. Estos datos se han incorporado al dictamen del Comité científico de los riesgos sanitarios emergentes y recientemente identificados, adoptado el 1 de febrero de 2012 ([2]). El Comité científico proseguirá su investigación a partir de los datos que vayan aportando los Estados miembros.

La Comisión está analizando el presente caso para detectar posibles carencias en el actual marco regulador. Sus conclusiones se tendrán en cuenta para la revisión de la legislación de productos sanitarios, iniciativa que ya se está preparando. La Comisión tiene previsto adoptar propuestas en 2012. El objetivo es reforzar el sistema reglamentario, superar sus actuales carencias y deficiencias y asegurarse de que responda a los retos actuales.

Entre tanto, la Comisión estudiará con los Estados miembros cómo reforzar inmediatamente la vigilancia de los productos sanitarios en el marco legislativo existente.

([1]) DO L 28 de 4.2.2003, p. 43.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_o_034.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000601/12
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Protection for patients receiving breast implants

In light of the scandal caused by the use of industrial silicone to produce breast implants received by thousands of people in the EU, most of them women, and the serious damage in health and economic terms which may be caused by the negligent use and necessary removal of such implants:

Does the Commission consider that current EU legislation (Directive 2003/12/EC on the reclassification of breast implants in the framework of Directive 93/42/EEC concerning medical devices) offers adequate guarantees to the recipients of breast implants that they will receive proper information on their composition, origin and possible risks associated with their use?

Does the Commission believe that the quality controls applied to breast implants and to the medical practices associated with their use (prior information, operation and post-operation follow-up) currently in force in the Member States have been adequate and far-reaching enough to safeguard health and minimise the incidence of post-operatory complications in their recipients?

Current EU legislation encourages Member States to inform the Commission of their control and monitoring methods, so that a Community-wide assessment can be made of incidents linked with the use of breast implants.

Could the Commission say what information it has received so far from the Member States and what sort of assessment and evaluation it has been able to make from the data obtained?

Does the Commission intend to propose legislation to the Member States aimed at strengthening in a binding and effective manner the level of protection provided to the recipients of breast implants?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

Under Directive 2003/12/EC ([1]), breast implants are classified in the highest risk class of medical devices and are submitted to the most stringent pre-market review by a notified body. However, patient information might need to be further reinforced.

The organisation and delivery of health services and medical care, including pre-operative patient information, surgery related aspects and post-operation patient follow-up, fall within the responsibilities of the Member States, in accordance with Article 168 of the Treaty.

As of 30 March 2010, Member States started sharing information on tests conducted on the fraudulent implants concerned. Those data have been fed into the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks opinion adopted on 1 February 2012 ([2]). This Scientific Committee will pursue its investigation based on further data from Member States

The Commission is analysing the present case to identify possible shortcomings in the current regulatory framework. The findings will be taken into account in the revision of the medical device legislation, an initiative already under preparation. The Commission envisages adopting proposals in 2012. The objective is to reinforce the regulatory system, overcome existing gaps and weaknesses and make sure that it responds to the existing challenges.

In the meantime, the Commission will discuss with the Member States how surveillance of medical devices can be reinforced immediately within the existing legislative framework.

([1]) OJ L 28/43, 4.2.2003.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_o_034.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000602/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(26 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ελλείψεις και προβλήματα ολοκλήρωσης του έργου «Δίκτυο ανοικτών διωρύγων πεδιάδος Μόρνου Νομού Φωκίδας»

Οι κάτοικοι και φορείς της περιοχής του Νομού Φωκίδας ανησυχούν για την πορεία ολοκλήρωσης του έργου «Δίκτυο ανοικτών διωρύγων πεδιάδος Μόρνου Νομού Φωκίδας». Συγκεκριμένα αναφέρουν ότι το εν λόγω έργο παρουσιάζει ελλείψεις και προβλήματα στην κατασκευή του με αποτέλεσμα να καθίσταται προβληματικό στη λειτουργία του. Έχοντας υπόψη την έκθεση προσωρινών αποτελεσμάτων ελέγχου του Υπουργείου Οικονομικών με αριθμό πρωτοκόλλου 1420/0056, όπου αναφέρει αναλυτικά τις παραλείψεις και τα προβλήματα του εν λόγω έργου και ότι το έργο είναι συγχρηματοδοτούμενο από κοινοτικούς πόρους, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Μπορεί να ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή αν οι παραλείψεις και τα ελαττώματα του εν λόγω έργου που αναφέρουν τόσο οι κάτοικοι και φορείς της περιοχής όσο και η έκθεση του Υπουργείου Οικονομικών έχουν διορθωθεί; Πως σχολιάζει την καθυστέρηση ολοκλήρωσης του έργου;

2. Μπορεί να βεβαιώσει η Επιτροπή ότι το έργο είναι στο σύνολό του λειτουργικό; Αν όχι, τι μέτρα προτίθεται να πάρει ώστε το εν λόγω έργο να ολοκληρωθεί και να λειτουργήσει προς όφελος των κατοίκων της περιοχής και του περιβάλλοντος;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Ο κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1698/2005 ([1]) του Συμβουλίου, στο άρθρο 7 σχετικά με την υποστήριξη της γεωργικής ανάπτυξης μέσω του ευρωπαϊκού γεωργικού ταμείου για τη γεωργική ανάπτυξη, ορίζει ότι τα κράτη μέλη είναι αρμόδια για την εφαρμογή των προγραμμάτων αγροτικής ανάπτυξης στο κατάλληλο εδαφικό επίπεδο, σύμφωνα με τις οικείες θεσμικές ρυθμίσεις, κατά τον παρόντα κανονισμό.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, οιαδήποτε πληροφορία συνδέεται με τη διάρκεια ενός έργου διατίθεται από τις αρμόδιες αρχές του οικείου κράτους μέλους και οιαδήποτε λήψη μέτρου για την αποκατάσταση παραλείψεων και ελαττωμάτων που επηρεάζουν ένα τρέχον έργο εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα του εκάστοτε κράτους μέλους και στις εθνικές νομικές διατάξεις που ισχύουν για οιοδήποτε εγκριθέν έργο.

Συνεπώς η Επιτροπή προτείνει στον αξιότιμο κ.βουλευτή να απευθύνει το αίτημά του στην υπηρεσία διαχείρισης του Προγράμματος Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης της Ελλάδας (βλ. στοιχεία των αρμόδιων επαφής παρακάτω). Η εν λόγω αρχή είναι σε θέση να του παράσχει πληροφορίες σχετικά με οιαδήποτε δράση έχει αναληφθεί για την αποκατάσταση τυχόν παραλείψεων και προβλημάτων που επηρεάζουν το συγκεκριμένο έργο.

Ειδική Υπηρεσία Διαχείρισης για το πρόγραμμα αγροτικής ανάπτυξης
Κα Α. Κανναβού,
Υπουργείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και Τροφίμων,
Λεωφόρος Αθηνών 58,
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http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/

([1]) ΕΕ L 277 της 21.10.2005, σ. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000602/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Shortcomings and problems in completing the projected 'Mornos Valley Network in the prefecture of Fokida' project

Residents and local bodies in the prefecture of Fokida are concerned about the work on completion of the 'Mornos Valley Irrigation Network in the prefecture of Fokida', referring in particular to operational problems caused by structural defects. Having regard to the findings of the provisional audit by the Ministry of Finance (No 1420/0056) which lists in detail the omissions and problems which have come to light regarding the project in question, and given that the project is receiving EU funding:

1. Can the Commission indicate whether action has been taken to remedy the omissions and defects affecting the project identified by local residents and bodies and in the report by the Ministry of Finance? What view does the Commission take of the delay in completing the project?

2. Can the Commission confirm that the project is fully operational? If it is not, what measures does it intend to take to ensure the completion and operation thereof for the benefit of the local residents and the environment?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1]), in its Article 7 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, stipulates that Member States shall be responsible for implementing the rural development programmes at the appropriate territorial level, according to their own institutional arrangements, in accordance with this regulation.

In this context any information related to a project's lifecycle is available at the Member States competent authority's level and any action to remedy omissions and defects affecting an ongoing project falls under the competence of each Member State and the national legal provisions that apply to any approved project.

The Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member first addresses his concerns to the Managing Authority of the Greek Rural Development Programme (see contact details below). They should be in position to provide him with information on any action taken to remedy omissions and defects affecting this specific project.

Special Managing Authority Rural Development Programme
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Ministry of Rural Development and Food
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([1]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000603/12
to the Commission
Mairead McGuinness (PPE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Waste and treatment not acceptable in landfills

Can the Commission provide its reasons for the decision — including the information used to help make the decision — to include in Council Directive 1999/31/EC, specifically, Article 5, paragraph 3, point (d) on whole used tyres?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

Waste tyres present severe problems in landfills: they do not disintegrate to reduce volume, they have negative effects on the landfill's behaviour and stability (they are hard to compact and may rise to the landfill's surface over time in poorly compacted waste), they provide dangerous breeding grounds for mosquitoes and rats, they may negatively impact the degassing of landfills by rendering drilling more complicated and risky, and they pose significant fire risks.

In addition, recycling and energy recovery techniques for tyres are widely available and economically and technically viable, having a better environmental profile; therefore, the disposal of tyres at landfills cannot be justified from a resource efficiency perspective.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000604/12
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: EU sanctions against Burma

Given the relaxation of EU sanctions against Burma over the last twelve months, how does the Commission plan to maintain pressure on the Burmese authorities in order to ensure continued progress on democratic and social reforms? In the light of the huge amount of progress still to be made in Burma, can the EU ensure that the release of all political prisoners in Burma will be a prerequisite for the removal of sanctions? Is the Commission prepared to reinstate sanctions against Burma should progress toward reforms be halted?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is following events in Burma/Myanmar closely. There have been significant positive changes since the new Government took office in 2011. These include the engagement with the opposition — i.e. with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her NLD party — amendments to the Constitution and the Party Registration Law allowing the NLD to contest the by-elections on 1 April 2012; the release of many political prisoners with the most prominent and sensitive cases among them; the creation of a National Human Rights Commission; new laws on trade unions and free assembly, as well as relaxed censorship and major efforts to resolve peacefully the conflicts in ethnic areas. An intensive debate on economic and social reform has been launched, focusing on rural poverty and improving the business climate.

It is the view of the HR/VP that as these positive steps accumulate, they make a reversal of course more difficult. After fifty years of military rule, much needs to change. However, the conditions seem in place to reset relations between the EU and Myanmar.

Factors contributing to a normalisation of relations would be a free and fair conduct of the by-elections on 1 April 2012, the release of the remaining political prisoners, and continued efforts to settle the ethnic conflicts peacefully. Whether the set of EU restrictive measures will be lifted or further eased will depend on a unanimous decision by EU Foreign ministers in April 2012; this does not exclude the possible reinstatement of measures in the event that these positive developments are reversed. At this point, it seems appropriate to focus on opportunities to support the reform efforts in Burma/Myanmar with more dialogue and assistance, and to encourage further progress.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000605/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(26 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Γεγονότα στη Ρουμανία

Χιλιάδες Ρουμάνοι βρέθηκαν τις τελευταίες μέρες στους δρόμους ενάντια στα μέτρα λιτότητας που έχει επιβάλει στη χώρα το ΔΝΤ. Σοβαρές συμπλοκές σημειώθηκαν στο Βουκουρέστι με δυνάμεις της αστυνομίας, όπου τραυματίστηκαν 60 άτομα.

«Κόκκινο» έχει χτυπήσει η οργή κατά των μέτρων λιτότητας στη Ρουμανία, όπου διαδηλωτές και αντιπολίτευση ζητούν την παραίτηση της κυβέρνησης. Δεκάδες άτομα έχουν τραυματιστεί στις διαδηλώσεις που ξεκίνησαν ως αντίδραση στην παραίτηση του υφυπουργού Υγείας και σε ένα αμφιλεγόμενο νομοσχέδιο για το σύστημα υγείας, αλλά εξελίχθηκαν στις μεγαλύτερες διαμαρτυρίες κατά της σκληρής λιτότητας που επιβλήθηκε το 2010 με συνταγή του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της για τα γεγονότα στη Ρουμανία;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση που έπληξε την παγκόσμια οικονομία το 2008 και το 2009 επέτεινε τις ανησυχίες των επενδυτών για τα μεγάλα ελλείμματα του προϋπολογισμού και του ισοζυγίου τρεχουσών συναλλαγών της Ρουμανίας. Οι ροές κεφαλαίων στέρεψαν και το κόστος του κρατικού δανεισμού αυξήθηκε σε μη βιώσιμα επίπεδα. Τον Μάρτιο του 2009 οι ρουμανικές αρχές ζήτησαν χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή από την ΕΕ, το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο και άλλους διεθνείς χρηματοπιστωτικούς οργανισμούς.

Κατά την περίοδο 2009-11, η χώρα ελάμβανε χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή υπό τον όρο της εφαρμογής ενός εκτενούς προγράμματος οικονομικής πολιτικής, ώστε να αντέξει στις βραχυπρόθεσμες πιέσεις ρευστότητας ενώ θα βελτιωνόταν η ανταγωνιστικότητα και θα διορθώνονταν οι ανισορροπίες. Το πρόγραμμα αυτό είχε ως στόχο την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας στον μεσοπρόθεσμο και μακροπρόθεσμο ορίζοντα μέσω σειράς διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων, όπως μέτρων με τα οποία βελτιώνονται η φορολογική διοίκηση, το επιχειρηματικό περιβάλλον, η αποτελεσματικότητα των κρατικών επιχειρήσεων, καθώς και η μακροπρόθεσμη βιωσιμότητα του συνταξιοδοτικού συστήματος. Οι παροχές κοινωνικής πρόνοιας υπάχθηκαν σε εισοδηματικά κριτήρια ώστε να προστατευθούν τα πλέον ευάλωτα άτομα από τα μέτρα λιτότητας. Το πρώτο αυτό πρόγραμμα χρηματοδοτικής συνδρομής επέτρεψε στη Ρουμανία να προσαρμοστεί πιο βαθμιαία στη νέα οικονομική πραγματικότητα.

Τώρα, η Ρουμανία εφαρμόζει ένα επακόλουθο προληπτικό πρόγραμμα (2011-2013) το οποίο στηρίζει το μεταρρυθμιστικό πρόγραμμα της κυβέρνησης, δηλαδή τις διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις της και τα μέτρα βελτίωσης της δημοσιονομικής βιωσιμότητας και παγίωσης της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας. Στόχος του είναι η επίτευξη ισχυρότερης οικονομικής ανάπτυξης και η βελτίωση του βιοτικού επιπέδου. Η κοινωνική προστασία θα καταστεί αποτελεσματικότερη με την ενοποίηση των υφισταμένων κατηγοριών κοινωνικών παροχών και τη θέσπιση νέων κριτηρίων επιλεξιμότητας, ώστε να προστατευθούν τα πλέον ευάλωτα νοικοκυριά.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000605/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Events in Romania

Thousands of Romanians have taken to the streets in recent days to protest against the austerity measures that have been imposed on the country by the IMF. Pitched battles with police in Bucharest have left 60 injured.

Anger against the austerity measures in Romania is ringing alarm bells, with both demonstrators and opposition calling for the resignation of the Government. Dozens have been injured in the course of the demonstrations, which began as a protest against the resignation of the Health Minister and the controversial health bill but mushroomed into the largest protests to date against the harsh austerity measures ordered by the IMF in 2010.

What is the Commission's official position regarding the events in Romania?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2012)

The financial crisis that hit the world economy in 2008 and 2009 accentuated investors' concerns about Romania's large budget and current account deficits. Capital flows dried up and government borrowing costs increased to unsustainable levels. In March 2009 the Romanian authorities asked the EU, the International Monetary Fund and other international financial institutions for financial assistance.

In 2009-2011 the country received financial assistance conditional upon the implementation of a comprehensive economic policy programme in order to withstand short-term liquidity pressures while improving competitiveness and correcting imbalances. This programme aimed at restoring sustainability over the medium- and long-term through a series of structural reforms, such as measures improving tax administration, the business environment, the efficiency of state-owned enterprises, and the long-term sustainability of the pension system. Social assistance was made dependent on means-testing in order to shield the most vulnerable people from the austerity measures. This first programme of financial assistance allowed Romania to adjust more gradually to the new economic reality.

Currently, Romania is implementing a follow-up precautionary programme (2011-2013) which supports the government's reform programme, namely its structural reforms and measures to improve fiscal sustainability and consolidate financial stability. Its aim is to deliver a stronger growth and improved living standards. Social protection will become more efficient by consolidating the existing categories of social benefits and introducing new eligibility criteria so that the most vulnerable households are protected.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000606/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(26 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ναυάγιο στην Ιταλία

Σε κατάσταση έκτακτης ανάγκης θα κηρύξει ο υπουργός Περιβάλλοντος, Κοράντο Κλίνι, την περιοχή όπου σημειώθηκε το ναυάγιο του κρουαζιερόπλοιου Concordia, ώστε να αποδεσμευθούν κρατικά κονδύλια για την αποφυγή μίας περιβαλλοντικής καταστροφής. Αγνοείται η τύχη 29 ανθρώπων.

Ο Ιταλός υπουργός δήλωσε ότι από το κρουαζιερόπλοιο έχουν αρχίσει να διαρρέουν υγρά, αλλά δεν έχει διευκρινιστεί ακόμη αν πρόκειται για καύσιμα, ενώ πρόσθεσε ότι θα τοποθετηθούν προστατευτικά πετάσματα. Σύμφωνα με πηγές της ιταλικής ακτοφυλακής, οι ειδικοί που πέταξαν με ελικόπτερο πάνω από το σημείο του ναυαγίου του κρουαζιερόπλοιου Concordia, παρατήρησαν ότι γύρω από το πλοίο, έχουν αρχίσει να δημιουργούνται κηλίδες πετρελαίου περιορισμένης έκτασης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν μπορούν να δρομολογηθούν ενέργειες ώστε να αποφευχθεί η μόλυνση του περιβάλλοντος στη συγκεκριμένη περιοχή;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Μαρτίου 2012)

Σε εκθέσεις των ιταλικών αρχών έπειτα από το δυστύχημα του Costa Concordia αναφερόταν ότι ο κίνδυνος ρύπανσης φαινόταν περιορισμένος και ότι είχαν ληφθεί κατάλληλα μέτρα αντιμετώπισης του προβλήματος, ενώ προτεραιότητα δόθηκε στις επιχειρήσεις έρευνας και διάσωσης. Στα μέτρα αυτά περιλαμβάνεται η δημιουργία ζώνης με πλωτά φράγματα γύρω από το πλοίο για τον περιορισμό ενδεχόμενης ρύπανσης και η εκπόνηση σχεδίου για την απομάκρυνση των καυσίμων από τις δεξαμενές των πλοίων. Με την απόφαση 2007/779/ΕΚ έχει δημιουργηθεί μηχανισμός για την ενίσχυση της συνεργασίας μεταξύ της Ένωσης και των κρατών μελών σε επεμβάσεις βοήθειας της πολιτικής προστασίας, ο οποίος μπορεί να ενεργοποιηθεί και σε περίπτωση ακούσιας θαλάσσιας ρύπανσης, έπειτα από αίτηση του ενδιαφερόμενου κράτους μέλους (ή κρατών μελών). Επιπλέον, ο Ευρωπαϊκός Οργανισμός για την Ασφάλεια στη Θάλασσα (EMSA) έχει μεταξύ των καθηκόντων του την υποχρέωση να παρέχει στα κράτη μέλη πρόσθετα μέσα καταπολέμησης της ρύπανσης, επιπλέον των μηχανισμών τους για την αντιμετώπιση της ρύπανσης. Ο Οργανισμός διατηρεί επί του παρόντος συμβάσεις για 16 πλήρως εξοπλισμένα σκάφη επιφυλακής για την αντιμετώπιση πετρελαιοκηλίδων, που σταθμεύουν σε διάφορες κρίσιμες θαλάσσιες περιοχές ανά την Ευρώπη. Ύστερα από το ατύχημα της 13ης Ιανουαρίου 2012, ο EMSA ενέργησε ώστε ένα από τα πλήρως εξοπλισμένα σκάφη του για αντιμετώπιση πετρελαιοκηλίδων, καθώς και ένα εφεδρικό σκάφος, να συμβάλουν στην άντληση των καυσίμων πλοίου που περιέχονται στο κρουαζιερόπλοιο Costa Concordia.

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι η επιχείρηση για την άντληση των περίπου 2 300 τόνων καυσίμων από το ναυάγιο του πλοίου, η οποία διεξάγεται υπό την ευθύνη της ίδιας της ναυτιλιακής εταιρείας, άρχισε στις 12 Φεβρουαρίου 2012 και είναι πιθανό να διαρκέσει αρκετές εβδομάδες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000606/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Maritime disaster in Italy

Corrado Clini, the Minister for the Environment, is to declare a state of emergency in the area surrounding the stricken Concordia cruise ship, thereby allowing the release of state funds to avert an environmental disaster. 29 persons are still missing.

According to Mr Clini, fluids have started to leak from the cruise ship. It has not yet been determined whether these fluids are fuel but protective screens are to be installed. According to information obtained from the Italian coast guard, experts flown in a helicopter above the site of the shipwrecked Concordia cruise ship have detected signs of oil slicks slowly starting to form around the ship.

Can the Commission indicate whether action can be taken to avoid environmental pollution in the area concerned?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2012)

Following the Costa Concordia accident, reports received from the Italian Authorities indicated that the pollution risk appeared limited and that appropriate response measures were put in place while the priority was given to the search and rescue operations. These measures included surrounding the ship with floating barriers to mitigate potential pollution and initiating a plan for the removal of the fuel from the ships tanks. Decision 2007/779/EC has established a Mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation between the Union and the Member States in civil protection assistance intervention, which can be activated also in case of accidental marine pollution at the request of the Member State(s) concerned. Furthermore, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has among its tasks the obligation to provide Member States with additional anti-pollution means, topping up their pollution response mechanisms. The Agency currently maintains contracts for 16 fully equipped stand-by oil spill response vessels, stationed in various critical sea areas around Europe. Following the accident of 13 January 2012 EMSA has made it possible that one of their fully equipped and one back-up oil spill response vessels are assisting in the evacuation of the bunker fuels on board of the Costa Concordia cruise liner.

The Commission understands that the operation for the removal of about 2.300 tonnes of fuel from the ship wreck, which is taking place under the responsibility of the shipping company itself, started on 12 February 2012 and is likely to last for several weeks.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000607/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(26 Ιανουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: CDS και κερδοσκοπία

Χρέος ύψους 10 δισ. ευρώ βρίσκεται στα χέρια ξένων hedge funds που απειλούν την Ελλάδα με μη αποδοχή του PSI για να εκμεταλλευτούν τα CDS σε περίπτωση πτώχευσης. Ταυτόχρονα υπάρχουν και hedge funds που κινούνται προς την κατεύθυνση της αναζήτησης φθηνών ελληνικών ομολόγων σε περίπτωση που σωθεί η χώρα. Πάντως υπάρχουν και μεγάλα hedge funds με ενεργητικά δισεκατομμυρίων που ακολουθούν και τις δύο τάσεις, αγοράζοντας φθηνά ελληνικά ομόλογα βραχυπρόθεσμης λήξης (μέσα στο 2012) από τη δευτερογενή αγορά και ταυτόχρονα εμπλουτίζουν το «χρηματοοικονομικό τους οπλοστάσιο» με CDS's. Μονά ή ζυγά, κάποιοι θα βγάλουν πολλά λεφτά από την ελληνική κρίση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή πως μπορούν να χτυπηθούν οι κερδοσκόποι οι οποίοι θησαυρίζουν από αυτή την κατάσταση.

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή έχει λάβει μέτρα για την ενίσχυση της διαφάνειας και τη λειτουργία των συμφωνιών ανταλλαγής χρεογράφων με κάλυψη κατά του κινδύνου μη πληρωμής της πίστωσης (Credit Default Swaps (CDS)), με την πρότασή της για κανονισμό όσον αφορά τις ανοικτές πωλήσεις και ορισμένες πτυχές των CDS, ο οποίος θα εγκριθεί από το Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο τον Μάρτιο του 2012 και προβλέπει την απαγόρευση ακάλυπτων κυρίαρχων CDS.

Για περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στις απαντήσεις της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-012213/2011 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000607/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Speculation with credit default swaps

Foreign hedge funds currently holding EUR 10 billion of debt are threatening Greece with non-acceptance of the Private Sector Initiative with a view to capitalising on credit default swaps in the event of insolvency. Hedge funds are also on the lookout for cheap Greek bonds should the country be saved from disaster. Some of the larger hedge funds holding assets worth billions are keeping both options open, purchasing cheap Greek short-term bonds (maturing in 2012) on the secondary market while at the same time adding credit default swaps to their 'financial arsenals'. One way or another there are those who will make a great deal of money out of the crisis afflicting Greece.

In the Commission's view what action can be taken to curb speculators who are making a fortune from the crisis?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The Commission has taken steps to enhance the transparency and functioning of Credit Default Swaps (CDS) markets through its proposal for a regulation on short selling and certain aspects of CDS, which will be adopted by the Parliament and Council in March 2012 and includes a ban on uncovered sovereign CDS.

For more details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Question E-012213/2011 ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000608/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(26 de janeiro de 2012)

Assunto: Empréstimos concedidos a Portugal pelo Banco Europeu de Investimento (BEI)

Tendo em conta que:

— Os acionistas do Banco Europeu de Investimento (BEI) são os 27 países da União Europeia. O BEI levanta dinheiro nos mercados de capitais e empresta-o a taxas de juro reduzidas para financiar projetos relacionados com o melhoramento das infraestruturas, o aprovisionamento energético ou as normas ambientais, tanto na Europa como nos países vizinhos ou nos países em desenvolvimento.

— Portugal tem vindo a recorrer a sucessivos empréstimos do BEI, tendo como principal objetivo dinamizar a implementação do Quadro de Referência Estratégica Nacional (QREN);

— Foi assinado um contrato de financiamento de 1 500 milhões de euros entre Portugal e o BEI, tendo a primeira tranche, no valor de 450 milhões de euros, sido utilizada para financiar investimentos importantes no país, cofinanciados por fundos da União Europeia (UE);

— A segunda tranche, no valor de 1 050 milhões de euros, destina-se a financiar as empresas que possuem operações aprovadas no Quadro de Referência Estratégico nacional (QREN);

— Segundo o documento aprovado no Conselho Económico e Social de Portugal, intitulado «Compromisso para o Crescimento, Competitividade e Emprego», será concedido um «Apoio ao investimento produtivo no âmbito do QREN com uma linha BEI-IP no valor de 1 000 milhões de euros»;

— O Governo português quer assim colocar à disposição das empresas novas linhas de financiamento com vista a permitir uma crescente internacionalização dos seus produtos e desenvolvimento de projetos aprovados no QREN.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Dos empréstimos atualmente concedidos pelo BEI a Portugal, qual o valor, objetivo e data de pagamento de cada um dos empréstimos em causa?

2. Tem conhecimento de mais algum empréstimo solicitado pelo Governo português com vista a apoiar o melhoramento das infraestruturas ou novos projetos na área da energia ou ambiente?

3. Como poderá Portugal maximizar a utilização dos empréstimos já concedidos no intuito de dinamizar o crescimento económico?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(28 de fevereiro de 2012)

Em setembro de 2010, o Conselho de Administração do Banco Europeu de Investimento (BEI) aprovou a concessão a Portugal de um montante máximo de 1 500 milhões de euros destinado à contribuição nacional para o financiamento de projetos beneficiários dos fundos estruturais, no contexto do QREN; esse montante, que constitui o «mecanismo de cofinanciamento da UE (2007/2013)» para Portugal, é a seguir designado por «mecanismo».

Em novembro de 2010, foi aprovada e concedida a primeira parcela, no montante de 450 milhões de euros. No último trimestre de 2011, as autoridades portuguesas apresentaram ao BEI provas da utilização do montante em causa para investimentos elegíveis. De modo geral, os projetos de investimento de capital de pequena ou média envergadura, promovidos por entidades dos setores público e privado, que são elegíveis para apoio ao abrigo de diversos programas operacionais do QREN são também elegíveis para financiamento ao abrigo do mecanismo.

Em dezembro de 2011, foi aprovada a segunda parcela, no montante de 600 milhões de euros, para concessão e atribuição em 2012. Assim, do montante inicial, permanece disponível um saldo de 450 milhões de euros.

O governo português não apresentou ao BEI qualquer novo pedido de empréstimo.

O seguinte endereço contém dados pormenorizados e informações aprofundadas sobre as operações do BEI respeitantes a Portugal:

http://www.eib.org/projects/loans/regions/european-union/pt.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000608/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(26 January 2012)

Subject: Loans granted to Portugal by the European Investment Bank (EIB)

Given that:

— the shareholders of the European Investment Bank (EIB) are the EU's 27 Member States, and that the EIB raises money in the capital markets and lends it at low interest rates in order to finance projects related to the improvement of infrastructures, energy supply and environmental standards, in Europe and in neighbouring countries and developing countries;

— Portugal obtained successive loans from the EIB, mostly intended to stimulate implementation of its National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF);

— a EUR 1 500 million financing contract was concluded between Portugal and the EIB, under which the first tranche, to the value of EUR 450 million, was used to finance key investments in the country, co-financed from EU funds;

— the second tranche, to the value of EUR 1 050 million, is to be used to finance companies whose operations fall under the NSRF;

— a document approved by the Economic and Social Council of Portugal entitled 'Commitment to growth, competitiveness and employment' refers to the granting of 'aid for productive investment within the scope of the NSRF with a EIB-PI credit line to the sum of EUR 1 000 million';

— the Portuguese Government therefore wishes to place new funding lines at the disposal of companies with a view to greater internationalisation of their products and development projects falling under the NSRF,

can the Commission state:

1. regarding the loans already granted by the EIB to Portugal, the amount, purpose and payment date of each;

2. whether it is aware of any other loan requested by the Portuguese Government with a view to funding improvement of infrastructures or new projects in the fields of energy or the environment;

3. to what extent it believes Portugal can make maximum use of the loans already granted so as to boost growth?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2012)

In September 2010, the Board of Directors of the European Investment Bank (EIB) approved financing for up to EUR 1 500 million to be provided to Portugal for the purpose of funding the national contribution to the financing of projects that benefit from Structural Funds in the context of the NSRF, the so-called 'EU Funds Co-financing 2007-2013 (PT)' facility, herein the Facility.

In November 2010, a first tranche of the Facility was signed and disbursed for EUR 450 million. In the last quarter of 2011, the Portuguese authorities provided the EIB with evidence of the allocation of such a tranche to eligible investments. Normally, small-/medium-sized capital investment projects, undertaken by entities of the public and private sectors, eligible for support by several Operational Programmes of the NSRF, are also eligible for funding through the Facility.

In December 2011, a second tranche was signed for EUR 600 million with disbursement and allocation expected in 2012. Thus, a balance of EUR 450 million remains available for signature, out of the total amount approved.

No new loan request has been submitted to the EIB by the Portuguese Government.

The following link provides access to extensive data and information about EIB operations in Portugal: http://www.eib.org/projects/loans/regions/european-union/pt.htm