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 115 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002522/12
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Paragraph 3 of Article 136 to apply to the UK

Would the new paragraph 3 of Article 136 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, contained in European Council Decision 2011/199/EU, apply to the United Kingdom as a provision of the EU treaties if that Decision enters force?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(30 March 2012)

The new paragraph 3 added to Article 136 TFEU states that the Member States whose currency is the euro may establish amongst themselves a stability mechanism by which financial assistance may be granted to States in difficulty.

The United Kingdom is not obliged to adopt the euro (Protocol No 15 to the Treaties) and has not notified its intention to do so. Therefore the United Kingdom is not affected by the new provision.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002523/12
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(6 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Finansowanie przez Komisję Międzynarodowego Stowarzyszenia Lesbijek i Gejów (ILGA)

Odpowiedź Komisji na pytanie pisemne E-012149/2011 wydaje się niekompletna i nieścisła, chciałbym więc poruszyć kilka dodatkowych kwestii:

1. Według Komisji wsparcie finansowe udzielone europejskiej sekcji Międzynarodowego Stowarzyszenia Lesbijek, Gejów, Biseksualistów, Osób Transgenderowych i Interseksualnych (ILGA Europe), (które, jak już ustalono, obejmuje niemal 70 % łącznego budżetu organizacji) „przeznaczone jest, między innymi, na podnoszenie świadomości społecznej dotyczącej [praw] wszystkich osób LGBT w Europie (…)". Czy oznacza to, że fundusze są tylko częściowo wykorzystywane w celach wskazanych przez Komisję, i że część z nich wykorzystywana jest do działań, które nie mają nic wspólnego z podnoszeniem „świadomości społecznej dotyczącej [praw] wszystkich osób LGBT"? Czy działania, na które Komisja przeznacza środki, obejmują kampanie na rzecz zmiany przepisów w państwach członkowskich, np. wprowadzenia „małżeństw osób tej samej płci" lub zezwolenia na adopcję dzieci przez osoby homoseksualne?

2. Czy Komisja jest przekonana, że promowanie „małżeństw osób tej samej płci" i adopcji dzieci przez osoby homoseksualne, co do których nie istnieje wspólne stanowisko państw członkowskich, wchodzi w zakres jej kompetencji na mocy art. 19 TFUE?

3. Jeśli Komisja zgadza się, że promowanie małżeństw osób tej samej płci oraz adopcji dzieci przez osoby homoseksualne nie wchodzi w zakres kompetencji UE na mocy art. 19 TFUE, jakie działania podejmie w celu dopilnowania tego, by środki przyznawane na rzecz stowarzyszenia ILGA Europe nie były bezpośrednio ani pośrednio wykorzystywane w tym celu?

4. Na czym polega zgodność finansowania przez Komisję kampanii stowarzyszenia ILGA Europe na rzecz „małżeństw osób tej samej płci" i adopcji dzieci przez osoby homoseksualne z zasadami równości i niedyskryminacji, skoro grupy lobbystyczne prowadzące kampanie przeciwko takim zmianom nie otrzymują porównywalnych środków? Czy Komisja zgadza się, że finansowanie stowarzyszenia ILGA stwarza ryzyko zakłócenia konkurencji politycznej w sprawach wykraczających poza zakres kompetencji UE?

5. Co dyrektywa 2000/78/WE ma wspólnego z pytaniem pisemnym E-012149/2011, skoro przedmiotowe pytanie nie dotyczyło wcale dyskryminacji w kontekście zatrudnienia i wykonywania zawodu?

6. Czy Komisja mogłaby udzielić bardziej precyzyjnej odpowiedzi na pkt 2 i 3 pytania pisemnego E-012149/2011?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(2 maja 2012 r.)

Komisja przypomina, że zasady równości i niedyskryminacji stanowią fundamentalne wartości UE i są zagwarantowane w art. 21 Karty praw podstawowych UE oraz art. 19 TFUE.

Komisja jest zdecydowana zwalczać dyskryminację ze względu na orientację seksualną, wykorzystując uprawnienia przyznane UE na mocy traktatów. W tym względzie Komisja uznaje i w pełni szanuje kompetencje państw członkowskich dotyczące prawa rodzinnego, w tym prawa do zawierania związków małżeńskich i zakładania rodziny.

Rozporządzenie finansowe (art. 108 ust. 1 lit. b)) przewiduje, że Komisja Europejska może przyznawać dotacje, które pokrywają ogólne koszty działalności organizacji nienastawionych na zysk, realizujących cele leżące w ogólnym interesie europejskim, a nie koszty konkretnych, jednostkowych projektów lub kampanii. Cele organizacji ILGA Europe są zgodne z zasadami zawartymi w art. 19 TFUE. Podobnie jak inne organizacje zaangażowane w walkę z dyskryminacją, ILGA Europe otrzymała dotację operacyjną zgodnie z zasadami i procedurami programu PROGRESS, w tym z procedurą komitetową. Każda organizacja, której działalność jest zgodna z tymi zasadami, może również ubiegać się o dotację w ramach odpowiedniego zaproszenia do składania wniosków.

Rolą Komisji jest zapewnianie takiego wsparcia finansowego dla funkcjonowania organizacji beneficjenta, które poprawi jej możliwości organizacyjne i wzmocni umiejętności obrony własnych interesów, tak aby mogła wyrażać obawy i oczekiwania osób narażonych na dyskryminację. Wdrożenie tych działań i odpowiedzialność za ich wyniki należy do beneficjenta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002523/12
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Commission funding for the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA)

The Commission's reply to Written Question E-012149/2011 appears incomplete and lacks precision, thus I would like to raise some follow-up questions:

1. According to the Commission, the financial support provided to the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe) (which, as we have learned in the meantime, covers nearly 70 % of the organisation's total budget) 'covers, among others, raising public awareness about the existing rights of all LGBT people in Europe …'. Does this statement imply that the funding is only partially used for the purposes indicated by the Commission, and that some of the funding is instead used for activities that have nothing to do with 'raising public awareness about the existing rights of all LGBT people'? Do those activities for which the Commission provides funding include campaigns for legislative changes in Member States, such as the introduction of 'same-sex marriage' or the possibility for homosexuals to adopt children?

2. Does the Commission believe that promotion of 'same-sex marriage' and homosexual adoption, on which there is no common ground among Member States, falls within its competence under Article 19 of the TFEU?

3. If the Commission agrees that the promotion of same-sex marriage and homosexual adoption does not fall within the EU competence under Article 19 TFEU, which measures will the Commission take to ensure that funds provided to ILGA-Europe will neither directly nor indirectly be used for that purpose?

4. How does the Commission's financing of ILGA-Europe's campaigns for 'same-sex marriage' and homosexual adoption comply with the principles of equality and non-discrimination, if lobby groups campaigning against such legislative changes do not receive equal funding? Does the Commission agree that the funding provided to ILGA creates a risk of distorting political competition on matters that are outside the EU's competence?

5. What has Directive 2000/78/EC to do with Written Question E-012149/2011, given that that question did not at all refer to any discrimination in the context of employment and occupation?

6. Could the Commission kindly answer with greater precision to points 2 and 3 of Written Question E-012149/2011?

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

The Commission recalls that the principles of equality and non-discrimination are core EU values and are guaranteed by Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and Article 19 of the TFEU.

The Commission is committed to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation to the extent of the powers conferred on the EU by the Treaties. In this regard, the Commission recognises and fully respects the competences of the Member States concerning the family law including the right to marry and found a family.

Moreover, the Financial Regulation (Article108(1)b) provides that the European Commission may award grants which cover the general operating costs of non-profit organisations pursuing an objective of European interest and not specific individual projects or campaigns. ILGA Europe's goals are in line with the principles enshrined in Article 19 of TFEU. Like other networks active in the area of fight against discrimination, ILGA Europe received such an operating grant according to the rules and procedures of the Progress programme, including comitology procedure. Any other organisation complying with these rules may also apply under the relevant call for proposal.

The role of the Commission consists of providing such a financial contribution towards the functioning of the beneficiary organisation, improving the organisational capacity and reinforcing the advocacy skills to voice the concerns and expectations of people exposed to discrimination. The implementation of these activities and the ownership of their results remain with the beneficiary.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-002525/12
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(6 maart 2012)

Betreft: Normering voor windmolens in de stad

Stedelijke wind wordt zwaar onderschat en onderbenut. In een stad zijn er specifieke luchtstromingen, anders dan die op zee of op het platteland, waardoor er ook een specifiek type windmolen vereist is. Het gaat hier om kleinere types, vaak met verticale rotatie-as, die perfect geplaatst kunnen worden waar grote molens niet kunnen staan en zo een uitstekende aanvullende productiebron kunnen vormen.

Ondanks het potentieel komt de markt van stedelijke wind niet voldoende op gang. Belangrijkste oorzaken hiervoor zijn het gebrek aan normering/certificering en regelgeving alsook de terughoudendheid van de vergunnende overheden. Hierdoor blijven de nodige zekerheden en stimulansen uit en is er momenteel een wildgroei aan modellen met verschillende prestaties.

De veiligheid en kwaliteitsvereisten van microturbines (>15m) met een horizontale rotatie-as zijn vastgelegd in de IEC 61400-2 norm.

1. Kan de Commissie duiden wat deze IEC 61400-2 norm in houdt?

2. Welke criteria (veiligheid, vermogen, trilling, geluid …) worden in deze norm bepaald?

3. Is deze norm ook van toepassing voor microturbines met verticale as? Zo nee, wanneer wordt er een vergelijkbare norm opgesteld?

4. Zijn er andere acties die de Commissie gaat ondernemen om het benutten van windenergie in de stad te bevorderen?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(17 april 2012)

Het ontwerp van windturbines valt onder de Richtlijn 2006/42/EG betreffende machines ([1]). Het Europees Comité voor elektrotechnische normalisatie (CENELEC) werkt momenteel aan een Europese geharmoniseerde norm voor windturbines die de essentiële gezondheids- en veiligheidseisen van de richtlijn (EN 50308) zal ondersteunen. Zodra de referentie van deze norm door de Commissie in het Publicatieblad is gepubliceerd, doet toepassing van die norm veronderstellen dat aan de eisen van de richtlijn is voldaan.

De IEC/EN 61400-serie van normen, die de norm IEC/EN 61400-2 inzake kleine windturbines omvat, is door de Internationale Elektrotechnische Commissie (IEC) en CENELEC opgesteld om een antwoord te bieden op de op de behoeften van de producenten van windturbines en hun klanten, zonder dat daarbij wordt verwezen naar de EU-wetgeving.

De Commissie heeft acties voor de uitwisseling van beste praktijken betreffende de integratie van kleine windturbines in een stedelijke omgeving ondersteund (bv. het Wineur-project).

De administratieve procedures, regelgeving en codes met betrekking tot de installatie van dergelijke turbines vallen reeds onder Richtlijn 2009/28/EG inzake hernieuwbare energie ([2]).

De Commissie zal van nabij blijven toekijken op de ontwikkelingen van de technologie en zal, wanneer dat nodig blijkt, maatregelen treffen om belemmeringen uit de weg te ruimen.

([1]) PB 157 van 9.6.2006.
([2]) PB L 140 van 5.6.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002525/12
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Standards for urban wind turbines

Urban wind is seriously underestimated and underutilised. There are specific air currents in urban areas that are different from those at sea or in the countryside, as a result of which a particular type of wind turbine is also required. These are smaller wind turbines, often with a vertical rotational axis, which can perfectly well be placed where large turbines cannot be located and thus can be an excellent additional source of energy generation.

Despite its potential, the urban wind market is not taking off sufficiently. The major reasons for this are the lack of standards/certification and regulation, as well as the reluctance on the part of the authorities responsible for issuing permits. As a result, the necessary certainties and incentives are not created and there is currently a proliferation of models with different capabilities.

The IEC 61400-2 standard contains the safety and quality requirements for micro turbines (>15 metres) with a horizontal rotational axis.

1. Can the Commission explain what this IEC 61400-2 standard means?

2. Which criteria (safety, power rating, vibration, noise, …) are specified in this standard?

3. Does this standard also apply to micro turbines with a vertical axis? If not, when will a comparable standard be drawn up?

4. Are there other steps that the Commission is going to undertake in order to promote the utilisation of wind energy in urban areas?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The design of wind turbines is subject to the Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC ([1]). A European harmonised standard for wind turbines supporting the essential health and safety requirements of the directive (EN 50308) is currently under preparation by the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CENELEC). Once the reference of this standard is published by the Commission in the Official Journal, its application will confer a presumption of conformity with the directive.

The IEC/EN 61400 series of standards, which includes standard IEC/EN 61400-2 on small wind turbines, has been developed by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and CENELEC in response to the needs of wind turbine manufacturers and their customers, without reference to EU legislation.

The Commission has supported actions for the exchange of best practices concerning the integration of small wind turbines in the urban environment (e.g. Wineur project).

The administrative procedures, regulation and codes related to the installation of the turbines are already covered under the renewable energy Directive 2009/28/EC ([2]).

The Commission will continue to closely monitor the developments of technology and, when necessary, intervene to remove barriers.

([1]) OJ L 157, 9.6.2006.
([2]) OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-002526/12
до Съвета
Димитър Стоянов (NI)
(6 март 2012 г.)

Относно: Съхраняване на пари и други активи, принадлежащи на авторитарни режими и техните диктатори на територията на ЕС

С оглед постигане на целите на Общата външна политика и политика на сигурност (ОВППС), установени в член 21 от ДЕС, които включват опазване на мира, укрепване на международната сигурност, зачитане на правата на човека, утвърждаване и укрепване на демокрацията и принципите на международното право, ЕС налага санкции или ограничителни мерки самостоятелно или в изпълнение на задължителни резолюции на Съвета за сигурност на Организацията на обединените нации. Въпреки това в публичното пространство има данни за редица авторитарни лидери, притежаващи активи в ЕС. Твърди се, че починалият севернокорейски лидер Ким Чен Ир, Кадафи, суданският президент Омар ал Башир и др. държат активи в размер на милиарди евро в европейски банки. Налагането на санкции на диктаторите, от една страна, и позволяването им да укриват натрупаните от тях богатства в ЕС, от друга, има негативно влияние върху европейската външна политика. В тази връзка на 02.02.2012 г. Европейският парламент прие препоръка до Съвета относно последователна политика по отношение на авторитарните режими, спрямо които ЕС прилага ограничителни мерки, когато техните ръководители упражняват своите лични и търговски интереси в рамките на ЕС.

Предвид изложеното се обръщам към Вас със следните въпроси:

1. Какви мерки смята да предприеме Съветът с оглед приетата от Европейския парламент препоръка за изграждане на по-ефикасна и последователна политика на санкции?

2. Смята ли Съветът да ангажира състав „Санкции“ на работната група на съветниците по външни отношения (RELEX/Санкции) да даде оценка относно прилагането и изпълнението на ограничителни мерки, и по-специално на появилите се в публичното пространство факти за съхраняване на пари и други активи на диктатори в ЕС и, ако да, кога ще бъдат докладвани на Европейския парламент направените констатации?

Отговор
(30 април 2012 г.)

Миналата година Съветът прие ограничителни мерки срещу редица държави/режими, а именно Тунис, Египет, Либия и Сирия. Ограничителните мерки бяха своевременен отговор на събитията, развиващи се в южните съседи на Европа. Съветът следи постоянно обстановката в режимите с наложени санкции с оглед адаптирането им спрямо евентуално положително или отрицателно развитие в съответните държави. Във връзка с това санкциите срещу Иран бяха засилени поради липсата на напредък по отношение на дейностите на Иран, свързани с разпространение на ядрено оръжие, и нарушенията на правата на човека, а санкциите срещу Беларус също бяха засилени в отговор на продължаващите нарушения на правата на човека в тази държава. За разлика от тези случаи обаче Съветът изрази задоволство от подобрението на политическата обстановка в Кот д'Ивоар и Бирма/Мианмар, като прекрати ограничителните мерки срещу определени лица.

Съветът не разчита на информацията от публичното пространство, когато взема решения или прави оценка на прилагането и изпълнението на ограничителните мерки. Свързаната с ограничителните мерки информация се събира от компетентните органи на държавите членки и се обменя пряко между тях и Комисията или посредством подготвителните органи на Съвета. Съгласно член 215 от Договора за функционирането на Европейския съюз, Европейският парламент е информиран за приемането на правните актове на основанието на този член.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002526/12
to the Council
Dimitar Stoyanov (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Holding within EU borders of money and other assets belonging to authoritarian regimes and dictators

With a view to achieving the objectives of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) set out in Article 21 TEU, which include peacekeeping, strengthening international security, respect for human rights, establishing and strengthening democracy and the principles of international law, the EU imposes sanctions or restrictions that are either stand-alone or fulfil the binding resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council. However, there is evidence in the public domain to suggest that a number of authoritarian leaders possess assets in the EU. There are claims that the late North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il, Gaddafi and the Sudanese president Omar Al-Bashir, among others, hold assets amounting to billions of euro in European banks. Imposing sanctions on the dictators, on the one hand, and allowing them to conceal their accumulated wealth within the EU, on the other hand, negatively affects European foreign policy. In regard to this, on 2 February 2012, the European Parliament adopted a recommendation to the Council on a consistent policy towards regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures, when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests within EU borders.

On the basis of the above, can the Council answer the following questions:

1. What measures does the Council intend to take with regard to the recommendation adopted by the European Parliament aimed at establishing a more efficient and consistent sanctions policy?

2. Does the Council intend to ask the 'Sanctions' team of the Working Party of Foreign Relations Counsellors (RELEX/Sanctions) to evaluate the implementation and enforcement of restrictive measures and, more specifically, the information now in the public domain concerning the holding of dictators' money and other assets within the territory of the EU and, if so, when will a report on these findings be forwarded to the European Parliament?

Reply
(30 April 2012)

Last year, the Council adopted new restrictive measures against several countries/regimes, namely Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria. Those restrictive measures were a prompt response to the unfolding events in Europe's southern neighbourhood. The Council keeps all sanctions regimes under constant review with a view to adapting them in the light of any positive or negative developments in the countries concerned. In this context, sanctions against Iran were strengthened in response to a lack of progress on Iran's nuclear proliferation activities and human rights abuses, and the sanctions against Belarus were also strengthened in response to continuing human rights abuses in that country. By contrast, the Council has welcomed the improvement of the political situation in Côte d'Ivoire and Burma/Myanmar by lifting the restrictive measures against certain individuals.

The Council does not rely on information in the public domain when deciding or assessing the implementation and enforcement of restrictive measures. Information related to restrictive measures is collected by the Member States' competent authorities and directly exchanged among themselves and the Commission, or through the preparatory bodies of the Council. Pursuant to Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Parliament is informed of the adoption of legal acts based on that Article.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002527/12
a la Comisión
Andres Perello Rodriguez (S&D)
(6 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Incumplimiento de los objetivos 2020 por parte del Gobierno de España en materia de energías renovables

El pasado mes de febrero el Gobierno español presentó y aprobó un real decreto-ley por el que suspende el pago de primas a las nuevas instalaciones de energía renovable. Dicho recorte, argumentado por el gobierno como una medida necesaria para ajustar el presupuesto nacional a los objetivos de déficit marcados por la UE, muestra que las prioridades de la administración actual española para los recortes presupuestarios (renovables, investigación, protección del medio ambiente) no se corresponden, una vez más, con los instrumentos que, en el marco de la estrategia 2020, está empleando la UE para precisamente salir de la crisis (sostenibilidad, I+D+i, etc.).

Se ha de tener en cuenta que España había conseguido importantes objetivos en renovables, como ser líder en energía termosolar, tercera potencia eólica mundial y cuarto país del mundo en energía fotovoltaica, además de generar gracias a este sector cerca de 50 000 empleos:

¿No debería la Comisión recomendar a los Estados miembros que, en el momento de elaborar los ajustes presupuestarios necesarios, se ciñan a las prioridades decretadas por la Unión Europea, especialmente por lo que respecta a la Estrategia 2020 y sus iniciativas emblemáticas?

¿Considera la Comisión que el decreto aprobado podría estar en contradicción con la Directiva 2009/28 relativa al fomento del uso de la energía procedente de fuentes renovables?

¿No cree que, dado el porcentaje que ha conseguido alcanzar España en el uso de energía de fuentes renovables (35 % de la electricidad generada en 2010) podría verse seriamente comprometida la aplicación de legislación comunitaria fundamental, como es el caso de la Directiva 2010/31 sobre eficiencia energética de los edificios?

Si la Comisión está convencida de que la mejor salida a la actual crisis económica pasa por la inversión y la creación de empleo en renovables, I+D+i y en un nuevo modelo productivo basado en la sostenibilidad, ¿cómo piensa la Comisión interceder ante los diferentes Estados miembros para que los sectores mejor preparados para ayudar a alcanzar dichos objetivos no sean lo que contradictoriamente sufren los mayores recortes presupuestarios en los presupuestos nacionales?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión considera que el sector de las energías renovables es un sector estratégico clave para el desarrollo económico y social de Europa.

Aunque reconoce que España está afrontando importantes restricciones presupuestarias y se encuentra por encima de la trayectoria para lograr su objetivo nacional vinculante de consumir un 20 % de energía procedente de fuentes renovables de aquí a 2020, la Comisión considera que las reformas de los regímenes de apoyo deben emprenderse siguiendo las mejores prácticas europeas y deben procurar minimizar las perturbaciones y la confusión para los inversores y los operadores del mercado.

El objetivo de la Directiva sobre fuentes de energías renovables ([1]) es que estas energías representen una parte significativa del consumo de energía final, lo que implica que la eficiencia energética y las economías de energía también son esenciales para determinar el objetivo. Uno de los principales instrumentos para lograr economías de energía es la Directiva relativa a la eficiencia energética de los edificios, que, entre otras cosas, establece para todos los edificios nuevos la obligación de convertirse de aquí a 2020 en edificios con un consumo energético neto próximo a cero, y para el resto del consumo de energía la obligación de cubrirse en gran medida con fuentes renovables. Desde este punto de vista, la Comisión estima que una aplicación plena y rápida de la Directiva relativa a la eficiencia energética de los edificios facilitará el logro rentable del objetivo que se ha fijado España para las energías renovables.

([1]) Directiva 2009/28/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de abril de 2009, relativa al fomento del uso de energía procedente de fuentes renovables y por la que se modifican y se derogan las Directivas 2001/77/CE y 2003/30/CE, DO L 140 de 5.6.2009.

En este contexto, la Comisión supervisa continuamente la aplicación de las Directivas sobre energías renovables y sobre eficiencia energética de los edificios en los Estados miembros, con vistas a determinar si son necesarias nuevas acciones a nivel de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002527/12
to the Commission
Andres Perello Rodriguez (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Failure by the Spanish Government to respect the 2020 objectives in the field of renewable energy

In February, the Spanish Government tabled and adopted a royal decree-law suspending the payment of premiums to new renewable energy facilities. This cut, which the government claims is needed to bring the national budget into line with the deficit objectives set by the EU, demonstrates that the priorities of the current Spanish Administration as regards budget cuts (renewable energy, research, environmental protection) are once again at odds with the instruments that the EU is using under the 2020 strategy precisely to escape from the crisis (sustainability, R & D&I, etc.).

It should be noted that Spain has made significant progress in the field of renewable energy and is now the world leader in the solar thermal energy sector, third in the world for wind power and fourth in the world for photovoltaic energy, in addition to having created almost 50 000 jobs in this sector.

Should the Commission not recommend to the Member States that, when making adjustments to their budgets, they adhere to the priorities laid down by the European Union, especially as regards the 2020 strategy and its key initiatives?

Does the Commission not consider that the approved decree might run counter to Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources?

Does the Commission agree that, given the percentage use of energy from renewable sources that Spain has managed to achieve (35 % of the electricity generated in 2010), the application of basic EU legislation could be seriously compromised, as in the case of Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings?

If the Commission is convinced that the best way out of the current economic crisis is through investment and the creation of jobs in renewable energy, R & D&I and a new production model based on sustainability, how does it intend to intervene in the various Member States to ensure that the sectors best able to help achieve these objectives are not, somewhat perversely, subject to the biggest cuts under the national budgets?

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

The Commission considers renewable energy to be a key strategic sector for Europe's economic and social development.

While acknowledging that Spain is facing major fiscal constraints and that it is above the trajectory for achieving its binding national target of 20 % renewable energy by 2020, the Commission considers that reforms of support schemes must be undertaken following best practice across Europe and should strive to minimise disruption and confusion to the investors and market players..

The RES Directive ([1]) target is a share of final energy consumption which implies that energy efficiency and savings are also crucial for determining the target. One of the key instruments for achieving energy savings is Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings, which *inter alia* puts in place a requirement for all new buildings to be nearly zero-energy buildings by the end of 2020, and for the remaining energy use to be covered to a significant extent by renewable energy sources. From this perspective, the Commission believes that the full and swift implementation of the directive on Energy Performance of Buildings will facilitate the cost-effective achievement of the Spanish national renewable energy target.

In this context, the Commission is continuously monitoring the implementation of the Renewable Energy and Energy Performance of Buildings Directives in Member States with a view to considering if any further action at EU level is necessary.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002528/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(6. marts 2012)

Om: Vandrammedirektivet (2000/60/EF)

I henhold til vandrammedirektivet (2000/60/EF) skal medlemsstaterne indmelde klassificering af vandløb til Kommissionen.

Er det muligt for de nationale regeringer at ændre klassificeringen af de indmeldte vandløb, såfremt der foreligger faglige og saglige begrundelser herfor, og kan Kommissionen i bekræftende fald give eksempler på sådanne begrundelser?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(26. april 2012)

Vandrammedirektivets ([1]) mål er at opnå en god tilstand for alle vandområder inden 2015. Definitionerne af god tilstand for overfladevand og grundvand er fastlagt i vandrammedirektivets artikel 2, stk. 17 til 28, og bilag V. Definitionerne er gjort operationelle i en række andre retsakter, som supplerer vandrammedirektivet (grundvandsdirektivet ([2]), direktivet om miljøkvalitetskrav ([3]) og Kommissionens beslutning om resultat af interkalibreringen ([4])).

Medlemsstaterne skal udvikle overvågnings- og klassifikationssystemer (vandrammedirektivets artikel 8) i overensstemmelse med disse definitioner og bestemmelser. Vandområdeplanerne (vandrammedirektivets bilag VII), med angivelse af vandområdernes tilstand, skulle vedtages i december 2009 og indberettes til Kommissionen senest i marts 2010.

Hvis der efter vedtagelsen af vandområdeplanen fremkommer nye oplysninger, som viser, at vandets tilstand er ringere end forventet, skal medlemsstaterne træffe supplerende foranstaltninger i henhold til vandrammedirektivets artikel 11, stk. 5), for at sikre, at direktivets mål opfyldes. Hvis de nye oplysninger medfører betydelige ændringer i de programmerede foranstaltninger, skal bestemmelserne i vandrammedirektivets artikel 14 om offentlig høring anvendes.

Den ajourførte vandområdeplan, der skal vedtages i 2015 (vandrammedirektivets artikel 13, stk. 7), skal indeholde ajourførte oplysninger om vandområdernes tilstand.

([1]) Direktiv 2000/60/EF, EUT L 327 af 22.12.2000.
([2]) Direktiv 2006/118/EF, EUT L 372 af 27.12.2006.
([3]) Direktiv 2008/105/EF, EUT L 348 af 24.12.2008.
([4]) Kommissionens beslutning 2008/915/EF, EUT L 332 af 10.12.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002528/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

In accordance with the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), Member States must report the classification of watercourses to the Commission.

Is it possible for national governments to alter the classification of the reported watercourses if there are technical and factual reasons for doing so, and if so, can the Commission provide examples of such reasons?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Water Framework Directive ([1]) (WFD) establishes the objective of achieving good status of all water bodies by 2015. The definitions of good status for surface and groundwater are included in WFD Article 2, paragraphs 17 to 28, and Annex V. These definitions have been made operational in a number of other legal instruments that supplement the WFD (the Groundwater Directive ([2]), the Environmental Quality Standards Directive ([3]) and the Commission Decision on the Intercalibration results ([4])).

Member States have to develop monitoring and classification systems (WFD Article 8) according to these definitions and provisions. River basin management plans (WFD Annex VII), including the status of the water, had to be adopted by December 2009 and reported to the Commission by March 2010.

Should new information indicating that the water status is lower than expected become available after the adoption of the river basin management plan, Member States should take additional measures according to Article 11(5) of the WFD in order to ensure that the objectives of the directive are achieved. In case the new information leads to substantial changes in the programme of measures, the provisions of WFD Article 14 on public consultation would apply.

Updated information on status of water bodies has to be included in the updated river basin management plan to be adopted in 2015 (WFD Article 13(7)).

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([2]) Directive 2006/118/EC, OJ L 372, 27.12.2006.
([3]) Directive 2008/105/EC, OJ L 348, 24.12.2008.
([4]) Commission Decision 2008/915/EC, OJ L 332, 10.12.2008.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002529/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: Arbeitszeitenrichtlinie — Auswirkungen auf ehrenamtliche Tätigkeiten

Die EU-Arbeitszeitrichtlinie besagt unter anderem, dass Arbeitnehmer in der EU ab 2013 nicht mehr als 48 Stunden pro Woche arbeiten dürfen. Dies beträfe ebenso ehrenamtliche Tätigkeiten, wie zum Beispiel freiwillige Feuerwehren. Die Rechtsprechung des EuGH hat mit Nachdruck deutlich gemacht, dass Bereitschaftsdienst und Arbeitsbereitschaft als Arbeitszeit gelten. Unmittelbar im Anschluss an eine Arbeitsphase mit Arbeitszeit/Arbeitsbereitschaft/Bereitschaftsdienst muss sich die tägliche Mindestruhezeit in der Höhe von 11 Stunden anschließen.

Diese Richtlinie lässt die Alarmglocken von Freiwilligen-Organisationen schrillen, dürften ihre ehrenamtlichen Mitglieder somit ihre Diensteinsätze nicht mehr legal durchführen. Das ehrenamtliche System in Österreich würde zusammenbrechen.

1. Gibt es bezüglich dieser Richtlinie Ausnahmen für gewisse Berufsstände?

2. Wenn ja, welche Berufsgruppen sind davon betroffen?

3. Werden Sonderregelungen für Mitglieder freiwilliger Hilfsorganisationen geschaffen?

4. Wenn ja, wie sehen diese aus?

5. Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2012)

Grundsätzlich gilt die Arbeitszeitrichtlinie ([1]) ausnahmslos für alle Berufsstände. Gemäß den Artikeln 20 und 21 der Richtlinie gelten jedoch für bestimmte Personengruppen (Arbeitnehmer an Bord von seegehenden Fischereifahrzeugen, mobile Arbeitnehmer und Arbeitnehmer auf Offshore-Anlagen) andere Bestimmungen, während bestimmte Berufsstände (z. B. Seeleute, manche Piloten und LKW-Fahrer) von spezifischeren sektoralen Arbeitszeitvorschriften im Sinne von Artikel 14 der genannten Richtlinie erfasst werden.

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftlichen Anfragen P-001521/2012 ([2]) und P-002225/2012 ([3]).

([1]) Richtlinie 2003/88/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 4. November 2003 über bestimmte Aspekte der Arbeitszeitgestaltung, ABl. L 299 vom 18.11.2003, S. 9.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2012-001521&language=EN.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2012-002225&language=DE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002529/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Working Time Directive — implications for voluntary services

The EU Working Time Directive states, among other things, that, from 2013 onwards, workers in the EU may not work more than 48 hours per week. This would also affect voluntary activities, such as the volunteer fire services. The case law of the European Court of Justice has strongly reiterated that stand-by and on-call services are deemed working times. A working phase involving working time/on-call service/stand-by service must be directly followed by the daily minimum rest time of 11 hours.

This directive has set alarm bells ringing among voluntary organisations, as it would prevent their voluntary members from legally performing their duties. The volunteer system in Austria would collapse.

1. Are there any exemptions for particular professions under this directive?

2. If so, what professions are affected?

3. Are special provisions being established for members of volunteer organisations?

4. If so, what are they?

5. If not, then why not?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

'The Working Time Directive' ([1]) does not exempt particular professions: however, different rules apply under Articles 20 and 21 of the directive to certain specific groups (sea fishing workers, mobile workers, offshore workers) while certain professions (e.g. seafarers, some pilots and lorry drivers) are covered instead by more specific sectoral working time directives, as provided by Article 14 of the directive.

On the other issues raised, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions P-001521/2012 ([2]) and P-002225/2012 ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2012-001521&language=EN.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2012-002225+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002530/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: Novellierung der Tabakrichtlinie

Im Juli 2009 beschloss die Europäische Kommission (EK), die derzeit geltende Tabakproduktrichtlinie aus 2001 (TPD 2001/37/EG) zu novellieren. Die geplante Novellierung umfasst die Einschränkung bzw. das völlige Verbot von Zusatzstoffen in Tabakprodukten; das Verbot von Produktwerbung am Verkaufsstandort, d. h. in der Trafik oder am Tabakwarenautomaten, und die Einführung der Einheitspackung und Einheitszigarette (Plain Packaging). Diese Maßnahme soll aller Voraussicht nach 2013 kommen, obwohl zahlreiche Studien belegen, dass mit Verboten dieser Art dem Rauchen bei Jugendlichen und der daraus resultierenden Gesundheitsschädigung keineswegs erfolgreich und nachhaltig begegnet werden kann. Demgegenüber stehen aber eine ganze Reihe von negativen Auswirkungen in den Bereichen Steuern und Abgaben, Markenschutz und Urheberrecht, eingeschränkte Wettbewerbsdifferenzierung, illegale Herstellung von Zigaretten und Schmuggel sowie Verlust von Arbeitsplätzen und Schwächung des Wirtschaftsstandortes Österreich auf der Agenda, wenn diese Maßnahmen eins zu eins umgesetzt werden.

1. Welchen Stand hat die Novellierung der Tabakproduktrichtlinie 2001 derzeit auf den Ebenen der Europäischen Union?

2. Gibt es Mitgliedstaaten, die gegen die Novellierung sind?

3. Wenn ja, aus welchen Gründen?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(3. April 2012)

Die Kommission beabsichtigt, den Legislativvorschlag zur Überarbeitung der Richtlinie 2001/37/EG ([1]) über Tabakerzeugnisse im vierten Quartal 2012 vorzulegen. Derzeit arbeitet sie am Entwurf des Berichts über die Folgenabschätzung, die jedem Legislativvorschlag vorausgehen muss.

Anlässlich der öffentlichen Konsultation im Jahr 2010 hatten alle Akteure, auch die Regierungen der Mitgliedstaaten, die Möglichkeit, zu den verschiedenen Vorschlägen Stellung zu nehmen. Diese Stellungnahmen hat die Kommission auf ihrer Website zusammengefasst und veröffentlicht ([2]). Die offiziellen Standpunkte der Mitgliedstaaten werden bei Beginn der Beratungen im Rat bekannt gegeben, die eröffnet werden, nachdem die Kommission ihren Überarbeitungsvorschlag angenommen hat.

([1]) ABl. L 194 vom 18.7.2001, S. 26.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/consultations/tobacco_cons_01_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002530/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Revision of the Tobacco Products Directive

In July 2009, the Commission decided to revise the Tobacco Products Directive from 2001 (2001/37/EC). The planned revision encompasses restrictions or a complete ban on the use of additives in tobacco products, a ban on product advertising at the point of sale, i.e. in tobacconist's shops or on vending machines, and the introduction of plain packaging and plain cigarettes. These measures are expected to be introduced after 2013, even though many studies show that bans of this kind are not an effective or sustainable way of combating smoking among young people and the resulting damage to health. What is more, if these measures are implemented as they stand they will have a whole series of negative effects in the areas of taxes and duties, the protection of trademarks and copyright, competitive differentiation, the illegal production of cigarettes and cigarette smuggling, in addition to causing job losses and weakening the Austrian economy.

1. What stage has been reached in the process of revising the 2001 Tobacco Products Directive?

2. Are there any Member States which oppose the revision?

3. If so, for what reasons?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Commission plans to submit the legislative proposal for the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive 2001/37/EC ([1]) in the fourth quarter of 2012. The Commission is currently preparing the draft Impact Assessment report, which is a prerequisite for any legislative proposal.

A public consultation in 2010 provided all stakeholders, including Member States' Governments, the opportunity to express their views on a range of proposed options. Such views have been summarised and published on the Commission website ([2]). Member States' official positions will be known once discussions in Council start, following the Commission's adoption of the proposal for revision.

([1]) OJ L194, 18.7.2001, p. 26.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/consultations/tobacco_cons_01_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002531/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: Ressourcenschonender Einsatz mineralischer Rohstoffe

Mineralische Rohstoffe wie Sand, Kies und Schotter stehen geologisch gesehen ausreichend zur Verfügung. Auf vielen Flächen ist ihre Gewinnung jedoch aufgrund von Nutzungskonflikten (z. B. Siedlungsflächen, Grundwasserschutz) schwierig oder gar nicht möglich, weshalb de facto nur ein geringes nutzbares Potenzial verbleibt. Gerade diese Baustoffe sind jedoch unverzichtbar, um Infrastruktur zu errichten und um bestehende Infrastruktur zu erhalten. Eine Entlastung der natürlichen Ressourcen ist beispielsweise durch eine Reduktion der Verwendung der mineralischen Rohstoffe und Wiederverwertung von Baurestmassen möglich. Die EU hat sich diesbezüglich im Rahmen der Strategie Europa 2020 dem sparsamen und effizienten Umgang mit natürlichen Ressourcen verschrieben.

1. Gibt es schon Zwischenberichte, welche (Teil-)Maßnahmen erfolgreich umgesetzt werden konnten und wo Probleme aufgetaucht sind?

2. Bei den Bauresten gibt es ja mineralische Abfälle, Baumischabfälle, Wertstoffe und Problemabfälle, wie z. B. asbesthaltige Baustoffe. Funktioniert diese Trennung in den EU-Staaten, so dass tatsächlich nur wiederverwertbare Bauabfälle beim Recycling landen?

3. Die fachgerechte Entsorgung von Bauschutt gestaltet sich kostenintensiv. Quer durch Europa sind in den letzten Jahren vermehrt Baufirmen aufgetreten, die im großen Stil Sozialabgaben umgehen und bei denen im Bedarfsfall die Firma in den Konkurs geschickt wird. Wurde in diesem Zusammenhang in der EU ein Anstieg illegal entsorgten Bauschutts im größeren Ausmaß verzeichnet?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(27. April 2012)

1. Eine Studie zur Feststellung von Maßnahmen, mit denen sich das Recycling von Bau- und Abbruchabfällen fördern lässt, und in der die Schwierigkeiten einiger Mitgliedstaaten erörtert werden, wurde unter der Internetadresse http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/pdf/2011_CDW_Report.pdf veröffentlicht.

Die Kommission will eine umfassende Untersuchung auf den Weg bringen, mit der u. a. bewertet werden soll, in wieweit die Zielvorgaben für Wiederverwendung, Recycling und sonstige stoffliche Verwertung gemäß Artikel 11 Buchstabe b der Richtlinie 2008/98/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 19. November 2008 über Abfälle ([1]) erreicht wurden. Wie in der Richtlinie vorgesehen, wird die Kommission diese Zielvorgaben bis Ende 2014 überprüfen und dem Parlament und dem Rat einen entsprechenden Bericht übermitteln.

2.-3. Der Kommission liegen keine Anhaltspunkte dafür vor, dass Fälle von illegaler Beseitigung oder von Problemen aufgrund der Vermischung von gefährlichen und ungefährlichen Bau- und Abbruchabfällen wesentlich häufiger auftreten.

([1]) ABl. L 312 vom 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002531/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Resource-efficient use of mineral raw materials

Mineral raw materials such as sand, gravel and rubble are in sufficient supply in geological terms. However, their extraction is difficult or impossible in many areas owing to competing land use requirements (for example in residential areas, or in the context of groundwater protection), which is why the utilisable reserves are in fact very limited. However, these materials are essential for projects to build new and maintain existing infrastructure. The pressure on our natural resources can be eased by reducing the use of mineral raw materials and reusing construction waste. In that connection, the EU has made the sparing and efficient use of natural resources a key element of the Europe 2020 strategy.

1. Have interim reports already been drawn up indicating which (sub-) measures have been successfully implemented and where problems have been encountered?

2. Construction waste includes mineral waste, mixed construction waste, reusable materials and hazardous waste, such as construction materials containing asbestos. Is waste segregation working in the EU Member States, so that only genuinely reusable construction waste is actually sent for recycling?

3. The proper disposal of construction waste is a cost-intensive process. In recent years construction companies have been springing up all over Europe which do everything they can to avoid paying social security contributions and then declare bankruptcy if the need arises. Against this background, is there evidence of a substantial increase in the illegal dumping of construction waste in the EU?

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

1. A study identifying some measures to promote the recycling of construction and demolition waste, as well as difficulties in some Member States has been published under:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/pdf/2011_CDW_Report.pdf

The Commission intends to launch a comprehensive study that will allow assessing, *inter alia*, the re-use, recycling and material recovery target laid down in Article 11(b) of Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste ([1]). As foreseen in the directive, the Commission will examine the targets by the end of 2014 and send a report to the Parliament and to the Council.

2.-3. The Commission has no evidence of a substantial increase in illegal disposal operations or of the existence of implementation problems concerning the mixing of hazardous and non-hazardous construction and demolition waste.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002532/12
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: Remote Forensic Software User Group

Ein Informationsaustausch u. a. zu Aspekten der Online-Durchsuchung erfolgt seit 2008 regelmäßig im Rahmen von Treffen der sogenannten „Remote Forensic Software User Group". In diesem Jahr soll sich die Arbeitsgruppe in Belgien treffen.

1. Ist die Kommission über die Ergebnisse dieser Arbeitsgruppe informiert?

2. Nimmt die Kommission an diesem Treffen teil?

3. Hat die Kommission jemals an einem Treffen dieser Arbeitsgruppe teilgenommen? Falls ja, wann?

4. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber erteilen, ob Europol jemals an diesen Treffen teilgenommen hat?

5. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber erteilen, ob Europol an dem diesjährigen Treffen in Belgien teilnehmen wird?

6. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber erteilen, ob Europol über die Ergebnisse dieser Arbeitsgruppe informiert ist?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2012)

Weder die Europäische Kommission noch Europol sind über die sogenannte „Remote Forensic Software User Group" informiert oder an den Arbeiten dieser Gruppe beteiligt. Daher ist die Antwort auf alle sechs Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten negativ.

Informationen über das Computer-Forensic-Netz, das von Europol unterstützt wird, finden sich im jüngsten Europol-Review oder unter folgender Adresse:
https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/europolreview-en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002532/12
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Remote Forensic Software User Group

Information has been regularly exchanged since 2008 in relation to computer surveillance, as well as other issues, under the auspices of meetings of the 'Remote Forensic Software User Group'. The working group is to meet in Belgium this year.

1. Is the Commission kept informed of the results of this working group?

2. Is the Commission to attend this meeting?

3. Has the Commission ever attended a meeting of this working group? If so, when?

4. Can the Commission say whether Europol has ever attended these meetings?

5. Can the Commission say whether Europol is to attend this year's meeting in Belgium?

6. Can the Commission say whether Europol is kept informed of the results of this working group?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

Neither the European Commission nor Europol have been aware or involved in the work of the Remote Forensic Software User Group, and therefore the Commission's reply to all six questions posed by the Honourable Member is negative.

Information about Computer Forensic Network supported by Europol can be found in the latest Europol Review, or at the following address:
https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/europolreview-en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002534/12
to the Council
Mary Honeyball (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Russian ban on trade in harp seal skins

The Customs Union between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia has recently prohibited the import and export of harp seal skins. This decision follows the European Union's own decision to ban commercial seal product trade.

Given that Canada claims Russia was one of the largest remaining markets for seal products, Moscow's decision is of great importance and will have a significant impact on the commercial sealing industry. Two years ago, Russia also prohibited the commercial slaughter of harp seals under one year of age.

Does the Council intend officially to congratulate the Russian Federation on its bold step to ban the trade in harp seal products?

Reply
(14 May 2012)

The Council has not discussed the issue.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002535/12
to the Commission
Mary Honeyball (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Russian ban on trade in harp seal skins

The Customs Union between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia recently prohibited the import and export of harp seal skins. This decision follows the European Union's own decision to ban commercial seal product trade.

Given that Canada claims that Russia was one of the largest remaining markets for seal products, Moscow's decision is of great importance and will have a significant impact on the commercial sealing industry. Two years ago, Russia also prohibited the commercial slaughter of harp seals under one year of age.

Does the Commission intend officially to congratulate the Russian Federation on its bold step to ban the trade in harp seal products?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission notes that the Customs Union between Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation now prohibits the import and export of harp seal skins which presumably reflects their concerns with regard to trade in seal products.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002536/12
to the Commission
Mary Honeyball (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Protection of European cultural heritage aid to struggling cultural institutions

It has recently been announced that Twickenham Studios is going to be closed for financial reasons.

This studio has a long and illustrious history; it was used by the Beatles to film 'A Hard Days Night' and 'Help', as well as by Ridley Scott in the making of 'Blade Runner'.

At a time when the film industry across Europe is struggling to compete with imports from the United States, it seems that we should be doing all we can to protect institutions such as Twickenham Studios.

What can the Commission do to help studios like Twickenham so that we can continue to make great films in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The MEDIA programme is the European Union's support programme for the European audiovisual industry. It co-finances training initiatives for audiovisual industry professionals, the development of production projects (feature films, television drama, documentaries, animation and new media), as well as the promotion of European audiovisual works. Infrastructure projects are covered by the European Union's Structural Funds. The detailed management of programmes which receive support from the Structural Funds is the responsibility of the Member States. For every programme, they designate a managing authority (at national, regional or another level) which will inform potential beneficiaries, select the projects and monitor implementation. Details for what possibilities might be available via the Structural Funds in the UK can be obtained from the following website: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/regional/european-structural-funds/index.html

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002537/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Louis Grech (S&D)
(6 ta' Marzu 2012)

Suġġett: Servizzi Bankarji

Ir-riżultati ta' Studju tas-Suq tal-Konsumatur ippubblikat fl-aħħar ta' Frar 2012 żvelaw li iżjed minn żewġ terzi ta' xerrejja anonimi (mystery shoppers) ma kinux kapaċi li jaqilbu l-kont bankarju tagħhom b'suċċess.

Il-konklużjonijiet urew b'mod ċar li l-inizjattiva ta' awtoregolazzjoni bbażata fuq prinċipji komuni, kif stabbiliti mill-Kumitat tas-Settur Bankarju (EBIC) ma tax lill-konsumaturi tagħna ċ-ċarezza u ċ-ċertezza li konna ttamajna għaliha.

Fil-fehma tal-Kummissjoni:

1. X'kienu n-nuqqasijiet ewlenin?

2. X'azzjoni konkreta, li se tibni wkoll fuq il-ħidma mwettqa diġà mill-EBIC, il-Kummissjoni tqis bħala fattibbli?

L-istudju tal-Kummissjoni: "Is-Suq Uniku mil-lenti tan-nies: Ħarsa ġenerika tal-20 ħassib ewlieni taċ-ċittadini u n-negozji", ippubblikat fl-2011 jagħti l-informazzjoni li ġejja. Meta jsiefru, il-konsumaturi u ċ-ċittadini jesperjenzaw diffikultajiet meta jiftħu kont bankarju fil-pajjiż ospitanti ġdid tagħhom, peress li dan l-eżerċizzju spiss hu suġġett għal kundizzjonijiet ta' residenza u/jew impjieg.

Il-Kummissjoni ħadet passi biex tindirizza din il-kwistjoni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Dalli f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' April 2012)

L-istudju mwettaq għall-Kummissjoni jikkonkludi li l-inizjattiva ta' awtoregolazzjoni bbażata fuq Prinċipji Komuni, kif stabbilita mill-Kumitat għall-Industrija Bankarja Ewropea (European Banking Industry Committee — EBIC), ma rnexxiliex issostni u tipproteġi lill-konsumaturi Ewropej meta jaqilbu kont bankarju minn bank għall-ieħor.

1. In-nuqqasijiet ewlenin identifikati mill-istudju li għalih qed jirreferi l-Onorevoli Membru huma:

— In-nuqqas ta' konformità tal-banek bil-kodiċi ta' awtoregolazzjoni fil-71% tal-każijiet li ġew analizzati;

— Nuqqas ta' informazzjoni, li nstabet li ma kinitx kompluta jew li kienet inkonsistenti, sa ċertu punt minħabba nuqqas ta' sensibilizzazzjoni fost il-persunal tal-banek.

2. Il-Kummissjoni attwalment qed tivvaluta kif wieħed jista' jegħleb bl-aħjar mod tali nuqqasijiet u qed tikkunsidra li tipproponi inizjattiva tal-UE dwar il-kontijiet bankarji bl-għan li ttejjeb il-protezzjoni tal-konsumaturi ta' servizzi finanzjarji għall-konsumatur u l-integrazzjoni tas-Suq Uniku.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni, b'segwitu għar-Rakkomandazzjoni tagħha tat-18 ta' Lulju 2011 dwar l-aċċess għal kont bażiku ta' ħlas ([1]), issa qiegħda timmonitorja l-miżuri stabbiliti fil-livell tal-Istati Membri sabiex jiffaċilitaw l-aċċess għall-kontijiet bankarji, b'mod partikolari fil-pajjiżi tal-UE għajr ir-residenza permanenti tal-konsumatur. Fuq il-bażi tar-riżultati tal-konsultazzjoni pubblika ([2]) u wara n-notifika tal-miżuri nazzjonali b'segwitu tar-Rakkomandazzjoni, hija se tivvaluta jekk humiex meħtieġa aktar miżuri sabiex jingħelbu l-problemi indikati fid-dokumenti ta' ħidma tal-persunal tal-2011 tagħha dwar l-20 ħassib ewlieni taċ-ċittadini u n-negozji fis-Suq Uniku.

([1]) Ir-Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni 2011/442 tat-18 ta' Lulju 2011 (ĠU L 190 tal-21.07.2011).
([2]) Konsultazzjoni pubblika dwar il-kontijiet bankarji, li tnediet fl-20 ta' Marzu 2012 (http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2012/bank_accounts_en.htm jew http://s-sanco-europa/consumers/consultations/consultations_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002537/12
to the Commission
Louis Grech (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Banking services

The results of a consumer market study published at the end of February 2012 revealed that more than two-thirds of mystery shoppers were not able to switch their bank account successfully.

The findings clearly showed that the self-regulation initiative based on common principles, as established by the Banking Industry Committee (EBIC), did not deliver to our consumers the clarity and certainty we had hoped for.

In the opinion of the Commission:

1. What were the main shortcomings?

2. What concrete action — which will also build on the work already carried out by EBIC — does the Commission perceive as feasible?

The Commission's 2011 study 'The Single Market through the lens of the people: A snapshot of citizens' and businesses' 20 main concerns', imparts the following information: When moving abroad, consumers and citizens experience difficulties when opening a bank account in their new host country, since this exercise is often subject to conditions of residence and/or employment.

Has the Commission taken steps to address this issue?

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

The study carried out for the Commission concludes that the self-regulatory initiative based on Common Principles, as established by the European Banking Industry Committee (EBIC), has not been successful in supporting and protecting European consumers when switching a bank account from one bank to another.

1. The main shortcomings identified by the study to which the Honourable Member refers are:

— non-compliance of banks with the self-regulatory code in 71 % of the cases analysed;

— lack of information, which has been demonstrated to be incomplete or inconsistent, in part driven by lack of awareness amongst bank staff.

2. The Commission is currently assessing how best to overcome such shortcomings and is considering bringing forward a EU initiative on bank accounts aiming to enhance protection of consumers of retail financial services and the integration of the single market.

In addition, the Commission, following its recommendation of 18 July 2011 on access to a basic payment account ([1]), is now monitoring the measures in place at Member State level to facilitate access to bank accounts, in particular in EU countries other than the consumer's permanent residence. Based on results of the public consultation ([2]) and on notification of national measures following the recommendation, it will assess whether further measures are needed in order to overcome the problems highlighted in its 2011 staff working paper on citizens' and businesses' 20 main concerns in the single market.

([1]) Commission Recommendation 2011/442 of 18 July 2011 (OJ L 190, 21.7.2011).
([2]) Public consultation on bank accounts, launched on 20 March 2012 (http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2012/bank_accounts_en.htm or http://s-sanco-europa/consumers/consultations/consultations_en.htm).

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002538/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(6. marts 2012)

Om: Det polske formandskabs konklusioner

I det polske formandskabs konklusioner af december 2011 ([1]) opfordres Kommissionen til at »overveje behovet for en bedre anvendelse af eksisterende data og supplerende sammenlignelige data og information om usund livsstil, sociale sundhedsdeterminanter og ikke-overførbare kroniske sygdomme«.

Hvilke eksisterende aktiviteter på dette område er Kommissionen i øjeblikket engageret i, og hvilke foranstaltninger planlægger den at træffe i fremtiden med henblik på at støtte opnåelsen af dette mål?

Hvordan påtænker Kommissionen at sikre »supplerende sammenlignelige data« på nationalt og europæisk plan, hvis de eksisterende data vurderes som utilstrækkelige?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli
(3. april 2012)

Der er blevet udviklet i alt 88 EU-sundhedsindikatorer ([2]) for at skabe et overblik over europæernes helbredstilstand, herunder bl.a. indikatorer vedrørende rygere, forbrug af frugt og grønt samt selvoplyst forekomst af diabetes. Disse indikatorer er forholdsvis sammenlignelige og så vidt muligt opdelt efter køn, aldersgruppe eller socioøkonomisk niveau.

I henhold til Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1338/2008 om fællesskabsstatistikker over folkesundhed og arbejdsmiljø ([3]) skal der indsamles sundhedsdata. Forordningen suppleres af to gennemførelsesforordninger fra Kommissionen om statistikker over dødsårsager ([4]) og arbejdsulykker ([5]). Som led i det gældende EU-folkesundhedsprogram er der desuden blevet ydet støtte til et projekt vedrørende en undersøgelse af sundhedsstatus i EU ([6]) med henblik på at indsamle yderligere nationale sundhedsdata, der er sammenlignelige landene imellem og over tid.

De eksisterende data om sundhed og sundhedsdeterminanter vil indgå i en rapport om forskelle i sundhedssituationen i EU, som er planlagt til at udkomme ved udgangen af 2012.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/118282.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:354:0070:0081:DA:PDF.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:090:0022:0024:DA:PDF.
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:097:0003:0008:DA:PDF.
([6]) http://www.ehes.info/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002538/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Council conclusions on closing health gaps

The conclusions of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting of 1 and 2 December 2011 ([1]) call upon the Commission to 'consider the need for the better deployment of existing data and additional comparative data and information on unhealthy lifestyle behaviours, social health determinants and non-communicable chronic disease'.

What activities in this area is the Commission currently engaged in, and what action does it plan to take in the future to support the delivery of this objective?

Furthermore, if the existing data is considered insufficient, how does the Commission intend to secure 'additional comparative data' at national and European level?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

A total of 88 European Community Health Indicators ([2]) have been developed to provide an overview of Europeans' health, including for example indicators on 'regular smokers', 'consumption of fruit and vegetable' or 'self-reported prevalence of diabetes'. These indicators are reasonably comparable and broken down, whenever possible, by gender, age group or socioeconomic level.

Regulation (EC) No 1338/2008 of the Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics on public health and health and safety at work ([3]) secures the collection of health data. This regulation is complemented by two Commission implementing regulations for statistics on causes of death ([4]) and accidents at work ([5]). The current Community health programme has also funded a project on a first European Health Examination Survey ([6]) to further collect national measured health data which are comparable between countries and over time.

Existing data on health and health determinants will feed into an upcoming report on the health inequalities situation in the EU which is planned for the end of 2012.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/126524.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:354:0070:0081:EN:PDF.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:090:0022:0024:EN:PDF.
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:097:0003:0008:EN:PDF.
([6]) http://www.ehes.info/index.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002539/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: Online-Drogenhandel

Europa ist der zweitgrößte Kokainmarkt der Welt, und der illegale Handel mit Cannabis, Kokain, Methamphetamin und Heroin hat einem Bericht des Internationalen Suchtstoffkontrollrates zufolge im letzten Jahr zugenommen. Verkauf und Herstellung von Betäubungsmitteln sind zwar klar geregelt, die Verwendung synthetischer Drogen hat jedoch zugenommen.

1. Wie überwacht die Kommission die pharmazeutischen Websites?

2. Welche Maßnahmen sollte die Kommission treffen, um den Online-Drogenhandel einzuschränken?

3. Welche personellen und finanziellen Ressourcen hat die Kommission bis heute bereitgestellt, um den Drogenhandel einzuschränken und zu verhindern?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(4. April 2012)

Die Kontrolle des Verkaufs neuer psychoaktiver Substanzen und des Handels mit illegalen Drogen ist Sache der Mitgliedstaaten. Gemäß dem EU-Drogenaktionsplan (2009-2012) ([1]) hält die Kommission die Mitgliedstaaten dazu an, in diesem Bereich eng zusammenzuarbeiten.

Um wirksam vorgehen zu können, muss man zunächst die Funktionsweise und das Ausmaß dieses Phänomens verstehen. Die Europäische Beobachtungsstelle für Drogen und Drogensucht überwacht seit 2006 psychoaktive Substanzen, die keiner gesetzlichen Regelung unterliegen und über Internet verkauft werden.

Die Kommission finanziert im Rahmen des Programms „Kriminalprävention und Kriminalitätsbekämpfung" (ISEC) ([2]) eine Studie mit dem Titel „Further analysis of the EU illicit drugs market: responding to future challenges" ([3]). Die Studie ([4]), die im Dezember 2012 abgeschlossen werden soll, wird Einblicke in die Funktionsweise der Drogenmärkte geben, so dass anschließend geeignete Maßnahmen zur Kontrolle des Drogenhandels über Internet konzipiert werden können.

In ihrer Mitteilung „Eine entschlossenere europäische Reaktion auf das Drogenproblem" ([5]) kündigte die Kommission verschiedene Initiativen an, die in den nächsten zwei Jahren durchgeführt werden sollen, darunter die Änderung der Rechtsvorschriften über neue psychoaktive Substanzen und im Bereich des illegalen Drogenhandels.

Die Drogenbekämpfung ist ein bereichsübergreifendes Thema in der Kommission, mit dem mehrere Dienststellen direkt oder indirekt befasst sind. Für die Koordinierung ist das Referat „Anti-Drogenpolitik" der GD Justiz zuständig.

Durch EU-Finanzierungsprogramme wie das ISEC und das Programm „Drogenprävention und -aufklärung" ([6]) werden flankierende Projekte gefördert, die die Maßnahmen und Tätigkeiten der Mitgliedstaaten ergänzen.

([1]) ABl. C 326 vom 20.12.2008, S. 7.
([2]) Zu den Einzelheiten des Programms siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/isec/funding_isec_en.htm.
([3]) Zu den Einzelheiten der Studie siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/tenders/2010/318374/invitation_tender_en.pdf.
([4]) Auftragsnummer HOME/2010/ISEC/022-JUST-C4.
([5]) KOM(2011)689 endgültig vom 25.10.2011.
([6]) Zu den Einzelheiten des Programms siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/programme/drug-prevention-information/index_en.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002539/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Online drug trade

Europe is the world's second-largest cocaine market and illegal trafficking in cannabis, cocaine, methamphetamine and heroin have increased over the past year, according to a report by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). Although the manufacture and sale of controlled substances have been well regulated, the use of synthetic drugs has increased.

1. What is the Commission doing to monitor pharmaceutical websites?

2. What measures does the Commission think that it needs to take in order to put an end to the online drug trade?

3. What human and financial resources has the Commission deployed to date for the purpose of monitoring and combating the drug trade?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

Tackling the sale of new psychoactive substances and the trafficking of illicit drugs falls within the competence of Member States. The Commission encourages Member States to cooperate closely on this issue, in line with the EU Drugs Action Plan for 2009-2012 ([1]).

Understanding the functioning and the scale of this phenomenon is a necessary prerequisite for effective action. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, has been monitoring unregulated psychoactive products sold via Internet since 2006.

The Commission has funded a study 'Further analysis of the EU illicit drugs market: responding to future challenges' ([2]), under the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme (ISEC) ([3]). This study ([4]), to be completed by December 2012, will provide insights into the functioning of drugs markets that will help develop adequate policy responses to trafficking over the Internet.

The Commission communication 'Towards a stronger EU response to drugs' ([5]), announced a number of initiatives that will be launched over the next two years, including the revision of existing legislation on new psychoactive substances and in the field of illicit drug trafficking.

Tackling the drug phenomenon is a cross-cutting topic in the Commission, coordinated by DG Justice Anti Drugs Unit; various other departments are involved directly or indirectly.

EU financial programmes such as ISEC and the Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([6]) complement Member States' actions and activities by supporting projects.

([1]) OJ C 326/7, 20.12.2008.
([2]) For details of the study, see http://ec.europa.eu/justice/tenders/2010/318374/invitation_tender_en.pdf
([3]) For details of the programme, see http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/isec/funding_isec_en.htm
([4]) Contract number HOME/2010/ISEC/022-JUST-C4.
([5]) COM(2011) 689 final, 25.10.2011.
([6]) For details of the programme, see http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/programme/drug-prevention-information/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002540/12
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Quote per le donne che occupano la funzione di direttore

Ai primi di marzo, il settimanale «European Voice» ha annunciato che il Commissario alla giustizia, diritti fondamentali e cittadinanza si sta orientando verso una legge che stabilisca le quote rosa nei consigli di amministrazione delle società. La Commissione intende aumentare la percentuale delle donne nei consigli di amministrazione portandola al 30 % entro il 2015 e al 40 % entro il 2020. Secondo il settimanale, il Commissario ha annunciato l'intenzione di introdurre quote legalmente vincolanti nel caso in cui l'autoregolamentazione non portasse ai risultati attesi. Secondo quanto riferito dai mezzi di comunicazione, il Commissario ritiene che ciò si sia verificato.

In risposta alle proposte della Commissione, un membro di BusinessEurope, che rappresenta gruppi dei datori di lavoro di 35 paesi, ha affermato che le quote obbligatorie non risolverebbero il problema legato al miglioramento della rappresentanza e che l'unica soluzione sarebbe un approccio volontario a lungo termine. Inoltre, la Confindustria tedesca (BDI) ha dichiarato che le quote legali non rappresentano l'economia reale e che cambiamenti nella cultura del posto di lavoro, volti a incoraggiare la presenza delle donne in settori a predominanza maschile e a migliorare l'assistenza all'infanzia, sortirebbero un effetto migliore.

1. Al fine di garantire la meritocrazia sul posto di lavoro, intende la Commissione prendere in considerazione un piano volto a incoraggiare le imprese ad aumentare il numero delle donne presenti nei consigli di amministrazione, anziché imporre loro obblighi in tal senso?

2. La Commissione è pronta a impegnarsi con gruppi di imprese al fine di valutare la fattibilità e le implicazioni delle quote, prima di adottare decisioni legalmente vincolanti?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(19 aprile 2012)

Si rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla relazione sullo stato dei lavori intitolata «Women in economic decision-making in the EU» che la Vicepresidente Viviane Reding ha presentato il 5 marzo 2012 ([1]). La relazione prende nuovamente in esame la diversificazione di genere nei consigli di amministrazione delle società e valuta i risultati degli sforzi di autoregolamentazione, segnatamente dell'iniziativa «Un impegno formale per più donne alla guida delle imprese europee» lanciata dalla Vicepresidente Viviane Reding il 1° marzo 2011 a seguito di un dialogo con i dirigenti delle maggiori società europee ([2]).

Parallelamente alla pubblicazione della relazione sullo stato dei lavori, la Commissione ha avviato una consultazione pubblica che contribuirà alla valutazione dell'effetto delle misure eventualmente adottate dall'UE al fine di correggere la situazione attuale. La consultazione si rivolge anche alle organizzazioni imprenditoriali o industriali e alle singole imprese, che sono invitate a esprimere il proprio parere.

Nel corso dell'anno, a seguito di una valutazione d'impatto completa, la Commissione prenderà una decisione sugli eventuali provvedimenti, la loro natura e portata.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards_en.pdf
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/124&format=HTML&aged=1&language=IT&guiLanguage=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002540/12
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Quotas for women directors

In early March 2012, the *European Voice* announced that the Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship is moving towards legislation that would set quotas for the number of women on company boards. The Commission intends to increase the proportion of women on company boards to 30 % by 2015 and 40 % by 2020. According to the periodical, the Commissioner warned that she would be prepared to introduce legally enforceable quotas if self-regulation proved unsuccessful. Media reports suggest that the Commissioner believes that this has been the case.

In response to the Commission's proposals, a member of BusinessEurope, which represents employers' groups from 35 countries, said that mandatory quotas would not solve the problem of improving representation and that a long-term voluntary approach was the only solution. In addition, the German chamber of industry, the BDI, said in a statement that legal quotas did not 'represent the realities of business' and that changes in workplace culture, encouraging women into male-dominated jobs and improving childcare would have a better effect.

1. In order to ensure meritocracy in the workplace, would the Commission consider a plan to encourage companies to increase female representation on company boards, rather than impose obligations on them to do so?

2. Is the Commission prepared to engage with business groups in order to assess the feasibility and implications of quotas, before making any legally enforceable decisions?

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

The Honourable Member is referred to the progress report 'Women in economic decision-making in the EU', announced by Vice-President Reding on 5 March 2012. ([1]) The report re-assesses the situation of gender-diversity in company boards and the results of self-regulatory efforts, notably of the 'Women on Board Pledge for Europe' launched by Vice-President Reding on 1 March 2011 following a dialogue with the leaders of the biggest European companies. ([2])

In parallel to the publication of the progress report, the Commission has launched a public consultation that will contribute to assessing the impact of possible EU measures to redress the current situation. The consultation is open also to business or industry organisations and individual companies, which are invited to contribute their views.

A decision on possible measures, including on their nature and scope, will be taken by the Commission later this year, after a full impact assessment.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards_en.pdf
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/124.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002541/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Cimitero di guerra profanato in Libia

Il 4 marzo 2012 il ministero degli Esteri e del Commonwealth (FCO) del Regno Unito ha comunicato che più di 200 lapidi e la Croce del Ricordo nel cimitero della Commissione per le onoranze ai caduti di guerra del Commonwealth a Bengasi sono state deliberatamente danneggiate alla fine di febbraio. Oltre 1 200 soldati e aviatori del Commonwealth furono seppelliti a Bengasi dopo aver combattuto contro le potenze dell'Asse per il controllo della Libia e dell'Egitto.

In risposta a questi incidenti, il ministro degli Esteri della Libia, Ashur Bin Khayyal, e il presidente del paese, Mustafa Abdul Jalil, hanno condannato l'attacco, definendo la profanazione delle tombe della Seconda Guerra mondiale come immorale, irresponsabile e criminale. La dichiarazione del governo è giunta in seguito alla diffusione di un video in cui si vedono presunti miliziani — alcuni dei quali brandivano fucili e indossavano uniformi militari non coordinate — abbattere a calci le tombe di Bengasi. Il video mostra numerosi uomini che prendono a calci e rovesciano le lapidi dei militari.

1. Può l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente far sapere se è a conoscenza della profanazione del cimitero di guerra a Bengasi?

2. L'Unione europea è pronta a offrire il suo sostegno alle autorità libiche per individuare i responsabili di tali attacchi?

3. Come valuta l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente la minaccia rappresentata dalle milizie islamiche in Libia?

4. Riesce l'amministrazione transitoria libica a consolidare il suo controllo politico?

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

L'AR/VP è consapevole degli attacchi alle tombe militari a Bengasi, ed è lieta di constatare che il governo transitorio ha affermato rapidamente e pubblicamente la propria determinazione ad assicurare i colpevoli alla giustizia Al momento l'UE non ha ricevuto richieste di assistenza.

Le condizioni di sicurezza in Libia restano precarie, anche se stanno migliorando. Accogliamo favorevolmente i recenti negoziati sul ritiro dei miliziani da Tripoli e la transizione verso un servizio nazionale di sicurezza controllato a livello centrale. Restiamo dell'avviso che la grande maggioranza della popolazione libica abbia ancora come obiettivo una transizione democratica e il successo delle elezioni in giugno, e non segua ragionamenti di parte.

Nonostante le difficili condizioni, il governo transitorio ha compiuto notevoli progressi verso le elezioni e sta ottenendo un maggiore controllo sulle forze di sicurezza. Restano ancora importanti sfide da affrontare, ma non possiamo aspettarci un successo immediato a distanza così ravvicinata da un grande conflitto. La direzione dei progressi ottenuti resta positiva e il governo transitorio continua a collaborare con le comunità e i miliziani al fine di limitare gli atti di violenza a livello locale e reagire alla loro eventuale manifestazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002541/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — War graves damaged in Libya

On 4 March 2012, the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) reported that over 200 headstones and the Cross of Remembrance in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery in Benghazi were deliberately damaged in late February. Over 1200 Commonwealth soldiers and airmen were buried in Benghazi, as they played a role in fighting the Axis powers for control over Libya and Egypt.

In response to these incidents, Libya's Foreign Minister, Ashur Bin Khayyal, and the Chairman of the country's National Transitional Council, Mustafa Abdul Jalil, condemned the attack, and called the damage on the World War II graves 'unethical, irresponsible and criminal'. The government's statement comes after a video was uploaded, showing what appear to be militiamen — some wielding rifles and wearing partial military dress — kicking down the graves in Benghazi. Several dozen men were shown kicking and knocking down the headstones of the servicemen's graves.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the desecration of war graves in Benghazi?

2. Is the EU prepared to lend support to the Libyan authorities in tracing the individuals responsible for these attacks?

3. What is the VP/HR's assessment of the threat posed by Islamist militias inside Libya?

4. Is Libya's transitional administration managing to solidify its political control?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the attacks on war graves in Benghazi. The HR/VP is pleased to see that the transitional administration rapidly and publicly stated their determination to bring the perpetrators to justice. At this point they have made no request for EU assistance.

The security situation in Libya remains fragile although it is improving. We welcome recent negotiations on the withdrawal of militias from Tripoli and the transition towards centrally controlled national security services. Our assessment remains that the vast majority of the Libyan people remain focused on democratic transition and successful June elections rather than sectarian considerations.

The transitional administration has made impressive progress in difficult conditions towards the delivery of elections and the delivery of greater control over security. Significant challenges remain, but we cannot expect instantaneous success so soon after major conflict. The direction of progress remains positive and the transitional administration continues to work with communities and the militias to curtail and respond to local outbreaks of violence when they occur.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002542/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Timothy Kirkhope (ECR)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — The situation in Zimbabwe subsequent to the lifting of sanctions, update on Marange Diamonds and on EU funding for agriculture

The lifting of sanctions in Zimbabwe offers scope for progress in the area and will allow for greater dialogue between international actors and members of the Zimbabwean government. What will ensure that such progress leads to true electoral and governmental reform in the country?

Can the Commission confirm that as part of the 'enhanced cooperation' that Baroness Ashton mentioned in relation to Zimbabwe on 17 February 2012, attention will also be given to issues such as the misuse of funds by Marange Diamonds and the siphoning off of EU funds from agricultural programmes for personal gain, practices which, according to the Zimbabwean Minister of Finance Tendai Biti and as reported by small-scale farmers and villagers, are ongoing?

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

The Commission would like to confirm its continued support for South Africa/SADC's facilitation in Zimbabwe. These efforts aim, in particular, at the full implementation of the Global Political Agreement, while in parallel ensuring a conductive environment for free and credible elections in Zimbabwe.

By taking off 51 individuals and 19 entities from the visa ban and asset freeze list, the EU has sought to strengthen efforts for further reform. The EU has been encouraged by the positive reactions in Zimbabwe and SADC. This creates renewed scope for political re-engagement, paving the way for genuine electoral and governmental reform. A meeting between the High Representative/Vice-President and the Zimbabwean Re-engagement Team is envisaged in the coming weeks.

Regarding the issue of revenue from Marange Diamonds, the EU is supporting Minister Biti's efforts to enhance transparency in public finance management, including revenue from mining. The EU has also actively supported the November 2011 Kimberley Process agreement on Zimbabwe, which should allow for improved oversight of revenue flows. The parastatal Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation remains, for now, on the EU restrictive measures list.

As regards EU-funded agricultural programmes, the Commission is not aware of any reports or statements pointing to possible embezzlement. At the same time, the Commission continues to apply rigorous standards and measures for monitoring, evaluation and audit in the implementations of its programmes, including in the agricultural sector.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002543/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 mars 2012)

Objet: Risques de mortalité liés à la consommation de somnifères

Une étude américaine publiée le 28 février 2012 par l'équipe scientifique du Scripps Clinic Viterbi Family Sleep Center indiquait que la consommation, même restreinte, de certains somnifères exposerait les utilisateurs à un risque 4,6 fois plus élevé que chez les personnes qui n'en prennent pas. Par ailleurs, ces médicaments pris pour dormir seraient également associés à un risque plus élevé de cancer.

Les médicaments incriminés sont de la famille des benzodiazépines, comme le zolpidem, les barbituriques et les sédatifs antihistaminiques.

Même si les auteurs reconnaissent que l'association entre ces médicaments et le risque de décès n'implique pas forcement un lien de cause à effet, ils tirent la sonnette d'alarme et mettent en garde contre la surconsommation de ces médicaments.

— Sachant qu'en Europe, la consommation des somnifères a augmenté ces dernières années, la Commission envisage-t-elle de faire mener une étude similaire sur les risques que comportent les somnifères?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(20 avril 2012)

Un médicament ne peut être mis sur le marché de l'Union européenne qu'après la délivrance d'une autorisation adéquate, conformément à la législation pharmaceutique ([1]), une évaluation de sa qualité, de sa sûreté et de son efficacité et l'établissement d'un rapport bénéfice/risques positif concernant son utilisation. Il fait en outre l'objet d'une surveillance après sa mise sur le marché; en effet, les préoccupations en matière de sûreté (risques accrus de décès ou de cancer, par exemple) relèvent de la pharmacovigilance, raison pour laquelle la législation fixe les obligations des titulaires de l'autorisation de mise sur le marché et désigne les autorités compétentes.

Les produits destinés à être utilisés pour traiter les troubles du sommeil ont été autorisés dans l'Union à la fois par la Commission et par les autorités compétentes des États membres.

L'étude sur l'association entre les médicaments hypnotiques et le risque de décès ou de cancer, étude réalisée par Kripke et al. et publiée dans le *British Medical Journal* du 27 février 2012, a été examinée en mars dernier à la réunion du groupe de travail de pharmacovigilance de l'Agence européenne des médicaments. Étant donné certaines limitations dans la conception de l'étude, les résultats de celle-ci n'ont suscité aucune inquiétude particulière. Afin de recueillir d'autres données qui justifieraient la nécessité d'une étude plus approfondie, le groupe de travail a proposé de vérifier au sein du réseau scientifique si d'autres recherches indépendantes étaient effectuées. Cette vérification est en cours.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 726/2004 établissant des procédures communautaires pour l'autorisation et la surveillance en ce qui concerne les médicaments à usage humain et à usage vétérinaire, et instituant une Agence européenne des médicaments (JO L 136 du 30.4.2004), directive 2001/83/CE instituant un code communautaire relatif aux médicaments à usage humain (JO L 311 du 28.11.2001).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002543/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Risk of death linked to use of sleeping tablets

A study published in the US on 28 February 2012 by the research team at the Scripps Clinic Viterbi Family Sleep Center has shown that even moderate use of certain kinds of sleeping tablets exposes users to a 4.6 times higher risk of death compared to those who do not take them. Furthermore, these medications, which are taken to aid sleep, are also associated with an increased risk of cancer.

The medicinal products in question belong to the benzodiazepine family, such as zolpidem, barbiturates and antihistamine sedatives.

Although the authors acknowledge that the association between these medications and the risk of death does not necessarily imply a causal link, they are sounding the alarm and warning against overuse of these medications.

— Given that in Europe the use of sleeping tablets has increased in recent years, does the Commission plan to conduct a similar study on the risks posed by sleeping tablets?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

A medicinal product can be placed on the European Union market only after a marketing authorisation has been granted in accordance with the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]), after its quality, safety and efficacy have been evaluated and a positive benefit-risk balance related to its use has been concluded. A medicinal product is further subject to a post-marketing surveillance, safety concerns as higher risk of death or cancer being part of pharmacovigilance, for which obligations to marketing authorisation holders and competent authorities are set by the legislation.

Products for use in sleeping disorders have been authorised in the EU both by the Commission and by competent authorities of the Member States.

The study by Kripke et al. on the association of hypnotics with mortality or cancer, published in the British Medical Journal, 27 February 2012 was discussed in the meeting of the European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Working Party in March 2012. The results of the study, given a number of limitations in the study design, have not raised particular concerns. With the aim to identifying further data which would justify the need for more substantial discussion, the Working Party proposed to investigate within the scientific network whether any other independent research is being done. This work is currently ongoing.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended, Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002547/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(6 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Represje wobec białoruskich dziennikarzy

27 lutego dziennikarka nadającego z Białegostoku Radia Racyja otrzymała od prokuratury w Grodnie oficjalne ostrzeżenie z powodu współpracy z zagranicznymi mediami bez akredytacji. Dziennikarka była już wcześniej wzywana do KGB, gdzie pytano ją o ubiegłoroczne akcje grupy internetowej Rewolucja Poprzez Sieci Społeczne oraz o współpracę z zagranicznymi mediami.

W zeszłym tygodniu podobne upomnienia otrzymało dwóch innych dziennikarzy z Grodna, którzy współpracują z Radiem Racyja i białoruskojęzyczną telewizją Biełsat, nadawaną z Polski.

Pragnę zauważyć, że białoruskie MSZ niejednokrotnie odmawiało przyznania akredytacji dziennikarzom Radia Racyja i Biełsatu bez podania przyczyny. W związku z tym zwracam się do Komisji z zapytaniem, czy ma zamiar podjąć interwencję i zbadać sprawę represji wobec białoruskich dziennikarzy współpracujących z polskimi mediami?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(23 maja 2012 r.)

UE wielokrotnie wyrażała zaniepokojenie ciągłymi prześladowaniami społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, opozycji politycznej i niezależnych mediów, do jakich dochodzi na Białorusi od czasów wyborów prezydenckich, dnia 19 grudnia 2010 r. Ograniczenia wolności niezależnych mediów i ich prześladowania stanowią część tych represji. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca została powiadomiona o co najmniej ośmiu przypadkach ostrzeżeń, jakie prokuratura miała wystosować do dziennikarzy w różnych regionach Białorusi od początku 2012 r.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca posiada jedynie ograniczone informacje o prześladowaniach niezależnych dziennikarzy i nie może interweniować w każdym indywidualnym przypadku. Jednakże UE zawsze zdecydowanie potępiała i potępiać będzie represyjną politykę władz białoruskich, w tym ich próby wywierania nacisku na niezależne media. Aby utrzymać presję polityczną, UE przyjęła również środki ograniczające wobec osób odpowiedzialnych za prześladowania społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, niezależnych mediów i opozycji politycznej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002547/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Repression of Belarusian journalists

On 27 February 2012, a journalist from Radio Racyja, which broadcasts from Białystok, received an official warning from the prosecutor's office in Grodno for cooperating with foreign media without accreditation. The journalist had already been summoned to the KGB, where she was questioned about last year's campaigns by the Internet group 'Revolution through Social Networks' and about her cooperation with foreign media.

Last week, similar warnings were received by two other journalists from Grodno who work with Radio Racyja and Belsat, a Belarusian-language television station broadcasting from Poland.

The Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has repeatedly refused to grant accreditation to journalists from Radio Racyja and Belsat, without providing any reason for this refusal. In this connection, I would like to ask the Commission whether it intends to intervene and to investigate these instances of repression against Belarusian journalists cooperating with the Polish media?

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

The EU has, on numerous occasions, expressed its concern about the continued crackdown on civil society, the political opposition and the independent media after the 19 December 2010 Presidential elections in Belarus. The restrictions on, and harassment of, independent media are part of the ongoing repression in this country. As far as the HR/VP is aware, at least eight warnings have been issued by the public prosecutor to journalists in different regions in Belarus since the beginning of 2012.

The HR/VP has only limited information about the cases of harassment of independent journalists and cannot intervene in each individual case. However, the EU has been, and will continue to be, very vocal in condemning the repressive policies of the Belarusian authorities, including the authorities' interference with independent media. To maintain political pressure, the EU has also adopted restrictive measures towards those responsible for the crackdown on civil society, independent media and political opposition.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-002548/12
a la Comisión
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(6 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Prospecciones petrolíferas en las costas de Fuerteventura y Lanzarote

En 2001 el Gobierno de España autorizó la realización de prospecciones petrolíferas en el océano Atlántico frente a las costas de Fuerteventura y Lanzarote, islas incardinadas en una de las mayores cunas de biodiversidad de toda Europa, contando con fauna y flora únicas en el planeta y con más de una decena de Espacios Naturales Protegidos, algunos de ellos comprendidos en la Red Natura 2000 de la UE. El decreto en que se contenía dicha autorización fue anulado por el Tribunal Supremo en el año 2004 por no contener medidas de protección medioambientales ni plan de restauración apropiado al plan de labores previsto.

Transcurridos más de diez años, el actual Gobierno español pretende retomar estas prospecciones petrolíferas mediante la reactivación de la mencionada autorización, reabriendo así la amenaza para la diversidad marina del litoral canario y el potencial perjuicio para la industria turística, principal actividad económica de las Islas.

Teniendo en cuenta la nueva normativa de la UE relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente (Directiva 2011/92/UE, en vigor desde el 17 de febrero de 2012), que se basa en los principios de cautela y de acción preventiva, y el estado de elaboración del futuro Reglamento sobre la seguridad de las actividades de prospección, exploración y producción de petróleo y de gas mar adentro, actualmente en tramitación, ¿considera la Comisión que las autorizaciones que pretende otorgar el Gobierno español para la realización de prospecciones petrolíferas en el océano Atlántico cumplen los principios contenidos en la Directiva 2011/92/UE?

¿Tiene la Comisión información acerca de la adecuación de la decisión del Gobierno español de conceder la autorización de prospecciones petrolíferas en el marco de la normativa europea actualmente en tramitación y, previsiblemente, en vigor en breve plazo?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de abril de 2012)

En general, compete a los Estados miembros determinar las condiciones de explotación de sus recursos energéticos. Esto se entiende sin perjuicio de los requisitos dirigidos a la protección del medio ambiente en virtud del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea y del derecho derivado de la UE.

La Comisión ha solicitado información de las autoridades competentes españolas acerca del cumplimiento de los requisitos pertinentes en virtud del Derecho medioambiental de la UE. En este caso concreto, la Comisión ha preguntado a las autoridades españolas cómo han aplicado las disposiciones de la Directiva de 2011/92/UE ([1]) (conocida como la Directiva de la evaluación del impacto ambiental o EIA) y de la Directiva 92/43/CEE ([2]) sobre hábitats.

En relación con la nueva propuesta de Reglamento sobre la seguridad de las actividades de prospección, exploración y producción de petróleo y de gas mar adentro ([3]), que se está tramitando según el procedimiento legislativo ordinario, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-001568/2012 ([4]) sobre este asunto.

([1]) Versión codificada de la Directiva 85/337/CEE relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, en su versión modificada (DO L 26 de 28.1.2012).
([2]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).
([3]) COM(2011) 688 final de 27.10.2011.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002548/12
to the Commission
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Oil prospection off the Fuerteventura and Lanzarote coasts

In 2001 the Spanish Government authorised oil prospection in the Atlantic Ocean off the coasts of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, islands that are found in one of Europe's largest cradles of biodiversity, with flora and fauna found nowhere else on the planet and more than a dozen protected nature reserves, some of which are included in the EU Natura 2000 network. The decree containing this authorisation was repealed by the Supreme Court in 2004 because it did not include environmental protection measures or a restoration plan appropriate for the proposed works.

Ten years on, the current Spanish Government is trying to resume these oil prospection activities by reactivating this authorisation, thereby renewing the threat to the marine diversity of the coast of the Canary Islands and the possibility of damage to the tourist industry, which is their main economic activity.

Taking into account the new EU legislation on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (Directive 2011/92/EU, which entered into force on 17 February 2012), which is based on the precautionary principle and the principle of preventive action, and the preparations for the future Regulation **on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities**, which is currently being examined, does the Commission believe that the authorisations that the Spanish Government intends to grant for oil prospection in the Atlantic Ocean comply with the principles laid down in Directive 2011/92/EU?

Does the Commission have any information as to whether the Spanish Government's decision to authorise oil prospection complies with the European legislation that is currently being examined and that is expected to enter into force soon?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

It falls in general within the competence of the Member States to determine the conditions for exploiting their energy resources. This is without prejudice to the requirements for the protection of the environment under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and secondary EC law.

The Commission has requested information from the competent Spanish authorities concerning compliance with the relevant requirements under EU environmental law. In this particular case, the Commission has asked the Spanish authorities how they have applied the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU ([1]) (known as the Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA Directive) and of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([2]).

In relation to the new proposed Regulation on the safety of offshore oil and gas activities ([3]), which is currently in the ordinary legislative procedure, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001568/2012 ([4]) on this matter.

([1]) Codified version of Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) Directive 92/43/EEC on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) COM(2011) 688 final, 27.10.2011.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002549/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Cross Border Enforcement Directive -Application to the Court of Justice

Could the Commission outline its reasons for bringing an action in the Court of Justice with the aim of changing the legal basis for adopting the Cross Border Enforcement Directive (CBED) from a Justice and Home Affairs to a Transport legal basis? The Commission should note that Ireland has already taken a number of steps to opt-in under the JHA basis. Why, at this stage, is the Commission creating legal uncertainty with regard to the legal basis of the CBED?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the Court of Justice has been seized in order to ensure that directive 2011/82/EU on the cross-border exchange of information on road safety related offences ([1]) is founded on the correct legal base. The main objective of this directive is to improve road safety, what is a prime objective of the Union's transport policy.

For reasons of legal security, the annulment of the directive was requested in such a way that the effects shall remain in place. Member States are obliged to transpose the directive by 7 November 2013 into national legislation and the Commission as guardian of the Treaty will consider to take the necessary steps to ensure the correct transposition.

The Commission welcomes the decision taken by Ireland to implement the provisions of the directive.

([1]) OJ L 288, 5.11.2011, p. 1.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. P-002550/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: ES finansavimas planuojamai statyti branduolinei jėgainei Lietuvoje

Noriu Jums padėkoti už tai, kad Jūsų pastangomis per pastaruosius metus ES nemažai nuveikta siekiant sustiprinti vidaus energetikos rinką ir padidinti visos ES energinį saugumą bei užtikrinti energijos išteklių tiekimą. Tačiau dėl šios žiemos šalčių Europoje ir už jos ribų ES valstybėms narėms buvo sumažėjęs dujų tiekimas. O tai rodo, jog iki šiol ES išlieka itin priklausoma nuo išorės energijos išteklių tiekėjų. Ši priklausomybė išliks, kol nebus visiškai užbaigta kurti vidaus energijos rinka ir nebus pastatyti reikiamą energijos kiekį generuojantys objektai.

Lietuva, kaip ir likusios Baltijos šalys, didžiausią energijos išteklių dalį gauna tik iš vieno išorės tiekėjo ir priklausomybė nuo jo yra akivaizdi. Be to, Rusijos ir Baltarusijos planuojamos statyti atominės jėgainės tik dar labiau padidintų ne tik Baltijos valstybių, bet ir visos ES priklausomybę ne tik nuo dujų, bet ir nuo elektros energijos tiekimo.

Kaip žinoma, Lietuvos planuojama statyti atominė elektrinė itin prisidėtų prie Lietuvos ir visos ES teigiamo energijos balanso padidinimo bei priklausomybės nuo išorės tiekėjų sumažinimo.

Naujos atominės statybos finansavimas komerciniais pagrindais Lietuvai gali tapti nepakeliama našta, ir Lietuva, prisiimdama šiuos didelius finansinius įsipareigojimus, rizikuoja pažeisti pasirašytos fiskalinės sutarties nuostatas, nes valstybės vidaus skola viršytų 60 procentų BVP. Jei taip atsitiktų, Lietuva pagal fiskalinės drausmės sutartį privalėtų besąlygiškai sumokėti dar ir baudas į ES biudžetą.

Lietuva turi nemažą patirtį, tinkamus specialistus ir gali eksploatuoti uždarytą Ignalinos atominę jėgainę, paruoštą statybvietę naujai atominei jėgainei Visagine statyti ir t. t.

Ar Komisija nemano, kad, atsižvelgiant į susidariusią situaciją ir norint užtikrinti didesnį energijos tiekimo saugumą bei sukurti vieningą, nepriklausomą ir konkurencingą ES vidaus energijos rinką, reikėtų išimtine tvarka išnagrinėti Visagino atominės elektrinės statybos dalinio finansavimo iš ES lėšų galimybę?

Komisijos nario G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 2 d.)

Investavimo sprendimai priimami tik investuotojų ir susijusios valstybės narės atsakomybe. Priimant tokius investavimo sprendimus Komisija tiesiogiai nedalyvauja.

Atsižvelgiant į ribotas galimybes suteikti EIB ir Euratomo paskolas, biudžeto lėšų, kuriomis būtų galima tiesiogiai iš ES biudžeto prisidėti prie atominės elektrinės projekto finansavimo, nėra.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002550/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: EU financing for the planned nuclear power plant in Lithuania

I would like to thank you for the fact that your efforts in recent years have done much to strengthen the internal energy market, increase the energy security of the entire EU and ensure security of energy supplies. However, due to this winter's frosts in Europe and beyond there was a reduction in the supply of gas to EU Member States. This demonstrates that to this day, the EU continues to be particularly dependent on external energy suppliers. This dependence will continue until the creation of the internal energy market is fully completed and the facilities are built that will generate the required amounts of energy.

Lithuania, like the other Baltic countries, receives most of its energy from one sole external supplier, and its dependence on it is obvious. Furthermore, the nuclear power plants planned by Russia and Belarus would only further increase the dependence, not only of the Baltic States, but of the entire EU, and not just on the supply of gas, but also of electricity.

As we know, Lithuania's proposed nuclear power plant would greatly contribute to increasing the positive energy balance of Lithuania and of the whole of the EU and to reducing dependence on external suppliers.

Financing the construction of the new nuclear power plant on a commercial basis may become an intolerable burden for Lithuania and, by taking on these major financial obligations, Lithuania risks breaching the provisions of the fiscal treaty it signed because the country's internal debt would exceed 60% GDP. If this were to happen, under the treaty on fiscal discipline Lithuania would be obliged unconditionally to pay fines into the EU budget.

Lithuania has considerable experience, suitable specialists and can operate the decommissioned Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant as well as handle the site prepared for the construction of a new nuclear power plant in Visaginas, etc.

Does the Commission agree that given the situation that has arisen and in order to ensure greater security of energy supply and create a single, independent and competitive EU internal energy market, we should exceptionally examine the possibility of partially financing the construction of Visaginas Nuclear Power Plant from EU funds?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

Investment decisions are the sole responsibility of investors and the Member State concerned. The Commission is not directly involved in such investment decisions.

Taking into account the limited availability of EIB and Euratom loans, there are no budgetary means to contribute directly to the financing of a nuclear power plant project from the EU budget.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002551/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Decisión sobre el sistema de tax-lease en el sector naval gallego

En relación con la industria naval de Galicia el pasado 22 de septiembre de 2011 y en respuesta a la pregunta E-007729/2011, la Comisión Europea comunicó que «es consciente de las implicaciones sociales de este asunto, pero debe tener también en cuenta las repercusiones de las medidas estudiadas en la competencia y en otras empresas. A la Comisión no le consta que existan sistemas similares en otros Estados miembros».

En el marco de la problemática social y económica que genera la resolución de esta cuestión se planteó la pregunta E-000688/2012 y se solicitó una reunión del sector del naval gallego con el Comisario de la Competencia, Joaquín Almunia, para dialogar sobre la grave situación, con el fin de buscar soluciones a este asunto de gran importancia para la estructura productiva y el mercado de trabajo de Galicia.

Durante estas semanas han sido publicadas diversas informaciones en medios de comunicación en Galicia que apuntan a que la Comisión Europea ha rechazado diversas propuestas del Estado español que recogían un baremo de rentabilidad fiscal de entre un 20 ó 21 % para un nuevo sistema de financiación. De este modo, el sistema sería semejante al de otros Estados miembro como Francia u Holanda.

1. ¿Puede confirmar la Comisión dicha información?

2. En ese caso, ¿cuando tomará una decisión la Comisión, conociendo la gravedad de la situación y la importancia estratégica de alcanzar una solución a esta problemática?

3. ¿Considera la Comisión que va a poder encontrar una solución justa para los intereses del sector naval de Galicia, con el fin de que pueda garantizar su viabilidad y futuro?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de abril de 2012)

Los servicios de la Comisión están discutiendo con las autoridades españolas las opciones posibles, pero aún no se ha adoptado ninguna decisión. La Comisión es consciente de la importancia de la medida para algunas regiones españolas. La Comisión tendrá ciertamente este hecho en cuenta, pero también debe tener presentes las quejas recibidas en relación con el sistema de arrendamiento fiscal español en vigor desde 2002 y las implicaciones de cualquier posible medida sobre la competencia y sobre otras empresas del sector de fuera de España.

La Comisión confirma que no tiene conocimiento de ningún sistema aplicable en otros Estados miembros comparable al sistema de arrendamiento fiscal español. Si dispusiera de información sobre la existencia de tal sistema, la Comisión lo evaluaría y garantizaría el mismo trato por lo que se refiere a la aplicación de las normas sobre ayudas estatales establecidas en el Tratado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002551/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Decision on the Galician shipping sector tax-lease system

On 22 September 2011, the Commission stated, in response to Question E-007729/2011 regarding the Galician shipping sector, that it 'is aware of the social implications of this issue but it must also bear in mind the repercussions that these measures have on competition and on other companies. The Commission is not aware of any similar systems in other Member States'.

Question E-000688/2012 was prompted by the economic and social problems arising in this connection and a meeting was requested between the Galician shipping industry and the Competition Commissioner, Joaquín Almunia, to discuss this serious matter, which is of vital importance for Galicia's productive sectors and job market, and find solutions.

In recent weeks, information has been published in the media in Galicia indicating that the European Commission has rejected a number of proposals from the Spanish Government offering a fiscal return of between 20 % and 21 % for a new financing system. The system would thus be similar to those of other Member States, such as France or the Netherlands.

1. Can the Commission confirm this?

2. In that case, given the severity of the situation and the strategic importance of finding a solution, when will the Commission make a decision?

3. Does the Commission believe that it can find a solution that is fair to the interests of Galicia's shipping sector and that can ensure its future sustainability?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

The Commission services are discussing possible options with the Spanish authorities, but no decision has been taken. The Commission is aware of the importance of the measure for certain Spanish regions. This will be of course taken into consideration, but the Commission must also take account of the complaints received concerning the Spanish Tax Lease (STL) scheme in force since 2002 and of the implications of any possible measures on competition and other companies of the industry outside Spain.

The Commission confirms it is not aware of any scheme applicable in other Member States and comparable to the Spanish Tax Lease. If it was aware of any such scheme, the Commission would assess it and ensure equal treatment in the application of the rules on state aid laid down in the Treaty.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002552/12
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: Weißbuch Rente — Betriebsrente

Im Kontext des Weißbuchs Rente und der Überlegungen der Kommission, Betriebsrenten unter das Solvency-II-Regime fallen zu lassen, gab es erhebliche Kritik. Die Intention der Kommission, Versicherungsunternehmen besser abzusichern, indem die Eigenkapitalausstattung ab 2013 abhängig von dem Marktwert der Versicherungsverpflichtung, dem Marktwert der Kapitalanlage sowie dem Risiko der Kapitalanlage gemacht wurde.

1. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission die Tatsache, dass Betriebsrenten zukünftig denselben Regeln unterworfen werden wie gewöhnliche Finanzprodukte? Die zusätzliche Altersvorsorge würde individualisiert bei Banken und Versicherungen liegen. Eine einfache Abwicklung und geringe Kosten wären nicht mehr möglich. Das Argument eines besseren Verbraucherschutzes entfällt in vielen Mitgliedstaaten, da z. B. Deutschland und andere bereits ein erprobtes und krisensicheres Sicherungssystem der Betriebsrenten besitzen.

2. Was ist die Meinung der Kommission zur Tatsache, dass allein der Branchenverband der Betriebsrenten in Deutschland mit Mehrkosten von bis zu 45 Mrd. EUR rechnet, sollten die neuen Eigenkapitalvorschriften umgesetzt werden?

3. Wie erklärt die Kommission den Widerspruch, einerseits neben der staatlichen Rente (1. Säule) andere Rentenformen zu fördern, gleichzeitig aber die Betriebsrente (2. Säule) durch Verwaltungsvorschriften so zu verteuern, dass sich die arbeitgeberfinanzierte Betriebsrente in vielen Mitgliedstaaten in absehbarer Zeit nicht mehr rechnen wird?

Antwort von Michel Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(30. April 2012)

Die Kommission hat nicht vorgeschlagen, dass die betriebliche Altersversorgung unter die Solvabilität-II-Regelung fallen sollte. Das Weißbuch zur Alterversorgung enthält keinerlei Aussage dazu, dass die Kommission einen entsprechenden Vorschlag vorzulegen plant.

Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-2800/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=DE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002552/12
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: White Paper on pensions — occupational pensions

There has been a lot of criticism regarding the White Paper on pensions and the consideration given by the Commission to the proposal to allow occupational pensions to come under the Solvency II regime. The Commission's intention was to offer better protection to insurance companies from 2013 onwards by making capital adequacy dependent on the market value of the insurance obligation, the market value of investments and the investment risk.

1. How does the Commission justify the fact that, in future, occupational pensions will be subject to the same rules as ordinary financial products? The additional pension provision would be individualised with banks and insurance companies. Straightforward administration and modest costs would no longer be possible. The argument of improved consumer protection does not apply in many Member States because, in Germany and other countries, for example, a tried-and-tested, crisis-proof system of securing occupational pensions already exists.

2. What is the Commission's view of the fact that the Professional Association of Occupational Pension Providers in Germany expects costs to rise by up to EUR 45 billion if the new equity capital regulations are implemented?

3. How does the Commission explain the contradictory situation whereby other forms of pension are promoted alongside the state pension (1st pillar), while occupational pensions (2nd pillar) are rendered so expensive as a result of administrative requirements that employer-financed occupational pensions will no longer be an option in many Member States in the foreseeable future?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

The Commission has not proposed that occupational pensions would be subject to the Solvency II regime. The White Paper on pensions does not mention that the Commission intends to present such a proposal.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-2800/2012 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002553/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(6 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή της απαίτησης πραγματικού και σταθερού τόπου εγκατάστασης οδικού μεταφορέα του Κανονισμού 1071/2009/ΕΚ

Μία εκ των τεσσάρων βασικών απαιτήσεων που θεσπίζει ο Κανονισμός 1071/2009/ΕΚ για την άσκηση του επαγγέλματος του οδικού μεταφορέα, αφορά την ύπαρξη πραγματικού και σταθερού τόπου εγκατάστασης της επιχείρησης. Στην εκτίμηση αντίκτυπου που διεξήγαγε το 2007, η Επιτροπή τονίζει πως οι εικονικές εταιρείες, ή «εταιρείες-γραμματοκιβώτια» προκαλούν στρεβλώσεις στον ανταγωνισμό εις βάρος εταιρειών εγκατεστημένων σε χώρες με υψηλότερες απαιτήσεις εγκατάστασης.

Πρόσφατες αναφορές ελληνικών μέσων ενημέρωσης, αλλά και καταγγελίες επαγγελματικών συνδέσμων, περιγράφουν ένα κλιμακούμενο φαινόμενο εικονικής φυγής ελληνικών διεθνών μεταφορέων (TIR) σε γειτονικές χώρες, όπου απολαύουν μεταξύ άλλων σημαντικά χαμηλότερης φορολόγησης. Ωστόσο, εφόσον πρόκειται για εικονικές μετεγκαταστάσεις, οι εν λόγω επιχειρήσεις δεν πληρούν τους όρους του Άρθρου 5 α) β) και γ) σχετικά με το βασικό χώρο της επιχείρησης και το μεταφορικό της έργο. Το φαινόμενο αυτό αποτελεί αθέμιτο ανταγωνισμό έναντι των συναδέλφων τους και προκαλεί απώλεια φορολογικών εσόδων στο Κράτος-Μέλος πραγματικής εγκατάστασης, εν προκειμένω την Ελλάδα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σε ποια άμεσα βήματα μπορεί να προβεί για τη διασφάλιση της αποτελεσματικότητας του συστήματος ελέγχων που προβλέπει το Άρθρο 12 του Κανονισμού;

2. Τι στοιχεία έχει στη κατοχή της σχετικά με το μέγεθος του προβλήματος στην ΕΕ και των επιπτώσεών του στην εσωτερική αγορά, καθώς και την οδική ασφάλεια;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Σκοπός του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ.1071/2009 ([1]) είναι να εναρμονίσει τους όρους για την πρόσβαση στην άσκηση του επαγγέλματος του οδικού μεταφορέα και συνεπώς να συμβάλει στην εξασφάλιση συνθηκών υγιούς ανταγωνισμού. Ο κανονισμός στο άρθρο 12 συγκεκριμένα απαιτεί από τα κράτη μέλη να εξακριβώνεται τακτικά με στοχευμένους ελέγχους ότι οι εταιρείες μεταφορών που είναι εγκαταστημένες στην επικράτειά τους πληρούν εξολοκλήρου τα κριτήρια που προβλέπει ο κανονισμός, κυρίως για να διασφαλιστεί πως έχουν σταθερό και πραγματικό τόπο εγκατάστασης, καλή φήμη και την απαιτούμενη οικονομική επιφάνεια και επαγγελματική ικανότητα. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί και θα προβεί σε οποιαδήποτε απαραίτητη ενέργεια προκειμένου να εξασφαλισθεί η ορθή εφαρμογή των προαναφερόμενων διατάξεων.

2. Ο κανονισμός δεν ορίζει κανόνες για τα επίπεδα φορολογίας επιχειρήσεων που εφαρμόζονται στους οδικούς μεταφορείς. Κατ' εφαρμογή του κανονισμού 1072/2009 ([2]) σχετικά με την πρόσβαση στην αγορά η Επιτροπή διερευνά επί του παρόντος τις συνθήκες ανταγωνισμού στην εσωτερική αγορά όσον αφορά την οδική μεταφορά εμπορευμάτων. Η Επιτροπή προτίθεται να εγκρίνει την έκθεση για την παρούσα ανάλυση και να την υποβάλει στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο πριν το καλοκαίρι του 2013.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1071/2009 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 21ης Οκτωβρίου 2009 σχετικά με τη θέσπιση κοινών κανόνων όσον αφορά τους όρους που πρέπει να πληρούνται για την άσκηση του επαγγέλματος του οδικού μεταφορέα και για την κατάργηση της οδηγίας 96/26/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου (ΕΕ L 300 της 14.11.2009, σ. 51-71).

([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1072/2009 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 21ης Οκτωβρίου 2009 για τους κοινούς κανόνες πρόσβασης στην αγορά διεθνών οδικών εμπορευματικών μεταφορών (Κείμενο που παρουσιάζει ενδιαφέρον για τον ΕΟΧ) (ΕΕ L 300 της 14.11.2009, σ. 72-87).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002553/12
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Implementation of the requirement for a road transport operator to have an effective and stable establishment under Regulation (EC) No 1071/2009

One of the four basic requirements laid down by Regulation (EC) No 1071/2009 for a person to pursue the occupation of road transport operator is that the undertaking should have an effective and stable establishment. In its impact assessment of 2007, the Commission stresses that shell companies or 'post-box' offices give rise to distortions in competition at the expense of undertakings established in countries with more stringent establishment requirements.

According to both the Greek media and professional associations, an increasing number of Greek international transport operators (TIR) are ostensibly transferring to neighbouring countries, where one of the advantages they enjoy is significantly lower taxation. However, in so far as these are bogus transfers, the undertakings in question are not fulfilling the terms of Article 5(a), (b) and (c) regarding the core premises and transport activities of an undertaking. This constitutes unfair competition against fellow companies and results in lost tax revenue for the Member States in which they are actually established, in this case Greece.

In view of this:

1. What immediate steps can the Commission take to ensure that the system of checks laid down by Article 12 of the regulation is effective?

2. What information does it have regarding the extent of the problem in the EU and its effects on the internal market and road safety?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

1. The purpose of Regulation 1071/2009 ([1]) is to harmonise the conditions for the admission to the occupation of road transport operators and hence contribute to fair conditions of competition. The regulation and its Article 12 in particular requires Member States to verify regularly by means of targeted checks that transport undertakings established on their territory fully comply with the criteria defined in the regulation, notably to ensure that they have a stable and effective establishment, a good repute and the required financial standing and professional capacity. The Commission is monitoring, and will take any necessary steps to ensure, the proper implementation of these provisions.

2. The regulation does not set rules on the corporate taxation levels applied to road transport operators. As requested by the legislator in Regulation 1072/2009 ([2]) on access to the market, the Commission is currently assessing the conditions of competition in the internal market for road freight transport. The Commission intends to adopt the report on this analysis and transmit it to the European Parliament before the Summer 2013.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1071/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing common rules concerning the conditions to be complied with to pursue the occupation of road transport operator and repealing Council Directive 96/26/EC (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 51-71.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 72-87.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002554/12
an die Kommission
Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: Diskriminierung auf dem Wohnungsmarkt

Ich wurde von einem in Frankreich lebenden EU-Bürger deutscher Staatsangehörigkeit darauf aufmerksam gemacht, dass er auf dem Wohnungsmarkt anscheinend einer diskriminierenden Behandlung ausgesetzt ist. Die Beschreibung des Falls durch den Bürger legt die Schlussfolgerung nahe, dass das Problem möglicherweise allgemeiner Natur ist und nicht nur für die beschriebene Situation besteht.

Bei der Bewerbung für eine Mietwohnung wurde dieser Bürger von Vermietern und Maklern wiederholt aufgefordert, (neben der Kaution) einen französischen Bürgen beizubringen, obwohl sein regelmäßiges Einkommen um ein Vielfaches höher als die Miete war. Ihm wurde mitgeteilt, dass er nicht um einen Bürgen gebeten würde, wenn er französischer Staatsbürger wäre. Demnach hat es den Anschein, dass der einzige Grund für das Vorweisen eines Bürgen die Staatsangehörigkeit des Bewerbers war, während andere objektive Kriterien wie etwa das Einkommen keine Rolle spielten.

Daher frage ich die Kommission:

1. Spiegelt dieser Fall Ihrer Kenntnis nach eine allgemeine Praxis und ein allgemeines Problem in der Europäischen Union oder einigen ihrer Mitgliedstaaten wider?

2. Sind Sie der Ansicht, dass derartige Praktiken eine Diskriminierung aufgrund der Staatsangehörigkeit darstellen, die mit EU-Recht nicht vereinbar ist? Falls ja, welche rechtliche Bestimmung ist genau betroffen?

3. Wenn derartige Praktiken nach bestehendem EU-Recht nicht verboten sind, beabsichtigen Sie, gesetzliche Maßnahmen zu ergreifen, um sie zu untersagen?

4. Sind Sie der Ansicht, dass lokale, regionale, nationale oder europäische Behörden Maßnahmen (nicht notwendigerweise rechtlicher Art) ergreifen sollten, um derartige Praktiken in Zukunft zu unterbinden? Falls ja, welche Schritte schweben Ihnen vor, und auf welcher Ebene?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2012)

Sofern der angesprochene Fall eine Vertragsbeziehung zwischen einer Privatperson und einem nicht-gewerblichen Vermieter betrifft, steht es den Parteien (im Rahmen der einschlägigen Bestimmungen) frei zu entscheiden, wem und zu welchen Geschäftsbedingungen sie ihre Waren und Dienstleistungen anbieten.

Immobilienmakler dagegen sind Dienstleistungserbringer, für welche die Richtlinie 2006/123/EG über Dienstleistungen auf dem Binnenmarkt („Dienstleistungsrichtlinie") anwendbar ist. Wenn diese Mietdienstleistungen erbringen, müssen sie nach Artikel 20 Absatz 2 der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie ihre bekanntgegebenen Allgemeinen Geschäftsbedingungen so anpassen, dass Dienstleistungsempfänger nicht aufgrund ihrer Staatsangehörigkeit oder ihres Wohnsitzes diskriminiert werden. Eine Bürgschaft einzig für Dienstleistungsempfänger anderer Nationalität zu verlangen, könnte als Verletzung dieses Prinzips aufgefasst werden, solange diese Bedingung nicht nachweislich objektiv begründet ist.

Artikel 20 Absatz 2 der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie wurde nun in einzelstaatliches Recht umgesetzt und es obliegt den einzelstaatlichen Behörden, die Einhaltung der entsprechenden Regelungen zu gewährleisten. In diesem Fall muss eine Beschwerde bezüglich einer mutmaßlichen Verletzung der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie an die französischen Behörden gerichtet werden. Bürger können außerdem ein Netz einzelstaatlicher Stellen zur Unterstützung von Dienstleistungsempfängern kontaktieren (die Stellen nach Artikel 21). Eine Liste dieser Stellen ist hier abrufbar: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/docs/services-dir/guides/bodies_designated_en.pdf

Die Kommission wird Leitfäden für die einzelstaatlichen Behörden zur Anwendung des oben genannten Artikels 20 Absatz 2 der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie veröffentlichen und beobachtet kontinuierlich, wie diese Regelung umgesetzt wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002554/12
to the Commission
Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Discrimination in the housing market

It was brought to my attention by a German EU citizen living in France that he faces what appears to be discriminatory treatment in the housing market. The citizen's description of the case suggests the problem might be of a general scope and not specific to his situation.

When applying to rent flats, the citizen in question was repeatedly asked by landlords and letting agents to provide a French guarantor (in addition to the ordinary deposit), despite the fact that his regular income was several times higher than the rent. He was told that a guarantor would not be asked for if he were French. It thus appears that the only reason why a guarantor was required was the applicant's nationality while other objective criteria such as income did not play a role.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. To your knowledge, does this case reflect a general practice and problem in the European Union or some of its Member States?

2. Are you of the opinion that such practices constitute discrimination based on nationality inconsistent with EU legislation? If so, what exact legal provision is concerned?

3. If such practices are not banned by existing EU legislation, do you intend to take any action to make it illegal?

4. Are you of the opinion that local, regional, national or European authorities should take any action (not necessarily legal) to prevent such practices in the future? If so, what steps do you envisage and at what level?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

If the transaction in question concerns a contractual relationship between an individual and a private landlord, parties are free to decide (within the applicable rules and regulations) to whom to offer their goods and services and under which terms and conditions.

Letting agents, on the other hand, are service providers who fall within the scope of Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market ('Services Directive'). When providing rental services, they must adapt their general conditions of access made available to the public at large to the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality or residence laid down in Article 20 § 2 of the Services Directive. Requiring a guarantee only to service recipients of another nationality could appear to breach this principle unless this requirement proves to be objectively justified.

Article 20(2) of the Services Directive has now been implemented into the national legal orders and it is for national authorities to ensure compliance with the relevant laws. In this case, a complaint for an alleged violation of the Services Directive should be addressed to the French authorities. Citizens may also wish to consult the network of national bodies that assist service recipients, the so-called Article 21 bodies. A list of these bodies can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/docs/services-dir/guides/bodies_designated_en.pdf

The Commission will be issuing guidance to national authorities on the application of the abovementioned Article 20(2) of the Services Directive and will be monitoring how this provision is enforced.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002555/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: CAP reform and the sugar regime

The Commission proposals on CAP reform leave beet and isoglucose producers in a free market whilst maintaining constraints on cane refiners in a regulated market. Will the Commission explain its thinking — in particular as regards whether it is treating the two sectors equally or is in fact deliberately favouring one over the other?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 April 2012)

The Commission does not propose to prolong sugar and isoglucose quotas beyond 30 September 2015. In general the Commission carefully avoids favouring one sector over another. While competing on the same market for their end product, the sugar/sweetener producers compete on different markets for their inputs, which puts beet producers in a different legal and factual situation than the cane refiners.

As regards sourcing of their raw material:

Sugar beet processors need beet from farmers locally available over a period of four months a year only.

Isoglucose producers source year round wheat and maize mainly from EU origin.

Sugar refiners source year round raw sugar. Sugar used for EU consumption is mainly sourced from ACP countries and least developed countries' (LDCs') suppliers that have duty free quota free access to the EU. Moreover, sugar can be sourced in other parts of the world where prices are typically below the Union prices. This sugar is mainly used for inward processing and tolling.

Currently quotas effectively limit the possibilities to use raw material to produce sugar from beet and to produce isoglucose, while sugar refiners operate without limits as to their production.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002556/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Sugar regime partiality

Does the Commission agree that current sugar policies — and those proposed for October 2015 onwards — have the effect of protecting sugar sectors in certain Member States — including the less efficient sectors — while damaging sugar sectors in other Member States, often the most efficient and competitive sectors with a careful balance of beet and cane production?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

The Commission is of the view that the current sugar policies strike the right balance between different operators. As a result of the 2006 reform many less efficient producers have ceased production, increasing the overall competitiveness of the remaining operators.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002557/12
an die Kommission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: Rechtsgutachten über die Vorratsspeicherung von Daten

Kann die Kommission den Mitgliedern des LIBE-Ausschusses das Dokument Ares (2010)828204 zur Verfügung stellen?

Falls nicht, warum nicht?

Falls nicht, kann die Kommission die wichtigsten Ergebnisse des Dokuments zusammenfassen?

Antwort von Präsident Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(30. April 2012)

Bei dem in der Anfrage genannten Dokument handelt es sich um das Rechtsgutachten, das vom Juristischen Dienst der Kommission erstellt wurde, nachdem dieser im Rahmen der internen Beratungen über eine mögliche Überarbeitung der Richtlinie 2006/24/EG zur Vorratsdatenspeicherung ([1]) von der Generaldirektion Inneres (GD HOME) konsultiert worden war.

Eine Kopie dieses Dokuments wird dem Herrn Abgeordneten und dem Generalsekretariat des Parlaments direkt zugesandt.

([1]) ABl. L 105 vom 13.4.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002557/12
to the Commission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Data retention legal opinion

Can the Commission supply the document Ares (2010)828204 to the members of the LIBE committee?

If not, why not?

If not, can the Commission summarise the main findings of the document?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

The document to which the Honourable Member refers contains the opinion delivered by the Commission's Legal Service in reply to a consultation by Directorate-General Home Affairs in the context of internal preliminary discussions on a possible revision of Directive 2006/24/EC ([1]) (Data Retention Directive).

The Commission will send a copy of this document directly to the Honourable Member and to the Secretariat General of the Parliament.

([1]) OJ L 105, 13.4.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002558/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Militanti islamici yemeniti uccidono trentacinque soldati governativi

Il 3 marzo 2012, il «Los Angeles Times» ha riferito che trentacinque soldati governativi sono rimasti uccisi nella regione di Abyan, nel sud dello Yemen, dopo che estremisti islamici hanno fatto esplodere autobombe e hanno lanciato un attacco utilizzando kalashnikov e lanciarazzi RPG. I funzionari del governo sostengono che i militanti potrebbero aver catturato più di cinquanta soldati ed essersi impossessati dell'artiglieria e dei razzi dell'arsenale della base. I residenti hanno riferito che gli estremisti si sono allontanati con tre carri armati e veicoli corazzati.

Molte città e molti villaggi nel sud dello Yemen sono invasi da islamici. Finora il governo non è stato in grado di allontanarli e la loro presenza è rafforzata dall'arrivo di combattenti stranieri. Al-Qaeda intende consolidare la sua presenza nel sud del paese, al fine di attirare i membri delle tribù che sono delusi dal governo nella capitale Sana'a.

Si è registrata un'escalation di violenza in tutto lo Yemen da quando il neoeletto presidente Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi ha promesso di usare il pugno di ferro contro gli estremisti che hanno sfruttato il caos politico e tribale del paese. In febbraio Al-Qaeda ha lanciato un attacco suicida al palazzo presidenziale, uccidendo venticinque persone. Il fatto si è verificato il giorno dopo che Hadi aveva prestato giuramento. Il governo di Sana'a sta lottando per far fronte alla povertà diffusa, alla carenza di acqua e a una rivolta sciita nel nord del paese.

Il 22 febbraio 2012, l'Alto Rappresentante ha osservato che un dialogo nazionale e un processo di riconciliazione e di riforma costituzionale dovrebbero spianare la strada a uno Stato realmente inclusivo, democratico e civile. Inoltre, il 27 febbraio 2012, nelle sue conclusioni il Consiglio ha indicato che «l'UE è pertanto pronta a offrire assistenza in settori rilevanti per la transizione, quali un dialogo nazionale pienamente inclusivo, la sicurezza, la governance, la costruzione istituzionale e lo sviluppo economico».

1. Può l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente far sapere se è a conoscenza della portata dell'influenza di Al-Qaeda nel sud dello Yemen?

2. Alla luce della fragile situazione della sicurezza nello Yemen, quali sono le prospettive di successo per un dialogo nazionale e un processo di riconciliazione e di riforma costituzionale?

3. Secondo i funzionari dell'UE presenti nello Yemen, quali sono le maggiori minacce alla stabilità del paese a breve e medio termine?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton è pienamente consapevole delle minacce alla sicurezza e degli attacchi violenti perpetrati da Al Qaeda e da altri gruppi estremisti violenti, affiliati o meno a quest'ultima, nello Yemen. Il 5 marzo 2012, in un colloquio telefonico con il presidente Hadi, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha fatto specifico riferimento alla situazione e ha espresso il proprio cordoglio per la perdita di vite umane. Ha poi ribadito, sia direttamente al presidente Hadi che in una dichiarazione pubblica, che la violenza non deve compromettere il processo di transizione nello Yemen.

In questo momento le prospettive di successo del dialogo nazionale e del processo di riconciliazione e di riforma costituzionale sono difficili da valutare. È indubbio tuttavia che i partiti tradizionali dello Yemen e la comunità internazionale sono convinti della necessità di questo processo per accompagnare il paese durante la fase di transizione e oltre. In stretta collaborazione con gli Stati membri dell'UE e con gli altri interlocutori internazionali l'UE si è impegnata a far sì che la transizione sia un processo inclusivo.

Le minacce alla stabilità del paese sono molteplici e vanno dal terrorismo alle carestie e alla disoccupazione. La risposta al terrorismo non può essere solo militare ma deve essere anche sociale, politica ed economica. Occorre una strategia globale e approfondita. L'UE, in collaborazione con i partner internazionali e con il governo dello Yemen, è impegnata a definire le principali priorità e l'ordine in cui devono essere affrontate. È chiaro, tuttavia, che le questioni in materia di sicurezza, compresa la ristrutturazione del settore e la risposta ai bisogni fondamentali della popolazione, sono priorità che richiedono un'attenzione immediata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002558/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR Yemeni Islamic militants kill 35 government soldiers

On 3 March 2012, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that 35 government soldiers were killed in Yemen's southern region of Abyan after Islamic extremists set off car bombs and launched a raid using Kalashnikovs and rocket-propelled grenades. Government officials claim that militants may have captured more than 50 soldiers and that they seized artillery and rockets from the base's arsenal. Residents even reported that extremists drove away with three tanks and armoured vehicles.

There are many towns and villages in southern Yemen that are overrun by Islamists. To date, the government has been unable to unseat them, and their presence is being bolstered by the arrival of foreign fighters. Al-Qaeda wishes to strengthen its foothold in the south in order to broaden its appeal with tribesmen, who are frustrated with the government in the capital, Sana'a.

There has been an escalation of violence across Yemen since the newly elected President, Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, vowed to crush extremists who have exploited the country's political and tribal chaos. In February 2012, al-Qaeda carried out a suicide bombing at the presidential palace which killed 25 people. It occurred the day after Hadi was sworn into office. The government in Sana'a is struggling to cope with widespread poverty, water shortages and a Shia uprising in the north of the country.

On 22 February 2012, the High Representative noted that a 'national dialogue, reconciliation and constitutional reform process' was needed in order to 'pave the way for a genuinely inclusive, democratic and civil state'. In addition, the Council concluded on 27 February 2012 that 'the EU is therefore ready to offer assistance in areas relevant for the transition including a fully inclusive national dialogue, security, governance, institution building and economic development'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the extent of al-Qaeda's influence across southern Yemen?

2. In light of Yemen's fragile security situation, what are the prospects for a successful 'national dialogue, reconciliation and constitutional reform process'?

3. What do Yemen-based EU officials consider to be among the greatest threats to short-to-medium-term stability in the country?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) Ashton is fully aware of the security threats and violent attacks caused by al Qaeda and other violent extremist groups in Yemen, al Qaeda affiliated or not. In a phone call with President Hadi on 5 March 2012, the HR/VP specifically referred to this and expressed her condolences for the loss of life. The HR/VP reiterated her conviction that violence shall not be allowed to derail the transition process in Yemen, both directly with President Hadi and in a public statement thereafter.

At this point in time the prospects for a successful 'national dialogue, reconciliation and constitutional reform process' are difficult to measure. It is however true that the mainstream parties in Yemen as well as the international community are convinced of the necessity of this process to lead the country through the transition phase and beyond. In close collaboration with the EU Member States and other international actors the EU is committed to make all efforts to ensure that the transition will be an inclusive process.

The threats to stability in the country are multiple, ranging from terrorism to food shortage and unemployment. The answer to terrorism cannot be military only — it has to be political, social and economic. It needs a thorough and comprehensive strategy. The EU, in collaboration with international partners and the Government of Yemen, is identifying the main priorities and the sequence in which they need to be addressed. It is clear however, that security issues, including restructuring of the security sector as well as addressing the immediate basic needs of the population, are among the priorities that need urgent attention.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002559/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(6 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Compatibilità del Decreto Legge n. 5/2012 con la direttiva 89/391/CEE

Il governo italiano ha emanato, in data 9 febbraio 2012, il Decreto Legge n. 5/2012 recante «Disposizioni urgenti in materia di semplificazione e di sviluppo». L'articolo 14, paragrafo 4, lettera f), relativo alla semplificazione dei controlli sulle imprese prevede la «soppressione o riduzione dei controlli sulle imprese in possesso della certificazione del sistema di gestione per la qualità (UNI EN ISO-9001), o altra appropriata certificazione emessa, a fronte di norme armonizzate, da un organismo di certificazione accreditato da un ente di accreditamento designato da uno Stato membro dell'Unione europea ai sensi del Regolamento 2008/765/CE, o firmatario degli Accordi internazionali di mutuo riconoscimento (IAF MLA).»

Dal testo del decreto non sono esplicitamente esclusi i controlli riguardanti l'applicazione delle normative in materia di salute e sicurezza sul lavoro.

Il regolamento (CE) n. 765/2008 determina un quadro di vigilanza sul prodotto e non sul processo produttivo.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se ritiene che tale formulazione sia compatibile rispetto alla direttiva 89/391/CEE, e in particolare rispetto all'articolo 4, paragrafo 2, che prevede che «gli Stati membri assicurano in particolare una vigilanza ed una sorveglianza adeguate»?

Risposta data da Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(20 aprile 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della pubblicazione del DL italiano n. 5/2012 recante disposizioni urgenti in materia di semplificazione e sviluppo, e in particolare del suo articolo 14, comma 4, lettera f), che riduce o elimina i controlli sulle imprese.

La Commissione sta analizzando la questione sollevata dall'onorevole deputato alla luce dell'articolo 4, paragrafo 2, della direttiva 89/391/CEE il quale stabilisce che «Gli Stati membri assicurano in particolare una vigilanza e una sorveglianza adeguate.» La Commissione contatterà, se del caso, le autorità nazionali per ottenere ulteriori informazioni e chiarimenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002559/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Compatibility of Decree Law No 5/2012 with Directive 89/391/EEC

On 9 February 2012, the Italian Government issued Decree Law No 5/2012 introducing 'Urgent measures on simplification and development'. Article 14(4)(f), concerning the simplification of checks on companies, provides for the 'elimination or reduction of audits on companies with (UNI EN ISO-9001) quality management system certification, or other equivalent certification, in view of harmonised standards, issued by a certification body accredited by an accreditation body designated by a Member State of the European Union pursuant to Regulation 2008/765/EC, or a signatory of the International Accreditation Forum Multilateral Recognition Arrangements (IAF MLA)'.

Checks on the implementation of the rules concerning health and safety at work are not explicitly excluded from the wording of the decree.

Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 establishes a surveillance framework for products and not production processes.

In view of the above, can the Commission state if it considers that such wording is compatible with Directive 89/391/EEC and, in particular, with Article 4(2), which provides that 'In particular, Member States shall ensure adequate controls and supervision'?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the publication of Italian Decree Law No 5/2012 laying down urgent provisions regarding simplification and development, and in particular of Article 14(4)(f) thereof, which reduces or eliminates company checks and inspections.

The Commission is currently analysing the issue raised by the Honourable Member in the light of Article 4(2) of Directive 89/391/EEC, which provides that 'In particular, Member States shall ensure adequate controls and supervision'. It will, where necessary, contact the national authorities to obtain further information and clarifications.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002562/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: Dėl Europos jūrų transporto erdvės Baltijos jūros regione

Jūrų transporto sektorius labai prisideda prie Baltijos jūros regiono klestėjimo. Panaikinus arba supaprastinus administracines Europos Sąjungos vidaus jūrų transporto procedūras, jūrų transportas taptų patrauklesnis, veiksmingesnis ir konkurencingesnis. Kuriant Europos jūrų transporto erdvę be kliūčių turi būti didinamas bendras ES vidaus jūrų transporto veiksmingumas. Šiuo tikslu turėtų būti siekiama šalinti pagrindines administracines kliūtis, trikdančias laivybos plėtrą.

Pagal vieną iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų Baltijos jūros regione numatyta įgyvendinti Europos jūrų transporto erdvę be kliūčių.

Ar Komisija galėtų pateikti informacijos apie tai, kokių priemonių imtasi siekiant mažinti administracinę naštą, su kuria susiduria laivybos bendrovės? Ar, siekiant supaprastinti administracinius formalumus, pradėtos tirti esamos teisinės ir administracinės kliūtys? Ar atliekami reguliavimo ir administracinės sistemos pakeitimai? Kokios šalys dalyvauja įgyvendinant šį projektą? Kokio dydžio finansavimas reikalingas ir kiek lėšų šiuo metu skirta šiam projektui įgyvendinti?

Komisijos nario S. Kallaso atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 19 d.)

2009 m. sausio 21 d. Europos Komisija priėmė komunikatą ir veiksmų planą dėl Europos jūrų transporto erdvės be kliūčių sukūrimo ([1]), kad būtų supaprastintos jūrų transportui taikomos administracinės procedūros. Veiksmų plane numatytos trumpalaikės ir vidutinės trukmės priemonės ir rekomendacijos valstybėms narėms.

Priemonės bus naudingos visoms valstybėms narėms. Skirti specialaus finansavimo pagal šias priemones nenumatyta, tačiau ši iniciatyva netiesiogiai remiama subsidijomis, kurios skiriamos pagal transeuropinio transporto tinklo programą pateiktiems projektams, visų pirma tam, kad uostuose būtų sukurtos „vieno langelio“ sistemos. Komisija toliau sieks, kad būtų sukurta Europos jūrų transporto erdvė be kliūčių ir įgyvendintos naujos iniciatyvos, pavyzdžiui, 2010 m. lapkričio mėn. „Mėlynosios juostos“ bandomasis projektas. Laikoma, kad tai ypač svarbu Baltijos jūros regionui, o pažanga taip pat stebima pagal ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategiją.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/maritime/short_sea_shipping/short_sea_shipping_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002562/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: A European maritime transport space in the Baltic Sea Region

The maritime transport sector makes a significant contribution to the prosperity of the Baltic Sea Region. Eliminating or simplifying administrative procedures in intra-EU maritime transport would make maritime transport more attractive, more efficient and more competitive. Creating a European maritime transport space without barriers should boost the overall effectiveness of intra-EU maritime transport. The aim should be to remove major administrative obstacles to the development of shipping.

According to one of the main projects of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, provision is made for the implementation in the Baltic Sea Region of a European maritime transport space without barriers.

Can the Commission provide information about the measures being taken to reduce the administrative burden faced by shipping companies? Has it begun to examine existing legal and administrative obstacles in order to simplify administrative formalities? Are amendments being made to the regulatory and administrative framework? Which countries are involved in the implementation of this project? What amount of funding is required and how much funds are currently allocated to implement this project?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

On 21 January 2009 the European Commission adopted a communication and an action plan on the establishment of a European maritime transport space without barriers ([1]) designed to simplify administrative procedures applicable to maritime transport. The action plan contains short- and medium-term measures and recommendations to the Member States.

These measures will benefit to all Member States. They do not include dedicated funding but the initiative is indirectly supported by subsidies granted to projects presented in the framework of the trans-European Transport Network Programme, notably in view to establish single windows in ports. The Commission will pursue its effort to fully realise the 'European maritime transport space without barriers' alongside with new initiatives, notably the Blue Belt Pilot Project launched in November 2010. In the Baltic Sea Region this is considered to be of great importance and the progress is monitored also in the context of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/maritime/short_sea_shipping/short_sea_shipping_en.htm

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002563/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: ES ir Rusijos pasienio padėtis

Europos Sąjunga ir Rusija – svarbios prekybos partnerės. Rusija yra trečia pagal dydį ES prekybos partnerė. Užtikrinant sklandžią ir saugią tarpusavio prekybą svarbų vaidmenį atlieka muitinės. Tiek ES, tiek Rusijai itin svarbus šios srities bendradarbiavimas. Būtina stiprinti tolesnį bendradarbiavimą bei infrastruktūros gerinimą pasienio postuose.

Remiantis Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio pirmąja prioritetine sritimi, pagrindinis siekis yra pašalinti vidaus rinkos kliūtis, pagerinti bendradarbiavimą muitų ir mokesčių srityje.

Ar Komisija gali informuoti, koks progresas pasiektas Rusijai įgyvendinant teisėkūros, administracines ir procedūrines priemones, gerinančias padėtį pasienyje? Kokie veiksmai atlikti įgyvendinant ir plėtojant sienų kirtimo vietų ir muitinių infrastruktūrą? Kokių rezultatų pasiekta įgyvendinant ES ir Rusijos bandomąjį informacijos mainų projektą? Kokiomis priemonėmis gerinamos ES ir Rusijos sienų kontrolės procedūros?

Komisijos nario A. Šemetos atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 11 d.)

Siekdama palengvinti teisėtą prekybą, didinti tiekimo grandinės saugumą bei saugą ir kovoti su sukčiavimu, Komisija muitinių bendradarbiavimui su Rusija teikia pirmenybę.

2010 m. pabaigoje Rusijos muitinės vadovas Andrejus Belianinovas ir Komisijos narys A. Šemeta patvirtino ES ir Rusijos muitinių bendradarbiavimo strateginę programą. Programa pagrįsta trimis prioritetais: saugių bei sklandžių prekybos kelių, rizikos valdymo ir kovos su sukčiavimu, taip pat investicijų į muitinių modernizavimą. Imtasi keleto priemonių šiems prioritetams įgyvendinti, dėmesį sutelkiant į įgaliotiesiems ekonominių operacijų vykdytojams taikytinas nuostatas ir teisinę konvergenciją. Įsteigtos muitinės teisės aktų ir procedūrų harmonizavimo, prekybos subjektų atitiktimi pagrįstos sklandesnės prekybos užtikrinimo ir aktyvesnio rizikos valdymo metodų taikymo nacionalinių ekspertų grupės. Rengiamasi parašais patvirtinti ES ir Rusijos išankstinio įspėjimo mechanizmą, kurio paskirtis – spręsti problemas, dėl kurių gali padaugėti spūsčių prie sienos.

Artimiausiais mėnesiais pagal ES ir Rusijos bendros erdvės priemonę tikimasi pradėti vertinimą, kaip įgyvendinamas ES ir Rusijos bandomasis keitimosi išankstine muitinės informacija projektas.

Pastaraisiais metais su ES parama įgyvendinta keletas infrastruktūros projektų, įskaitant Černiševskoje ir Mamonovo II sienos perėjimo punktuose vykdytus projektus. Be to, pasienio infrastruktūrai atnaujinti plačiai naudojamos Europos kaimynystės ir partnerystės priemonės tarpvalstybinio bendradarbiavimo programos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002563/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: The EU-Russia border situation

The European Union and Russia are important trade partners. Russia is the EU's third largest trade partner. Customs play an important role in ensuring smooth and safe mutual trade. Cooperation in this area is especially important, both for the EU and Russia. There is a need to strengthen cooperation further and to improve infrastructure at border points.

According to the first priority area of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the main aim is to remove internal market obstacles and improve cooperation in the area of customs and taxation.

Can the Commission say what progress Russia has made in implementing the legislative, administrative and procedural measures that will improve the situation on the border? What actions have been carried out to establish and develop border crossing points and customs infrastructure? What results have been achieved in implementing a *pilot* project on *EU-Russia information exchanges?* What measures are being taken to improve EU-Russia border control procedures?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

The Commission pursues customs cooperation with Russia as a matter of priority in order to facilitate legitimate trade while enhancing the security and safety of the supply chain and fighting against fraud.

At the end of 2010, the Head of Russian Customs Andrei Belyaninov and Commissioner Šemeta endorsed the Strategic Framework for EU-Russia Customs Cooperation. The framework is based on three priorities: safe and fluid trade lanes, risk management and the fight against fraud; and investment in customs modernisation. A number of steps have been taken in order to implement these priorities with emphasis on the treatment of Authorised Economic Operators (AEOs) and legislative convergence. National expert groups have been established on harmonising customs legislation and procedures, achieving greater trade facilitation on the basis of trade operators' compliance and enhancing application of risk management methods. An EU-Russia Early Warning Mechanism is being finalised for signature, with the objective of defusing issues that may lead to increased congestion at the border.

An evaluation study under the EU-Russia Common Space Facility is expected to be launched in the coming months in order to assess the implementation of the EU-Russia pilot project on exchange of advance customs information.

A number of infrastructural projects have been implemented with the financial support of the EU during recent years, including at the border crossing points Chernyshevskoye and Mamonovo II. The ENPI CBC programmes are also widely used for upgrading border infrastructure.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002564/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: Dėl Baltijos jūros regiono darbo rinkos

Atsižvelgiant į šiuo metu sulėtėjusį ekonomikos augimą ir išaugusį nedarbo lygį labai svarbu daugiau dėmesio skirti aktyviai darbo rinkos politikai ir kintantiems darbo rinkos poreikiams. Dėl demografinių pokyčių ir migracijos procesų darbo rinka Baltijos jūros regione susitraukė. Būtina stiprinti darbo rinkos plėtrą, siekti didesnės šios rinkos integracijos ir skatinti aktyvesnį bendradarbiavimą tarpvalstybiniu mastu Baltijos jūros regione. Didelio masto užimtumas, kokybiškos darbo vietos, kvalifikuota darbo jėga – svarbūs veiksniai siekiant, kad regionas būtų konkurencingas ir patrauklus.

Viena iš Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos prioritetinių sričių – įgyvendinti Smulkiojo verslo aktą, t. y. skatinti verslumą, stiprinti mažąsias ir vidutines įmones ir veiksmingiau naudoti žmogiškuosius išteklius.

Norėčiau paklausti Komisijos, ko pasiekta įgyvendinant Baltijos jūros regiono darbo jėgos tinklo projektą? Kokiomis priemonėmis siekiama valdyti ir derinti bendrus Baltijos jūros regiono darbo rinkos aspektus? Kokia pažanga padaryta valstybių įdarbinimo tarnybų bendradarbiavimo srityje?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. gegužės 2 d.)

1. Įgyvendinant Baltijos jūros regiono darbo jėgos tinklo projektą 2011 m. lapkritį įsteigtas Baltijos jūros regiono darbo jėgos forumas. Šis forumas skirtas dalytis patirtimi, skatinti bendradarbiavimą, socialinius dialogus, trišales struktūras ir pagrindinių darbo rinkos subjektų regione, įskaitant Rusijos socialinius partnerius ir politinius sprendimus priimančius subjektus, bendradarbiavimą. Forumo sekretoriatas turėtų būti įkurtas iki 2012 m. pabaigos Baltijos jūros valstybių tarybos sekretoriate Stokholme.

2. Priemonės, skirtos spręsti ir derinti bendrus darbo rinkos politikos klausimus, yra svarbiausia strategijos „Europa 2020“ dalis. Strategijoje „Europa 2020“ nustatytas pagrindinis tikslas – 75 proc. užimtumas 20-64 m. amžiaus grupėje – ES lygiu turi būti pasiektas iki 2020 m. Šis tikslas buvo paverstas nacionaliniais tikslais. Komisija taip pat pristatė pavyzdines iniciatyvas pažangai skatinti, išdėstydama veiklos prioritetus valstybėms narėms ir sau pačiai. Be to, ji vertina pažangą įgyvendinant veiklos prioritetus ir siekiant tikslų bei rengia konkrečiai šaliai skirtas rekomendacijas.

3. Komisija aktyviai ragina valstybines užimtumo tarnybas bendradarbiauti ir dalytis geriausia patirtimi, *inter alia*, pasinaudojant abipusio mokymosi programa. Šia programa prisidedama prie vykdomos veiklos, įskaitant ES valstybinių užimtumo tarnybų, be kita ko, Estijoje, Latvijoje ir Lietuvoje, vidinį bei tarpusavio bendradarbiavimą. Be to, pagal 2010-2013 m. EURES partnerystės susitarimą šios šalys kasmet gauna maždaug 300 000 EUR finansavimą judumui ES viduje.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002564/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: The Baltic Sea Region labour market

Given the current slowdown in economic growth and the increased unemployment rate, it is very important to pay more attention to active labour market policy and changing labour market needs. The labour market in the Baltic Sea Region has shrunk due to demographic changes and migration processes. It is essential to strengthen labour market development, to work towards greater integration of this market and to promote more active cross-border co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region. Large-scale employment, quality jobs and a skilled workforce are important factors for ensuring that the region is competitive and attractive.

One of the priority areas of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is to implement the Small Business Act for Europe, i.e. to promote entrepreneurship, strengthen small and medium-sized enterprises and use human resources more effectively.

Can the Commission describe what has been achieved by the implementation of the Baltic Sea Labour Network Project? What measures are directed at managing and coordinating common aspects of the labour market of the Baltic Sea Region? What progress has been made in the area of cooperation between national employment services?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2012)

1. The Baltic Sea Labour Network project set up the Baltic Sea Labour Forum (BSLF) in November 2011. The BSLF is a network for exchanging experiences, fostering communication, social dialogues, tripartite structures and cooperation among the key labour actors in the region, including Russian social partners and political decision-makers. The Forum's Secretariat is expected to be based in the Council of the Baltic Sea States' (CBSS) Secretariat in Stockholm later in 2012.

2. Measures to manage and coordinate common aspects of labour market policies are a key part of the Europe 2020 strategy. Europe 2020 sets a headline target of 75 % employment rate of the 20-64 age group, to be achieved by 2020 at EU level. This target has been translated into national targets. The Commission also put forward Flagship Initiatives to encourage progress, setting out priority actions both for Member States and itself. It also assesses the progress on priority actions and towards the targets and drafts country specific recommendations.

3. The Commission actively encourages public employment services to cooperate and exchange best practice, *inter alia* on the basis of a mutual learning programme. This programme reinforces existing activities, including cooperation in and between EU public employment services, including those of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Moreover, these countries receive funding for intra-EU mobility of around EUR 300 000 each year under the EURES partnership agreement 2010-2013.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002565/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: Dėl papildomų dažnių naudojimo

Europos Parlamentas, skatindamas skaitmeninės televizijos plėtrą, priėmė rezoliuciją, kurioje ES šalims rekomenduojama iki 2013 m. išjungti analoginę antžeminę televiziją. Sutankintas skaitmeninis srautas leidžia atlaisvinti nemažą dažnių spektro dalį. Atlaisvintais dažniais gali pasinaudoti interneto, mobiliojo ryšio ir kitų paslaugų teikėjai. Efektyvesnis dažnių naudojimas prisidės prie skaitmeninės atskirties mažinimo: kaimo vietovėse ims veikti belaidis plačiajuostis ryšys, daugiau piliečių galės paprasčiau patenkinti įvairius socialinius, ekonominius ir kultūrinius poreikius, vis labiau priklausančius nuo naujųjų technologijų.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta: „Koordinuoti papildomų dažnių naudojimą“.

Ar Komisija gali nurodyti, kokiomis priemonėmis koordinuojamas papildomų dažnių naudojimas, siekiant veiksmingesnio jų naudojimo? Kaip bendrovės skatinamos teikti plačiajuosčio ryšio paslaugas retai gyvenamose vietovėse? Kas pasiekta sustiprinto valstybių narių bendradarbiavimo, siekiant daugiašalio koordinavimo ir rinkos kontrolės, modelių rengimo srityje?

N. Kroes atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 26 d.)

Nuo 2010 m. Komisija ėmėsi iniciatyvų skaitmeninio dividendo efektyvaus naudojimo srityje, įskaitant sprendimą dėl 800 MHz dažnių juostos naudojimo techninio suderinimo ([1]), taip pat kitas priemones, įtrauktas į neseniai priimtą Radijo spektro politikos programą (RSPP) ([2]). Be kita ko, programoje valstybės narės įpareigotos iki 2013 m. sausio 1 d. užbaigti patvirtinimo procesą, kad 800 MHz dažnių juostą būtų galima naudoti elektroninių ryšių paslaugoms ([3]), taip pat bendradarbiaujant su Komisija prireikus skatinti prieigą prie plačiajuosčio ryšio paslaugų naudojant 800 MHz dažnių juostą atokiose ir retai apgyvendintose vietovėse ([4]).

Be to, Radijo spektro politikos programoje Komisija raginama stebėti belaidžio plačiajuosčio ryšio paslaugų poreikį ir iki 2015 m. sausio 1 d. Europos Parlamentui ir Tarybai pranešti, ar būtina imtis veiksmų siekiant suderinti papildomas dažnio juostas ([5]). Tokią nuostatą Komisija visapusiškai įgyvendino – ji ėmėsi tarptautinių spektro koordinavimo veiksmų, visų pirma susijusių su neseniai surengta Tarptautinės telekomunikacijų sąjungos 2012 m. Pasaulio radijo ryšio konferencija ([6]).

Komisija, padedama Europos pašto ir telekomunikacijų administracijų konferencijos (CEPT), teikė tiesioginę politinę paramą valstybėms narėms, kad joms būtų lengviau sudaryti susitarimus su Rusija ir kitomis Rytų Europos šalimis dėl 800 MHz dažnių juostos naudojimo koordinavimo. Be to, Radijo spektro politikos grupė (RSPG) neseniai susitarė dėl naujo proceso, kad galėtų patarti Komisijai dvišalio ir daugiašalio koordinavimo klausimais tarptautiniu ir ES mastu ([7]); tikimasi, kad dažniausiai tai bus susiję su skaitmeninio dividendo spektru.

([1]) 2010 m. gegužės 6 d. Komisijos sprendimas 2010/267/ES dėl antžeminių sistemų, kuriomis galima teikti elektroninio ryšio paslaugas, naudojimo 790-862 MHz dažnių juostoje Europos Sąjungoje suderintų techninių sąlygų.
([2]) OL L 81, 2012 03 21.
([3]) RSPP 6.4 straipsnis. Tam tikromis sąlygomis gali būti taikomos nukrypti leidžiančios nuostatos.
([4]) RSPP 6.6 straipsnis.
([5]) RSPP 6.5 straipsnis.
([6]) COM(2011) 0180, pateiktas rengiantis 2012 m. Radijo ryšio konferencijai, ypač atsižvelgiant į darbotvarkės 8.2 klausimą dėl belaidžio globaliojo tinklo papildomo spektro poreikio (be kita ko, galbūt įskaitant papildomą skaitmeninį dividendą) vertinimo 2015 m. Radijo ryšio konferencijoje.
([7]) Radijo spektro politikos grupės nuomonė RSPG12-409 dėl ES paramos dvišaliam spektro koordinavimui, http://rspg.ec.europa.eu/rspg_opinions/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002565/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: On the use of the digital dividend

Promoting the development of digital television, the European Parliament adopted a resolution in which it is recommended that EU Member States switch off analogue terrestrial television by 2013. Multiplexed digital streams allow a large proportion of the frequency spectrum to be freed up. Freed-up frequencies can be used by Internet, mobile phone and other service providers. More effective frequency use will contribute to reducing the digital divide: wireless broadband will be available in rural areas and it will be simpler for more citizens to satisfy various social, economic and cultural needs that are becoming increasingly dependent on new technologies.

One of the main projects of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is to 'coordinate the use of the digital dividend'.

Can the Commission indicate what measures are being used to coordinate the use of the digital dividend so that it is used more effectively? How are companies being encouraged to provide broadband services in sparsely populated areas? What has been achieved in the area of developing models of enhanced Member State cooperation for multilateral coordination and market control?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

Since 2010, the Commission has taken a number of initiatives regarding the efficient use of the digital dividend, including a decision on the technical harmonisation of the 800 MHz band ([1]) as well as other measures integrated in the recently adopted Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP) ([2]). In particular, the RSPP includes an obligation for Member States to carry out the authorisation process by 1 January 2013 in order to allow the use of the 800 MHz band for electronic communications services ([3]) as well as to promote, in cooperation with the Commission, access to broadband services using the 800 MHz band in remote and sparsely populated areas, where appropriate ([4]).

The RSPP also includes a call to the Commission for monitoring the capacity requirements for wireless broadband services and to report to the European Parliament and the Council by 1 January 2015 on whether there is a need for action to harmonise additional frequency bands ([5]). This approach was fully reflected in the Commission's international spectrum coordination efforts, in particular in the context of the recent International Telecommunication Union (ITU) World Radiocommunication Conference 2012 ([6]).

In terms of direct assistance to Member States, the Commission, assisted by the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT), provided political support to facilitate the conclusion of individual agreements between Member States and Russia and other Eastern European countries with regard the coordination of the 800 MHz band. In addition, the Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG) has recently agreed on a new process to be able to advise the Commission on international as well as intra-EU cases of bilateral or multilateral coordination issues ([7]), most of which are expected to relate to the digital dividend spectrum.

([1]) Commission Decision 2010/267/EU of 6 May 2010 on harmonised technical conditions of use in the 790-862 MHz frequency band for terrestrial systems capable of providing electronic communications services in the European Union.
([2]) OJ L 81, 21.3.2012.
([3]) RSPP Article 6.4. Derogations can be granted under specified conditions.
([4]) RSPP Article 6.6.
([5]) RSPP Article 6.5.
([6]) COM(2011) 0180 in preparation for the WRC-12, in particular in the context of agenda item 8.2 concerning the examination at WRC-15 of further spectrum needs for mobile broadband, including possibly but not exclusively a further digital dividend.
([7]) Radio Spectrum Policy Group, Opinion RSPG12-409 on EU assistance in bilateral spectrum coordination, available at http://rspg.ec.europa.eu/rspg_opinions/index_en.htm

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002566/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: Mažųjų ir vidutinių įmonių dalyvavimas viešuosiuose pirkimuose

Mažosios ir vidutinės įmonės (MVĮ) laikomos Europos ekonomikos pagrindu, jos teikia didžiulių darbo vietų kūrimo, augimo ir naujovių diegimo galimybių. Geresnės MVĮ sąlygos patekti į viešųjų pirkimų rinkas leistų išnaudoti šį potencialą. Labai svarbu MVĮ suteikti galimybę lengviau dalyvauti viešųjų pirkimų procedūrose. Siekiant, kad būtų skatinamas pažangus ir tvarus viešųjų pirkimų augimas, reikėtų supaprastinti jų taisykles, padidinti efektyvumą, veiksmingumą ir juos labiau pritaikyti prie kintančių politinių, socialinių ir ekonominių aplinkybių. Supaprastintos efektyvesnės procedūros būtų naudingos visiems ūkio subjektams.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta „naudotis visomis Europos geriausios praktikos kodekso, kuriuo siekiama palengvinti MVĮ dalyvavimą viešuosiuose pirkimuose, teikiamomis galimybėmis.“

Noriu paklausti Komisijos, kokių rezultatų pavyko pasiekti naudojantis Europos geriausios praktikos kodekso teikiamomis galimybėmis, siekiant pašalinti mažųjų ir vidutinių įmonių (MVĮ) plėtros kliūtis?

Kokių konkrečių priemonių imtasi, kad viešosios sutartys būtų kuo labiau prieinamos MVĮ?

Kokios šalys dalyvauja įgyvendinant šį projektą?

Komisijos nario J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 26 d.)

Atsižvelgdama į Smulkiojo verslo akto Europai įgyvendinimą ir jo peržiūrą, Komisija paskelbė Gerosios patirties kodeksą, kuriuo MVĮ užtikrinamos palankesnės sąlygos sudaryti viešojo pirkimo sutartis ([1]), ir paragino valstybes nares visapusiškai jį įgyvendinti ([2]). Kodekse pateikiamos gairės, kaip gali būti taikoma ES teisinė sistema, kad MVĮ būtų sudaromos palankesnės sąlygos dalyvauti sutarčių sudarymo procedūrose. Be to, 2011 m. gruodžio mėn. Komisija priėmė pasiūlymą modernizuoti viešuosius pirkimus Europos Sąjungoje. Kai kurios naujos priemonės bus ypač naudingos MVĮ: reikalaujamų dokumentų skaičiaus sumažinimas; finansavimo pajėgumų reikalavimų, taikomų teikiant pasiūlymą, sumažinimas; viešųjų pirkimų sutarčių suskaidymas dalimis.

ES Baltijos jūros strategija teikiama didelė parama MVĮ, kad jos galėtų lengviau naudotis paslaugomis. Nauju pavyzdiniu projektu „Baltic Supply“ (kuriame dalyvauja Vokietija, Danija, Suomija, Švedija, Estija, Latvija, Lietuva ir Lenkija) siekiama MVĮ sudaryti palankesnes sąlygas dalyvauti dideliuose originalios įrangos gamintojų konkursuose kitose šalyse ([3]). Projektas įgyvendinamas drauge su projektu „North Sea Supply Connect“ Verslo plėtros paramos tinkle ([4]) paslaugoms internetu ir tiesiogiai teikiamoms paslaugoms (pavyzdžiui, konkursų paslaugos, inovacijų portalai, informacija apie galimus partnerius ir konferencijas, tarptautinių verslo partnerių paieška, e. mokymasis, savęs vertinimo priemonės, mokymas MVĮ, konsultavimas, prie individualių poreikių pritaikyta parama ieškant verslo partnerių).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/other_aspects/index_en.htm#smes.
([2]) Valstybės narės šiam pasiūlymui pritarė 2011 m. gegužės 31 d. Konkurencingumo taryboje.
([3]) www.balticsupply.eu.
([4]) www.eubizz.net.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002566/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Involvement of small and medium-sized enterprises in public procurement

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are regarded as the backbone of the European economy, and they have a huge potential for job creation, growth and innovation. Better access for SMEs to procurement markets would enable them to unlock this potential. It is very important to make it easier for SMEs to participate in public procurement procedures. In order to promote progressive and sustainable public procurement growth, the rules need to be simplified, made more efficient, effective and better suited to deal with the evolving political, social and economic context. Streamlined and more-efficient procedures will benefit all economic operators.

One of the main projects of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is to 'make the most of the European Code of Best Practices Facilitating Access by SMEs to Public Procurement'.

I would like to ask the Commission what results have been achieved using the opportunities provided by the European Code of Best Practices to remove barriers to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)?

What specific measures are being taken to make public contracts more accessible to SMEs?

Which countries are involved in the implementation of this project?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

In the context of the implementation of the 'Small Business Act' for Europe and its 'Review', the Commission published a Code of Best Practices facilitating SME access to public procurement ([1]) and invited the Member States to fully implement it ([2]). The Code provides guidance on how the EU legal framework can be applied in a way which facilitates SME participation in contract award procedures. In addition, in December 2011 the Commission adopted a proposal to modernise public procurement in the European Union. Some of the new measures will particularly benefit SMEs: reduction of documentation requirements, limits to the financial capacity requirements for the submission of a tender, splitting public contracts into lots.

The EU Baltic Sea Strategy provides a strong support to SMEs to get better access to services. One new Flagship project 'Baltic Supply' (involving Germany, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland), is focused on access of SMEs to large tenders of Original Equipment Manufacturers in other countries ([3]). It works alongside the North Sea Supply Connect project, a Business Development Support Network of online ([4]) and offline services (eg. tendering services, innovation portals, information on matchmakings and conferences, search for international business partners, e-learning, self assessment tools, SME training, coaching, individual tailored support in search for business partners).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/other_aspects/index_en.htm#smes.
([2]) Member states endorsed this proposal in the Competitiveness Council Commission of 31 May 2011.
([3]) www.balticsupply.eu.
([4]) www.eubizz.net.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002567/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: Dėl tvarios žuvininkystės, gyvūnų sveikatos ir ligų kontrolės

Baltijos jūros regionas turi išsaugoti ir plėtoti žuvininkystės sektorių, pertvarkydamas jį į ekonomiškai efektyvią ir socialiai naudingą veiklos šaką. Reikia užtikrinti racionalią žvejybą Baltijos jūros priekrantėje, socialinį reikšmingumą, darnią plėtrą bei skatinti tarpvalstybinį žuvininkystės regionų bendradarbiavimą ir veiklos koordinavimą.

Dėl prekybos globalizavimo, gyvūnų, gyvūninių maisto produktų judėjimo susidaro sąlygos pasireikšti rimtoms gyvūnų ligų epidemijoms. Reikia būti pasiruošusiems likviduoti pavojingas gyvūnų užkrečiamąsias ligas ir šiuo metu vis labiau plintančių gyvūnų egzotinių ligų protrūkius. Būtina užkirsti kelią su gyvūnų sveikata susijusiam pavojui vykdant socialiai atsakingą gyvūnų ligų prevencijos ir kontrolės politiką.

Remiantis Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio ketvirtąja prioritetine sritimi, pagrindinis siekis yra stiprinti tvarų žemės ūkį, miškininkystę ir žuvininkystę.

Ar Komisija galėtų pateikti informaciją, kokių rezultatų pasiekta stabdant sugautų žuvų išmetimą į jūrą?

Kokiomis priemonėmis siekiama užtikrinti tausią žvejybą?

Kaip skatinami tausios akvakultūros gamybos metodai?

Kokiais būdais plėtojamas valstybių narių ir suinteresuotųjų šalių veiklos koordinavimas ir bendradarbiavimas valdant žuvininkystę?

Kaip siekiama stiprinti gyvūnų sveikatos ir ligų kontrolę?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 24 d.)

1. Toliau vykdomas Danijos vadovaujamas pavyzdinis projektas, skirtas sustabdyti sugautų žuvų išmetimą į jūrą. Parengtas sugautų žuvų išmetimo sustabdymo Baltijos jūroje veiksmų planas, o draudimas išmesti sugautas žuvis buvo įtrauktas į bendros žuvininkystės politikos reformų rinkinį.

2. Vienas iš Komisijos pateiktų pasiūlymų bendrai žuvininkystės politikai reformuoti – tai stiprinti ekosistemomis grindžiamus daugiamečius planus žuvininkystės valdymo srityje siekiant užtikrinti, kad iki 2015 m. būtų pradėta tvariai naudoti žuvies išteklius ([1]). Jau pradėtas rengti įvairių rūšių (Baltijos jūros menkių ir pelaginių žuvų) ištekliams skirtas planas. Švedijos vadovaujamame tvarios žūklės projekte daugiausia dėmesio skiriama pasiūlyto valdymo plano biologiniam ir ekonominiam poveikiui, susijusiam su Baltijos lašišomis.

3. Pagal projektą „Bestaq“ parengtas preliminarus Atsakingos akvakultūros Baltijos jūros regione elgesio kodeksas. Be to, vienas iš projekto siekių yra informuoti valstybes nares apie nacionalines akvakultūros iniciatyvas ir būsimąsias Komisijos gaires.

4. Baltijos valstybių narių iniciatyva „Baltfish“ padeda žuvininkystės priežiūros institucijoms, pramonės, regioninėms organizacijoms ([2]) ir kitiems regiono subjektams koordinuoti savo veiklą.

5. Suderinti teisės aktai ir atitinkamos techninės priemonės, pvz., ES ir nacionalinių etaloninių žuvų, moliuskų ir vėžiagyvių laboratorijų tinklas, leidžia užtikrinti vandens gyvūnų sveikatą ir ligų kontrolę visoje ES. Griežtai reglamentuotas bendradarbiavimas pagal minėtą ES strategiją vykdomas nenumatytų atvejų planavimo, mokymo ir kt. srityse.

([1]) COM(2011) 417 galutinis.
([2]) (Helsinkio konvencijos).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002567/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: On sustainable fishing, animal health and disease control

The Baltic Sea region must maintain and develop the fisheries sector, transforming it into a cost-efficient and socially beneficial area of activity. There is a need to ensure sustainable fishing along the Baltic Sea coast, social significance and sustainable development, as well as to promote cross-border cooperation between fisheries regions and the coordination of activities.

The globalisation of trade and the movement of animals and animal foodstuffs has created the environment for serious animal disease epidemics to occur. There is a need to be prepared to eradicate dangerous contagious animal diseases and outbreaks of exotic animal diseases that are currently on the increase. Animal health risks must be prevented through a socially responsible animal disease prevention and control policy.

According to the fourth priority area of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the main objective is to reinforce sustainable agriculture, forestry and fishing.

Could the Commission provide information on the results achieved in stopping discards?

What measures are being taken to ensure sustainable fishing?

How are sustainable aquaculture production methods being promoted?

What means are being used to develop coordination of Member State and stakeholder activities and cooperation between Member States and stakeholders in fisheries management?

How is animal health and disease control to be reinforced?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

1. The Danish-led flagship project on eradicating discards is ongoing. There is a draft road map for eliminating discards in the Baltic, and a discard ban has been tabled as a part of the Common Fisheries Plan (CFP) reform package.

2. As part of its proposals for the reform of the common fisheries policy, the Commission has proposed to strengthen the use of eco-system based multi-annual plans in fisheries management in order to ensure the exploitation of stocks at sustainable levels by 2015 ([1]). Work on developing a multi-species plan covering cod and pelagic stocks for the Baltic sea is under way. The Swedish-led sustainable fishing project focuses on the impact of the biological and economic consequences of the proposed management plan for Baltic salmon.

3. The project (Bestaq) has developed a draft Code of Conduct for Responsible Aquaculture in the Baltic Sea Region. It also aims at informing Member States on national aquaculture initiatives and future Commission guidelines.

4. The Baltic Member States' initiative, Baltfish, develops coordination among fisheries administrators, industry, regional ([2]) and other actors in the region.

5. Harmonised legislation and appropriate technical tools such as the network of the EU and National Reference Laboratories for fish, molluscs and crustaceans are in place to ensure the health of aquatic animals and disease control in the whole EU. In the frame of the abovementioned EU Strategy, strict cooperation is ongoing in several fields, such as contingency planning, training and others.

([1]) COM(2011) 417 final.
([2]) (Helsinki Convention.).

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002568/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: Bendrosios rinkos kliūtys

Siekiant padidinti ekonomikos konkurencingumą, taip pat paskatinti jos augimą ir darbo vietų kūrimą, būtina kurti dar glaudesnę ir veiksmingesnę bendrąją rinką. Europos ekonominis klestėjimas ir augimas labai priklauso nuo Europos įmonių. Ji turi išnaudoti bendrosios rinkos potencialą. Nuoseklūs ES veiksmai šalinant vidines prekių, paslaugų ir žmonių judėjimo kliūtis naudingi įmonėms ir piliečiams. Europos Sąjungos rinkoje turi nebelikti bendrosios rinkos kliūčių.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta „pašalinti likusias bendrosios rinkos kliūtis."

Ar Komisija galėtų nurodyti, kokių rezultatų pasiekta vidaus rinkos kliūčių nustatymo ir šalinimo srityje?

Ar sudaryta bendradarbiavimo grupė, kuri dalytųsi patirtimi, įgyta įgyvendinant Komisijos rekomendaciją dėl priemonių, skirtų bendrosios rinkos veikimui gerinti?

Kaip aktyvinamas regiono valstybių SOLVIT centrų bendradarbiavimas?

Ar sukurta sistema, kurioje būtų galima dalytis Baltijos jūros regiono produktų kontaktinių centrų steigimo, finansavimo ir plėtros patirtimi?

Kaip akreditacijos įstaigos skatinamos bendradarbiauti ir dalytis kompetencija?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 26 d.)

1. 2012 m. projekte bendrosios rinkos kliūtims šalinti pagrindinis dėmesys skiriamas trims sritims: prekybos kliūčių nustatymui regione (vadovauja Lenkijos ūkio ministerija); prekių ir paslaugų kontaktinių centrų keitimuisi gerąja patirtimi (vadovauja Švedijos nacionalinė prekybos valdyba) ir darbui tinkluose bendrais vidaus rinkos klausimais (kol kas šiai sričiai nevadovaujama). Tinkle EUGO ([1]) bus rengiamas naujas susitikimas, skirtas keitimuisi kontaktinių centrų gerąja patirtimi ir prekybos kliūčių nustatymui, kurį 2012 m. gegužės mėn. organizuos Švedijos nacionalinė prekybos valdyba.

2. Kol kas vidaus rinkos ekspertai iš kiekvienos valstybės narės sudarė bendrą grupę, kuri gali dalytis gerąja patirtimi, nustatyti prekybos kliūtis ir bendradarbiauti tinkle vidaus rinkos klausimais.

3. 30 nacionalinių centrų dalyvauja SOLVIT internetinėje duomenų bazėje ir dažnai susitinka mokytis, dalytis gerąja patirtimi ir aptarti visiems aktualius reikalus ir klausimus ([2]).

4. Sukurta platforma, kurią sudaro kontaktiniai centrai ir kuria siekiama padėti paslaugų teikėjams atlikti visas administracines procedūras internetu. EUGO tinkle, kuriame dalyvauja visi nacionaliniai kontaktiniai centrai, dalijamasi gerąja kontaktinių centrų patirtimi.

5. Netrukus tinklas veiks visose akreditavimo srityse (pvz., medicinos laboratorijų), o už techninių vertintojų grupės subūrimą bus atsakingas vienas žmogus. Jau įsteigti šiltnamio efektą sukeliančių dujų ir kvalifikacijos tikrinimo tinklai.

([1]) EUGO – tai tinklas, jungiantis nacionalinius valstybių narių kontaktinius centrus, siekiant, kad paslaugų teikėjai galėtų lengvai sutvarkyti formalumus internetu.

([2]) Įgyvendinant projektą, SOLVIT centrai Lenkijoje ir Švedijoje koordinuoja savo veiklą, kad nustatytų esamas prekybos kliūtis ir pasiūlytų konkrečius kitų regiono centrų patiriamų problemų sprendimus. 2010 m. birželio mėn. Varšuvoje įsteigta projekto grupė jau yra susitikusi tris kartus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002568/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Single market barriers

An even closer and more effective single market needs to be established in order to increase the competitiveness of the economy and boost its growth and job creation. Europe is highly dependent on European companies for its economic prosperity and growth. It must exploit the potential of the single market. Coherent EU actions removing internal obstacles to the movement of goods, services and people benefit companies and citizens. There must no longer be single market obstacles in the European Union market.

One of the main projects of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is to 'remove remaining Single Market barriers'.

Could the Commission indicate what results have been achieved in the area of identifying and removing internal market barriers?

Has a cooperative group been formed that would share experience gained when implementing the Commission's recommendation on measures to improve the functioning of the single market?

How is cooperation between Solvit centres in the countries of the region being activated?

Has a platform been created for the exchange of experience regarding establishing, financing and developing product contact points in the Baltic Sea Region?

How are accreditation bodies being encouraged to cooperate and share expertise?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

1. In 2012, the project to remove Single Market barriers is focusing on three modules: identification of trade barriers in the region (lead: Polish Ministry of Economy); exchange of best practice between the contact points for goods and services (lead: Swedish National Board of Trade) and networking on general Internal Market issues (no lead yet). In the framework of EUGO network ([1]), a new meeting on exchanging contact point best practice and the inventory of trade barriers will be hosted by the Swedish National Board of Trade in May 2012.

2. So far, experts on the internal market from each Member State have formed a cooperative group to exchange best practice, to make an inventory of trade barriers and to network on general Internal Market Issues.

3. 30 national centres participate in the Solvit online database and meet frequently for training, exchanging best practice, and identifying cases and issues of mutual interest ([2]).

4. A platform has been created consisting of the Points of Single Contact (PSC) to help service providers complete all necessary administrative processes online. The EUGO network covers all national points of single contact, and promotes and shares PSC best practices.

5. Soon, a network will be established within each accreditation area (e.g. medical laboratories) with one person responsible for creating a pool of technical assessors. The networks for greenhouse gases and proficiency testing are already in place.

([1]) EUGO is the network gathering all national points of single contact in Member States with the aim at promoting online easy completion of formalities for service providers.

([2]) In the framework of the project, Solvit centres in Poland and Sweden coordinate their activities to map out existing barriers to trade and initiate concrete solutions to tackle specific cases reported by the other centres in the region. The project group has met three times following the kick-off in Warsaw in June 2010.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002570/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 6 d.)

Tema: Dėl tvarios miškotvarkos, kaimo plėtros ir augalų genetinių išteklių išsaugojimo Baltijos jūros regione

Baltijos jūros regione, kaip ir visoje Europos Sąjungoje, svarbų vaidmenį atlieka miškininkystės sektorius. Miškai užtikrina didelę ekonominę ir socialinę naudą, biologinę įvairovę, padeda apriboti šiltnamio efektą sukeliančių dujų susidarymą atmosferoje, tad jiems tenka ypač svarbus vaidmuo planetos ekologinėje sistemoje. Miškininkystės praktika turėtų būti ekonominiu, ekologiniu, socialiniu ir kultūriniu požiūriais tvari.

Be to, turi būti užtikrintas ilgalaikis augalų nacionalinių genetinių išteklių išsaugojimas ir tausus jų naudojimas, taip pat išsamus, patikimas ir saugus informavimas apie augalų nacionalinius genetinius išteklius.

Baltijos jūros regiono plėtrai itin svarbios kaimo vietovės. Jose vis dažniau susiduriama su aktualiomis socialinėmis ir ekonominėmis problemomis, kurias lemia silpnos demografinės struktūros, darbo galimybių ir pagrindinių paslaugų trūkumas.

Viena iš Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos prioritetinių sričių – stiprinti tvarų žemės ūkį, miškininkystę ir žuvininkystę.

Norėčiau paklausti Komisijos, kokie projektai įgyvendinami siekiant užtikrinti tvarią Baltijos jūros regiono miškotvarką?

Kokia pažanga pasiekta plėtojant regiono institucijų tinklų veiklą, užtikrinant tvarų mitybai ir žemės ūkiui svarbių augalų genetinių išteklių išsaugojimą ir naudojimą?

Kokie projektai pradėti įgyvendinti kaimo plėtros srityje siekiant suvienyti regiono žmones, užtikrinti tvarią kaimo plėtrą ir pragyvenimo šaltinius?

D. Cioloș atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. gegužės 11 d.)

1. ES strategijos veiksmų plane numatytas pavyzdinis projektas „Tvari Baltijos jūros regiono miškotvarka“. Projektui vadovauja Europos miškų institutas. Pagal šį pavyzdinį projektą įgyvendinami veiksmų plane išvardyti paprojekčiai; daugiau informacijos galima rasti http://www.efinord.efi.int/.

2. Baltijos jūros pakrantės ES valstybės narės dalyvauja Europos miškų genetinių išteklių programoje, taip pat yra prisijungusios prie Europos miškų genetinių išteklių informacinės sistemos.

3. Veikla augalų genetinių išteklių srityje plėtojama bendradarbiaujant *NordGen* centrui, Vavilovo institutui Sankt Peterburge ir Baltijos valstybių genų bankams. Šiuo projektu skatinama plėtoti tinklus, rengti susitikimus, kurti bendras duomenų bazes ir bendrai vykdyti Europos projektus.

4. ES strategijos veiksmų plane numatytas bendras veiksmas „Stiprinti bendrą kaimo plėtros programų poveikį“. Jam vadovauja Lietuvos žemės ūkio ministerija, o 2012 m. kovo 13 d. Vilniuje vyko susitikimas bendrai strategijai parengti. ES strategijoje numatytam pavyzdiniam projektui „Tvari kaimo plėtra“ vadovauja Lenkijos žemės ūkio ministerija. Jis įgyvendinamas per Baltijos jūros regiono nacionalinius kaimo tinklus. Šiuo pavyzdiniu projektu siekiama kuo labiau integruoti kaimo vietovėse gyvenantį jaunimą.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002570/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: On sustainable forest management, rural development and the conservation of plant genetic resources in the Baltic Sea region

The forestry sector plays an important role in the Baltic Sea region, as it does throughout the European Union. Forests guarantee major economic and social benefits, biodiversity and help to limit the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, thereby playing a particularly crucial role in the planet's ecology. The practice of forestry should be economically, ecologically, socially and culturally sustainable.

Furthermore, it must guarantee the long-term conservation and sustainable utilisation of national plant genetic resources, as well as detailed, reliable and safe information about national plant genetic resources.

Rural areas are particularly important for the development of the Baltic Sea region. Increasingly, they are facing common social and economic problems caused by weak demographic structures and a lack of job opportunities and basic services.

Reinforcing sustainable agriculture, forestry and fishing is one of the priority areas of the strategy for the Baltic Sea region.

I would like to ask the Commission what projects are being implemented to ensure sustainable forest management in the Baltic Sea region?

What progress has been made in developing the work of networks of regional institutions and ensuring the sustainable conservation and utilisation of plant genetic resources that are so important for nutrition and agriculture?

What projects have been launched in the area of rural development to unite the people of the region and ensure sustainable rural development and livelihoods?

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

1. The action plan of the EU Strategy includes the flagship project 'Sustainable forest management in the Baltic Sea Region'. This is led by the European Forest Institute. The flagship project is an umbrella with sub-projects listed in the action plan that can be found at http://www.efinord.efi.int

2. EU Member States around the Baltic Sea participate in the European forest genetic resources programme and the European information system on forest genetic resources.

3. The development of the work on plant genetic resources is based on a cooperation between NordGen, Vavilov Institute in St. Petersburg, and the gene banks in the Baltic States. This project promotes a development of the networks, meetings, common databases, and work within the framework of European projects.

4. The action plan of the EU Strategy refers to the cooperative action 'Enhance the combined effects of the rural development programmes'. This is led by the Lithuanian Ministry of Agriculture and recent meeting to develop a joint approach was held on 13 March 2012 in Vilnius. The flagship project of the EU Strategy 'Sustainable rural development' is led by Polish Ministry of Agriculture and is implemented within the National Rural Networks of the Baltic Sea Region. The flagship project is striving to better integrate the rural youth.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-002572/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(6 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: La exención del IVA discrimina a las entidades sociales exentas respecto a las empresas mercantiles en los concursos públicos de gestión de servicios a las personas

La transposición de la Directiva 2004/18/CE que hizo el Estado español en la Ley 30/2007 de contratos de las administraciones públicas determina que la adjudicación de contratos públicos por parte de la administración debe hacerse a la «oferta económicamente más ventajosa» ateniéndose a los criterios vinculados al contrato. Si la adjudicación se basa en un solo criterio éste será siempre el precio más bajo. Dichos precios se comparan antes del IVA, debiendo añadirse el coste del IVA al servicio si su gestión es adjudicada a una empresa mercantil. De adjudicarse el concurso a una entidad sin ánimo de lucro exenta, la administración no ha de pagar el impuesto pero la entidad debe asumir, como consumidora final, el IVA de sus costes generales, así como de los productos y servicios que deba adquirir para prestar el servicio que la administración le contrata, resultándole a la entidad social unos costes superiores, que son discriminatorios respecto al adjudicatario cuando éste es una empresa mercantil que recuperará el IVA soportado en su liquidación fiscal. La adjudicación a una empresa mercantil, sin considerar el coste del IVA, al tomar la decisión sobre la oferta más ventajosa, obliga a la administración pública a asumir el sobrecoste del IVA del servicio contratado.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que el precio a comparar debería ser el del coste total, IVA incluido, de la oferta que es el coste real del servicio para la administración pública contratante?

2. ¿Considera que se ha de contratar el precio neto, al que sólo en el supuesto de empresas mercantiles se deberá sumar el IVA?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión informa a Su Señoría de que los poderes adjudicadores pueden establecer libremente, en principio, los criterios de adjudicación aplicables a sus procedimientos de adjudicación de contratos, siempre que se cumpla la normativa de la UE en materia de contratación. Las normas de la UE en materia de contratación pública no prohíben aplicar el criterio de adjudicación basado en el precio más bajo o recurrir al precio como parte de los criterios de adjudicación de la oferta económicamente más ventajosa, calculada con o sin IVA.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002572/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: VAT exemption discriminates against exempt welfare organisations as opposed to commercial firms in public procurement for care services management

The transposition of Directive 2004/18/EC by the Spanish Government through Law No 30/2007 on public procurement requires public authorities to award public contracts to the 'economically most advantageous tender', in accordance with the criteria governing the contract. If there is only one award criterion for the contract, this will always be the lowest price. These prices are compared net of VAT and the cost of the VAT must be added to the service if the contract is awarded to a commercial firm. In awarding the contract to a non-profit-making organisation exempt from VAT, the public authority does not have to pay VAT but the organisation, as an end consumer, is obliged to pay VAT on its general costs and on any products and services it must purchase to provide the service contracted to it by the authority. This results in higher costs for the welfare organisation, which are discriminatory because if the successful tenderer is a commercial firm, the VAT paid out will be refunded through its VAT assessment. Awarding a contract to a commercial firm when determining the economically most advantageous tender, without taking into account VAT costs, obliges the public authority to take responsibility for the additional cost of the VAT for the service contracted.

1. Does the Commission believe that the price to be compared should be the total cost of the tender, including VAT, which is the actual cost of the service to the public authority awarding the contract?

2. Does the Commission consider that the net price should be the price for which services are contracted, to which VAT will be added only in the case of commercial firms?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member of the Parliament that as a matter of principle, contracting authorities are free to design the award criteria for their award procedures, provided that EU procurement law is respected. EU public procurement rules do not prohibit the lowest price award criterion or price as part of the award criteria of the most economically advantageous tender to be calculated either with or without VAT.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-002573/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6. März 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Todesurteil gegen iranischen Pastor

Im Iran wurde im Jahr 2009 der zum Christentum konvertierte Pfarrer Youcef Nadarkhanis verhaftet und von einem Gericht wegen „Verbreitung nichtislamischer Lehre“ und „Abfall vom islamischen Glauben“ zum Tode verurteilt. Da sich Nadarkhanis weiterhin weigert, zum islamischen Glauben zurückzukehren, werden anscheinend Vorbereitungen für seine Hinrichtung getroffen.

Bei diesem dem Pastor vorgeworfenen Verhalten handelt es sich nicht um ein Verbrechen, sondern eine Ausübung der auch im Iran völkerrechtlich verbrieften Religionsfreiheit. Damit stellte bereits die Festnahme einen eklatanten Verstoß gegen die Menschenrechte dar.

1. Wie hat die EU, insbesondere die Hohe Außenvertreterin, auf diesen schwerwiegenden Verstoß gegen die völkerrechtlich verbriefte Religionsfreiheit reagiert?

2. Was wurde auf EU-Ebene unternommen, um sich für den iranischen Pastor einzusetzen?

Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(16. Mai 2012)

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin Ashton hat die iranischen Behörden im September 2011 und im Februar 2012 aufgefordert, Pastor Nadarkhani unverzüglich freizulassen. Sie forderte, er solle seine Religion ungehindert ausüben können, im Einklang mit den — auch vom Iran unterzeichneten — internationalen Menschenrechtsverpflichtungen, die insbesondere die Freiheit der Religion oder Weltanschauung gewährleisten.

Diese Forderung wurde der iranischen Regierung direkt übermittelt und auch durch öffentliche Erklärungen in Farsi und Englisch über das Internet und soziale Netzwerke verbreitet.

Auch die Außenminister der EU haben im Rahmen der Schlussfolgerungen des Rates „Auswärtige Angelegenheiten“, die auf der Tagung im Oktober 2011 in Brüssel angenommen wurden, die Freilassung von Pastor Nadarkhani gefordert.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002573/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Death sentence against an Iranian cleric

In 2009, a death sentence was handed down by a court in Iran against the priest Youcef Nadarkhanis, a convert to Christianity imprisoned for the 'dissemination of non-Islamic teachings' and 'abandoning the Islamic faith'. Because Nadarkhanis continues to refuse to revert to the Islamic faith, it seems that preparations are in train for his execution.

The actions of which this cleric is accused do not constitute crimes, but rather the exercising of a religious freedom, which is also enshrined in Iranian national law. Accordingly, his arrest alone constituted a blatant breach of human rights.

1. How has the EU, in particular the High Representative, responded to this serious breach of the religious freedom enshrined in national law?

2. What action has been taken at EU level in support of the Iranian cleric?

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

High Representative/Vice-President Ashton has called on the Iranian authorities, in September 2011 and in February 2012, to immediately release Pastor Nadarkhani. He should be able to freely practice his religion in accordance with the international human rights obligations that Iran has itself signed up to, notably regarding freedom of religion or belief.

This call has been transmitted directly to the Iranian authorities, as well as by public statements that have been published on the Internet and social media, in Farsi as well as in English.

The EU's foreign ministers have also called for the release of Pastor Nadarkhani through the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Ministerial Council in Brussels in October 2011.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002575/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(6 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σύγκρουση συμφερόντων κατά την άσκηση της επαγγελματικής δραστηριότητας των «διαμεσολαβητών μεταγραφών» στο ευρωπαϊκό επαγγελματικό ποδόσφαιρο

Στην υπ' αρ. E-8362/2010 (5 Οκτωβρίου 2010) ερώτησή μου προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή σχετικά με τις «Προϋποθέσεις άσκησης της επαγγελματικής δραστηριότητας των "διαμεσολαβητών μεταγραφών" (managers) στο ευρωπαϊκό επαγγελματικό ποδόσφαιρο», έλαβα μεταξύ άλλων την απάντηση ότι «… η Επιτροπή επικεντρώνεται στην εξέταση του είδους της πρωτοβουλίας που, αν τυχόν υπάρχει, θα ήταν η καταλληλότερη για την αντιμετώπιση των προβλημάτων που εντοπίστηκαν σε σχέση με τις δραστηριότητες των πρακτόρων, ενώ ταυτόχρονα λαμβάνει υπόψη το γενικό πλαίσιο που περιβάλλει τις δραστηριότητες αυτές, ιδίως την εσωτερική αδιαφάνεια του συστήματος μεταγραφών στα επαγγελματικά αθλήματα». Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που είδαν το φως της δημοσιότητας, ο κύκλος εργασιών από τις επαγγελματικές δραστηριότητες διαμεσολάβησης μεταγραφών ανέρχεται σε ετήσια βάση περίπου στα 400 εκ. ευρώ. Επίσης, περίπου οι μισοί επαγγελματίες ποδοσφαιριστές που απασχολούνται σε σωματεία των 5 μεγαλυτέρων ευρωπαϊκών πρωταθλημάτων εκπροσωπούνται από μόλις 83 διαμεσολαβητές μεταγραφών. Σημαντικό είναι και το ποσοστό διαμεσολαβητών οι οποίοι εκπροσωπούν ταυτοχρόνως επαγγελματίες ποδοσφαιριστές αλλά και προπονητές, εγείροντας μείζον ζήτημα σύγκρουσης συμφερόντων. Σημειώνεται ότι σεβαστός αριθμός διαμεσολαβητών παραδέχονται ότι διατηρούν μερίδιο επί των δικαιωμάτων μεταγραφής των αθλητών. Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Ευρώπη:

1. Σε ποιές ενέργειες έχει καταλήξει η εκ μέρους της εξέταση του είδους της πρωτοβουλίας σχετικά με τη δραστηριότητα των διαμεσολαβητών μεταγραφών;

2. Θεωρεί ότι όντως εγείρονται ζητήματα σύγκρουσης συμφερόντων κατά τη διαδικασία μεταγραφής επαγγελματιών ποδοσφαιριστών λόγω της συμμετοχής διαμεσολαβητών που διατηρούν αδιαφανείς οικονομικές σχέσεις με τα συναλλασσόμενα μέρη;

3. Θεωρεί ότι το ζήτημα που εγείρεται εξαιτίας της δραστηριότητας των διαμεσολαβητών, λόγω των οικονομικών διαστάσεων που έχει λάβει, εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί αποκλειστική αρμοδιότητα των υπερεθνικών και εθνικών ποδοσφαιρικών αρχών;

Απάντηση της κας Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή λαμβάνει υπό σημείωση τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία για τους ποδοσφαιρικούς πράκτορες στις πέντε μεγαλύτερες ποδοσφαιρικές αγορές της Ευρώπης που δημοσιεύτηκαν τον Φεβρουάριο του 2012 από το παρατηρητήριο ποδοσφαίρου του «Διεθνούς κέντρου αθλητικών μελετών» CIES. Όσον αφορά τα ζητήματα που έθιξε ο κ. βουλευτής, η Επιτροπή έχει να δηλώσει τα εξής:

1. Σε συνέχεια της δημοσίευσης της ανεξάρτητης μελέτης για τους αθλητικούς πράκτορες στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (ΕΕ), η Επιτροπή διοργάνωσε στις 9-10 Νοεμβρίου 2011, διάσκεψη σε επίπεδο ΕΕ με θέμα τους αθλητικούς πράκτορες. Οι συμμετέχοντες στη διάσκεψη κατέληξαν στο συμπέρασμα ότι η διαδικασία αυτορύθμισης από τους αθλητικούς κύκλους αποτελεί την καλύτερη δυνατή λύση, παρ' όλο που θα πρέπει να υπάρχει πάντα η δυνατότητα ανάληψης δράσης σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, σε περίπτωση που η διαδικασία της αυτορύθμισης δεν αποφέρει τα αναμενόμενα αποτελέσματα. Η τυποποίηση των δραστηριοτήτων των πρακτόρων υπό την αιγίδα της «Ευρωπαϊκής επιτροπής τυποποίησης» (CEN) και ο κοινωνικός διάλογος για το επαγγελματικό ποδόσφαιρο θεωρούνται τα πλέον αποτελεσματικά μέσα για την επίτευξη προόδου. Η Επιτροπή, βασιζόμενη στα συμπεράσματα της διάσκεψης, έχει ξεκινήσει διάλογο με τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη από το χώρο του ποδοσφαίρου με απώτερο σκοπό την πιθανή τυποποίηση του επαγγελμάτων των ποδοσφαιρικών πρακτόρων σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο.

2. Η Επιτροπή συμμερίζεται τη γνώμη του κ. βουλευτή ότι είναι δυνατό να προκύψουν ζητήματα σύγκρουσης συμφερόντων στο πλαίσιο των μεταγραφών επαγγελματιών ποδοσφαιριστών. Για να διαλευκανθούν οι νομικές και οικονομικές πτυχές των μεταγραφών των επαγγελματιών ποδοσφαιριστών, η Επιτροπή ξεκίνησε μια μελέτη που θα πρέπει να ολοκληρωθεί στα τέλη του 2012. Τα αποτελέσματα της μελέτης θα βοηθήσουν την Επιτροπή να εκτιμήσει τι είδους ενέργειες πρέπει να αναληφθούν σ' αυτόν τον τομέα.

3. Η Επιτροπή είναι της γνώμης ότι, σε περίπτωση εντοπισμού οικονομικού εγκλήματος στις δραστηριότητες των πρακτόρων, θα πρέπει να εφαρμόζεται η σχετική εθνική και διεθνής νομοθεσία σε θέματα, μεταξύ άλλων, διαφθοράς, απάτης και νομιμοποίησης προσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002575/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Conflict of interests in exercising the professional activity of transfer agent in European professional football

Part of the reply to my question No E-8362/2010 (5 October 2010) to the European Commission regarding the conditions governing activities of agents in European professional football stated that 'the Commission is focusing on examining which type of initiative, if any, would be best suited to tackle the problems identified in relation to agents' activities, whilst taking into account the general context surrounding such activities, in particular the intrinsic opacity of the transfer system in professional sports'. According to details that have been made public, the turnover of agents' professional activities amounts to approximately EUR 400 million per year. In addition, approximately half of the professional footballers employed in the associations of the five largest European leagues are represented by just 83 transfer agents. There is also a significant number of agents who simultaneously represent professional footballers and coaches, giving rise to a major conflict of interests. It should be noted that a sizeable number of agents admit that they retain a share of players' transfer fees. Can the Commission say:

1. What actions has it decided upon as a result of its examination of the type of initiative related to agents' activities?

2. Does it consider that conflict of interest issues do in fact arise in the course of the professional footballer transfer procedure as a result of the participation of agents who maintain non-transparent financial relations with the parties they do business with?

3. Given the financial dimensions the issues arising from agents' activities have assumed, does it consider that such issues are still the sole responsibility of the supranational and national football authorities?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission takes note of the figures on football agents in the biggest five European football markets published in February 2012 by the CIES Football Observatory. In relation to the questions raised by the Honourable Member, the answers from the Commission are as follows:

1. As a follow-up to the publication of the independent study on sport agents in the European Union (EU), the Commission organised on 9-10 November 2011 an EU Conference on Sport Agents. The participants in the conference concluded that a self-regulatory approach by the sports movement was the most appropriate way forward, even though future EU action should remain possible if self-regulation fails to deliver the expected results. The standardisation of agents' activities through a process led by the European Standardisation Committee (CEN) and the social dialogue on professional football were retained as the most effective frameworks for further work. In line with the conclusions of the Conference, the Commission is pursuing its dialogue with football stakeholders towards a possible standardisation of the profession of football agent at European level.

2. The Commission shares the Honourable Member's opinion that situations of conflict of interest may arise in connection with transfers of professional footballers. To shed light on the legal and economic aspects of transfers of professional players, the Commission has launched a study which should be finalised by the end of 2012. The results of the study will help the Commission assess which type of action may be needed in this field.

3. The Commission considers that if cases of financial crime are detected in connection with agents' activities, the relevant national and international legislation in the fields of, *inter alia*, corruption, fraud and money laundering should be applied.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002579/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Zoológico ilegal en Paderne (Galicia-España)

Durante el pasado año 2011, la Asociación Animalista Libera presentó diversas denuncias ante las autoridades de Galicia por la permisividad con un parque zoológico situado en la localidad de Paderne, provincia de A Coruña, que no disponía de las pertinentes licencias de apertura y, aunque entra en el ámbito de aplicación de la Directiva 1999/22/CE. tampoco cumplía las medidas de conservación. La Asociación también denunció las graves deficiencias de seguridad de las instalaciones, donde se alojan grandes felinos, alguno de ellos en peligro de extinción, y que cualquier visitante puede tocar a través de las rejas.

El peculiar parque, que se promociona bajo el nombre «Corax», ofrece la posibilidad a las visitas de tocar a los animales que allí alberga, algunos de ellos peligrosos para los visitantes como un tigre, así como realizar un auténtico reportaje fotográfico, animales incluidos, previo pago. Resulta probado que el citado parque, situado en territorio gallego, incumple las normas más básicas para garantizar el bienestar y cuidado de la colección zoológica, sometiéndola a tocamientos de forma sistemática y empleando a parte de la misma para realizar anuncios y otro tipo de grabaciones, como reza en su propia página web.

Casi un año después de las iniciativas legales de Libera, el parque todavía sigue abierto, realizando las mismas prácticas descritas por este eurodiputado, e incluso apareciendo en un programa de televisión nacional donde se exponen las instalaciones y los animales ([1]).

Teniendo en cuenta que todo ello es incompatible con la normativa de conservación de animales salvajes en parques zoológicos,

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de la existencia de este parque zoológico en Galicia?

En caso negativo, ¿cómo es posible que un parque abierto durante la aplicación de la normativa estatal y comunitaria no haya sido puesto en conocimiento de la Comisión?

¿Se está realizando sobre el citado parque alguna investigación por parte de las autoridades comunitarias?

¿Considera necesario la Comisión apercibir al Gobierno español, y por extensión al gallego, por la vulneración sistemática de la Directiva 1999/22/CE?

En caso afirmativo, ¿cree que España ha hecho sus «deberes» en la aplicación de la normativa comunitaria?

En caso negativo ¿Cree suficientes las medidas que toma para garantizar la normativa en los países miembros?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión está al corriente de la existencia de este parque zoológico a través de una serie de quejas recibidas sobre el mismo.

El 17 de febrero de 2012, la Comisión fue informada por la asociación «ANDA» de que las autoridades competentes de la región de Galicia habían ordenado el cierre de este establecimiento. Esta información se ha hecho pública en: http://www.infozoos.org/ver_noticia.php?not_id=96

La Comisión no encuentra motivos para declarar la existencia de un incumplimiento de las obligaciones del Reino de España en relación con este establecimiento.

([1]) Véase a partir del minuto 2: http://www.mitele.es/programas-tv/la-selva-en-casa/temporada-1/programa-6/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002579/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Illegal zoo in Paderne (Galicia, Spain)

Last year (2011), the Libera animal rights association made several complaints to the Galician authorities about their tolerance of a zoo located in the town of Paderne in A Coruña province which did not have the relevant licences to open and, although it comes within the scope of Directive 1999/22/EC, has failed to carry out conservation measures. The association also reported serious safety failings in the zoo's facilities, which house big cats, some of them endangered, which any visitor can touch through the bars.

This singular zoo, which is advertised under the name 'Corax', gives visitors the chance to touch the animals it houses, some of which — like the tiger — are dangerous, and to make a full photo reportage, in which animals are included, on payment of a fee. It has been established that the zoo, located in Galicia, breaches the most basic animal welfare and care rules, subjecting its animals systematically to being touched and using some of them to make advertisements and other types of recordings, such as those posted on its website.

Almost a year after Libera took legal steps, the zoo remains open, carrying on with the practices described above and even appearing in a national television programme showing the facilities and the animals ([1]).

Given that the above situation is incompatible with the rules governing the keeping of wild animals in zoos:

Is the Commission aware of the existence of this zoo in Galicia?

If not, how is it possible for a zoo that was opened at a time when state and EU rules were already in force not to have been brought to the Commission's attention?

Are any investigations into the zoo being conducted by the EU authorities?

Does the Commission consider it necessary to serve notice on the Spanish Government — and, by extension, the Galician Government — for systematic violation of Directive 1999/22/EC?

If so, does it believe that Spain has been failing to fulfil its obligation to implement EC law?

If not, does it believe that the measures it takes to ensure that EC law is applied in the Member States are adequate?

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

The Commission is aware of the existence of this zoo through a number of complaints received on the subject.

On 17 February 2012, the Commission has been informed by the association 'ANDA' that competent authorities of the region of Galicia have ordered the closure of this establishment. This information has been made public at: http://www.infozoos.org/ver_noticia.php?not_id=96

The Commission has no grounds to identify any failing on the obligations of the Kingdom of Spain concerning this establishment.

([1]) Watch from minute 2: http://www.mitele.es/programas-tv/la-selva-en-casa/temporada-1/programa-6/.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002580/12
a la Comisión
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D) y Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(6 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Pacto de las Islas

El Parlamento Europeo aprobó el pasado mes de enero una Declaración por escrito instando a la Comisión a que «continúe prestando su apoyo a las comunidades insulares europeas con vistas a la consecución de los objetivos contenidos en el Pacto de las Islas», un acuerdo a través del cual las autoridades de las regiones insulares se comprometen a trabajar conjuntamente para ir más allá de los objetivos 20-20-20 fijados por la Unión Europea. Estos objetivos consisten en conseguir para el año 2020 una reducción de las emisiones de CO_2 de un 20 %, aumentar en un 20 % la contribución de las renovables y reducir en un 20 % el uso de energía primaria.

¿Cómo tiene previsto la Comisión movilizar los recursos financieros adecuados para apoyar el funcionamiento del proceso de este Pacto, basado en el modelo del Pacto de Alcaldes, Ciudades Inteligentes y otras iniciativas similares de la UE?

¿Piensa la Comisión incentivar la adhesión al Pacto del resto de las islas europeas para promover la creación de una verdadera red de islas?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de abril de 2012)

En apoyo a los objetivos del Pacto de las Islas, la Comisión lanzó un proyecto llamado Isle-Pact para ayudar a cada una de las islas participantes en la elaboración de un plan de acción de energías sostenibles y de una lista de proyectos potencialmente financiables. Los recursos financieros para este tipo de proyectos deberían recabarse en primera instancia de las entidades financieras (de ahí la insistencia en su financiabilidad), así como de los instrumentos financieros disponibles en el marco de las políticas y programas de la UE, como por ejemplo los fondos estructurales y de cohesión.

El proyecto Isle-Pact no se ha concebido con la idea de crear una red de islas más allá de las que ya participan en el proyecto. No obstante, desde su concepción, han suscrito el Pacto de las Islas las autoridades de nueve islas italianas no cubiertas por el proyecto Isle-Pact y se espera que en breve lo firmen las autoridades de dos municipios chipriotas. Todo firmante nuevo se compromete a elaborar un plan de acción de energías sostenibles para la isla en el plazo de un año desde la firma y se ha propuesto prestar asistencia técnica también a los nuevos firmantes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002580/12
to the Commission
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D) and Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Pact of Islands

In January of this year, Parliament adopted a written declaration urging the Commission to continue providing its support to European island communities with a view to achieving the objectives set out in the Pact of Islands, an agreement in which island regional authorities undertake to work together to go beyond the 20-20-20 objectives set by the European Union for 2020, that is to say, a 20 % reduction in CO_2 emissions, a 20 % increase in the contribution of renewables and a 20 % reduction in primary energy use.

How does the Commission plan to mobilise the financial resources needed to support the functioning of the Pact process, modelled on the Covenant of Mayors, Smart Cities and other similar EU initiatives?

Will it encourage other European islands to join the Pact in order to establish a genuine island network?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

In support of the Pact of Islands goals, the Commission launched an Isle-Pact project to assist each participating island in the preparation of an Island Sustainable Energy Action Plan and of a list of potentially bankable projects. Financial resources for such projects should be primarily sought from financial institutions (hence the stress on the projects' bankability), as well as from the available financial instruments under existing EU policies and programmes such as , structural and cohesion funds, for example.

The Isle-Pact is not conceived to result in a network of islands beyond those participating in the project. However, since its inception, nine Italian island authorities not covered by the Isles-Pact project have signed the Pact of Islands and two Cypriot municipalities are expected to sign soon. Each new signatory commits to the preparation of an Island Sustainable Energy Action Plan within a year of signature and it is proposed that technical assistance be given to new signatories as well.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002581/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σταθμός Μεταφόρτωσης Απορριμμάτων (ΣΜΑ) και Κέντρο Διαλογής Ανακυκλώσιμων Υλικών (ΚΔΑΥ) — Ευκαρπίας

Στα βορειοδυτικά της Θεσσαλονίκης, εντός των ορίων του Δήμου Παύλου Μελά (περιοχή Ευκαρπίας), έχει αρχίσει η κατασκευή του έργου «Σταθμός Μεταφόρτωσης Απορριμμάτων (ΣΜΑ) και Κέντρο Διαλογής Ανακυκλώσιμων Υλικών (ΚΔΑΥ)». Το έργο που συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) έχει ξεσηκώσει θύελλα αντιδράσεων από τους κατοίκους της περιοχής. Ο αρχικός Περιφερειακός Σχεδιασμός για την Θεσσαλονίκη προέβλεπε την κατασκευή 7 μικρών ΣΜΑ σε διάφορα σημεία του πολεοδομικού συγκροτήματος, ενώ τελικά το εν λόγω έργο θα συγκεντρώσει το 60 % των απορριμμάτων των δήμων της Θεσσαλονίκης (1 100 τόνους την ημέρα στο ΣΜΑ). Στο ίδιο αγροτεμάχιο θα λειτουργεί βιολογική μονάδα επεξεργασίας υγρών αποβλήτων και κέντρο διαλογής ανακυκλώσιμων υλικών. Το έργο χωροθετήθηκε σε αντίθεση με τις προτάσεις και τις σημαντικές επιφυλάξεις της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης, περίπου 600 μέτρα από πυκνοκατοικημένη περιοχή.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: Έχει αλλάξει ο περιφερειακός σχεδιασμός όσον αφορά την περιοχή της Θεσσαλονίκης; Προωθούνται οι υπόλοιποι ΣΜΑ; Αν όχι, γιατί; Με δεδομένο ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή αλλά και το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο επανειλημμένα έχουν τονίσει την περιβαλλοντική ανάγκη αλλά και τα οικονομικά οφέλη από την ανακύκλωση στην πηγή, γιατί η Επιτροπή χρηματοδοτεί ΚΔΑΥ και όχι προγράμματα χωριστής συλλογής στην πηγή, σύμφωνα και με τα όσα προβλέπει η οδηγία 2008/1 για τη χρήση βέλτιστων διαθέσιμων τεχνικών;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Ελλάδα είναι ένα από τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ που πρέπει κατεπειγόντως να δημιουργήσει υποδομές για τη διαχείριση των αποβλήτων, ιδίως για τη διαχείριση των αστικών αποβλήτων, προκειμένου να μειωθεί το ποσοστό υγειονομικής ταφής και να αυξηθούν τα ποσοστά ανάκτησης και ανακύκλωσης. Το 2010 ανακυκλώθηκε και λιπασματοποιήθηκε στην Ελλάδα μόνο το 18 % των αστικών της αποβλήτων, ενώ το 82 % των αποβλήτων διοχετεύθηκε σε χώρους υγειονομικής ταφής.

Η οδηγία 2008/98/ΕΚ (οδηγία-πλαίσιο για τα απόβλητα ([1])) ορίζει ότι τα κράτη μέλη **λαμβάνουν μέτρα για την προώθηση ανακύκλωσης υψηλής ποιότητας και για το σκοπό αυτό καθιερώνουν χωριστή συλλογή αποβλήτων όπου αυτό είναι τεχνικά, περιβαλλοντικά και οικονομικά εφικτό και ενδεδειγμένο για να επιτευχθούν τα αναγκαία ποιοτικά πρότυπα στους αντίστοιχους τομείς ανακύκλωσης. Έως το 2015, τα κράτη μέλη καθιερώνουν τη χωριστή συλλογή τουλάχιστον για το χαρτί, το μέταλλο, το πλαστικό και το γυαλί. Οι διατάξεις αυτές δεν αποκλείουν το ενδεχόμενο κοινής συλλογής και διαχωρισμού διαφορετικών ροών αποβλήτων σε κέντρα διαλογής: θεωρώντας ότι στόχος της χωριστής συλλογής είναι η ανακύκλωση υψηλής ποιότητας, η καθιέρωση χωριστού συστήματος συλλογής δεν είναι αναγκαία εάν ο στόχος της ανακύκλωσης υψηλής ποιότητας μπορεί να επιτευχθεί εξίσου καλά με τη διαλογή των αποβλήτων μετά τη συλλογή τους. Κατά συνέπεια, αυτό δεν αποτελεί λόγο άρνησης της κοινοτικής συγχρηματοδότησης για το κέντρο ανακύκλωσης**.

Περαιτέρω **πληροφορίες για τις αλλαγές που έχουν ενδεχομένως γίνει σε επίπεδο περιφερειακού χωροταξικού σχεδιασμού στη Θεσσαλονίκη πρέπει να ζητηθούν από τις αρμόδιες περιφερειακές αρχές.**

([1]) ΕΕ L 312 της 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002581/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: A waste transhipment station and sorting centre for recyclable materials in Efkarpia

To the northwest of Thessaloniki, in Efkarpia, a suburb in the municipality of Pavlos Melas, construction has started on a waste transhipment station and sorting centre for recyclable materials. This project, which is subsidised by the European Regional Development Fund, has provoked angry reactions from local residents. The original regional planning for Thessaloniki specified the construction of seven small waste transhipment stations in different locations in the urban agglomeration, but in fact the project in question will handle 60 % of Thessaloniki's municipal waste (1 100 tonnes per day). The same plot of land will house a waste water treatment plant and a sorting centre for recyclable materials. The project was zoned in opposition to the local authority's proposals and significant reservations and is situated approximately 600 metres from a densely-populated area.

In view of this:

Can the Commission say whether regional planning in respect of Thessaloniki has been modified? Will the other waste transhipment stations go ahead? If not, why not? Given that the European Commission and the European Parliament have repeatedly stressed the environmental necessity and economic benefit of recycling at source, why is the Commission funding a recycling sorting centre and not programmes for separate collections at source, in line with the provisions of Directive 2008/1/EC on the use of best available techniques?

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

Greece is one of the EU Member States which urgently needs to build waste management infrastructure, particularly for the management of municipal waste, in order to reduce the rate of landfilling and increase waste recovery and recycling. In 2010, Greece recycled and composted only 18 % of its municipal waste, while 82 % of the waste was landfilled.

Directive 2008/98/EC (Waste Framework Directive ([1])) stipulates that Member States shall take measures to promote high quality recycling and, to this end, shall set up separate collections of waste where technically, environmentally and economically practicable and appropriate to meet the necessary quality standards for the relevant recycling sectors. By 2015, Member States shall set up separate collection for at least paper, metal, plastic and glass. These provisions do not exclude that different waste streams are collected together and separated in a sorting centre: considering that the aim of separate collection is high-quality recycling, the introduction of a separate collection system is not necessary if the aim of high-quality recycling can be achieved just as well with sorting of waste after its collection. Consequently, **this is not a reason for refusing EU co-financing for the recycling centre**.

Further information **on changes that possibly have been made to the regional planning in Thessaloniki should be obtained from the competent regional authorities.**

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002583/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 maart 2012)

Betreft: EU-gezant: „Israël eigent zich Westoever toe en blokkeert tweestatenoplossing" (vervolgvraag)

Op 6 maart 2012 heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger — vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-000364/2012. In het antwoord staat geschreven: „De Commissie is niet op de hoogte van het specifieke bericht waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst."

1. Is de Commissie alsnog bereid kennis te nemen van het bericht „EU-gezant: Israël eigent zich Westoever toe" ([1])?

2. Ontkent de Commissie het bestaan van het in voornoemd bericht aangehaalde interne document dat gezanten van de Europese Unie in Tel Aviv en Ramallah aan hun hoofdkwartier in Brussel hebben gestuurd? Zo ja, kan de Commissie dit misverstand resp. de onjuiste verwijzing naar dit stuk verklaren? Zo neen, kan de Commissie het document verstrekken?

Een antwoord op punt 2, derde streepje, van mijn eerdere vraag E-000364/2012 is uitgebleven:

3. Kan de Commissie alsnog mededelen of zij met de PVV van mening is dat een tweestatenoplossing geen oplossing biedt zolang Hamas, volledig conform de islamitische doctrine, de vernietiging van de staat Israël nastreeft? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(10 mei 2012)

Het geachte Parlementslid wordt verwezen naar het antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-000364/2012 ([2]) over hetzelfde onderwerp. De Commissie is niet op de hoogte van het specifieke interne document waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst.

De oplossing van het Palestijns-Israëlische conflict blijft voor Europa een strategische prioriteit.

De EU streeft naar een tweestatenoplossing met een onafhankelijke, democratische en levensvatbare Palestijnse staat die naast Israël en zijn andere buren kan bestaan.

De oplossing moet tegelijkertijd tegemoetkomen aan de legitieme bezorgdheid van Israël over zijn veiligheid.

([1]) http://www.refdag.nl/nieuws/buitenland/eu_gezant_israel_eigent_zich_westoever_toe_1_615401.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=NL.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002583/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: EU envoy: 'Israel is appropriating the West Bank and blocking a two-state solution' (follow-up question)

On 6 March 2012, High Representative/Vice-President Baroness Ashton gave an answer on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-000364/2012. The answer includes the following statement: 'A report with the specific name referred to by the Honourable Member is not known by the Commission.'

1. Is the Commission still prepared to familiarise itself with the report 'EU envoy: Israel is appropriating the West Bank' ([1])?

2. Does the Commission deny the existence of the internal document cited in the abovementioned report, which European Union envoys in Tel Aviv and Ramallah have sent to their headquarters in Brussels? If so, can the Commission explain this misunderstanding or the incorrect reference to this document? If not, can the Commission provide the document?

Point 2, third indent, of my previous Question E-000364/2012 remains unanswered,

3. Can the Commission still indicate if it agrees with the PVV that a two-state solution does not offer any benefit as long as Hamas, fully in keeping with Islamic doctrine, seeks the destruction of the State of Israel? If not, why not?

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

The Honourable Member is requested to refer the reply to previous Written Question E-000364/2012 ([2]) on the same subject. The Commission is not aware of any internal report with the specific name referred to by the Honourable Member.

Resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remains a strategic priority for Europe.

The EU's objective is a two-state solution with an independent, democratic, viable Palestinian state living side-by-side with Israel and its other neighbours.

The solution must, at the same time, address Israel's legitimate security concerns.

([1]) http://www.refdag.nl/nieuws/buitenland/eu_gezant_israel_eigent_zich_westoever_toe_1_615401.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002584/12
do Komisji
Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(6 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Obowiązek prowadzenia dzienników połowowych w świetle rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1098/2007

Artykuł 11 (1) rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1098/2007 mówi, iż „W drodze odstępstwa od art. 6 ust. 4 rozporządzenia (EWG) nr 2847/93 kapitanowie wszystkich statków wspólnotowych o całkowitej długości równej lub większej niż osiem metrów prowadzą dziennik połowowy zawierający informacje dotyczące wykonywanych czynności, zgodnie z art. 6 tego rozporządzenia".

Czy artykuł ten można interpretować w taki sposób, iż zwalnia on statki wspólnotowe o długości poniżej 8 metrów, które poławiają dorsza w Morzu Bałtyckim, z prowadzenia dziennika pokładowego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Marię Damanaki w imieniu Komisji
(20 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Komisja może potwierdzić, że rzeczywiście, zgodnie z przepisami art. 11 ust. 1 rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1098/2007, kapitanowie unijnych statków rybackich o całkowitej długości równej lub większej niż osiem metrów nie muszą prowadzić dziennika połowowego zgodnie z wymogami art. 14 rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1224/2009.

Jednakże należy zwrócić uwagę, że zgodnie z przepisami art. 16 ust. 1 rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1224/2009 państwa członkowskie mają obowiązek monitorowania, na zasadzie kontroli wyrywkowej, działalności statków rybackich niepodlegających wymogom prowadzenia dziennika połowowego w celu zapewnienia przestrzegania przez te statki przepisów wspólnej polityki rybołówstwa. Niemniej art. 16 ust. 3 tego samego rozporządzenia stanowi, że państwa członkowskie mogą wymagać od pływających pod ich banderą statków rybackich o długości poniżej 10 metrów (w przypadku Morza Bałtyckiego – 8 metrów), aby przekazywały dzienniki połowowe zgodnie z ich prawem krajowym oraz aby, jeżeli państwa członkowskie tak postępują, były zwolnione z obowiązku monitorowania na zasadzie kontroli wyrywkowej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002584/12
to the Commission
Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Requirement to keep a logbook under Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007

Article 11(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007 states that 'By way of derogation from Article 6(4) of Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93, the masters of all Community vessels of an overall length equal to or greater than eight metres shall keep a logbook of their operations in accordance with Article 6 of that regulation'.

Can this article be interpreted in such a way as to exempt those Community vessels of a length less than 8 metres which fish for cod in the Baltic Sea from the requirement to keep a logbook?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

The Commission can confirm that indeed, in accordance with the provisions of Article 11(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007, masters of Union fishing vessels of an overall length less than eight meters are not required to keep a logbook as required by Article 14 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009.

However, it must be noted that, in accordance with the provisions of Article 16(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, Member States are under an obligation to monitor, on the basis of sampling, the activities of fishing vessels which are not subject to logbook requirements in order to ensure compliance by these vessels with the rules of the common fisheries policy. Yet, Article 16(3) of the same Regulation provides that Member States may require their fishing vessels of less than 10 meters overall length (in the case of the Baltic Sea 8 meters) to submit logbooks in accordance with their national law and that, where Member States do that, they shall be exempted from monitoring by way of sampling.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002585/12
do Komisji
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(6 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Dofinansowanie unijne na działalność przedszkolną na Podkarpaciu

Od 2007 r. powstawały w ramach unijnego projektu Podkarpackie Ośrodki Przedszkolne. Na początku było ich 50, a w 2009 r. już 81. Takie przedszkola na Podkarpaciu stworzyły wspólnie Fundacja „Wzrastanie" i Związek Gmin Ziemi Przeworskiej.

Środki unijne przekazane na ten cel wynosiły 25 mln zł, a samorządy dopłacały tylko 1.5 %.

Podkarpacie jest specyficznym regionem w Polsce, obejmującym głównie tereny rolnicze, a w małych gminach i miasteczkach trudno jest o edukację przedszkolną. Od momentu powstania z przedszkoli skorzystało w regionie ponad 2,5 tys. dzieci.

Dotychczas Podkarpackim Ośrodkom Przedszkolnym trzykrotnie udało się zdobyć dofinansowanie unijne na funkcjonowanie placówek, jednak wiadomo, że środki przekazywane są na utworzenie przedszkoli, a nie ich bezterminowe prowadzenie i w tym roku środki zostały już wyczerpane.

Mając na uwadze dobro mieszkańców Podkarpacia zwracam się do Komisji z uprzejmym zapytaniem:

Na jakie unijne formy dofinansowania mogą liczyć ww. podmioty prowadzące już działalność przedszkolną?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(25 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Jednym z celów Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki na lata 2007-2013 w ramach Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego jest zwiększenie dostępu do edukacji przedszkolnej dla dzieci w wieku od 3 do 5 lat, zwłaszcza na obszarach o ograniczonej ilości miejsc w przedszkolach. Cel ten obejmuje współfinansowanie zakładania nowych placówek przedszkolnych, szczególnie na obszarach wiejskich, i wspieranie istniejących ośrodków edukacji przedszkolnej, które tworzą nowe miejsca dla dzieci.

Z Funduszu nie można jednak współfinansować kosztów operacyjnych takich placówek – należy to do organów krajowych. W przeciwnym razie środki z Funduszu nie mogłyby być skutecznie wykorzystywane w tej dziedzinie.

W dniu 1 marca 2012 r. Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Podkarpackiego, który jest odpowiedzialny za zarządzanie środkami z Funduszu, opublikował zaproszenie do składania wniosków dotyczące placówek przedszkolnych w tym województwie. Budżet wynosi 30 mln złotych, a ostateczny termin składania wniosków upłynął 29 marca 2012 r. Do zaproszenia do składania wniosków kwalifikują się projekty dotyczące zarówno zakładania nowych ośrodków przedszkolnych, jak i wsparcia istniejących placówek, które tworzą nowe miejsca dla dzieci.

W ramach priorytetu Infrastruktura publiczna Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego Województwa Podkarpackiego zrealizowano szereg projektów w dziedzinie edukacji (szkoły podstawowe), które przyczyniły się do stworzenia miejsc w placówkach przedszkolnych. Według ostatniego dostępnego sprawozdania z realizacji całkowita liczba takich nowo utworzonych miejsc wynosi 110. Miejsca te rozdzielono między ośrodki zlokalizowane w miastach i na obszarach wiejskich. Ponadto instytucja zarządzająca uznaje za otwartą możliwość ogłoszenia we wrześniu 2012 r. zaproszenia do składania wniosków poświęconych edukacji przedszkolnej. Będzie to jednak zależeć od dostępności środków, w związku z czym nie można tego potwierdzić na tym etapie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002585/12
to the Commission
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: EU assistance for pre-school activities in Podkarpackie

Since 2007, Podkarpackie pre-school centres have been established as part of an EU project. Initially there were 50, and this number had grown to 81 by 2009. These Podkarpackie pre-school centres were jointly created by the 'Wzrastanie' (Growth) Foundation and the Association of Municipalities of the Przeworsk district.

EU funds allocated for this purpose amounted to PLN 25 million, with the local authorities contributing only 1.5 %.

Podkarpackie is a unique region in Poland that mainly comprises agricultural land, and its small towns and villages are experiencing difficulties relating to pre-school education. More than 2 500 of the region's children have benefited from attending pre-schools since their foundation.

The Podkarpackie pre-school centres have so far succeeded on three occasions in obtaining EU funding for their operations, but the fact is that funds are allocated for the setting up of pre-schools rather than their indefinite upkeep, and funds for this year have already been exhausted.

With the interests of Podkarpackie residents in mind, I put the following question to the Commission:

What forms of EU funding are available to those pre-school centres that are already in operation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

One of the objectives of the European Social Fund's Human Capital operational programme for 2007-13 is to increase access to pre-school education for children aged 3 to 5, especially in areas with limited pre-school capacity. This involves co-financing the establishment of new pre-school facilities, in particular in rural areas, and support for existing pre-school centres that create new places for children.

The Fund cannot co-finance the operating costs of facilities, which is a national responsibility. The Fund's resources cannot otherwise be used effectively in this field.

A call for proposals for pre-school facilities in the Podkarpackie region was published on 1 March 2012 by the region's Marshal Office, which is responsible for managing the Fund there. The budget is PLN 30 million and the closing date for proposals is 29 March 2012. The establishment of new pre-school facilities and support for existing pre-school centres that provide new places for children are both eligible under the call.

In the regional operational programme Podkarpackie under the priority Public Infrastructure there was number of projects implemented in the education field (primary schools) that contributed to the creation of the places in the pre-school centres. The total number of these newly created places is 110 (as per last implementation report available). These places were distributed among municipal and country side located centres. Furthermore, the managing authority keeps open possibility to launch call for applications dedicated to pre-school education in September 2012, however this very much will depend on the availability of the funding and cannot be confirmed at this stage.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002586/12
do Komisji
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(6 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Program „Erasmus dla wszystkich"

Komisja Europejska przedstawiła ostatnio projekt programu „Erasmus dla wszystkich", który od 2014 r. ma zastąpić wszystkie obecne siedem inicjatyw w dziedzinie kształcenia, szkolenia, młodzieży i sportu, w tym przede wszystkim takie programy jak „Uczenie się przez całe życie" oraz „Młodzież w działaniu".

W swojej propozycji Komisja zakłada wzrost budżetu aż o 70 % (do kwoty około 19 mld €), z czego 65 % środków finansowych miałoby być przeznaczonych na stypendia i innego rodzaju pomoc finansową dla młodych ludzi, na różnego typu wyjazdy mające na celu nabycie wiedzy i umiejętności.

Podejście Komisji jest słuszne i tym samym wpisuje się w założenia strategii „Europa 2020", kładąc nacisk na inwestowanie w przyszłość UE, jaką niewątpliwie są młodzi ludzie.

W obliczu – obchodzonego obecnie – Roku Aktywności Osób Starszych i Solidarności Międzypokoleniowej oraz sukcesów programu Grundtvig (niezawodowa edukacja dorosłych), większa uwaga powinna być także skupiona na osobach dorosłych i seniorach.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z uprzejmym zapytaniem do KE:

1. Jak Komisja zamierza zadbać o to, aby w zaproponowanym programie „Erasmus dla wszystkich" kwestie wsparcia kształcenia osób dorosłych, w tym szczególnie seniorów, nie zostały zmarginalizowane i niedofinansowane w stosunku do potrzeb?

2. Czy połączenie wszystkich dotychczasowych programów w jeden nie spowoduje marginalizacji edukacji osób starszych i wykluczonych społecznie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(25 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Oczekuje się, że w ramach przedstawionego nowego programu „Erasmus dla wszystkich" wszystkie sektory odniosą korzyści z proponowanego zwiększenia budżetu. W komunikacie ([1]) towarzyszącym projektowi podstawy prawnej tego programu proponuje się, aby wzrost środków dla sektora kształcenia dorosłych był największy spośród wszystkich sektorów i wyniósł 80 %. Właśnie w celu uniknięcia marginalizacji jakiegokolwiek sektora, w tym samym tekście określono również minimalny przydział środków dla każdego z sektorów. Gwarantuje to, że w żadnym wypadku środki przeznaczone dla danego sektora nie będą zmniejszone poniżej poziomu gwarantowanego w ramach programów na lata 2007-2013.

Aby jak najlepiej zaspokajać potrzeby tego sektora, zapewnić skuteczne oddziaływanie instytucji unijnych oraz zwiększyć europejską wartość dodaną, znacznie wzmocniona zostanie zarówno mobilność pracowników działających w dziedzinie kształcenia dorosłych, jak i projekty współpracy między instytucjami kształcącymi dorosłych a innymi zainteresowanymi stronami. Przyczyni się to do poprawy jakości nauczania oraz doprowadzi do rozwoju innowacyjnych i skutecznych metod nauczania i uczenia się oraz do upowszechniania dobrych praktyk w dziedzinie kształcenia dorosłych.

By wykorzystać efekt synergii z innymi europejskimi programami finansowania oraz uniknąć nakładania się na siebie środków, wsparcie na ustawiczne szkolenie dorosłych na rynku pracy będzie przekazywane za pośrednictwem innych programów finansowania Unii Europejskiej (UE), w szczególności za pośrednictwem Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego.

([1]) COM(2011) 787 wersja ostateczna.

Komisja pragnie wreszcie zwrócić uwagę Pani Poseł na rezolucję przyjętą przez Radę (28 listopada 2011 r.) w sprawie europejskiej agendy w zakresie uczenia się dorosłych. Wzywa się w niej do zapewnienia dobrze rozwiniętej oferty edukacyjnej dla osób starszych w celu wspierania aktywnego, samodzielnego i zdrowego starzenia się. W rezolucji podkreślono również znaczenie uczenia się dorosłych jako środka wspierania solidarności między różnymi grupami wiekowymi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002586/12
to the Commission
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: 'Erasmus for All' programme

The European Commission recently submitted a draft programme entitled 'Erasmus for All', which is intended to replace all of the seven existing initiatives in the areas of education, training, youth and sport, with particular reference to programmes such as 'Lifelong Learning' and 'Youth in Action'.

In its proposal, the Commission assumes a budget increase of as much as 70 % (reaching approximately EUR 19 billion), 65 % of which would be earmarked for scholarships and other financial assistance to fund a range of trips for young people in order to increase their knowledge and skills.

The Commission's approach is the right one, and thus tallies with the principles of the Europe 2020 strategy, as it emphasises investing in the future of the EU, which is undoubtedly young people.

In view of the fact that it is currently the Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, and in view of the successes achieved by the Grundtvig Programme (non-vocational adult education), greater attention should also be focused on adults and seniors.

In this connection, I should like to put the following questions:

1. How does the Commission intend to ensure that support for adult education, especially with regard to senior citizens, is adequately funded under the proposed 'Erasmus for All' programme and not marginalised?

2. Will the amalgamation of all existing programmes into a single programme not result in the marginalisation of education for the elderly and the socially excluded?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

In the proposed new programme 'Erasmus for all' all sectors are expected to gain from the proposed budget increase. The communication ([1]) accompanying the draft legal base proposes that the adult learning sector receive the biggest budgetary increase of all sectors with an increase of 80 %. Precisely to avoid the marginalisation of any one sector, the same text also spells out minimum percentages by sector to ensure that the funding going to any given sector is in under no circumstances reduced below the levels of the programmes for the 2007-2013 period.

In order to best serve the needs of the sector, to ensure an institutional impact and to increase European added value, both mobility of staff active in adult education and cooperation projects between adult education institutions and other stakeholders will be significantly strengthened. This will foster quality improvements in teaching and will lead to the development of innovative and successful teaching/learning methods and the dissemination of good practices in the area of adult education.

With a view to exploiting synergies with other European funding programmes and to avoiding overlap, the continuing training of adults in the labour market will be channelled through other European Union (EU) funding programmes, in particular the European Social Fund.

Finally the Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the Resolution adopted by the Council (28 November 2011) on a European Agenda for Adult Learning, calling for well-developed learning provision for older people in order to promote active, autonomous, and healthy ageing. It also emphasises the importance of adult learning as a means of fostering solidarity between different age groups.

([1]) COM(2011) 787 final.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002588/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(6. marts 2012)

Om: Krav om løsgående søer fra 2013

I svaret til min ærede kollega Bendt Bendtsen om krav om løsgående søer fra 2013 (E-005475/2011) skriver Kommissionen, at den ikke kan kræve oplysninger fra medlemsstaterne om, hvor langt de er nået med gennemførelsen af bestemmelserne i direktiv 2001/88/EF af 23. oktober 2011 (indskrevet i direktiv 2008/120/EF), før udløbet af den fastsatte tidsfrist for gennemførelsen.

Det er almindeligt kendt, at der er stor forskel på, hvordan og hvor hurtigt medlemsstaterne gennemfører vedtagne EU-regler. Senest har vi set, at krav om bur-størrelse med videre for burhøns ikke er blevet gennemført på tilfredsstillende vis på EU-plan inden for tidsfristen. Dette er til stor gene og ulempe for både de medlemsstater og de producenter, der har investeret i deres bedrifter, så gennemførelsesfristen overholdes. Hvis der ikke sikres en bedre og hurtigere gennemførelse af EU-reglerne, fører det til en underminering af det indre marked, da der reelt bliver tale om konkurrenceforvridning.

1. Deler Kommissionen bekymringen om, at mange medlemsstater får svært ved at nå at opfylde kravene om løsgående søer pr. 1. januar 2013?

2. Vil Kommissionen tage initiativ til at sikre et juridisk grundlag for at indsamle data — også inden for gennemførelsesfristen — om udviklingen i gennemførelsen af EU-lovgivning i medlemsstaterne?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli
(25. april 2012)

Kommissionen har en gennemførelsesplan for flokopstaldning af søer for 2012. Alle de redskaber, der er tilgængelige på EU-plan, anvendes til at opfordre medlemsstaterne til at overholde den lovbestemte frist. Indsamling af data fra medlemsstaterne om nuværende og fremtidig gennemførelse af flokopstaldning af søer er en af de foranstaltninger, der er fastsat i gennemførelsesplanen. Det fremgår af de data, der hidtil er modtaget fra 27 medlemsstater, at 12 medlemsstater skønner, at de vil kunne opfylde bestemmelserne fuldt ud fra 1. januar 2013. Kommissionen forelægger disse oplysninger og anmoder regelmæssigt medlemsstaterne om opdateringer i Den Stående Komité for Fødevarekæden og Dyresundhed.

Den 7. marts 2012 sendte Kommissionen et brev til de 27 medlemsstater for at understrege, hvor afgørende det er at overholde direktivet og indsende disse data.

Kommissionen har ikke til hensigt at fremsætte forslag om ændring af den gældende lovgivning, da der ikke vil kunne etableres et retsgrundlag inden ikrafttrædelsen af de nye bestemmelser.

Fra 1. januar 2013 bliver flokopstaldning af søer obligatorisk på alle svinebedrifter med ti søer eller derover, og medlemsstaterne er juridisk forpligtede til at rapportere tilfælde af manglende overholdelse af direktiv 2008/120/EF [1] om beskyttelse af svin som fastsat i Kommissionens beslutning 2006/778/EF [2] om mindstekrav til indsamling af oplysninger i forbindelse med inspektion af produktionssteder, hvor der holdes visse dyr til landbrugsformål.

[1] EUT L 47 af 18.2.2009, s. 5.
[2] EUT L 314 af 15.11.2006, s. 39.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002588/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Requirement for sows to be untethered from 2013

In the answer to the question raised by Bendt Bendtsen regarding the requirement for sows to be untethered from 2013 (E-005475/2011) the Commission writes that it cannot request information from Member States on the progress they have made towards implementation of the provisions in Directive 2001/88/EC of 23 October 2011 (codified in Council Directive 2008/120/EC) before expiry of the deadline for implementation.

It is well known that there are wide differences in the manner and speed of implementation by Member States of regulations adopted by the EU. Recently we have seen that the requirements for cage size, etc., for battery hens were not satisfactorily implemented across the EU by the deadline. This is extremely annoying and inconvenient for those Member States and producers who have made investments in their holdings in order to comply with the deadline for implementation. If better and swifter implementation of EU rules is not ensured, this will lead to an undermining of the internal market, as it will in fact result in the distortion of competition.

1. Does the Commission share the concern that many Member States will find it difficult to fulfil the requirements for untethered sows by 1 January 2013?

2. Will the Commission take the initiative to ensure that there is a legal basis for collecting data — including within the deadline for implementation — on progress made in the implementation of EU legislation in Member States?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The Commission has an implementation plan for group housing of sows in place for 2012. All the tools available at European Union (EU) level are used to push Member States to comply by the legal deadline. Collecting data from the Member States on the current and future implementation of group housing of sows is one of the actions laid down in the implementation plan. From the data received so far from 27 Member States, 12 Member States estimate that they will fully comply by 1 January 2013. The Commission presents these data and calls for updates with the Member States on a regular basis at the Standing Committee for the Food Chain and Animal Health.

On 7 March 2012, the Commission sent a letter to the 27 Member States to recall them of the utmost importance of complying with the directive and of sending these data.

The Commission does not intend to make a proposal to amend the current legislation as it would not provide a legal basis before the entry into force of the new provisions.

From 1 January 2013, group housing of sows will be mandatory in all pig holdings keeping 10 sows or more and Member States will have the legal obligation to report non-compliances to the directive 2008/120/EC ([1]) on the protection of pigs as laid down in Commission Decision 2006/778/EC ([2]) concerning minimum requirements for the collection of information during the inspections of production sites on which certain animals are kept for farming purposes.

([1]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5.
([2]) OJ L 314, 15.11.2066, p. 39.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002590/12
to the Commission
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Situation of asylum-seekers in Ukraine

The Ukrainian authorities have reportedly been detaining around 60 Somali asylum-seekers in the Migrant Accommodation Centre in Zhuravichi, and their situation was said to be dire. Due to administrative and other problems, the Ukrainian asylum system is chaotic, and the asylum-seekers risk harassment and attacks from the local population if they leave the facility. Many have crossed the border to Poland to claim asylum there but have been sent back, in line with the EU-Ukraine readmission agreement.

1. In light of the recent decisions in Cases C-411/10 and C-493/10 by the European Court of Justice, and Case 30696/09 M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece by the European Court of Human Rights, does the Commission agree that compliance with human rights standards should always be checked before implementing readmission agreements?

2. Does the Commission consider Poland to be in breach of the principle of non-refoulement when it implements the readmission agreement in the face of clear evidence of persons returned being subjected to cruel treatment?

3. Will the Commission ask Poland to check whether Ukraine complies with human rights standards and guarantees fair treatment to asylum-seekers before sending more applicants back?

4. Is the Commission raising the issue of the malfunctioning asylum system, and the harassment and violence directed against asylum-seekers, as part of the negotiations on an EU-Ukraine Association Agreement?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2012)

EC law provides that, prior to returning someone to a third country, a Member State must satisfy itself that the migrant does not wish to seek international protection and, if such a request has been made, make sure that it has been carefully and individually assessed in a proper evaluation procedure.

Asylum-seekers are entitled to stay on the territory of the Member State pending the examination of their request, and cannot therefore be considered for readmission. Only after a Member State rejects their request can it take a return decision followed by possible use of a readmission agreement, such as the EU-Ukraine readmission agreement.

When returning a migrant using a readmission procedure, Member States must always respect the principle of non-refoulement, which requires that no person is sent to a country where they may be subjected to persecution, torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The Commission monitors Member States' compliance with these obligations and in cases of violations of EC law, it can take action as set out in the Treaties.

Negotiations for an EU-Ukraine Association Agreement are complete. The text, which contains an article on cooperation on asylum, was initialled on 30 April 2012. Home affairs issues, including asylum are discussed every year in the cooperation fora with Ukraine. An Action Plan on Visa Liberalisation was presented to Ukraine in November 2010, with benchmarks for legislative and implementation phases, including asylum policy. The Commission services and EEAS are currently reporting on the legislative phase of the action plan. The Second Progress Report was issued on 9 February 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002591/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights in Palestine

In the context of the EEAS' dialogue with the Palestinian Authority on human rights issues, could Baroness Ashton please advise me as to whether the matter of 'curative rape' of gay women has been raised, and if so with whom?

Has the EEAS engaged with gay rights activists, in either Gaza or the West Bank, in order to ascertain the real situation faced by gay men and women in Palestine?

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

The EU monitors closely the situation of women's rights in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and finances a number of projects dealing with women's rights in the Gaza Strip. The EU is not in receipt of any information concerning the treatment of lesbian women which you describe. We will, however, continue to monitor the situation on the ground through our office in Jerusalem.

As regards the broader question of the rights of gay women and men in occupied Palestinian territory, *I would recall that the EU* is engaged in an ongoing human rights dialogue with the Palestinian Authority (PA) within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy which provides an opportunity to raise issues of concern.

To date the EU has not received any submissions/information on this issue from human rights organisations in the oPt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002594/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Implications of Scottish and Welsh independence

Given the current debate within the UK about the possible dissolution of the union which currently exists as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, were Scotland and/or Wales to decide as nations to vote for a separatist agenda and therefore the break-up of the UK, what would be their status within the EU?

1. Would a newly independent Scotland or Wales need to apply to the EU for membership in their own right?

2. Is there a mechanism for 'fast-tracked' consideration of accession requests?

3. Would Scotland and Wales, as new members of the EU, need to commit to the EU's current entry requirements or would the current UK rights as an existing member be likely to apply?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000395/2012 by Mr Tremosa y Balcells ([1]).

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002595/12
do Komisji
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(6 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wspólnoty Wiedzy i Innowacji – WWiI

Pod koniec ubiegłego roku ukazał się komunikat prasowy Komisji Europejskiej, dotyczący Europejskiego Instytutu Wiedzy i Innowacji (EIT) oraz jego planów utworzenia kolejnych transgranicznych ośrodków innowacji, zwanych Wspólnotami Wiedzy i Innowacji (WWiI).

Plany te zakładają m.in. utworzenie do 2018 r. sześciu nowych Wspólnot Wiedzy i Innowacji, które koncentrować się będą na trzech dziedzinach:

— zrównoważonej energii,

— zmianach klimatu,

— społeczeństwie i technologiach informacyjno-komunikacyjnych (TIK).

Ponadto do 2020 r. przewiduje się utworzenie 600 nowych przedsiębiorstw oraz objęcie 25 tys. studentów i 10 tys. doktorantów specjalistycznymi szkoleniami.

Z informacji zamieszczonych na stronie internetowej Europejskiego Instytut Wiedzy i Innowacji (EIT) wynika, iż dotychczas powstało 18 takich ośrodków, z czego jedynie 2 znajdują się na obszarze państw, które przystąpiły do Unii Europejskiej po 2004 r.

W związku z powyższym kieruję do Komisji następujące pytania:

1. W których państwach członkowskich UE i gdzie dokładnie planowane jest utworzenie kolejnych sześciu Wspólnot Wiedzy i Innowacji?

2. Jak Komisja zamierza zadbać o równowagę w rozmieszczeniu tak ważnych ośrodków innowacji, które mają wpływ nie tylko na wypracowanie ogólnych rozwiązań dla Europy, ale również na rozwój regionalny?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(25 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Pakiet wniosków ustawodawczych „Horyzont 2020" przedstawiony przez Komisję w dniu 30 listopada 2011 r. obejmuje wniosek w sprawie strategicznego planu innowacji Europejskiego Instytutu Innowacji i Technologii (EIT). We wniosku tym zaleca się, aby kolejne sześć wspólnot wiedzy i innowacji (WWiI) powstało w latach 2014-2020 w dwóch etapach rozpoczynających się odpowiednio w 2014 r. i 2018 r.

1. Wybór WWiI, tak jak obecnie, należeć będzie w pełni do Europejskiego Instytutu Innowacji i Technologii, jak przewidziano w rozporządzeniu go ustanawiającym. WWiI zostaną wybrane na podstawie kryteriów określonych w specjalnym zaproszeniu do składania wniosków, które zostanie opublikowane przez EIT w odpowiednim czasie. Tak jak w przeszłości, WWiI będą wybierane na podstawie ich wyników, a nie na podstawie szczególnego rozmieszczenia geograficznego.

2. Komisja nie może wpływać na wybór WWiI. Zgodnie z tym, co Komisja zaproponowała w strategicznym planie innowacji EIT, będzie jednak gwarantować, aby EIT przynosił korzyści również tym obszarom Unii, które nie uczestniczą bezpośrednio w WWiI. W tym celu EIT:

— ustanowi program („Członkowie EIT"), w ramach którego bardzo utalentowane osoby z całej UE i z zagranicy będą miały możliwość zaangażowania się – na pewien wyznaczony okres – w działalność centrów kolokacji WWiI, co przyniesie wzajemne korzyści dla uczestników oraz dla WWiI;

— stworzy narzędzie internetowe stanowiące platformę wymiany wiedzy i tworzenia sieci kontaktów mającą EIT jako swoje centrum;

— będzie systematycznie udostępniać doświadczenia i osiągnięcia WWiI szerszej wspólnocie innowacji w UE i poza nią.

Kontakty zewnętrzne tego rodzaju zagwarantują, że doświadczenia i korzyści EIT wspierać będą rozwój zdolności innowacyjnych na wszystkich obszarach Unii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002595/12
to the Commission
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs)

Towards the end of last year, the Commission issued a press release concerning the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), and its plans to establish other cross-border centres of innovation called Knowledge and Innovation Communities.

The plans include, amongst other things, setting up six new KICs by 2018, concentrating on three areas:

— sustainable energy,

— climate change,

— society and information and communication technologies (ICT).

In addition, by 2020 it is envisaged that 600 new businesses will be created, and that 25 000 students and 10 000 postgraduates will be enrolled in specialised studies.

From information on the EIT website, it would appear that 18 such centres have already been established, of which only two are located in countries that joined the European Union in or after 2004.

In view of the above, I would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. In which EU Member States, and where exactly, does it plan to create the next six KICs?

2. How does the Commission intend to ensure a balance in the distribution of such important centres of innovation, which have an impact not only in terms of finding general solutions for Europe, but also on regional development?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The HORIZON 2020 legislative package proposed by the Commission on 30 November 2011 includes the proposal for the Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) of the EIT. This latter proposal in turn recommends that there should be six more KICs in the period 2014-2020, to be launched in two waves, in 2014 and 2018 respectively.

1. The selection of KICs will, as it currently is, be entirely the responsibility of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), as provided for by the regulation establishing it. The KICs will be selected on the basis of criteria described in a specific call for proposals which will be published by the EIT in due time. The KICs will, as in the past, be selected on the basis of excellence, not on the basis of a specific geographical distribution.

2. The Commission cannot influence the selection of KICs. However, the Commission will — as it has proposed in the Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) of the EIT — ensure that the EIT also delivers benefits to areas of the Union which are not directly participating in KICs. To this end the EIT will:

— establish a scheme ('EIT fellows') allowing high talent people from across the EU and beyond to be involved in the activities of KIC co-location centres for a limited period of time, thereby creating mutual benefits for the participants as well as for the KIC;

— organise a web based tool to provide a platform for knowledge sharing and networking around the EIT;

— ensure that lessons learned from and successes of the KICs are systematically accessible to the wider EU innovation community and beyond.

Such outreach will ensure that the experience and benefits of the EIT promote the development of innovation capacity in all areas of the Union.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002597/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(6 martie 2012)

Subiect: Trafic transfrontalier

În ultimii ani, după extinderea spațiului Schengen, s-a constatat o creştere semnificativă a traficului rutier transfrontalier — cetățenii europeni circulă pentru a vizita diverse locuri din Europa sau având interese economice fie private, fie legate de activitățile profesionale. În plus, există din ce în ce mai mulți cetățeni europeni care traversează frontierele zilnic sau săptămânal pentru a merge la muncă în alt stat membru.

De mult ori, însă, aceştia sunt dezorientați, după trecerea frontierei, în ceea ce priveşte regulile şi principiile de circulație din acest stat membru, în prezent existând politici diferite de siguranță rutieră.

Care este strategia Comisiei pentru o armonizare a acestor politici, în colaborare cu statele membre, mai ales la capitolul semnalizării şi a marcajelor rutiere, precum şi a codurilor rutiere europene, cu precădere în cazul infrastructurii realizate cu fonduri europene?

Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei
(19 aprilie 2012)

Comisia dorește să precizeze că, pentru chestiunile legate de semnalizarea rutieră, contextul normativ este dat de Convenția privind semnalizarea rutieră, semnată la Viena la 8 noiembrie 1968 sub auspiciile Comisiei Economice pentru Europa a Organizației Națiunilor Unite.

Statele membre au responsabilitatea de a se asigura că regulile de circulație aplicate pe teritoriul lor (de exemplu limite de viteză, utilizarea semafoarelor) sunt bine afișate la punctele de trecere a frontierei.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002597/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(6 March 2012)

Subject: Cross-border traffic

In recent years, since the expansion of the Schengen area, a significant increase in cross-border road traffic has been recorded — European citizens moving around to visit various locations in Europe or pursue economic interests, either for private reasons or as part of their professional activities. In addition, an increasing number of European citizens are crossing borders on a daily or weekly basis to go to work in another Member State.

Often, however, after crossing the border, they become disorientated with regard to the traffic rules and principles of that Member State because of the different road safety policies in place at present.

What is the Commission's strategy for harmonising these policies, in collaboration with Member States, especially on the subject of road signs and road markings, as well as European highway codes, particularly in the case of infrastructures put in place using European funds?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

The Commission wishes to point out that the Convention of Road Signs and Signals, done at Vienna on 8 November 1968, under the auspices of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, provides the regulatory context for issues regarding road signs.

Member States are responsible for making sure that at cross-border points, traffic rules applied on their territory are well displayed (such as speed limits, use of traffic lights).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002599/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: La exención del IVA

La transposición de la Directiva 2004/18/CE que hizo el Estado español en la Ley 30/2007 de contratos de las administraciones públicas determina que la adjudicación de contratos públicos por parte de la administración debe hacerse a la «oferta económicamente más ventajosa» ateniéndose a los criterios vinculados al contrato. Si la adjudicación se basa en un solo criterio éste será siempre el precio más bajo. Dichos precios se comparan antes del IVA, debiendo añadirse el coste del IVA al servicio si su gestión es adjudicada a una empresa mercantil. De adjudicarse el concurso a una entidad sin ánimo de lucro exenta, la administración no ha de pagar el impuesto pero la entidad debe asumir como consumidora final del IVA de sus costes generales, así como de los productos y servicios que deba adquirir para prestar el servicio que la administración le contrata resultándole a la entidad social unos costes superiores, discriminatorios respecto al adjudicatario cuando éste es una empresa mercantil que recuperará el IVA soportado en su liquidación fiscal. La adjudicación a una empresa mercantil, sin considerar el coste del IVA, al tomar la decisión sobre la oferta más ventajosa, obliga a la administración pública a asumir el sobrecoste del IVA del servicio contratado.

Habida cuenta la especificidad de las entidades sociales sin ánimo de lucro que deben asumir como coste el IVA soportado, sin tener la ventaja de que el precio final que ofertan sea considerado en igualdad de condiciones que el precio que pueda presentar una sociedad mercantil con el IVA añadido,

1. ¿Qué criterios fijaría la Comisión para evitar la situación de discriminación hacia las entidades sociales sin ánimo de lucro?

2. ¿Está la Comisión satisfecha de la transposición de la Directiva 2004/18/CE en los términos descritos?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión no tiene ningún motivo para cuestionar la transposición que han hecho las autoridades españolas de la Directiva 2004/18/CE en lo que atañe a las disposiciones que regulan los criterios de adjudicación. De conformidad con la Ley 30/2007, de 30 de octubre, de Contratos del Sector Público, los criterios de adjudicación pueden atender a la oferta que sea económicamente más ventajosa o a la que presente el precio más bajo, lo que concuerda con el artículo 53 de la citada Directiva.

La Comisión observa que la Directiva 2004/18/CE se aplica únicamente a los contratos públicos cuyo valor estimado, sin incluir el impuesto sobre el valor añadido, sea igual o superior a los umbrales fijados en la Directiva. Por consiguiente, la situación que menciona Su Señoría no parece, en principio, relevante en el contexto de la repetida Directiva.

La Comisión debe señalar, asimismo, que la exoneración prevista en la Directiva 2006/112/CE sólo concierne a algunas actividades efectuadas por organismos sin ánimo de lucro que se enumeran con carácter limitativo en la propia Directiva. Tal exoneración conlleva también una serie de ventajas económicas para esos organismos, los cuales, ciertamente, deben soportar el IVA aplicable a sus compras, pero no están, en cambio, obligados a facturar el IVA correspondiente a los servicios que prestan (y, gracias a ello, sus precios pueden ser más ventajosos). Por lo demás, los organismos sin ánimo de lucro deben facturar el IVA aplicable a todas las entregas de bienes y prestaciones de servicios que no entren en el marco estricto de aplicación de la exoneración. Se encuentran así en la misma situación que cualquier otro contribuyente que efectúe operaciones sujetas al IVA.

Debe indicarse, en todo caso, que la oferta presentada por un licitador que disfrute de una ventaja competitiva como resultado de una ayuda estatal (por ejemplo, una exención fiscal) no puede rechazarse si el licitador demuestra que esa ayuda se le concedió legalmente ([1]).

([1]) Véase el artículo 55, apartado 3, de la Directiva 2004/18/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002599/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: VAT exemption

The transposition of Directive 2004/18/EC by the Spanish Government through Law No 30/2007 on public procurement requires public authorities to award public contracts to the 'most economically advantageous tender', in accordance with the criteria governing the contract. If there is only one award criterion for the contract, this will always be the lowest price. These prices are compared net of VAT, and the cost of the VAT must be added to the service if the contract is awarded to a commercial company. In awarding the tender to a VAT exempt non-profit institution, the public authority does not have to pay the tax but the institution, as an end consumer, is obliged to pay VAT on its general costs and on any goods and services it must purchase to provide the service contracted to it by the authority. This means that welfare organisations incur certain higher costs, and are therefore discriminated against, since, if the successful tenderer is a commercial company, the VAT paid out will be refunded in its tax assessment. Awarding a contract to a commercial company when determining the most advantageous tender, without taking into account the cost of VAT, obliges the public authority to bear the additional cost of the VAT for the service contracted.

Given the specific nature of non-profit welfare institutions that must bear the cost of the VAT they pay, without having the advantage of their final tendered price being considered on equal terms with the VAT-included price tendered by a commercial company,

1. What criteria would the Commission establish to prevent such discrimination against non-profit welfare institutions?

2. Is the Commission satisfied with the transposition of Directive 2004/18/EC in the terms described?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission has no reason to question the transposition of Directive 2004/18/EC by the Spanish authorities in relation to the provisions on award criteria. According to Law 30/2007 on the award of public contracts, award criteria can be either the most economically advantageous tender or the lowest price which is in line with Article 53 of Directive 2004/18/EC.

The Commission notes that directive 2004/18/EC applies only to public contracts which have a value exclusive of value-added tax (estimated to be equal to or greater than the directive's thresholds). Hence, the situation referred to by the Honourable Member is not, *prima facie*, a relevant one in the context of Directive 2004/18/EC.

The Commission would also point out that the exemption provided for in Directive 2006/112/EC concerns only some of the activities carried out by non-profit-making organisations, and these are exhaustively listed in the directive. An exemption of this type also involves economic advantages for these organisations, which will have to pay the VAT on their purchases but will not be required to charge VAT on the services they provide (thus keeping their prices down). In addition, not-profit-making organisations must charge VAT each time they supply goods or services which do not fall within the strict framework of the exemption. They are then in the same position as any other taxable person carrying out transactions which are subject to VAT.

In any event, an offer submitted by a tenderer enjoying a competitive advantage resulting from a state aid (i.e. a tax exemption) cannot be rejected if the tenderer proves that the aid in question was legally granted ([1]).

([1]) See Article 55(3) of Directive 2004/18/EC.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002600/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Puertos catalanes que no tienen permiso para operar fuera del espacio Schengen

Desde hace años los distintos agentes económicos de las comarcas de Girona y de Palamós reclaman apoyo para potenciar las infraestructuras del Puerto de Palamós tanto desde la perspectiva de circulación de personas como de circulación de mercancías. Así, se ha solicitado que el Puerto de Palamós sea un punto fronterizo Schengen con el fin de potenciar su actividad turística y económica y también que sea un punto de inspección fronterizo para la importación y exportación de mercancías. El Senado español votó recientemente en contra de esto.

Palamós, como puerto de cruceros, recibió el año pasado 38 770 cruceristas y 36 escalas, cifra importante pero que pudiera multiplicarse en caso de lograr ser un punto fronterizo Schengen, habiendo incluso la posibilidad de vincular turísticamente el Puerto de Palamós con el aeropuerto de Girona para iniciar y/o finalizar sus cruceros en esta localidad de la Costa Brava. Para ello es necesario que se pueda intercambiar los dos modos de transporte con un solo trámite aduanero.

Ya en 2005, el Congreso de los Diputados aprobó una proposición no de ley, en el que se instaba al Gobierno español a realizar los estudios y proyectos técnicos necesarios para conocer la evolución del Puerto de Palamós, valorando en el futuro la posibilidad de convertirlo en frontera exterior Schengen.

¿Qué opina la Comisión del hecho de convertir el Puerto de Palamós en un punto fronterizo Schengen?

Una buena medida para facilitar la actividad económica sería extender las capacidades de inspección del puesto de inspección fronterizo del Puerto de Palamós, que se limitan a productos no destinados al consumo humano, a través del puesto de inspección fronteriza del aeropuerto de Girona; con ello se permitiría convertir a este puerto en una plataforma logística para la importación y exportación de sus productos a países fuera de la UE. ¿Qué piensa la Comisión sobre este tema?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

Por lo que se refiere al cruce de personas de una frontera exterior del espacio Schengen, de conformidad con el Código de fronteras Schengen, queda a la discreción del Estado miembro respectivo qué lugares designará como pasos fronterizos de acuerdo con las normas establecidas en dicho Código. Se informará a la Comisión de estos pasos fronterizos. España no ha realizado ninguna notificación sobre el Puerto de Palamós.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002600/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Catalonian ports that do not have permission to operate outside of the Schengen area

For years, the various economic operators of the municipalities of Girona and Palamós have been demanding support for improvements to the Palamós Port infrastructure both as regards movement of people and movement of goods. An application was therefore made for Palamós Port to become a Schengen border point with the aim of improving tourism and business activity there, and also for it to be made a border inspection point for the import and export of goods. The Spanish Senate recently voted against this.

Palamós, as a port for cruise ships, received 38 770 cruise passengers and 36 stopovers in the past year, a significant figure but one that could multiply if it became a Schengen border point, including having the possibility to link the Palamós Port with the Girona airport in order for tourists to begin and/or end their cruises in this locality of the Costa Brava. To achieve this, it must be possible to switch between the two forms of transport with only one customs process.

As long ago as 2005, the Congress of Deputies approved a non-legislative proposal, in which the Spanish Government was urged to undertake the necessary technical studies and projects with a view to the evolution of the Palamós Port, assessing the possibility of converting it into an external Schengen border in the future.

What is the Commission's opinion regarding the conversion of Palamós Port into a Schengen border point?

A useful measure in order to facilitate economic activity would be to expand the inspection capacities of the Palamós Port border inspection post, which are limited to products that are not destined for human consumption, using the border inspection point at Girona airport. Doing so would make it possible to convert this port into a logistic platform for the import and export of products to countries outside of the EU. What is the Commission's view on this matter?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

As regards the crossing of an external Schengen border by persons, according to the Schengen Borders Code, it is in the discretion of the respective Member State which locations it designates as such border crossing points which must comply with the standards as set out in the Schengen Borders Code. The Commission shall be notified of these border crossing points, and Spain has not notified Palamos port.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002601/12
a la Comisión
Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE) y Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE)
(7 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Estado actual del procedimiento de infracción contra Portugal por la implantación del sistema de peajes en autovías

El 15 de octubre de 2010 Portugal introdujo un sistema de peajes en algunas autovías del norte del país. El 7 de abril de 2011 la Comisión Europea envió a Portugal una carta de emplazamiento y el 27 de octubre un dictamen motivado. Sin embargo, a partir de diciembre de 2011, las autoridades portuguesas procedieron a extender el sistema de peajes electrónicos a otras cuatro autovías más del norte, centro y sur de Portugal. Sobre todo este asunto dirigimos a la Comisión Europea, a partir de octubre de 2010, una serie de preguntas, al tiempo que le informábamos del impacto económico negativo que la implantación del sistema de peaje tenía en la economía de Galicia y de la región Norte de Portugal.

En su respuesta de 16 de diciembre de 2011 a la última pregunta que habíamos formulado, de fecha 24 de octubre del mismo año (E-010060/2011), la Comisión Europea nos informó de que no había recibido respuesta por parte de las autoridades portuguesas al dictamen motivado y que Portugal tampoco había notificado a la Comisión su intención de aplicar los sistemas de peaje en otras autopistas.

¿Puede la Comisión informar sobre el estado actual del procedimiento de infracción? ¿Cuáles son las infracciones concretas que se imputan a Portugal en el dictamen motivado remitido el 27 de octubre? ¿Se encuentra entre los principios infringidos el principio de no discriminación? ¿Por qué razones concretas? ¿Qué opina la Comisión del complejo sistema electrónico de pago, de difícil acceso y el único establecido? ¿Es consciente la Comisión de las graves repercusiones económicas que estas medidas están provocando y del malestar y protestas surgidos a ambos lados de la frontera entre España y Portugal?

En los últimos días de la prensa de Galicia se deduce que el Gobierno portugués ya ha contestado al dictamen motivado, ¿puede la Comisión confirmar ese dato? ¿Cuáles son las alegaciones que formulan las autoridades portuguesas en esa respuesta? ¿Ha concluido ya la Comisión su evaluación? ¿Cuál es ésta? ¿A qué conclusiones ha llegado la Comisión y cuáles van a ser los próximos pasos que dará?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión abrió en abril de 2011 un procedimiento de infracción contra Portugal por la incorrecta incorporación al Derecho portugués de la Directiva 1999/62/CE, relativa a la aplicación de gravámenes a los vehículos pesados de transporte de mercancías por la utilización de determinadas infraestructuras (Directiva sobre la «euroviñeta») ([1]). La Comisión pidió también a Portugal que facilitara información precisa sobre la aplicación del nuevo sistema de peaje en las antiguas autopistas SCUT.

La Comisión ha recibido la respuesta de las autoridades portuguesas al dictamen motivado y está evaluando actualmente su contenido. A la vista de los resultados de esa evaluación, la Comisión tomará, en su caso, todas las medidas que sean necesarias para ejecutar el Derecho de la UE como prevé el Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea.

La Comisión, para terminar, recuerda que la obligación de cumplir íntegramente la Directiva 1999/62/CE y el Tratado se puso también de relieve en el marco del reciente Memorando de Acuerdo sobre el Programa de Ajuste Económico para Portugal, celebrado entre la CE, el BCE y el FMI, por una parte, y las autoridades portuguesas, por la otra. En él se dispone que Portugal adopte las modificaciones legislativas necesarias para lograr el pleno cumplimiento de la Directiva *1999/62/CE* (Directiva sobre la «euroviñeta») *y del Tratado de la UE y, en especial, para garantizar que los sistemas de peaje no se apliquen de forma discriminatoria a los usuarios de la carretera que no sean residentes* [Q4-2012]. *Una vez pasada la fecha límite para la aplicación de esta medida, todo descuento que se conceda en el marco de un sistema de peaje por razones imperiosas de cohesión territorial y social sólo podrá aplicarse si se demuestra su conformidad con la normativa de la UE* (http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2011/pdf/ocp89_en.pdf, página 123).

([1]) DO L 187 de 20.7.1999, p. 42, modificada por la Directiva 2006/38/CE (DO L 157 de 9.6.2006, p. 8).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002601/12
to the Commission
Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE) and Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Stage reached in the infringement proceedings against Portugal for implementing a motorway toll system

On 15 October 2010, Portugal introduced a toll system on some motorways in the north of the country. On 7 April 2011, the European Commission sent a letter of formal notice and on 27 October, a reasoned opinion. However, starting from December 2011, the Portuguese authorities expanded the electronic toll system to include another four motorways in the north, centre and south of Portugal. Starting from October 2010, we tabled a series of questions to the European Commission regarding this whole matter, informing it about the negative economic impact that the implementation of the toll system was having on Galicia's economy and on the economy of the Norte region of Portugal.

In its answer of 16 December 2011 to the latest question we tabled, on 24 October 2011, (E-010060/2011), the European Commission informed us that it had not received a response from the Portuguese authorities to the reasoned opinion, and that Portugal had also not notified the Commission of its intention to implement toll systems on other motorways.

Can the Commission indicate what stage has been reached in the infringement proceedings? Which specific infringements are attributed to Portugal in the reasoned opinion sent on 27 October? Is the principle of non-discrimination among the principles infringed? For which specific reasons? What is the Commission's opinion on the complex electronic payment system, which is difficult to access and the only one in place? Is the Commission aware of the serious economic repercussions that these measures are causing and of the unease and protests that have arisen on both sides of the border between Spain and Portugal?

The Galician press recently claimed that the Portuguese Government has now responded to the reasoned opinion. Can the Commission confirm this? What did the Portuguese authorities state in that response? Has the Commission now assessed that information? What was its assessment? What conclusions did the Commission arrive at, and what steps will it now take?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

In April 2011, the Commission opened an infringement case against Portugal concerning the incorrect transposition of Directive 1999/62/EC on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures ('Eurovignette' Directive) ([1]) into Portuguese law. The Commission also asked Portugal to provide detailed information on the application of the new tolling arrangement on former SCUT motorways.

The Commission has received the reply by the Portuguese authorities to the reasoned opinion and is currently assessing its content. In the light of this assessment, the Commission will, if necessary, take all the measures to enforce the EC law as foreseen by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Finally, the Commission recalls that the need for full compliance with Directive 1999/62/EC and the Treaty was also stressed in the framework of the recent Memorandum of Understanding concerning Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal concluded between EC/ECB/IMF and Portuguese authorities which requires Portugal to '*adopt the necessary legislative amendments in order to achieve full compliance with Directive 1999/62/EC (Eurovignette Directive) and the EU Treaty and, in particular, to guarantee non-discriminatory application of tolling schemes to non-resident road users* [Q4-2012]. After the deadline of this measure, rebates in tolling schemes that pursue compelling reasons of territorial and social cohesion may only be applied if their compliance with *the EC law is demonstrated*' (http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2011/pdf/ocp89_en.pdf, page 123).

([1]) OJ L 187/42, 20.7.1999 as amended by Directive 2006/38/EC (OJ L 157/8, 9.6.2006).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002602/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili fondi per l'ipogeo di Foggia

L'ipogeo urbano di San Domenico, a Foggia, da mesi non è più visitabile. Una parte della cavità è allagata a causa di infiltrazioni di acqua fognaria e potabile. Nonostante l'associazione Ipogei abbia allertato l'Acquedotto pugliese e l'impresa che ha la gestione del sistema fognario cittadino per conto del Comune, non è accaduto nulla.

Così resta a rischio uno dei due ipogei foggiani (l'altro è quello di Sant'Agostino) inseriti nel catasto regionale delle cavità artificiali, riconosciuti ufficialmente per il loro valore geologico e storico. Nel centro storico di Foggia gli ipogei già scoperti sono nove. L'associazione Ipogei, nata nel 1995, è stata fondata proprio per valorizzare al meglio questi luoghi.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza dell'allagamento dell'ipogeo urbano di San Domenico a Foggia;

2. se il Comune di Foggia ha chiesto finanziamenti per il ripristino del sito dall'alto valore geologico e storico;

3. se l'associazione Ipogei, alla luce dell'attività finalizzata al mantenimento degli ipogei cittadini, può usufruire di fondi europei per le proprie iniziative?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2012)

La Commissione non era a conoscenza dei fatti menzionati dall'onorevole deputato.

I progetti cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato potrebbero in effetti essere ammissibili a un sostegno finanziario nell'ambito della politica di coesione. Il programma regionale per la Puglia, che è cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, prevede uno stanziamento di 50 milioni di euro per la protezione e la tutela del patrimonio culturale nell'ambito della priorità consacrata alle risorse naturali e culturali per lo sviluppo locale. Tuttavia, in applicazione del principio della gestione condivisa che si applica per l'amministrazione della politica di coesione, le autorità nazionali sono responsabili della selezione dei progetti e della loro realizzazione. La Commissione suggerisce pertanto all'onorevole deputato di mettersi direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione responsabile del programma Puglia:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia
Viale Japigia, n. 145
70126 BARI
adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002602/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Possible funding for the hypogaeum in Foggia

Foggia's San Domenico urban hypogaeum has been closed to the public for months. The cavern has been partially flooded following seepage of both sewage and drinking water. Despite the fact that the Hypogea Association has alerted both the Apulian aqueducts agency and the company managing the urban sewers on behalf of the municipal authority, no action has been taken.

Consequently, risks still remain for one of Foggia's two hypogea (the other being Sant'Agostino) listed in the regional register of man-made caverns, officially acknowledged for their geological and historical significance. Nine hypogea have been discovered to date in Foggia's historic centre. The Hypogea Association was founded in 1995 for the very purpose of developing and promoting these sites.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the flooding of Foggia's San Domenico urban hypogaeum;

2. whether the Foggia municipal authority has applied for funding to restore this site of particular geological and historical significance;

3. whether, in light of its maintenance activities of the city's hypogea, the Hypogea Association is entitled to European funding for its initiatives?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission was not previously aware of the facts mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The projects referred to by the Honourable Member could indeed be eligible for financial support under cohesion policy. The regional programme for Puglia, which is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, provides for an allocation of EUR 50 million for the 'Protection and preservation of cultural heritage' under the priority 'Natural and cultural resources for local development'. However, within the framework of the shared management principle used in administering cohesion policy, the national authorities are responsible for project selection and implementation. The Commission, therefore, suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority responsible for the Puglia programme:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia
Viale Japigia, n. 145
70126 Bari
adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002603/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Dati e statistiche sul fumo negli Stati membri

In Italia il numero dei fumatori è di circa dodici milioni. Secondo l'Istat, quasi un italiano su quattro fuma, esattamente il 22,3 % della popolazione.

Prima dell'introduzione della legge anti-fumo i tabagisti italiani erano il 25,6 % della popolazione. L'identikit del fumatore tracciato dall'Istat vede la netta prevalenza degli uomini sulle donne (rispettivamente il 28,4 % contro il 16,6 %), ma la quota femminile è in ascesa. Stabile anche la propensione al vizio tra i giovani: nella fascia tra i 25 e i 34 anni si registra una diffusione record di fumatori, addirittura il 38,9 % tra i maschi e il 22,4 % tra le femmine.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. Se è a conoscenza dei dati Istat sul fumo in Italia,

2. Se intende fornire dati e statistiche aggiornati sul tabagismo nei vari Stati membri,

3. Se intende promuovere campagne di sensibilizzazione per informare la cittadinanza sui rischi per la salute che si possono correre col fumo attivo e passivo?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei dati Istat sul fumo in Italia e segue regolarmente gli sviluppi del consumo di tabacco negli Stati membri. L'ultima indagine Eurobarometro sul tabacco è stata pubblicata nel 2010 ([1]). Attualmente è in preparazione un aggiornamento i cui risultati dovrebbero essere disponibili entro il maggio 2012. Dati più dettagliati in tema di fumo (tipologia dei fumatori, esposizione al fumo di tabacco, ripartiti per sesso, età e situazione socioeconomica) saranno disponibili in relazione a tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE entro il 2017 in seguito all'attuazione dell'Indagine europea sulla salute basata su interviste armonizzata (European Health Interview Survey).

La Commissione è impegnata in campagne di sensibilizzazione e di comunicazione condotte su scala dell'UE ([2]) per attirare l'attenzione sui pericoli del fumo del tabacco, in particolare tra i giovani. Inoltre, gli avvertimenti scritti sui pacchetti di prodotti del tabacco sono uno strumento efficace per far conoscere i rischi sanitari legati al fumo. Per mantenerne l'impatto la Commissione ha aggiornato di recente questi avvertimenti ([3]). Inoltre è disponibile ad uso degli Stati membri una libreria di avvertenze illustrate ([4]).

Per quanto concerne i rischi sanitari legati al fumo passivo, la raccomandazione del Consiglio del 2009 relativa agli ambienti senza fumo ([5]) sollecita gli Stati membri a tutelare appieno i loro cittadini dall'esposizione al fumo di tabacco entro il 2012. La Commissione sostiene la piena attuazione della raccomandazione.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/ebs332_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/ex_smokers_are_unstoppable/index_en.htm
([3]) GU L69 dell'8.3.2012, pag. 15.
([4]) GU L226 del 10.9.2003, pag. 24.
([5]) GU C296 del 5.12.2009, pag. 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002603/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Data and statistics on smoking in Member States

The number of smokers in Italy is approximately 12 million. According to Istat, almost one Italian in four smokes, 22.3 % of the population to be precise.

Before the introduction of the anti-smoking law, Italian smokers totalled 25.6 % of the population. The identikit of smokers set out by Istat sees a clear prevalence of men over women (28.4 % and 16.6 % respectively), but the percentage of women is on the rise. The propensity to smoke also remains stable among young people: in the 25- to 34-year-old age range there is a record level of smokers, namely 38.9 % of men and 22.4 % of women.

In view of the above facts, the Commission is asked:

1. Whether it is aware of the Istat data on smoking in Italy?

2. Whether it intends to provide updated data and statistics on smoking in the various Member States?

3. Whether it intends to promote awareness-raising campaigns to inform the general public of the health risks they may run from active and passive smoking?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the Istat data on smoking in Italy and regularly monitors developments concerning tobacco consumption in the Member States. The latest Eurobarometer survey on Tobacco was published in 2010 ([1]). An update is currently under preparation and results are expected to become available by May 2012. More detailed data on smoking (types of smokers, exposure to tobacco smoke, by sex, age and socioeconomic characteristics) is due to be available for all EU Member States by 2017 through the implementation of the harmonised European Health Interview Survey.

The Commission is engaged in EU-wide awareness raising and communication campaigns ([2]) to draw attention to the dangers of tobacco smoking, in particular amongst young people. Moreover, text warnings on tobacco packages are an effective tool to communicate the health risks of smoking. In order to keep up their impact, the Commission has recently updated these warnings ([3]). In addition, a library of pictorial warnings is available for use by Member States ([4]).

Concerning the health risks related to passive smoking, the Council Recommendation on smoke-free environments from 2009 ([5]) calls on Member States to fully protect their citizens from exposure to tobacco smoke by 2012. The Commission supports the full implementation of the recommendation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/ebs332_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/ex_smokers_are_unstoppable/index_en.htm
([3]) OJ L 69, 8.3.2012, p. 15.
([4]) OJ L 226, 10.9.2003, p. 24.
([5]) OJ C 296, 5.12.2009, p. 4.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002604/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Il cassonetto «intelligente»

Viene dall'Emilia Romagna l'ambizioso progetto della multiutility italiana ideato per rivoluzionare il sistema di raccolta differenziata attraverso la realizzazione di «cassonetti intelligenti» tecnologicamente avanzati, nati per sondare le abitudini dei consumatori, ma soprattutto per intercettare i Raee (rifiuti di apparecchiature elettriche ed elettroniche). L'obiettivo sarà raddoppiarne la raccolta e tracciarne il ciclo completo, fino al recupero o al trattamento finale. Dopo Spilamberto, in provincia di Modena, sarà il turno di Bologna, Castenaso, Ravenna e Lugo.

Un'occasione per l'Italia, soprattutto dopo la condanna da parte della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo per la mala gestione della spazzatura in Campania. Il test ha coinvolto inizialmente 2 000 cittadini (a partire dallo scorso novembre) per poi estendersi all'intera popolazione di Spilamberto, con l'obiettivo di raggiungere il 70 % di raccolta differenziata sul territorio comunale, senza incidere sui costi del servizio.

Attraverso dei badge, i cassonetti intelligenti, muniti di display, saranno in grado di riconoscere il cittadino che getta i rifiuti e di mappare le sue abitudini sulla raccolta differenziata. L'esperimento, che avrà durata quadriennale, vuole tracciare un identikit del rifiuto, garantendo così la trasparenza dell'intero processo di gestione e determinando l'esatto quantitativo di Raee che ancora oggi, in Italia, rappresentano quasi la metà della raccolta.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione comunicare:

1. se è a conoscenza della sperimentazione sulla raccolta differenziata e se ritiene che tale scoperta innovativa possa usufruire di Fondi europei e, in caso affermativo, di quali;

2. se ritiene che questa sperimentazione possa essere estesa a tutti i comuni e replicata negli altri Stati membri, al fine di sensibilizzare i cittadini europei a una migliore gestione della raccolta differenziata?

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

La Commissione non era a conoscenza del progetto dei «cassonetti intelligenti» cui si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare. Per potersi pronunciare in merito alla possibilità di finanziamento del progetto, la Commissione deve riceverne opportuna domanda.

I programmi quadro (PQ) di ricerca dell'UE prevedono sovvenzioni destinate al cofinanziamento di progetti di ricerca e di dimostrazione. Il 7° PQ (2007-2013) prevede nuove opportunità di sovvenzioni, che saranno subordinate a inviti aperti a presentare proposte. Tali inviti saranno annunciati sul seguente sito:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls.

Per soluzioni più vicine al mercato, si potrebbe pensare anche al programma LIFE+ e al programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP), sempre subordinatamente all'invito e alle specifiche procedure di domanda previste per un determinato programma.

La politica di coesione dell'UE può aiutare gli Stati membri e le regioni ad investire nella gestione dei rifiuti. È compito degli Stati membri selezionare ed attuare questi programmi e progetti in linea con le priorità stabilite nei relativi programmi operativi.

Tutte le informazioni sulle opportunità di finanziamento UE e sulle procedure di domanda sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo:
http://europa.eu/policies-activities/funding-grants/index_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002604/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: The 'intelligent' waste-bin

The ambitious Italian multi-utility project originates from Emilia Romagna and is designed to revolutionise the separate waste collection system through the production of hi-tech 'intelligent waste-bins', created to examine the habits of consumers, but above all to intercept WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment). The objective will be to redouble the collection of WEEE and map out its complete cycle, up to recovery or final treatment. After Spilamberto, in the province of Modena, it will be the turn of Bologna, Castenaso, Ravenna and Lugo.

This is an opportunity for Italy, especially after the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights regarding the mismanagement of waste in Campania. The trial initially involved 2 000 citizens (starting last November) and was then extended to the whole population of Spilamberto, with the aim of achieving a level of 70 % of separate waste collection in the local area, without impacting on the cost of the service.

Through the use of electronic badges, the intelligent waste-bins, which have their own display, will be able to recognise the citizen who is disposing of waste and to map their habits on separate collection. The experiment, which will last for four years, aims to develop an identikit of waste, thus ensuring the transparency of the whole management process and establishing the exact quantity of WEEE, which still accounts for almost half of waste collection in Italy today.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the experiment on separate waste collection and whether it considers that this innovative discovery can draw on European funds, and if so, which ones;

2. whether it believes that this experiment can be extended to all local authorities and replicated in other Member States, in order to raise European citizens' awareness of how the management of separate collection can be improved?

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

The Commission has so far not been aware of the waste project in Italy referred to by the Honourable Member. The Commission would need a proper project application in order to express an opinion about the possibility for funding.

EU Research Framework Programmes (FP) provide grants to co-finance research and demonstration projects. New opportunities for such grants will be subject to open calls for proposals still under FP7 (2007-2013) and they will be announced on the following web page: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls

For closer-to-the-market solutions, the LIFE+ Programme or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) could be considered, following the usual application procedures specific to a given programme and call.

EU cohesion policy can support investments of Member States and regions into waste management. It is up to the Member States to select and implement these programmes and projects in accordance with the priorities set in the relevant Operational Programmes.

A gateway to overall funding opportunities from the European Union and the proper application procedures can be found at this link: http://europa.eu/policies-activities/funding-grants/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002606/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Dalla pianta alla plastica

Grazie ad una nanoparticella realizzata dall'università di Utrecht, in Olanda, sarà possibile trasformare biomasse vegetali nelle molecole base della plastica più comune: etilene, propilene e butadiene, ovvero tutte quelle che compongono prodotti tanto diversi quanto giocattoli e bottiglie, cosmetici e detergenti. La scoperta va così ad aggiungersi alle altre bioplastiche e rende sempre più concreta la possibilità di un futuro industriale indipendente dai combustibili fossili. Un tassello essenziale per la realizzazione della strategia ecosostenibile appena lanciata dalla Commissione europea.

I ricercatori sono partiti dalle molecole di ferro perché sono molto efficienti nel catalizzare la trasformazione dei gas in etilene, propilene e butadiene. Successivamente, per superare i problemi di instabilità di queste molecole, sono state unite a nanoparticelle non reattive così da renderle molto più resistenti. A questo punto, per arrivare alla produzione dei «mattoni» delle plastiche a partire dalle piante, i ricercatori olandesi hanno utilizzato monossido di carbonio e idrogeno generati dalla gassificazione di composti vegetali, ovvero da quel processo che, ad alte temperature e senza combustione, converte i composti vegetali nel mix di gas. A questi gas i ricercatori hanno poi aggiunto il catalizzatore a base di nanoparticelle di ferro: alla fine del processo, oltre il 65 % della miscela era stato tramutato in etilene, propilene e butadiene, ossia negli ingredienti fondamentali della plastica. I ricercatori sono convinti che la portata della scoperta sia così vasta da permetterci, un giorno, di sostituire le piante al petrolio nella produzione di qualunque tipo di plastica, un fatto che prima non era neanche lontanamente immaginabile a causa della minore versatilità delle bioplastiche oggi in commercio.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione se è a conoscenza della recente scoperta olandese della nanoparticella capace di trasformare le piante nelle molecole base della plastica, e se non si intenda avviare un programma sperimentale per valutare l'opportunità di impiegare questa nuova scoperta nel campo delle bioplastiche.

Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(4 aprile 2012)

La Commissione, che è a conoscenza della recente scoperta dei ricercatori olandesi pubblicata nell'edizione di febbraio di *Science*, è conscia della potenzialità delle nanoscienze e delle nanotecnologie per lo sviluppo sostenibile, l'ambiente, l'energia e la salute e della loro capacità di rivelarsi una fonte di innovazione in molti settori industriali.

L'articolo dei ricercatori olandesi su *Science* conferma le potenzialità dei nanocatalizzatori. Il settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ 2007-2013) stanzia fondi in questo settore nell'ambito del programma di lavoro per le nanoscienze, le nanotecnologie, i materiali e le nuove tecnologie di produzione (NMP), con due temi: NMP.2012.1.1-1 «*Rational design of nanocatalysts for sustainable energy production based on fundamental understanding*» e NMP.2012.2.1-2 «*Fine chemicals production from* CO_2».

L'ultimo programma di lavoro NMP nell'ambito 7° PQ, che sarà pubblicato a luglio 2012, potrebbe sostenere la prospezione, l'ottimizzazione e il controllo dei processi nanocatalitici e l'applicazione industriale del patrimonio intellettuale europeo per promuovere l'impiego, da parte dell'industria, di materiali di nuova concezione e di tecnologie dei materiali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002606/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: From plant to plastic

Thanks to a nanoparticle created by Utrecht University in the Netherlands, it is now possible to transform plant biomass into the base molecules of the most common types of plastic: ethylene, propylene and butadiene, which are all used to make products as diverse as toys and bottles, cosmetics and detergents. This discovery lengthens the list of bioplastics now available and increases the tangible prospects of an industrial future that does not rely on fossil fuels, which will be vital for the implementation of the Commission's recent eco-sustainable strategy.

Researchers began with iron molecules, which are extremely efficient in catalysing the transformation of gas into ethylene, propylene and butadiene. Then, in order to overcome the instability problems in these molecules, they were combined with non-reactive nanoparticles to make them far more resilient. At this point, in order to produce plastic 'building blocks' from plants, the Dutch researchers used carbon monoxide and hydrogen generated by the gasification of plant compounds, a high-temperature process without combustion that converts the plant compounds in the gas mixture. The researchers then added the iron-based nanoparticle catalyser to the gas mixture and when the process was complete, over 65 % had been converted into ethylene, propylene and butadiene, which are the basic ingredients of plastic. The researchers believe the scope of the discovery to be so vast that in the future it will be possible to replace oil with plants for the production of any type of plastic, a fact that was previously not even remotely imaginable because the bioplastics currently on the market are far less versatile.

In view of this, can the Commission state whether it is aware of the recent Dutch discovery of a nanoparticle capable of transforming plants into basic plastic molecules and whether it intends to start an experimental programme to evaluate the opportunity of using this new discovery in the field of bioplastics?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the recent discovery of Dutch researchers published in the February edition of *Science* as well as of the potential of nanosciences and nanotechnologies to contribute to sustainable development, to benefit environment, energy and health, and to become a source of innovation in many industrial sectors.

The *Science* article highlights the potential of nanocatalysts. In the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), nanocatalysis is supported in the NMP (Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies) work programme, with two relevant research topics : NMP.2012.1.1-1 'Rational design of nanocatalysts for sustainable energy production based on fundamental understanding' and NMP.2012.2.1-2 'Fine chemicals production from CO_2'.

The support for exploration, optimisation and control of nanocatalytic processes and for industrial use of European intellectual assets stimulating the use of newly developed materials and materials technologies by the industry may arise in the last NMP work programme under FP7 to be published in July 2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002607/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Sequestro di 1100 ricci di mare a Bari

Dal 27 febbraio al 3 marzo, la polizia giudiziaria della Guardia Costiera ha eseguito un'operazione mirata al rispetto della normativa per la commercializzazione di mitili e prodotti ittici. Le attività hanno riguardato la vendita al dettaglio esercitata illegalmente dagli ambulanti abusivi sul tratto di lungomare di Bari che va da Palese a Torre a Mare, rinvenendo non pochi casi di contravvenzione.

Durante le ispezioni, un veterinario dell'Azienda sanitaria locale ha rilevato notevoli quantità di echinodermi (ricci di mare), in cattivo stato di conservazione, venduti su banchetti improvvisati, senza alcuna forma di protezione contro gli agenti inquinanti e privi di qualsivoglia documentazione. In particolare, in seguito ad una ispezione a Torre a Mare, è stata scoperta una partita di frutti di mare e altri prodotti ittici in cattive condizioni di conservazione igienico-sanitarie. Complessivamente sono stati sequestrati oltre 1100 ricci di mare e un quintale di altri prodotti della pesca (ostriche, noci, cozze nere e pelose, seppie, polpi, gamberoni e spigole).

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può pertanto la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza del blitz della polizia giudiziaria della Guardia Costiera di Bari;

2. quali misure intende adottare al riguardo per contrastare il traffico illecito di prodotti ittici non controllati e pericolosi per la salute umana, in particolare se intende verificare il rispetto, da parte dell'Italia, del regolamento (CE) n. 1224/2009 del Consiglio, che istituisce un regime di controllo comunitario per garantire il rispetto delle norme della politica comune della pesca?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(31 maggio 2012)

Le regole in tema di igiene alimentare sono sancite nel regolamento (CE) n. 852/2004 ([1]). Conformemente all'articolo 1 di detto regolamento, la responsabilità principale per la sicurezza degli alimenti incombe all'operatore del settore alimentare. L'allegato II dello stesso regolamento stabilisce certi requisiti generali d'igiene che gli operatori del settore alimentare devono rispettare. Tra l'altro essi devono adottare una serie di misure e precauzioni per assicurare che le strutture temporanee come i banchi di vendita al mercato dispongano di strutture appropriate e siano integri e che gli alimenti siano collocati in modo tale da evitare nella misura del fattibile il rischio di contaminazione. Tutti gli articoli, gli accessori e le attrezzature con cui gli alimenti vengono a contatto devono essere gestiti in modo tale da evitare o ridurre al minimo il rischio di contaminazione.

Gli Stati membri sono responsabili di far rispettare la normativa UE sui mangimi e gli alimenti e di verificare, mediante l'organizzazione di controlli ufficiali, che le pertinenti disposizioni della stessa siano rispettate dagli operatori commerciali in tutte le fasi della produzione, della trasformazione e della distribuzione. Si deve procedere regolarmente con una frequenza appropriata a controlli ufficiali basati sul rischio e si devono adottare misure appropriate per eliminare il rischio ad assicurare il rispetto della normativa alimentare UE sia in relazione sia a prodotti domestici che a quelli importati.

Tali controlli consentono l'identificazione di carenze come quelle menzionate dall'onorevole deputato e l'adozione di interventi correttivi e di sanzioni appropriate. Il regolamento (CE) n. 1224/2009 non tratta dell'igiene alimentare, ma contribuisce a una migliore tracciabilità dei prodotti della pesca e dell'acquacoltura.

La Commissione controlla continuativamente che gli Stati membri ottemperino ai loro obblighi di vigilanza in forza della normativa UE sulla pesca e l'igiene, anche tramite ispezioni in loco o audit condotti dai servizi che ad essa fanno capo.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:226:0003:0021:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002607/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: 1 100 sea urchins seized in Bari

Between 27 February and 3 March, the coastguard criminal police carried out an operation to ensure compliance with legislation on the sale of mussels and seafood products. The operation targeted illegal itinerant traders selling unlawfully on the stretch of Bari seafront that goes from Palese to Torre a Mare, where a large number of offences were reported.

During the inspections, a local health authority veterinarian recorded considerable quantities of poorly preserved echinoderms (sea urchins), sold from makeshift stalls that lacked documentation and were without any form of protection against contaminants. In particular, during one inspection at Torre a Mare, a batch of shellfish and other seafood was found to be in poor sanitary and hygiene conditions. Over 1 100 sea urchins and 100 kg of other seafood products were seized, including oysters, sea walnuts, Mediterranean and bearded mussels, cuttlefish, octopus, prawns and sea bass.

In view of the abovementioned facts, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the Bari coastguard criminal police raid;

2. what measures it intends to adopt to counter illicit sales of uncontrolled seafood products that are hazardous to human health and, more specifically, whether it will check Italy's compliance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2012)

The rules on food hygiene are enshrined in Regulation No (EC) 852/2004 ([1]). According to Article 1 of the latter, the primary responsibility for food safety rests with food business operators. Annex II of the same Regulation lays down certain general hygiene requirements which business operators are required to comply with. Amongst other things, they must take a series of measures and precautions to ensure that temporary premises such as market stalls have appropriate facilities, are in a sound condition, and that foodstuffs are placed in such a manner so as to avoid the risk of contamination so far as is reasonably practicable. All articles, fittings and equipment with which food comes into contact must also be managed in such a way so as to avoid or minimise the risk of contamination.

Member States are responsible for the enforcement of EU feed and food law and verify, through the organisation of official controls, that the relevant requirements thereof are fulfilled by business operators at all stages of production, processing and distribution. Official controls must be carried out regularly, on a risk basis, with appropriate frequency and appropriate measures must be taken to eliminate risk and ensure enforcement of EU food law in relation to both domestic and import products.

Such controls allow the identification of shortcomings such as those referred to by the Honourable Member, and the adoption of remedial action and appropriate penalties. Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 does not address food hygiene but contributes to a better traceability of fisheries and aquaculture products.

The Commission constantly monitors delivery by the Member States of their control duties under EU fisheries and hygiene laws, including through on-the-spot inspection or audits by its services.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:226:0003:0021:EN:PDF.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002608/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Quote rosa nei posti dirigenziali

La presenza femminile nei consigli di amministrazione delle società europee è appena al 13,7 %, cioè solo un consigliere su sette è donna. Questo nonostante un anno fa la commissaria europea alla Giustizia Viviane Reding abbia chiesto alle società un codice di autoregolamentazione.

Finora soltanto ventiquattro società e aziende hanno risposto all'appello di Bruxelles per «un'autoregolamentazione», cioè per un intervento volontario diretto all'incremento della presenza femminile, ossia per il varo più o meno ufficiale delle quote rosa. Nella composizione dei vertici aziendali c'è stato, è vero, un lieve miglioramento dell'1,9 % almeno fra il 2010 e il 13,7 % di oggi. Rimangono differenze tra uomini e donne anche dal punto di vista dello stipendio. Secondo gli ultimi calcoli, in media e a parità di competenze, in Europa la donna guadagna ancora il 16,4 % in meno dell'uomo.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. come intende affrontare la questione delle quote rosa nei vertici aziendali;

2. come intende abbattere la differenza di stipendio a parità di competenze tra uomo e donna;

3. se esistono programmi europei per favorire l'inserimento delle donne nel mondo del lavoro e se si conoscono i loro risultati?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2012)

Parallelamente alla pubblicazione della relazione sulla rappresentatività femminile nel processo decisionale economico nell'UE ([1]), presentata dalla Vicepresidente Reding il 5 marzo 2012, la Commissione ha avviato una consultazione pubblica che contribuirà a valutare l'impatto di eventuali provvedimenti volti a riequilibrare la disparità di genere nei consigli di amministrazione aziendali. La Commissione intende adottare nel corso dell'anno una decisione sulle possibili misure da mettere in campo.

La parità di retribuzione è una delle priorità della strategia della Commissione per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015. Il principio della parità di retribuzione è sancito dai trattati e attuato dalla direttiva 2006/54/CE. La Commissione, nel suo ruolo di custode dei trattati, sorveglia costantemente che il quadro giuridico vigente sulla parità salariale venga correttamente applicato nella pratica a livello nazionale. Una relazione sull'applicazione della direttiva 2006/54/CE è prevista per il 2013.

Le attività di sensibilizzazione sono essenziali per portare all'attenzione di datori di lavoro, lavoratori e altri soggetti interessati, l'esistenza e la rilevanza del divario retributivo tra i sessi ([2]). Proprio su questo tema, nel 2009 la Commissione ha lanciato una campagna di sensibilizzazione su scala europea.

Il 2 marzo 2012, la Commissione ha inoltre organizzato la seconda Giornata europea per la parità retributiva.

Nel 2011 la Commissione ha inoltre promosso un'iniziativa che, attraverso attività di formazione e scambi di buone pratiche tra le imprese di tutti gli Stati membri, mira a sensibilizzare le aziende sul divario retributivo tra i sessi e sulle «ragioni economiche» a sostegno della parità di genere.

([1]) «Women in economic decision-making in the EU»: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002608/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Quotas for women in management positions

Barely 13.7 % of the board members of EU companies are women, that is, just one board member in seven is a woman. This is despite the fact that one year ago, the EU Commissioner for Justice, Viviane Reding, asked companies to put in place a self-regulatory code.

To date, only 24 companies and businesses have responded to the Commission's call for self-regulation, namely voluntary action with the aim of increasing the presence of women, or in other words, the more or less official launch of quotas for women. It is true that with regard to the composition of senior management in business, today's figure of 13.7 % is at least a slight improvement of 1.9 % compared with 2010. Differences also remain in the salaries earned by men and women. According to the latest calculations, women with equal skills still earn, on average, 16.4 % less than men in the EU.

Given the above, can the Commission state:

1. how it intends to tackle the issue of quotas for women in top positions;

2. how it intends to close the pay gap between men and women with equal skills;

3. whether there are currently any European programmes to promote the entry of women into employment and whether their results are known?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

In parallel to the publication of the progress report 'Women in economic decision-making in the EU', presented by Vice-President Reding on 5 March 2012 ([1]), the Commission has launched a public consultation that will contribute to assessing the impact of possible European Union (EU) measures to redress the gender imbalance in corporate boards. A decision on possible measures will be taken by the Commission later this year.

Equal pay is one of the Commission's priorities in its Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015. The principle of equal pay is enshrined in the Treaty and in Directive 2006/54/EC. The Commission, in its role as guardian of the Treaties, is constantly monitoring whether the existing legal framework on equal pay is being correctly applied in practice at national level. A report on the implementation of Directive 2006/54/EC is envisaged for 2013.

Awareness-raising activities are essential to keep employers, employees and stakeholders informed about the existence and importance of the gender pay gap ([2]). In 2009, the Commission launched an EU-wide awareness-raising campaign on the gender pay gap.

On 2 March 2012, the Commission held the second European Equal Pay Day.

Likewise, the Commission launched in 2011 an initiative which will help raise awareness in companies about the gender pay gap through training activities and exchanges of good practices for companies of all Member States on the 'business case' for gender equality.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002609/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Dati e statistiche sull'inflazione nei Paesi membri

In Italia il tasso di inflazione annuo a febbraio risale con una lieve accelerazione, passando al 3,3 % dal 3,2 % di gennaio (su base annua l'ultima accelerazione era stata registrata ad ottobre 2011). Lo rileva l'Istat nelle stime preliminari, indicando un aumento dei prezzi su base mensile dello 0,4 %.

Continuano a crescere i prezzi di benzina e gasolio. A febbraio, sempre secondo i dati provvisori sull'inflazione diffusi dall'Istat, la benzina è aumentata del 2,1 % su base mensile e del 18,7 % su base annua (era a +17,4 % a gennaio). Il gasolio per mezzi di trasporto ha segnato un incremento dell'1,3 % su base mensile e del 25,4 % su base annua (era a +25,2 % a gennaio). Il tasso di inflazione nell'area dell'euro (UE-17) dovrebbe, infine, salire al 2,7 % nel mese di febbraio.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza dei dati Istat sull'inflazione in Italia;

2. se intende fornire dati e statistiche aggiornate sull'andamento dell'inflazione nei diversi Paesi membri.

Risposta data da Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2012)

La Commissione è al corrente dello stato dell'inflazione in Italia. La Commissione (Eurostat) raccoglie regolarmente e pubblica con cadenza mensile gli Indici dei prezzi al consumo armonizzati (IPCA) per tutti gli Stati membri, Italia compresa. I dati IPCA relativi all'Italia sono compilati dall'ISTAT.

I dati italiani cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato nella sua interrogazione corrispondono tuttavia all'Indice dei prezzi al consumo nazionale italiano (IPC) e non all'IPCA.

L'IPCA è una misura europea dell'inflazione prodotta utilizzando una metodologia armonizzata in ciascun paese e i cui dati mensili possono divergere leggermente dalle cifre nazionali dell'IPC. L'ISTAT, nei suoi comunicati stampa relativi ai prezzi al consumo, riporta entrambi. Le principali differenze metodologiche tra l'IPCA e l'IPC nazionale italiano sono sintetizzati nei metadati italiani relativi all'IPCA ([1]).

I dati IPCA sono pubblicati in comunicati stampa consultabili sul sito web di Eurostat. La comunicazione pubblicata da Eurostat il 14 marzo 2012 ([2]) indicava che l'inflazione in Italia, misurata in base all'IPCA, era del 3,4 % sia a gennaio che a febbraio 2012; per la zona dell'euro le cifre erano rispettivamente il 2,6 % e il 2,7 %. La comunicazione riporta anche i sotto-indici che hanno contribuito maggiormente all'inflazione nella zona dell'euro; nel febbraio 2012 la causa principale era data da «Carburanti per i trasporti».

La Commissione (DG ECFIN) produce diverse proiezioni economiche tra cui le proiezioni IPCA per tutti gli Stati membri. Le principali proiezioni economiche sono pubblicate in primavera e in autunno; proiezioni interlocutorie più concise sono pubblicate diverse settimane prima. Esse sono accessibili sul sito:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/forecasts_en.htm

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/prc_hicp_nesms_it.htm
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/2-14032012-BP/EN/2-14032012-BP-EN.PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002609/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Data and statistics on inflation in the Member States

In February Italy's annual inflation rate increased slightly to 3.3 %, as against 3.2 % in January (the last increase in the annual rate was recorded in October 2011). The figure was revealed by ISTAT in its preliminary forecasts, which also drew attention to a monthly price increase of 0.4 %.

Petrol and diesel prices are continuing to rise. In February, again according to the provisional inflation figures released by ISTAT, the price of petrol increased by 2.1 % on a monthly basis and 18.7 % on an annual basis (the January figure was 17.4 %). The price of diesel fuel for vehicles increased by 1.3 % on a monthly basis, and 25.4 % on an annual basis (the January figure was 25.2 %). The inflation rate for the eurozone (EU-17) is expected to reach 2.7 % in February.

1. Is the Commission aware of the ISTAT inflation data for Italy?

2. Does it intend to provide up-to-date data and statistics on inflation trends for all the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the inflation in Italy. The Commission (Eurostat) regularly collects and publishes monthly Harmonised Indices of Consumer Prices (HICP) of all Member States including Italy. The HICP data for Italy is compiled by ISTAT.

The Italian data referred to in the question of the Honourable Member correspond however to the Italian national Consumer Price Index (CPI) and not to the HICP.

The HICP is an European inflation measure that is produced using harmonised methodology in each country, and the monthly readings may differ slightly from the national CPI figures. ISTAT reports both of them in its news releases on consumer prices. The main methodological differences between the HICP and the Italian national CPI are summarised in the HICP Italian metadata ([1]).

The HICP data is disseminated in news releases available on Eurostat's website. The release published by Eurostat on 14 March 2012 ([2]) showed that inflation for Italy, measured by the HICP, was 3.4 % both in January and February 2012; for the euro area the figures were 2.6 % and 2.7 %, respectively. The release records also the sub-indices that had the biggest contributions to the euro area inflation; in February 2012 it was 'Fuels for transport'.

The Commission (DG ECFIN) produces various economic forecasts — including HICP forecasts for all Member States. The main economic forecasts are published in the spring and autumn; more concise, interim forecasts are published several weeks before these. They are accessible from:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/forecasts_en.htm

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/prc_hicp_nesms_it.htm
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/2-14032012-BP/EN/2-14032012-BP-EN.PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002610/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Sapone liquido non invasivo per l'ecosistema marino

Un sapone liquido addizionato di ferro che deterge e poi si dissolve senza inquinare è stato sviluppato da un team di ricercatori dell'Università di Bristol. Il prodotto è stato concepito per l'intervento di pulizia nel caso di sversamenti di inquinanti in mare.

Il principio del suo funzionamento è semplice: unire alle sostanze detergenti dei sali di ferro. Il sapone ferroso, quindi, dopo aver pulito la macchia potrà essere rimosso tramite magneti. La scoperta è seguita con interesse non solo dall'industria, ma anche dagli ambientalisti: spesso per l'ecosistema marino i detergenti non sono molto meno pericolosi degli idrocarburi.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza dell'invenzione del sapone liquido addizionato fatta dai ricercatori dell'Università di Bristol?

2. Considerate le proprietà ecocompatibili del sapone, non intenderebbe finanziare uno studio che approfondisca i dati rilevati dal team scientifico dell'Università di Bristol?

Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(25 aprile 2012)

La notizia dell'invenzione cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare è stata annunciata nel gennaio di quest'anno. Gli scienziati responsabili sperano che dalla loro scoperta possano essere ricavati tensioattivi commercialmente sostenibili.

Il futuro programma quadro dell'Unione europea per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-2020), Orizzonte 2020 sosterrà azioni volte ad assicurare i risultati della ricerca al mercato, comprese le indagini collegate in materia di protezione ambientale e di inquadramento normativo in senso lato. I primi inviti a presentare proposte nell'ambito di Orizzonte 2020 saranno formulati in seguito alle decisioni del Consiglio e del Parlamento.

Nel frattempo, gli ultimi inviti del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo (7° PQ) dovrebbero essere pubblicati nel luglio 2012. Anch'essi avranno una forte dimensione per l'innovazione; Spetta al gruppo di Bristol valutare l'opportunità e la pertinenza di tali inviti. Le informazioni verranno pubblicate sul Portale dei partecipanti alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([1]), previa adozione formale da parte della Commissione. Le proposte sono valutate da esperti indipendenti sulla base degli obiettivi e criteri dettagliati pubblicati nel programma di lavoro.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002610/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Non-invasive liquid soap harmless to the marine ecosystem

A magnetic liquid soap which cleans and then dissolves without polluting has been developed by a team of researchers from the University of Bristol. It is designed for cleaning operations when pollutants have been spilled into the sea.

The soap works according to the simple principle of adding iron salts to surfactants. After it has cleaned the polluted area, the iron-rich soap can be removed using magnets. The discovery is being followed with interest not only by industry, but also by environmentalists: it is often the case, as far as the marine ecosystem is concerned, that surfactants are scarcely less dangerous than oil.

1. Is the Commission aware that the Bristol University researchers have invented magnetic liquid soap?

2. Given the environment-friendly properties of the soap, would it not consider financing a study to look more closely at the data reported by the Bristol University scientific team?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The news of the invention mentioned by the Honourable Member was announced in January this year. The scientists responsible hope that commercially viable surfactants can be developed from their discovery.

The European Union's future framework programme for research and innovation (2014-2020), Horizon 2020 will support actions to bring the fruits of research to market, including related investigations into environmental protection and the wider regulatory setting. The first calls for Horizon 2020 will be launched after decisions of the Council and Parliament.

In the meantime, the final calls for proposals of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7) are due to be published in July 2012. These too will have a strong innovation dimension. It would be up to the Bristol team to see if these calls offer any relevant opportunities. Information will be published on the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([1]) after formal adoption by the Commission. Proposals are assessed by independent experts based on the detailed objectives and evaluation criteria published in the work programme.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002612/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Statistiche sulla disoccupazione tra i giovani laureati

Oltre al tasso di disoccupazione giovanile superiore al 31 %, secondo i dati *Istat* di gennaio, ora arriva anche l'aumento della disoccupazione tra i laureati. È quanto stabilisce il XIV rapporto *Almalaurea* sulla condizione occupazionale dei «neodottori», circa 400mila ragazzi coinvolti.

Secondo il consorzio interuniversitario, la disoccupazione dei laureati triennali è passata dal 16 % del 2009 al 19 % del 2010. Dato che lievita anche per i laureati specialistici, passato dal 18 al 20 per cento. Non vengono risparmiati neanche gli specialistici «a ciclo unico» come i laureati in medicina, architettura, veterinaria, giurisprudenza: anche per loro la disoccupazione è passata dal 16,5 al 19.

Non conforta neanche il confronto con i dati del 2007. I laureati triennali disoccupati del 2010 fotografati da *Almalaurea*, sono infatti aumentati dell'8 %, percentuale che lievita per i laureati specialistici (9 %) e per gli specialistici a ciclo unico (+10 %). Diminuisce anche il lavoro stabile: la stabilità riguarda infatti il 42,5 % dei laureati occupati di primo livello e il 34 % dei laureati specialistici (con una riduzione, rispettivamente, di 4 e di 1 punto percentuale rispetto all'indagine 2010).

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione comunicare quanto segue:

1. Può essa fornire un quadro generale con dati e statistiche sulla disoccupazione tra i laureati in tutti gli Stati membri?

2. Come intende essa affrontare il fenomeno della disoccupazione giovanile tra i laureati?

3. Sono previsti programmi europei per l'inserimento dei neo laureati nel mondo del lavoro e se ne conoscono i risultati?

Risposta data da Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(4 maggio 2012)

Eurostat fornisce dati sulla disoccupazione tra i diplomati dell'istruzione terziaria (livelli 5 e 6 dell' ISCED) ripartiti per fascia d'età. Sono inoltre disponibili i tassi di disoccupazione relativi alla popolazione dai 15 ai 74 anni avente un diploma terziario (UE27 nel 2009: 5,0 %, UE27 nel 2010: 5,4 %).

Nel 2011 la Commissione ha proposto, nell'ambito di ET 2020 ([1]), un nuovo parametro di riferimento relativo all'occupabilità ([2]), che è ora in corso di negoziazione in sede di Consiglio. In tale contesto Eurostat definirà nell'aprile 2012 un nuovo indicatore sull'occupazione dei laureati nella coorte di età di 20-34 anni.

La Commissione ha presentato nel dicembre 2011 l'iniziativa Opportunità per i giovani (Youth Opportunities Initiative — YOI) ([3]) e, per quanto concerne gli interventi specifici condotti in tale ambito, rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta a precedenti interrogazioni scritte ([4]). La disoccupazione giovanile è anche una tematica chiave nell'ambito del riesame delle politiche degli Stati membri in sede di semestre europeo.

La Commissione sta rafforzando il sostegno alla mobilità transnazionale per l'apprendimento all'indirizzo degli studenti dell'istruzione superiore e della formazione professionale, compresi i tirocini, per il tramite del programma di apprendimento permanente al fine di realizzare un 30 % in più di collocamenti nel 2012. Il bilancio 2012 per il Servizio volontario europeo sarà anch'esso aumentato per fornire almeno 10 000 opportunità di volontariato.

([1]) Conclusioni del Consiglio del 12 maggio 2009 su un quadro strategico per la cooperazione europea nel settore dell'istruzione e della formazione (ET 2020), GU C 119 del 28 maggio 2009.
([2]) SEC(2011)670.
([3]) COM(2011)933.
([4]) E-0010895/2011, E-0011594/2011, E-001002/2012, E-001371/2012 e E-001812/2012: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp.

Il Fondo sociale europeo è un altro strumento chiave per affrontare il problema della disoccupazione giovanile. Nel 2010 il 29 % dei partecipanti a programmi del FSE, vale a dire 4,5 milioni di persone, era costituito di giovani (15-24 anni) e il 20 % dei partecipanti disponeva di un diploma di istruzione terziaria. Nel corso del febbraio 2012 sono stati istituiti, sotto la direzione della Commissione europea, Gruppi per la gioventù (Youth Action Teams) per esaminare come fondi UE non impegnati potessero essere utilizzati per combattere la disoccupazione giovanile in quegli Stati membri che presentano i tassi più elevati di disoccupazione giovanile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002612/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Statistics on unemployment among new graduates

Besides the youth unemployment rate being over 31 %, according to ISTAT data for January, there is now also an increase in unemployment among graduates. This is established by the XIV *Almalaurea* survey on the employment status of 'new graduates', conducted on approximately 400 000 youngsters.

According to the inter-university consortium, unemployment among three-year degree holders rose from 16 % in 2009 to 19 % in 2010. The figure also rose for second-level degree holders, from 18 to 20 %. Holders of 'single cycle' second-level degrees, such as graduates in medicine, architecture, veterinary science and law fared no better, with the unemployment rate for that category also rising, from 16.5 to 19 %.

There is no comfort to be had from the comparison with the data for 2007. The percentage of unemployed graduates with three-year degrees in 2010, as recorded by *Almalaurea*, rose by 8 %, a percentage which rose even higher for second-level degree holders (9 %) and single-cycle second-level degree holders (10 %). Regular employment also fell: 2.5 % of first-level degree holders and 34 % of second-level degree holders found stable employment (a reduction of 4 and 1 percentage points, respectively, compared with the 2010 survey).

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it provide an overview, with data and statistics, on unemployment among graduates in all the Member States?

2. How it intends to address the issue of youth unemployment among graduates?

3. Whether European programmes are being envisaged to integrate new graduates into the labour market and, if these already exist, what have been the results?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(4 May 2012)

Eurostat provides data on unemployment among tertiary graduates (ISCED levels 5 and 6) by age groups. In addition, unemployment rates for the population aged 15-74 with tertiary attainment are available (EU-27 in 2009: 5.0 %, EU-27 in 2010: 5.4 %).

In 2011 the Commission proposed under ET 2020 ([1]) a new benchmark on employability ([2]), which is now under negotiation in the Council. In this context Eurostat will set out in April 2012 a new indicator on the employment of graduates in the 20-34 age cohort.

The Commission presented in December 2011 the Youth Opportunities Initiative (YOI) ([3]) and, with respect to specific actions under it, would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to earlier written questions ([4]). Youth unemployment is also a core issue in the review of Member States policies under the European Semester.

The Commission is currently reinforcing support to transnational learning mobility for higher education and vocational training students, including traineeships, through the Lifelong Learning programme, in order to have 30 % extra placements in 2012. The 2012 budget for the European Voluntary Service will also be increased to provide at least 10 000 volunteering opportunities.

([1]) Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), OJ C 119, 28.5.2009.
([2]) SEC(2011) 670.
([3]) COM(2011) 933.
([4]) E-0010895/2011, E-0011594/2011, E-001002/2012, E-001371/2012 and E-001812/2012: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

The European Social Fund is another key instrument for tackling youth unemployment. In 2010, 29 % of ESF programme participants, 4.5 million persons were young people (15-24) and 20 % of the participants had tertiary educational attainment. During February 2012 Youth Action Teams lead by the European Commission were set up to explore how uncommitted EU funds could be used to fight youth unemployment in those Member States with the highest youth unemployment.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002614/12
aan de Commissie
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(7 maart 2012)

Betreft: Nederlandse regeling zeezoutaftrek fijn stof

In Richtlijn 2008/50/EG betreffende de luchtkwaliteit en schonere lucht voor Europa worden grenswaarden gesteld voor fijn stof (PM2.5) en wordt de aftrek van fijn stof afkomstig van natuurlijke bronnen bij de vaststelling van overschrijdingssituaties expliciet geregeld. In Richtlijn 2008/50/EG staat in artikel 20, lid 1, dat lidstaten de Commissie gegevens moeten verstrekken over de concentraties en bronnen en het bewijsmateriaal dat aantoont dat de overschrijdingen aan natuurlijke bronnen toe te schrijven zijn. Wanneer de Commissie hiervan in kennis is gesteld, dan worden de desbetreffende overschrijdingen niet als overschrijvingen in de zin van de richtlijn aangemerkt. De manier waarop Nederland de „zeezoutaftrek" toepast lijkt niet in overeenstemming te zijn met deze richtlijn. Nederland toont momenteel namelijk niet per overschrijdingsdag aan wat het percentage zeezout in het gemeten fijn stof is en of de overschrijving aan deze concentratie zeezout toe te schrijven is.

1. Klopt het dat de Commissie aan staatssecretaris Atsma kenbaar heeft gemaakt dat de manier waarop Nederland de zeezoutaftrek toepast niet in overeenstemming is met de richtlijn en dat Nederland zijn regeling voor zeezoutaftrek moet wijzigen? Deze correspondentie met Nederland zou ik graag willen inzien; kan de Commissie deze openbaar maken?

2. Is de Commissie op de hoogte gesteld of en op welke manier Nederland de zeezoutaftrek zal wijzigen?

3. Is de Commissie tevreden met de nieuwe manier waarop de zeezoutaftrek door Nederland zal worden toegepast?

4. Zal de Commissie er bij Nederland op aandringen dat de nieuwe regeling voor zeezoutaftrek ook met terugwerkende kracht wordt toegepast (dus voor het jaar 2011)?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(30 april 2012)

Overeenkomstig artikel 20, lid 3, van Richtlijn 2008/50/EG ([1]) betreffende de luchtkwaliteit en schonere lucht voor Europa heeft de Commissie richtsnoeren gepubliceerd voor het aantonen en in mindering brengen van overschrijdingen die toe te schrijven zijn aan natuurlijke bronnen ([2]). De richtsnoeren zijn niet bindend voor de lidstaten maar geven het standpunt van de diensten van de Commissie weer over de beste werkwijzen inzake het aantonen en in mindering brengen van natuurlijke bronnen, onder meer zeezout.

De Commissie heeft geen spoor gevonden van enige tot staatssecretaris Atsma gerichte briefwisseling waarin hem wordt verzocht de Nederlandse regeling inzake de zeezoutaftrek te herzien.

Evenmin is de Commissie in kennis gesteld van de nieuwe methode die Nederland zal toepassen om zeezout in mindering te brengen; zij kan zich daar dus niet over uitspreken. De lidstaten verstrekken alleen informatie over de bijdrage van natuurlijke bronnen wanneer wordt gemeld dat in een zone de toegestane waarden worden overschreden. In het laatste jaarverslag over de luchtkwaliteit (2010) hebben de Nederlandse autoriteiten (overeenkomstig Beschikking C(2009) 2560 van de Commissie) gerapporteerd dat over het gehele grondgebied aan de PM_{10}-grenswaarden plus de tolerantiemarge wordt voldaan. Nederland heeft het verslag voor 2011 nog niet ingediend; de termijn daarvoor loopt tot en met 30 september 2012.

([1]) PB L 152 van 11.6.2008.
([2]) Werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie tot vaststelling van richtsnoeren voor het aantonen en in mindering brengen van overschrijdingen die toe te schrijven zijn aan natuurlijke bronnen op grond van Richtlijn 2008/50/EG betreffende de luchtkwaliteit en schonere lucht voor Europa; SEC(2011) 208 definitief van 15.2.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002614/12
to the Commission
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Dutch regulation on sea salt subtraction from particulate matter

Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe establishes limit values for particulate matter (PM2,5) and explicitly regulates the subtraction of particulate matter originating from natural sources when establishing exceedances. Article 20(1) of Directive 2008/50/EC says that Member States shall provide the Commission with information on concentrations and sources and the evidence demonstrating that the exceedances are attributable to natural sources. Once the Commission has been notified accordingly, that exceedance will not be considered as an exceedance for the purposes of the directive. The way in which the Netherlands applies 'sea salt subtraction' does not seem to comply with this directive: the Netherlands currently fails to identify per exceedance day the percentage of sea salt in the measured particulate matter and whether the exceedance can be attributed to this concentration of sea salt.

1. Is it true that the Commission has notified Deputy Minister Atsma that the way in which the Netherlands applies the sea salt subtraction does not comply with the directive and that the Netherlands must amend its regulation for sea salt subtraction? I would like to have sight of this correspondence with the Netherlands; can the Commission make this correspondence public?

2. Has the Commission been informed whether and how the Netherlands will amend the sea salt subtraction?

3. Is the Commission satisfied with the new way in which the Netherlands will apply the sea salt subtraction?

4. Will the Commission urge the Netherlands to apply the new regulation for sea salt subtraction retroactively (i.e. for the year 2011)?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

In accordance with Article 20(3) of Directive 2008/50/EC ([1]) on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe the Commission has published guidelines for demonstration and subtraction of exceedances attributable to natural sources ([2]). The guidelines are not binding on Member States but represent the Commissions Services views on best practice of demonstration and subtraction of natural sources *inter alia* sea salt.

The Commission could not find trace of any correspondence addressed to the Deputy Minister Atsma asking him to revise the Dutch regulation of sea salt subtraction.

The Commission has also not been informed of the new way the Netherlands will subtract sea salt and therefore cannot comment on it. The Member States provide information on the contribution of natural sources only in the case when a zone is signalled to be in exceedance of the authorised values. In the last annual report on air quality (2010), the Dutch authorities reported (in line with Commission Decision C(2009)2560) compliance with the PM_{10} limit values plus margin of tolerance over the whole territory. The Netherlands has not yet submitted the report for 2011; they have until 30 September 2012 to do so.

([1]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.
([2]) Commission staff working paper establishing guidelines for demonstration and subtraction of exceedances attributable to natural sources under Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe; SEC(2011) 208 final, 15.2.2011.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002615/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(7 maart 2012)

Betreft: Schade luchtvaartsector als gevolg van Europese CO_2-belasting

Het Nederlandse Kennisinstituut voor Mobiliteitsbeleid heeft dramatische cijfers naar buiten gebracht over de schade die de Europese CO_2-belasting (ETS) de luchthaven Schiphol en de luchtvaartmaatschappij KLM zal berokkenen. Als gevolg van ETS dreigt Schiphol 200 banen te verliezen en loopt de KLM het risico dit jaar maar liefst 150 000 passagiers minder te vervoeren. Dit alles vanwege van de Europese CO_2-belasting in de luchtvaart die de EU er ondanks alle wereldwijde weerstand door probeert te drukken. Staatssecretaris Atsma (Infrastructuur) heeft inmiddels gewaarschuwd dat ETS van de baan moet als er sprake is van oneerlijke concurrentie ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de schokkende resultaten van dit onderzoek?

2. Is de Commissie het met staatssecretaris Atsma eens dat oneerlijke concurrentie betekent dat ETS moet worden gestaakt. Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Heeft de Commissie rekening gehouden met het scenario dat de CO2- taks geen navolging vindt buiten Europa, en de schade die dit veroorzaakt voor de Europese luchtvaartsector?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven wat het plan B is, nu de CO_2-belasting uitloopt op een handelsoorlog en de Europese luchtvaartsector grote schade wordt toegebracht?

5. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat het volstrekt onacceptabel is dat Schiphol en de KLM door de CO2-taks worden gedupeerd. Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(27 april 2012)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van het onderzoek en heeft de samenvatting maar niet de volledige tekst ervan ontvangen. Uit deze samenvatting blijkt dat het onderzoek in de lijn van de eerdere analyses ligt en geen resultaten bevat die als „schokkend" kunnen worden aangemerkt.

De samenvatting van het onderzoek staaft de huidige conclusies ten aanzien van de prijzen van vliegtickets. Ook wordt verwacht dat de luchtvaartsector, na de opneming ervan in de EU-regeling voor de handel in emissierechten, zal blijven groeien.

Op de Raad Milieu van 9 maart 2012 hebben alle 27 lidstaten de EU-aanpak inzake de opneming van de luchtvaart in de EU-regeling voor de handel in emissierechten gesteund.

Voorts verwijst de Commissie het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op de schriftelijke vragen E-008691/2011 en E-000147/2012 ([2]).

([1]) De Telegraaf, 6 maart 2012 — Vliegtaks EU nekt Schiphol.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002615/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Aviation sector harmed as a result of European CO_2 tax

The Netherlands Institute for Transport Policy Analysis (KiM) has published dramatic figures about the harm that the European CO_2 tax (Emissions Trading System — ETS) will do to Schiphol airport and KLM Airlines. Two hundred jobs are under threat at Schiphol and KLM is facing a decrease of at least 150 000 in the number of passengers it carries this year, and all because of the European CO_2 tax on the aviation sector, which the EU is trying to push through in the face of worldwide resistance. In the meantime, Minister of State Atsma (Infrastructure) has issued a warning that the ETS should be shelved if it gives rise to unfair competition ([1]).

1. Is the Commission aware of the shocking results of this investigation?

2. Does the Commission agree with Minister of State Atsma that unfair competition should result in the ETS being dropped? If not, why not?

3. Has the Commission considered the scenario whereby the introduction of the CO_2 tax is not matched by similar measures outside Europe and the damage that this would do to the European aviation sector?

4. Can the Commission indicate what plan B is now that the CO_2 tax looks set to cause a trade war with damaging effects on the European aviation sector?

5. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it is completely unacceptable for Schiphol and KLM to be the victims of the introduction of the CO_2 tax? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(27 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the study and has received the summary but not the full text. This summary indicates that the study is in line with previous analytical work and does not contain any results that would merit being characterised as 'shocking'.

The summary of the study supports the existing conclusions with regards to ticket prices. It also forecasts that, after inclusion in EU ETS, the aviation sector will continue to grow.

At the Environment Council on 9 March 2012, all 27 Member States supported the EU approach to the inclusion of the aviation sector into the EU ETS.

The Commission would further refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-008691/2011 and E-000147/2012 ([2]).

([1]) *De Telegraaf*, 6 March 2012 — 'Vliegtaks EU nekt Schiphol' [EU flight tax upsets Schiphol].
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002616/12
aan de Commissie
Barry Madlener (NI)
(7 maart 2012)

Betreft: Prematuur besluit storting ESM-fonds

1. Uit krantenberichten ([1]) vernemen we dat de Europese Raad van regeringsleiders al besloten heeft om geld in het ESM-fonds te storten, terwijl de nationale parlementen, op Frankrijk na, dit Verdrag nog moeten ratificeren. Kloppen deze berichten? Zo ja, wat vindt de Commissie van deze procedure?

2. Waarom is er besloten om meteen 2 termijnen te storten in het ESM-noodfonds?

3. Doen alle 17 landen mee aan die storting? Zo nee, welke niet?

4. Er is enige onduidelijkheid over de bedragen. In hetzelfde krantenbericht staat dat er besloten is om 80 mrd te storten, maar uit de bijdrage van NL (1,8 mrd) kan worden afgeleid, dat er slechts 32 mrd wordt gestort. Kan de Commissie dit bevestigen?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(4 april 2012)

1. De staatshoofden en regeringsleiders van de eurozone zijn op 2 maart 2012 overeengekomen „om de betaling van het gestorte kapitaal voor het ESM te bespoedigen, met volledige inachtneming van de nationale parlementaire procedures, te beginnen met de betaling van twee schijven in 2012". Zoals uit deze verklaring blijkt, is het besluit met betrekking tot het volgestorte kapitaal voor het Europees stabiliteitsmechanisme (ESM) genomen met volledige inachtneming van de in de lidstaten lopende nationale parlementaire procedures ter ratificatie van het ESM-Verdrag. Er is geen betaling van gestort kapitaal mogelijk vóór de inwerkingtreding van het ESM-Verdrag.

2. De geplande datum voor de inwerkingtreding van het ESM is 1 juli 2012. Met het besluit om twee schijven te betalen in 2012 beogen de lidstaten de capaciteit van het ESM op te bouwen teneinde een sterk ESM te krijgen vanaf het moment dat het mechanisme operationeel wordt en daarbij de geloofwaardigheid van de firewalls van de EU te versterken.

3. Alle landen van de eurozone nemen deel aan deze procedure met uitzondering van Slowakije dat zich terughoudend heeft opgesteld om momenteel een dergelijke verbintenis aan te gaan.

4. Het kapitaal van het ESM waarover overeenstemming is bereikt, namelijk 700 miljard euro, bestaat uit volgestorte en niet-volgestorte aandelen. De initiële totale geaggregeerde nominale waarde van de volgestorte aandelen is 80 miljard euro. De staatshoofden en regeringsleiders van de eurozone hebben ingestemd met de betaling van twee schijven, waarbij elke schijf goed is voor 20 % van het bedrag van 80 miljard euro, wat neerkomt op een initieel bedrag van 32 miljard euro.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/7264/Schuldencrisis/article/detail/3213740/2012/03/02/Eurolanden-storten-sneller-in-noodfonds.dhtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002616/12
to the Commission
Barry Madlener (NI)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Premature decision regarding deposits in the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) fund

1. According to newspaper reports ([1]) the European Council of government leaders has already decided that money should be deposited in the ESM fund, even though the other national parliaments have still to follow France's lead and ratify the Treaty. Are these reports correct? If so, what view does the Commission take of this procedure?

2. Why has a decision been taken to make two deposits in the ESM emergency fund immediately?

3. Are all 17 countries taking part in this procedure? If not, which ones are not participating?

4. There is some uncertainty about the sums involved. According to the same newspaper report, a decision has been taken to deposit EUR 80 billion, but, on the basis of the Netherlands' contribution (EUR 1.8 billion), it can be deduced that only EUR 32 billion is being deposited. Can the Commission confirm this amount?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

1. The euro area Heads of State and Governments agreed on 2 March 2012 'to accelerate, in full respect of national parliamentary procedures, the payment of the paid-in capital for the European Stabilisation Mechanism (ESM), starting with the payment of two tranches in 2012'. As the statement shows, the decision regarding paid-in capital for the ESM is taken in full respect of the ongoing national parliamentary procedures in the Member States to ratify the ESM Treaty. No payment of paid-in capital is possible before the entry into force of the ESM Treaty.

2. The envisaged date for the ESM entering into force is 1 July 2012. With the decision to make the payment of two tranches in 2012, Member States aim to build up the capacity of the ESM in order to have a strong ESM as soon as it becomes operational thereby reinforcing the credibility of the EU firewalls.

3. All euro area countries are taking part in this procedure with the exception of Slovakia that expressed a reservation to making such a commitment for the time being.

4. The ESM authorised capital stock of EUR 700 billion is divided into paid-in shares and callable shares. The initial total aggregate nominal value of paid-in shares is EUR 80 billion. The euro area Heads of State and Government agreed to the payment of two tranches with each tranche amounting to 20 % of the EUR 80 billion equalling an amount of EUR 32 billion.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/7264/Schuldencrisis/article/detail/3213740/2012/03/02/Eurolanden-storten-sneller-in-noodfonds.dhtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002623/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Fuel Quality Directive

I have been contacted by a constituent regarding the implementation of the Fuel Quality Directive which sets the maximum limits of ethanol that can be blended with petrol for sale. Article 3a(3) states that Member States are authorised to sell petrol blended with a maximum of 5 % ethanol until 2013 and 10 % thereafter.

Whilst I can appreciate the environmental benefits of using energy from renewable sources such as biofuels, there are a number of classic cars which are unable to use this blend of petrol, thus rendering the car unusable. Can the Commission explain:

1. Whether a Member State would be in breach of the directive if it permitted the sale of petrol with 5 % ethanol, or indeed without any ethanol content, after 2013?

2. If ethanol-free petrol will not be allowed, what alternatives can they offer to the owners of classic cars which cannot use this petrol blend?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to Article 3(3) of the directive 2009/30/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 23 April 2009, amending Directive 98/70/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 13 October 1998 relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels, and amending Council Directive 93/12/EC (Fuel Quality Directive). This provision states that 'Member States shall require suppliers to ensure the placing on the market of petrol with … a maximum ethanol content of 5 % until 2013 and may require the placing on the market of such petrol for a longer period if they consider it necessary'. It is therefore for Member States to decide whether petrol with an ethanol content of 5 % or less remains on the market after 2013.

In addition Article 3(6) of the Fuel Quality Directive makes allowance for owners of classic cars whereby 'Member *States may continue to permit the marketing of small quantities of leaded petrol, with a lead content not exceeding 0.15 g/l, to a maximum of 0.03 % of total sales, to be used by old vehicles of a characteristic nature and to be distributed through special interest groups.*'

The Commission is very aware of the important cultural heritage represented by historic vehicles and that they generate employment and wealth in respect of maintenance and re-manufacture of replacement parts.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002624/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 7 d.)

Tema: Derėjimasis ES vardu su išorės tiekėjais dėl energijos išteklių kainos

Komisija ėmėsi svarbių veiksmų, kad būtų sukurta bendroji ES vidaus energetikos rinka. Nustatyti ilgalaikiai energetikos infrastruktūros prioritetai, kurie ilguoju laikotarpiu užtikrins visų valstybių narių energetikos infrastruktūrų sujungimą į bendrą ES tinklą. Energetinių išteklių srityje Komisija yra pateikusi svarbų pasiūlymą dėl keitimosi informacija mechanizmo, numatyto taikyti tarpvyriausybiniams valstybių narių energetikos susitarimams su trečiosiomis šalimis, kuris leistų pagerinti atskirų valstybių narių derybinę poziciją dėl tiekimo saugumo užtikrinimo derantis su trečiosiomis šalimis ir Komisijai dalyvauti vykstančiose derybose, kad tokiais susitarimais nebūtų iškreipiami vidaus energetikos rinkos veikimo principai, ypač kalbant apie visapusišką ir tinkamą trečiojo energetikos paketo įgyvendinimą.

Tačiau pasiūlytomis priemonėmis neišsprendžiama Baltijos valstybėms itin aktuali problema, daug didesnės nei kitose ES valstybėse narėse energijos išteklių, ypač dujų, kainos.

Ar nemanote, kad atsižvelgiant į didelę ES, kaip energijos išteklių pirkėjos, galią reikėtų įsteigti *ad hoc* pagrindu veiksiančią energijos išteklių pirkimo grupę, kuri derėtųsi dėl energijos išteklių kainos ES vardu, ypač perkant dujas iš monopolinių tiekėjų labiausiai energetiškai izoliuotiems ES regionams, pvz., Baltijos, kurių konkurencingumą itin mažina didesnės dujų kainos nei likusioje ES dalyje?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 30 d.)

Tai, kad Rytuose ir Baltijos jūros regione nėra tinkamų energijos perdavimo jungčių, stabdo konkurenciją ir neleidžia tinkamai veikti energijos rinkai. Baltijos energijos rinkos jungčių plano (BEMIP) iniciatyva siekiama sukurti atvirą ir integruotą Baltijos jūros regiono ES valstybių narių energijos rinką ir taip panaikinti Baltijos valstybių energetinę atskirtį.

Tarpvyriausybiniai valstybių narių ir trečiųjų šalių susitarimai energetikos srityje tas taisykles turi atitikti, kad būtų užtikrintas vidaus energijos rinkos veikimas ir nuoseklus požiūris į išorės tiekėjus. Todėl Komisija pasiūlė mechanizmą, kuriuo būtų užtikrinamas didesnis skaidrumas ir informacijos apie tokius susitarimus mainai; šiuo metu Komisijos pasiūlymas nagrinėjamas Taryboje ir Parlamente.

Siekdama papildyti ir sutvirtinti esamus komercinius ryšius, ES veda dialogą energetikos klausimais su Rusija, Norvegija ir kitomis šalimis tiekėjomis. Tačiau tiesiogines komercines derybas turėtų vesti pačios energetikos įmonės.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002624/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Negotiations on energy prices with external suppliers on behalf of the EU

The Commission has taken important steps to establish an EU internal energy market. Long-term energy infrastructure priorities have been set out, which will ensure the connection in the long term of the energy infrastructures of all Member States into a common EU network. In the area of energy resources, the Commission has presented an important proposal for an information exchange mechanism for intergovernmental energy agreements between Member States and third countries. This will enhance the negotiating position of individual Member States vis-à-vis third countries to ensure security of supply and will enable the Commission to participate in negotiations so that such agreements do not distort the principles of the functioning of the internal energy market, particularly in terms of the full and proper implementation of the Third Energy Package.

However, the measures proposed do not address what is a particularly acute problem for the Baltic States — much higher prices for energy, particularly gas, than in other EU Member States.

Do you believe that, given the EU's considerable power as a purchaser of energy, an energy purchasing group should be established that will operate on an *ad hoc* basis, and which would negotiate the price of energy on behalf of the EU, particularly when purchasing gas from monopolistic suppliers for the most isolated EU regions from an energy point of view, such as the Baltic Region, whose competitiveness is significantly reduced by higher gas prices than in the rest of the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

Lack of proper energy interconnections in the East-Baltic Sea region is the main barrier for competition and a properly functioning energy market. The Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP) initiative aims to put an end to the energy isolation of the Baltic States by establishing an open and integrated regional energy market between the EU Member States in the Baltic Sea Region.

Intergovernmental energy agreements between Member States and third countries have to be in line with these rules to ensure the functioning of the internal energy market and a coherent approach towards external suppliers. The Commission therefore has proposed a mechanism for increased transparency and information exchange on such agreements which is currently in discussion with the Council and the Parliament.

The EU is engaged in numerous dialogues on energy issues with Russia, Norway and other supplier countries which complement and underpin existing commercial relations. Direct commercial negotiations should, however, be conducted by the energy companies themselves.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002626/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(7 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Podwyższenie minimalnych sum gwarancyjnych przy umowach ubezpieczenia OC, wobec problemu ich wyczerpywalności

W 2011 r. Sejm RP przyjął Ustawę o zmianie ustawy o ubezpieczeniach obowiązkowych, Ubezpieczeniowym Funduszu Gwarancyjnym i Polskim Biurze Ubezpieczycieli Komunikacyjnych oraz niektórych innych ustaw. Jednak, w opinii części prawników, przyjęta przez Sejm RP ustawa nie realizuje w pełni wskazań Dyrektywy Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2009/103/WE z dnia 16 września 2009 r. w sprawie ubezpieczenia od odpowiedzialności cywilnej za szkody powstałe w związku z ruchem pojazdów mechanicznych i egzekwowania obowiązku ubezpieczania od takiej odpowiedzialności. Zmieniona ustawa nie obejmuje bowiem swym wpływem osób bardzo ciężko poszkodowanych w okresie od 1 stycznia 1991 r. (data wejścia w życie unormowań dotyczących sum gwarancyjnych) do dnia 11 grudnia 2009 r. (data wejście w życie zmiany ustawy Dz.U.2007.102.691, art. 5), którzy uzyskują wieloletnie renty odszkodowawcze lub nad którymi opieka medyczna jest niezwykle droga. Poszkodowani, po wyczerpaniu się sum gwarancyjnych, nie otrzymują świadczeń od ubezpieczycieli.

Zwracam się z zapytaniem:

Czy Komisja monitoruje implementację unijnych dyrektyw w Polsce w powyższym zakresie?

Czy Komisja widzi możliwość podwyższenia minimalnych sum gwarancyjnych przy umowach ubezpieczenia OC wobec osób poszkodowanych w Polsce w latach 1990 do dnia 11 grudnia 2009 r., zwłaszcza ciężko poszkodowanych, których jest obecnie w Polsce ponad 20?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(2 maja 2012 r.)

Komisja monitoruje wdrożenie dyrektywy w sprawie ubezpieczeń komunikacyjnych ([1]) we wszystkich państwach członkowskich, a więc również w Polsce. Aktualne minimalne sumy gwarancyjne w przypadku umów ubezpieczenia od odpowiedzialności cywilnej obowiązują od dnia 11 czerwca 2005 r., przy czym dyrektywa przewiduje możliwość ustanowienia okresów przejściowych, trwających najdalej do dnia 22 czerwca 2012 r., na dostosowanie do tych zwiększonych sum gwarancyjnych. Wstępna ocena dokonana w powyższym kontekście wskazuje, że polskie przepisy wydają się być pod tym względem zgodne z dyrektywą. W przedstawionej sytuacji nie można się jednak odwoływać do prawa Unii Europejskiej celem zobowiązania państw członkowskich do podwyższenia z mocą wsteczną minimalnych sum gwarancyjnych w przypadku umów ubezpieczenia od odpowiedzialności cywilnej, na podstawie których wypłacane są odszkodowania osobom poszkodowanym w okresie od lat 90-tych ub. wieku do dnia 11 grudnia 2009 r.

([1]) Dyrektywa Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2009/103/WE z dnia 16 września 2009 r. w sprawie ubezpieczenia od odpowiedzialności cywilnej za szkody powstałe w związku z ruchem pojazdów mechanicznych i egzekwowania obowiązku ubezpieczania od takiej odpowiedzialności (wersja ujednolicona).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002626/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Increase in minimum amounts of cover for third-party liability insurance contracts in view of their depletion

In 2011, the Polish Sejm (Parliament) adopted a bill to amend the Compulsory Insurance, Insurance Guarantee Fund and Polish Motor Insurers' Bureau Act, as well as other acts. However, in the opinion of some lawyers, this Act adopted by the Polish Sejm does not fully implement Directive 2009/103/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 relating to insurance against civil liability in respect of the use of motor vehicles, and the enforcement of the obligation to insure against such liability. The amended act does not cover seriously injured people in the period from 1 January 1991 (the date of entry into force of the regulation governing amounts of cover) until 11 December 2009 (the date of entry into force of amendments to the Act published in Government Gazette 2007.102.691, Article 5) who receive long-term disability compensation, or for whom medical care is extremely expensive. Once the victims have used the amount guaranteed by insurance, they receive no further benefits from insurers.

Does the Commission monitor the implementation of EU directives in Poland in this area?

Does the Commission see any possibility of increasing the minimum amounts of cover for third-party liability insurance contracts for persons injured in Poland in the period beginning in the 1990s and ending on 11 December 2009, especially those seriously injured, of whom there are now more than 20 in Poland?

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

The Commission monitors the implementation of the Motor Insurance Directive ([1]) in all the Member States, including Poland. The current minimum amounts of cover for third-party liability insurance contracts have been in force since 11 June 2005 but the directive provides for the possibility of transitional periods until 22 June 2012 as far as the application of the increased amounts are concerned. A preliminary assessment against this background reveals that the Polish legislation does not appear to be incompatible with the directive in this respect. European Union law cannot be invoked in this case in order to oblige Member States to retroactively increase the minimum amounts of cover for third-party liability insurance contracts for persons injured during a period beginning in the 1990s and ending on 11 December 2009.

([1]) Directive 2009/103/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 relating to insurance against civil liability in respect of the use of motor vehicles, and the enforcement of the obligation to insure against such liability (codified version).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-002627/12
aan de Commissie
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(7 maart 2012)

Betreft: Controles Nederlandse traditionele zeezeilschepen in Duitsland

Over de certificering van traditionele zeilschepen op de internationale vaart is al lange tijd veel te doen. De Commissie is een inbreukprocedure gestart tegen de Deense staat omdat zij (net als de Duitse overheid) de Nederlandse traditionele zeezeilschepen de toegang willen weigeren in de Oostzee.

Daarnaast wordt er nu door de Commissie gewerkt aan nieuwe Europese wetgeving voor zeezeilschepen om onder andere meer duidelijkheid te geven over de certificering van zeezeilschepen.

De Nederlandse traditionele zeezeilvloot wordt echter weer veelvuldig door de Wasserschutzpolizei (WSP) gecontroleerd. De frequentie van de controles, de aard van de door de WSP geconstateerde overtredingen en het gebrek aan samenwerking tussen Duitse overheidsinstanties hebben afgelopen jaar tot grote frustraties geleid. Verzoeken om met de Duitse overheid afspraken te maken voor het komende seizoen hebben tot niets geleid.

1. Weet de Commissie dat Nederlandse traditionele zeezeilschepen veelvuldig in Duitsland worden gecontroleerd door de Wasserschutzpolizei en dat sommige schepen tot 6 maal toe in slechts een aantal maanden tijd zijn geïnspecteerd?

2. Weet zij dat deze controles te maken hebben met het verschil van interpretatie van internationale normen ten aanzien van veiligheid?

3. Deelt de Commissie de opvatting dat, in het licht van haar inspanningen om tot nieuwe wetgeving voor zeilschepen te komen en in het licht van de lopende infractieprocedure van de Commissie tegen de Deense staat over de interpretatie van internationale normen voor zeilschepen, zij bij de Duitse autoriteiten zou moeten aandringen op terughoudendheid in en bij de controle van traditionele zeezeilschepen, totdat er meer duidelijkheid op Europees niveau is?

4. Deelt zij de opvatting dat het de inzet zou moeten zijn om voor begin april, wanneer de traditionele zeezeilschepen weer richting de Oostzee vertrekken, tot een verstandhouding te komen om te voorkomen dat zeilschepen onnodig gehinderd worden in Duits vaargebied? En dat hierbij een taak ligt voor de Commissie om de Duitse autoriteiten op te roepen om komend vaarseizoen de Nederlandse traditionele zeezeilschepen in de Oostzee met rust te laten?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(28 maart 2012)

1.-2. Er is de Commissie niets bekend over inspecties van Nederlandse traditionele zeezeilschepen in Duitsland, over het aantal malen schepen dat schepen zijn geïnspecteerd of over de aard van die inspecties.

3. Dat de Commissie momenteel wetgeving voor zeezeilschepen ontwikkelt of tegen een lidstaat een inbreukprocedure heeft ingeleid, betekent niet noodzakelijkerwijs dat autoriteiten van andere lidstaten zouden moeten afzien van de inspectie van Nederlandse zeezeilschepen indien dit in overeenstemming is met de toepasselijke EU-wetgeving.

4. Pas wanneer de Commissie over feitelijke gegevens met betrekking tot deze inspecties beschikt, zal zij de zaak onderzoeken. Zoals het geachte Parlementslid reeds opmerkt, maakt de ontwikkeling van wetgeving voor zeilschepen op Europees niveau deel uit van de lopende herziening van de Europese wetgeving op het gebied van de veiligheid van passagiersschepen waarover de Commissie voornemens is in de tweede helft van dit jaar wetgevingsvoorstellen in te dienen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002627/12
to the Commission
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Inspections of traditional Dutch seagoing sailing ships in Germany

The certification of traditional sailing ships in international shipping has been an issue for quite some time. The Commission has launched infringement proceedings against the Danish state because it, like the German Government, wants to refuse entry to the Baltic Sea for traditional Dutch seagoing sailing ships.

The Commission is now also working on new European legislation for seagoing sailing ships, partly in order to provide more clarity about the certification of sea sailing ships.

However, the traditional Dutch seagoing sailing fleet is again being frequently inspected by the Wasserschutzpolizei (WSP, waterways police). The frequency of the inspections, the nature of the violations identified by the WSP and the lack of cooperation between German authorities have caused a lot of frustration in the last year. Requests to make agreements with the German Government for the coming season have come to nothing.

1. Is the Commission aware that traditional Dutch seagoing sailing ships are frequently inspected in Germany by the Wasserschutzpolizei and that some ships have been inspected up to six times in the space of just a few months?

2. Is the Commission aware that these inspections are due to the difference in interpretation of international safety standards?

3. Does the Commission agree that, in the light of its efforts to develop new legislation for sailing ships and in the light of the Commission's current infringement procedure against the Danish state about the interpretation of international standards for sailing ships, the Commission should urge the German authorities to demonstrate restraint in requesting and carrying out inspections on traditional seagoing sailing ships until there is more clarity at European level?

4. Does the Commission agree that the aim should be to come to an understanding before the beginning of April, when the traditional sea sailing ships again set out for the Baltic Sea, to make sure that sailing ships are not unnecessarily hindered in German waters? Does it also agree that one of its tasks in this connection is to urge the German authorities to refrain from troubling traditional Dutch seagoing sailing ships in the Baltic Sea?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

1.-2. No information has been submitted to the Commission concerning traditional Dutch seagoing sailing ships being inspected in Germany, neither on the number of times ships that have been inspected nor on the nature of such inspections.

3. The fact that the Commission is developing legislation for seagoing sailing vessels or has started an infringement procedure against a Member State does not necessarily mean that authorities from other Member States should refrain from inspecting Dutch seagoing sailing vessels if this complies with the relevant Union legislation in force.

4. Only once the Commission has obtained factual information on those inspections, it proceeds to an examination of the matter. As the Honourable Member points out, the development of legislation for the sailing vessels at European level is part of the ongoing review of the European passenger ship safety legislation on which the Commission intends to present legislative proposals in the second half of the year.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002629/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation and 220 authorised general function health claims

Approximately 2 500 health claims have been rejected by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) under the framework of the Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation. What appeal process has the Commission put in place for companies which have had a health claim rejected from inclusion in the permitted list?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 [1] on nutrition and health claims made on foods requires that health claims be substantiated by generally accepted scientific evidence after an assessment by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), be authorised by the Commission and the Member States by regulatory procedure with scrutiny, and be entered in the list of permitted health claims. Health claims not authorised must be entered in the Union Register of health claims with the reasons why they are not to be authorised.

There is no appeal process foreseen in the regulation. If a health claim cannot be substantiated by generally accepted scientific evidence, it should not be authorised. If a business operator wishes to have a second attempt for a health claim that has not been authorised, it can always make a new application for a health claim under Article 13(5) or Article 14 procedure, whichever is appropriate. The Union Register and the EFSA opinion can be used to inform business operators who want to make a new application for a health claim which has already been assessed as to what additional data might be necessary to ensure the new individual application may be more successful.

[1] Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods, OJ L 404 30.12.2006, p. 9, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:EN:PDF.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002630/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 mars 2012)

Objet: Réduction de la consommation d'énergie grâce à des applications disponibles sur le téléviseur, l'ordinateur ou les réseaux sociaux

La Commission a financé récemment une étude (projet Dehems) démontrant que les consommateurs sont susceptibles de modifier leur comportement en vue de réduire leur consommation d'énergie s'ils disposent d'informations précises relatives à leur propre utilisation.

La Commission peut-elle faire savoir:

1. Comment elle entend faire connaître tous les systèmes existants et tous les réseaux qui permettent d'avoir en temps réel une image de la consommation d'énergie afin de tirer parti des résultats de ces recherches dans leur consommation d'énergie?

2. Comment elle entend établir, sur la base de ces modèles, un profil de la consommation quotidienne d'énergie par type d'appareil, de logement etc., qui permette aux consommateurs de prendre des décisions d'achat en connaissance de cause?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(30 avril 2012)

Les résultats du projet Dehems, achevé en 2011, peuvent être consultés sur le site web www.dehems.eu, qui restera en service jusqu'à la mi-juillet 2013. De façon plus générale, la Commission propose des informations à jour sur les systèmes et les solutions de gestion de l'énergie dans le cadre de ses activités de promotion des objectifs et des interventions de l'UE en faveur de l'efficacité énergétique, ainsi que des politiques liées au développement de systèmes de distribution intelligents.

Concrètement, la Commission élabore des politiques donnant aux consommateurs la possibilité de contrôler de manière plus efficace leur consommation individuelle d'énergie, grâce à la mise en place de compteurs intelligents, qui permettront aux consommateurs d'accéder plus facilement à leurs données de consommation et amélioreront la facturation. Ces thèmes sont abordés dans la proposition de directive concernant l'efficacité énergétique qui fait actuellement l'objet d'un débat entre le Parlement et le Conseil.

Enfin, la Commission est en train d'étudier quelles mesures seraient nécessaires pour permettre aux appareils intelligents (par exemple, les appareils indiquant la consommation et les coûts, et susceptibles d'être utilisés pour agir sur la demande) de pénétrer le marché; elle envisage des outils issus de l'écoconception et des dispositifs encadrant la fourniture obligatoire, par voie d'étiquetage, d'informations utiles aux consommateurs concernant les caractéristiques de consommation d'énergie de différents types d'appareils et de produits. Ces informations permettent aux consommateurs de prendre des décisions d'achat éclairées afin d'optimiser leur consommation d'énergie liée à l'utilisation de ces appareils et de ces produits.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002630/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Reducing energy consumption through the use of applications available on television, computer or social network platforms

The Commission recently funded a study (the DEHEMS project) demonstrating that consumers are likely to change their behaviour in order to reduce their energy consumption if they have accurate information on their own energy use.

Could the Commission say:

1. how it intends to provide information on all the existing systems and networks that provide a real-time picture of energy consumption so that consumers can draw on the results of this research in their efforts to reduce their energy consumption?

2. how, on the basis of these models, it intends to establish profiles of daily energy consumption broken down by type of device, accommodation, etc., thereby enabling consumers to make informed purchasing decisions?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

The results of the DEHEMS project are accessible at the projects website www.dehems.eu, which remains operational until mid-July 2013 following the project's completion in 2011. In broader terms, the Commission provides updated information on energy management systems and solutions in the context of its activities promoting EU's energy efficiency goals and measures, as well as policies related to the development of smart distribution systems.

More specifically, the Commission has been developing policies to enable consumers to control their individual energy consumption more effectively through the roll-out of smart meters which will allow consumers to better access their consumption data and will facilitate better billing. These issues are taken up in the proposed Energy Efficiency Directive which is currently discussed between Parliament and Council.

Finally, the Commission is exploring what measures are necessary to enable the market up-take of smart appliances (e.g. appliances that show consumption and costs and which can participate in demand response activities) through the use of ecodesign tools and frameworks for obligatory provision, through labelling, of relevant information to consumers on the energy consumption characteristics of different types of appliances and products. Such information enables consumers to make informed purchasing decisions in order to optimise their energy consumption related to the use of such appliances and products.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002631/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 mars 2012)

Objet: Problèmes liés au changement de compte bancaire

La Commission vient de publier les résultats d'une étude mettant en évidence que plus des deux tiers des clients essayant de changer de banque n'y sont pas parvenus en raison des obstacles mis systématiquement à la mobilité des clients.

La Commission peut-elle préciser:

1. Si elle reconnaît enfin que toutes les procédures d'autorégulation mises en place depuis des dizaines d'années en concertation avec le secteur bancaire n'ont pas du tout été appliquées par ce secteur;

2. Quelles mesures elle entend prendre pour enfin permettre la mobilité des consommateurs indispensable à une véritable concurrence et à un véritable marché unique des services bancaires.

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(10 mai 2012)

Ces dernières années, la Commission a encouragé l'autorégulation dans le secteur bancaire, en particulier dans les domaines de la mobilité interbancaire et de l'information précontractuelle sur les prêts au logement.

La Commission s'est particulièrement appliquée à surveiller la mise en œuvre des initiatives d'autorégulation et à prendre des mesures lorsqu'elle jugeait ces initiatives inefficaces. En outre, l'autorégulation s'est, dans certains cas, révélée très utile à la Commission dans le cadre de l'élaboration de propositions législatives. C'est ainsi, par exemple, que la Commission s'est inspirée des obligations énoncées dans le code de conduite européen volontaire relatif à l'information précontractuelle concernant les prêts au logement pour prévoir l'obligation de fournir des informations personnalisées au moyen d'une fiche européenne d'information standardisée dans sa proposition de directive sur les contrats de crédit relatifs aux biens immobiliers à usage résidentiel.

Une étude récente publiée par la Commission, dont l'objectif était de vérifier le respect par les banques des principes communs pour le changement de compte bancaire du secteur bancaire européen, indique que les banques ne répondent pas pleinement aux besoins des consommateurs qui essaient de changer de banque. L'étude a mis en lumière les principales raisons de cette situation, à savoir le manque de respect du code de conduite sectoriel par les banques, des informations limitées ou incomplètes sur le service de mobilité interbancaire et le manque de connaissance du code parmi le personnel du secteur bancaire. En conséquence, la Commission entend présenter une proposition législative avant la fin de l'année 2012; cette proposition portera sur la transparence et la comparabilité des frais de gestion des comptes bancaires ainsi que sur la mobilité interbancaire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002631/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Problems connected with changing bank accounts

The Commission has just published the results of a study highlighting the fact that over two thirds of customers who have tried to change banks have been unable to do so as a result of obstacles systematically placed in the way of customer mobility.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission now acknowledge that the banking sector has totally failed to apply all the self-regulation procedures put in place, in consultation with this sector, over the decades?

2. What measures does it intend to take finally to allow consumer mobility, which is essential for true competition and a true single market in banking services?

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

In recent years the Commission has encouraged industry self regulation in the banking sector, in particular in the areas of bank account switching and pre-contractual information for home loans.

The Commission has been particularly attentive to monitor the implementation of the self regulation initiatives as well as to take action where they were found to be ineffective. In addition in some cases self regulation has provided very useful input into Commission legislative proposals. For example, the requirement to provide personalised information in a European Standardised Information Sheet, contained in the Commission's proposal for a directive on credit agreements relating to residential property, builds on the voluntary obligations set out in the European Voluntary Code of Conduct on Home Loans.

A recent study published by the Commission, whose aim was to monitor the banks' compliance with the European banking industry's Common Principles for Bank Account Switching, indicates that they do not effectively address consumers' needs when undertaking to switch between banks. The main reasons highlighted by the study's findings are a lack of compliance with the industry code by banks, limited or incomplete information about the switching service as well as a lack of awareness about the code among bank staff. As a result the Commission is planning a legislative proposal by the end of 2012 that will comprise bank account fees transparency and comparability as well as switching.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002632/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Status di paese candidato per la Serbia

La Serbia muove il primo passo verso l'Unione europea. Dopo due anni di anticamera, i capi di Stato e di governo dei 27 hanno deciso di concedere a Belgrado lo status di paese candidato. La decisione arriva dopo un negoziato difficile, rallentato dal pericolo di veto della Romania, che ha chiesto tutele per la minoranza dei valacchi che vivono in Serbia. Ad agevolare il cammino della Serbia i nuovi accordi con il Kosovo, in particolare il sostanziale riconoscimento del Kosovo da parte di Belgrado, a cui si è giunti grazie al dialogo facilitato dalla mediazione dell'Unione europea.

La decisione non fa felici tutti a Belgrado. Gli ultranazionalisti sono già scesi in piazza, mercoledì, per dire «no» alla candidatura e annunciano di aver raccolto già 200 000 firme per evitare quella che considerano una soluzione catastrofica.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali sono i maggiori benefici dell'eventuale adesione della Serbia all'Unione europea;

2. se esiste già una data prevista per la piena adesione di Belgrado all'UE e quali sono le maggiori questioni ancora in sospeso relativamente alle quali il paese deve migliorare le sue performance al fine di ottenere l'adesione?

Risposta data da Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(27 aprile 2012)

Analogamente all'esperienza degli allargamenti precedenti, la graduale integrazione europea della Serbia consoliderà la stabilità politica, le istituzioni democratiche e lo Stato di diritto e promuoverà lo sviluppo economico e sociale del paese, rafforzandone la competitività. Attraverso il progressivo allineamento alla politica estera e di sicurezza comune dell'UE (PESC) e alla politica di sicurezza e difesa comune (PSDC), il processo di adesione accrescerà ulteriormente il ruolo del paese candidato sulla scena mondiale.

In linea col principio dei «meriti propri», sotteso al processo di stabilizzazione e associazione, e col nuovo consenso sull'allargamento raggiunto dal Consiglio europeo del dicembre 2006, il ritmo del processo di adesione della Serbia dipenderà interamente dai suoi progressi nell'adempiere alle condizioni stabilite. La Serbia ha chiesto di entrare a fare parte dell'Unione europea il 22 dicembre 2009, e il 1º marzo 2012 il Consiglio europeo le ha accordato lo status di candidato. Si tratta solo del primo passo sul cammino di adesione di questo paese all'Unione europea.

Nelle sue conclusioni del 5 dicembre 2011 il Consiglio ha convenuto con quanto espresso dalla Commissione nel suo parere del 12 ottobre 2011, ossia che la Serbia deve compiere ulteriori progressi, in particolare verso un visibile e duraturo miglioramento delle relazioni col Kosovo, prima che la Commissione raccomandi l'avvio dei negoziati di adesione. La Serbia deve anche mantenere lo slancio delle riforme, deve attuare la legislazione adottata e accordare particolare attenzione allo Stato di diritto. Saranno inoltre attentamente monitorati la protezione delle minoranze e il contesto imprenditoriale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002632/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Candidate status for Serbia

Serbia is taking its first steps towards the European Union. After two years of waiting, the Heads of State or Government of the 27 existing Member States decided to grant Belgrade candidate status. The decision comes after difficult negotiations, slowed by the threat of veto from Romania, which requested protection for the Vlach minority living in Serbia. Serbia's progress was facilitated by new agreements with Kosovo, in particular Belgrade's substantive recognition of the latter, achieved through dialogue mediated by the European Union.

The decision does not make everyone happy in Belgrade. On Wednesday, ultra-nationalists took to the streets to protest against the application and announced that they have already collected 200 000 signatures to avoid what they see as a catastrophic solution.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. what increased benefits will Serbia's possible accession to the European Union offer;

2. whether a date has already been set for Serbia's full entry into the EU, and the major issues pending for which Serbia has yet to improve its performance before it can be accepted?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 April 2012)

Based on experience with past enlargements, Serbia's gradual European integration will consolidate political stability, democratic institutions and the rule of law and promote its economic and social development, strengthening its competitiveness. Through progressive alignment with the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the accession process further increases the role of the acceding country in global affairs.

In line with the own merits principle which underpins the Stabilisation and Association Process and the new consensus on enlargement as agreed upon by the European Council in December 2006, the pace of Serbia's accession process depends entirely on Serbia's progress in meeting the established conditions. Serbia applied for membership on 22 December 2009 and was granted candidate status on 1 March 2012 by the European Council. This is only the first step of Serbia's accession path to the European Union.

In its conclusions of 5 December 2011, the Council concurred with the Commission, in its Opinion of 12 October 2011 that Serbia still needs to make further progress, in particular towards visible and sustainable improvement of its relations with Kosovo, before the Commission can recommend the opening of accession negotiations. Serbia also needs to maintain the momentum of reforms, implement adopted legislation and pay particular attention to the rule of law. The protection of minorities and business environment will also be closely monitored.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002633/12
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Assenza del tema prevenzione e cura delle tossicodipendenze dalle priorità della futura programmazione europea (2014-2020)

I finanziamenti nel campo della riduzione della domanda di stupefacenti sono attualmente compresi sia nella «Strategia europea per la droga (2005-2012)», attuata soprattutto attraverso il programma specifico «Prevenzione e Informazioni in materia di Droga (2007-2013)», sia nel «Programma comunitario di azione nel campo della sanità (2008-2013)». Negli anni scorsi è stata finanziata, per mezzo di tali programmi, una varietà di importanti progetti, tra cui interventi precoci di prevenzione, sviluppo di approcci innovativi in relazione al consumo di droga nei centri sportivi e ricreativi, incontri e attività del Forum della società civile sulla droga. Tuttavia, giungendo a termine, nel 2013, il programma «Prevenzione e Informazione in materia di Droga», sembra terminare con esso qualsiasi opportunità di finanziamento in tali ambiti.

Nelle proposte che la Commissione ha presentato lo scorso novembre in materia di finanziamenti pluriennali nel campo della salute e della giustizia, non sembrano essere compresi i finanziamenti connessi alla riduzione della domanda di droga e alla prevenzione delle malattie trasmissibili mediante l'uso della stessa. Il Programma «Salute per la Crescita (2014-2020)», infatti, non cita tali obiettivi, mentre il «Programma Giustizia (2014-2020)» prevede finanziamenti solo nel campo della prevenzione del crimine e della lotta al traffico di droga.

Considerando l'articolo 168, paragrafo 1 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, considerando la raccomandazione del Consiglio del 18 giugno 2003 sulla prevenzione e la riduzione del danno per la salute causato da tossicodipendenza, tenendo conto del fatto che, annualmente, tra le 7 600 e le 20 000 persone muoiono a causa di problemi di salute legati al consumo di droga e che nell'Unione europea sono presenti circa 1.4 milioni di consumatori di oppiacei, può dire la Commissione se intende porre fine al finanziamento di azioni volte a prevenire il consumo di droga e a curare le malattie connesse al consumo della stessa? Qualora la risposta fosse positiva, quali sono le ragioni all'origine di tale scelta? Qualora la risposta fosse negativa, nell'ambito di quali programmi e con quali mezzi intende finanziare tali azioni?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(27 aprile 2012)

Le proposte della Commissione relative al prossimo quadro finanziario sono state formulate nell'ottica di una politica di spesa responsabile e di una razionalizzazione sensata, onde evitare duplicazioni e concentrandosi sulle azioni ad alto valore aggiunto a livello UE, tenendo presente l'attuale contesto di crisi economica.

Il programma «Giustizia» ([1]) affronta la politica antidroga dal punto di vista della prevenzione della criminalità, che costituisce anch'essa un aspetto chiave. L'obiettivo specifico di prevenire e ridurre la domanda e l'offerta di droga permette di finanziare una gamma di attività più ampia. In questo caso i vincoli giuridici non consentono una base giuridica multipla. Ciò significa che il programma «Giustizia» non può occuparsi di questioni relative alla salute.

Il programma «Salute per la crescita» ([2]) considera l'HIV/AIDS uno dei principali fattori di rischio. Pertanto, nell'ambito di tale programma, si potrebbero finanziare progetti in questo settore relativi alla lotta contro la droga.

La Commissione ritiene che sia possibile evitare le lacune e minimizzare le sovrapposizioni tra i programmi che hanno ad oggetto la promozione delle attività relative alla lotta contro la droga.

([1]) COM(2011)759 definitivo, del 15.11.2011.
([2]) COM(2011)709 definitivo, del 9.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002633/12
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Failure to include the issue of prevention and treatment of drug addicts in the priorities of the next European programming period (2014-2020)

Funding in the sphere of reducing the demand for drugs is currently included in both the 'EU Drugs Strategy (2005-2012)', implemented mainly through the specific programme entitled 'Drug Prevention and Information (2007-2013)', and in the 'Programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-2013)'. In recent years these programmes have funded a variety of important projects, including early prevention interventions, the development of innovative approaches in relation to drug consumption in sports and leisure centres, and meetings and activities by the Civil Society Forum on Drugs. However, as the 'Drug Prevention and Information' programme comes to an end in 2013, any opportunity for funding in these spheres seems to end with it.

The proposals presented by the Commission last November regarding multiannual funding in the sphere of health and justice do not seem to include funding connected with reducing demand for drugs or the prevention of diseases that may be communicated through drug use. The 'Health for Growth (2014-2020)' programme does not cite these objectives, while the 'Justice Programme (2014-2020)' provides for funding only in the field of crime prevention and combating drug trafficking.

In view of Article 168(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Council Recommendation of 18 June 2003 on the prevention and reduction of health-related harm associated with drug dependence, and taking into account the fact that every year between 7 600 and 20 000 people die as a result of health problems linked to drug consumption and that there are approximately 1.4 million opiates consumers in the European Union, does the Commission intend to stop funding actions designed to prevent drug consumption and treat the diseases connected with drug consumption? If so, what are its reasons for this decision? If not, what programmes will these actions come under and how will they be funded?

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

The Commission's proposals for the next financial framework were created in the spirit of responsible spending policy and a reasonable rationalisation. They seek to avoid duplications and concentrate on actions with high EU added value, and take into account the current economic crisis.

The Justice Programme ([1]) approaches the anti-drugs policy via the angle of crime prevention, which is also a key aspect. The specific objective to prevent and reduce drug demand and supply allows for funding of a wider spectrum of activities. Legal constraints do not allow for a multiple legal basis in this case, which means that health-related aspects cannot be covered under the Justice programme.

The Health for Growth Programme ([2]) addresses HIV/AIDS as one of the key risk factors. Drug-related projects in this area could therefore be financed via this programme.

The Commission believes it is possible to avoid gaps and minimise overlaps between programmes focusing on support of drug-related activities.

([1]) COM(2011) 759 final, 15.11.2011.
([2]) COM(2011) 709 final, 9.11.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002634/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Costo del roaming

L'Unione europea si è recentemente espressa sul taglio ai costi del roaming internazionale. Dal 2014 sarà concessa la libera concorrenza anche in tema di roaming internazionale. Questo significa che un utente, recandosi all'estero, non sarà più costretto a chiamare utilizzando i partner esteri scelti dal suo gestore, ma sarà libero di utilizzare l'operatore telefonico che più desidera. Questa grande novità, più volte anticipata, dovrebbe aiutare a rendere il mercato delle chiamate estere più conveniente e competitivo.

Inoltre saranno confermati i tagli dei costi massimi per le chiamate in roaming internazionale. Le tariffe massime applicabili per le chiamate in uscita passeranno dagli attuali 49 centesimi a 25 centesimi, mentre quelle in entrata passeranno dagli attuali 24 centesimi a 8 centesimi.

Soddisfazioni in ambito europeo e anche grandi soddisfazioni per gli utenti, mentre sono meno contenti i gestori di telefonia mobile che prevedono così minori guadagni. Le grandi compagnie telefoniche hanno attaccato duramente l'Unione europea rea di aver emanato nuove regole troppo rigide verso i provider e i gestori di telefonia mobile. Secondo i gestori, infatti, tutti questi tagli penalizzeranno i futuri investimenti dei gestori di telefonia oggi impegnati a realizzare le nuove reti LTE che offrono prestazioni elevate ma sono anche molto costose.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se già esistono dati sulla valutazione di impatto in termini di risparmio per i consumatori, a seguito della nuova normativa che entrerà in vigore a partire dal 2014;

2. quale sarebbe invece il possibile impatto previsto dalla Commissione europea sugli investimenti dei gestori telefonici privati?

Risposta data da Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2012)

Durante il processo di riesame, la Commissione ha analizzato i pro e i contro di diverse opzioni politiche nella valutazione d'impatto. I risultati ottenuti indicano che l'opzione normativa scelta presenta un importante vantaggio generale in termini di benessere dei consumatori. Sono state effettuate stime per il periodo 2012-2014 sugli effetti economici prodotti dai vari scenari possibili. I calcoli relativi al benessere dei consumatori si basano soltanto sui massimali di salvaguardia previsti per il biennio 2012-2014 e non prendono in considerazione l'effetto di riduzione tariffaria dovuto a misure strutturali a favore della concorrenza. Pertanto, l'impatto previsto sul benessere dei consumatori costituisce un minimo prudenziale e probabilmente i benefici reali saranno più significativi, dati i vantaggi risultanti dalla maggiore concorrenza dovuta all'opzione scelta. La Commissione analizzerà in dettaglio l'impatto sul benessere dei consumatori durante il processo di riesame previsto nel progetto di regolamento sul roaming. La Commissione si compiace dei recenti sforzi profusi dai colegislatori per permettere che tale regolamento possa essere adottato prima dell'estate.

In termini di dimensioni, il mercato del roaming dell'Unione europea rappresenta meno del 4 % del totale del mercato di telefonia mobile dell'UE. Al contempo, lo scarto economico tra i massimali all'ingrosso e al dettaglio proposti consente un congruo margine di profitto e costituisce un incentivo per i nuovi ingressi sul mercato. Una forte crescita del traffico mobile di dati, una maggiore diffusione di tablet e smartphone e un'accresciuta elasticità della domanda di servizi di roaming di dati dovrebbero portare ad un aumento dei volumi di traffico, nonché ad ulteriori introiti per gli operatori telefonici.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002634/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 March 2012)

Subject: Roaming charges

The European Union recently issued a statement on cutting international roaming charges. From 2014, free competition will also be extended to international roaming. That means that users who travel abroad will no longer be forced to make calls using the foreign partners chosen by their providers, but will be free to use the telephone operator they prefer. This great innovation, which has been anticipated many times, should help to make the foreign calls market more convenient and competitive.

Cuts to the maximum charges for international roaming calls will also be confirmed. The maximum tariffs applicable for calls made will fall from the current 49 cents to 25 cents, while that for calls received will fall from the current 24 cents to 8 cents.

This is cause for satisfaction within Europe and also for users, but mobile telephony operators are less happy, as they forecast lower profits as a result. The large telephony companies have harshly criticised the European Union, stating that it is guilty of having issued new rules that are too rigid for mobile telephony providers and operators. According to the operators, in fact, all these cuts will jeopardise future investments by telephony operators; they now have an obligation to implement the new Long-Term Evolution (LTE) networks, which offer better services but are also much more expensive.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission indicate whether there are already data on impact evaluation in terms of savings for consumers after the new rules that will enter into force in 2014?

2. What would be the possible impact forecast by the European Commission on the investments of private telephony operators?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

During the review process, the Commission has analysed the pros and cons of different policy options in its Impact Assessment. The results indicated an important positive overall welfare gain for the chosen regulatory option. The estimation of economic impacts of various scenarios was carried out for the period 2012-2014. The consumer welfare calculations are based only on the safeguard caps foreseen for the period 2012-2014 and does not take into account the downward pricing effect arising from competition enhancing structural measures. Thus, the calculated consumer welfare impacts constitute a conservative minimum and the actual welfare benefits are likely be higher taking into account the benefits of increased competition which will arise from this option. The Commission will assess the consumer welfare impact in detail during the review process foreseen in the draft Roaming Regulation. The Commission welcomes the recent efforts by the co-legislators to bring this regulation to an adoption before the summer.

In terms of size, the EU roaming market represents less than 4 % of the total EU mobile market. At the same time, the economic space between the proposed wholesale and retail caps allow both a reasonable profit margin and acts as an incentive for new market entry. Strong growth in mobile data traffic, increased penetration of tablets and smartphones and greater elasticity of demand of data roaming service is expected to result in greater traffic volumes and increased revenues for operators.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002639/12
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(8. März 2012)

Betrifft: Einbeziehung der Elbe in die transeuropäischen Netze

Der Vorschlag der Kommission zur Revision der Leitlinien für die transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetze (TEN-T) vom 19. Oktober 2011 sieht vor, die Elbe in das Kernnetz und in einen der Kernnetzkorridore aufzunehmen. Vor diesem Hintergrund frage ich, mit der Bitte um separate Beantwortung jeder Frage:

1. Mit welcher Begründung schlägt die Kommission vor, die Elbe — besonders den Abschnitt zwischen Ústí nad Labem und Geesthacht — in das Kernnetz der TEN-T aufzunehmen?

2. Welche Maßnahme zum Ausbau der Elbe sieht die Kommission vor?

3. Wie bewertet die Kommission die in der Praxis zu beobachtenden Abweichungen des Verkehraufkommens und der Schiffbarkeit von den Prognosen? Geht sie von einer Umkehrung der bisherigen Trends aus?

4. Welche Konsequenzen hätte die Aufnahme der Elbe in das Kernnetz im Hinblick auf den Status als Natura-2000-Reservat und auf die Wasserrahmenrichtlinie?

5. Wird die Kommission die Umweltauswirkungen des vorgeschlagenen Ausbaus bewerten? Wenn ja, in welcher Form?

6. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Konkurrenzsituation zwischen der Elbe einerseits und den Verkehrsträgern Straße und Schiene andererseits?

7. Wird bei der Elbe das von der Kommission geforderte Prinzip der Kostentragung durch die Nutzer Anwendung finden? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2012)

Die Elbe ist Teil des Kernnetzes, da sie die für das Kernnetz (Artikel 44) und für die Kernnetzkorridore (Artikel 49) festgelegten Mindestanforderungen ([1]) erfüllt.

Die zur Gewährleistung der Schiffbarkeit durchzuführenden Maßnahmen werden von den relevanten Mitgliedstaaten gemäß den Bestimmungen der künftigen TEN-V-bezogenen Instrumente beschlossen. Infrastrukturmaßnahmen, die im Rahmen des Kernnetzes im Zusammenhang mit diesem Fluss durchgeführt werden, kommen für eine Förderung durch das TEN-V-Programm in Frage. Sie müssen jedoch auch die europäischen Umweltrechtsvorschriften einhalten.

Die Genehmigungsverfahren für jedes Projekt, das die Schiffbarkeit eines Flusses fördert und unter die einschlägigen EU-Umweltschutzvorschriften fällt, müssen von den Mitgliedstaaten gemäß den relevanten Bestimmungen dieser Rechtsvorschriften durchgeführt werden.

Die Kommission hat für die Elbe keine speziellen Prognosen erstellt und kann daher etwaige Abweichungen zwischen dem aktuellen und dem prognostizierten Verkehrsaufkommen nicht bewerten. Aufgrund der angewandten Methodik, die zu dem vorgeschlagenen Netz geführt hat, ist die Kommission jedoch der Ansicht, dass die Elbe hinsichtlich des Verkehrs zwischen dem Hamburger Hafen, dessen Hinterland und den Nachbarländern, insbesondere den Wirtschaftszentren der Tschechischen Republik, eine wichtige Rolle spielen kann.

Außerdem unterstützt die Kommission den Verkehr auf der Elbe gegenüber anderen landgestützten Verkehrsträgern wegen seiner komparativen Vorteile in wirtschaftlicher und ökologischer Hinsicht, in Bezug auf den Kraftstoffverbrauch, die CO_2-Emissionen und die Sicherheit.

([1]) Wie im Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über Leitlinien der Union für den Aufbau des transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetzes (KOM(2011)650) (TEN-V) festgelegt: http://ec.europa.eu/prelex/detail_dossier_real.cfm?CL=de&DosId=200944.

Da alle Verkehrsträger gleich behandelt werden sollen, fördert die Kommission in ihrem Weißbuch 2011 für die Zukunft des Verkehrs ([2]) für alle Verkehrsformen das Prinzip der Kostentragung durch die Nutzer. Die konkrete Entscheidung, für die Infrastrukturnutzung Entgelte zu erheben, liegt gemäß dem Subsidiaritätsprinzip bei den Mitgliedstaaten.

([2]) „Fahrplan zu einem einheitlichen europäischen Verkehrsraum — Hin zu einem wettbewerbsorientierten und ressourcenschonenden Verkehrssystem", KOM(2011)144.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002639/12
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Inclusion of the Elbe in the trans-European networks

The proposal from the Commission for the revision of the guidelines for the trans-European transport networks (TEN-T) of 19 October 2011 provides for the inclusion of the Elbe in the core network and in one of the core network corridors. With this in mind, I would like to ask the following questions, with the express request that each should be answered separately:

1. What are the Commission's reasons for proposing that the Elbe — in particular the section between Ústí nad Labem and Geesthacht — should be included in the core network of the TEN-T?

2. What measures is the Commission planning for the development of the Elbe?

3. How does the Commission assess the apparent divergence between traffic volumes and navigability in practice and the forecasts? Does it expect a reversal of the trends seen to date?

4. What would be the implications of the inclusion of the Elbe in the core network in terms of its status as a Natura 2000 reserve and the Water Framework Directive?

5. Does the Commission intend to conduct an environmental impact assessment in relation to the proposed development? If so, in what form?

6. How does the Commission assess the situation regarding the competition between the Elbe, on the one hand, and road and rail as modes of transport, on the other?

7. Will the principle promoted by the Commission of the users bearing the costs apply in the case of the Elbe? If not, then why not?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The Elbe River is part of the Core Network as it qualifies for the minimum requirements as defined for the Core Network (Article 44) and the Core Network Corridors (Article 49) ([1]).

The measures to be undertaken in order to ensure navigability will be decided by the relevant Member States in accordance with the provisions of the future TEN-T related instruments. As part of the Core Network, infrastructural activities undertaken on this river will be entitled to be supported by the TEN-T Programme, but also will have to respect the European environmental legislation.

The authorisation procedures for any project that supports navigability on a river and that falls under the scope of relevant EU environmental legislation will have to be carried out by the Member States in accordance with the relevant provisions of this legislation.

The Commission has not undertaken specific forecasts for the River Elbe, therefore is not in a position to assess any divergences between current and forecast transport volumes. Through the methodology applied leading to the proposed network, the Commission however considers that the Elbe can have an important role to play for the transport between the Port of Hamburg its hinterland and the neighbouring countries, in particular for the economic centres of the Czech Republic.

Additionally the Commission supports transport on the Elbe in comparison to other land transport modes for its comparative advantages in economic and environmental terms, fuel consumption, CO_2 emission and safety levels.

([1]) As specified in the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on Union Guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (COM(2011) 650) (TEN-T), http://ec.europa.eu/prelex/detail_dossier_real.cfm?CL=en&DosId=200944.

As all modes of transport are to be treated in an equivalent way, the Commission in its 2011 White Paper for the future of transport ([2]) promotes the 'user pays principle' for all modes of transport. The concrete decision on charging for the use of infrastructure is following the principle of subsidiarity, at the discretion of the Member States.

([2]) 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system' COM(2011) 144.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-002640/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Marò italiani arrestati in India

L'incidente del 15 febbraio u.s. al largo della costa indiana, che ha coinvolto due marò italiani, sembra essere un affronto diretto all'Italia. Le autorità indiane ritengono che i militari in servizio anti-pirateria siano colpevoli di aver ucciso due pescatori locali. Le pressioni esercitate dal governo italiano hanno evitato che i marò fossero incarcerati come comuni delinquenti e privati della loro uniforme. Grazie all'azione diplomatica della Farnesina, i fucilieri si trovano attualmente in custodia giudiziaria in un'area separata del penitenziario di Trivandrum.

Il governo italiano intende far rispettare il diritto internazionale e riportare in patria i militari. A seguito dell'esame balistico ancora in corso, dovrebbe essere la giustizia italiana a decidere se processare i marò o rilasciarli e non certo il tribunale di Kollam.

Mentre l'episodio sta provocando non poche tensioni diplomatiche tra India e Italia, l'Unione europea resta del tutto indifferente. Il Sottosegretario Staffan De Mistura ha sottolineato che l'episodio potrebbe rappresentare un pericoloso precedente per i paesi che partecipano alle missioni internazionali. L'Alto Rappresentante per la politica estera e di sicurezza comune Lady Ashton ha invece dichiarato che la vicenda è bilaterale, nonostante la lotta alla pirateria marittima sia una delle prerogative dell'Unione europea.

L'Italia è stata lasciata sola dall'Europa anche in occasioni precedenti. Durante la Primavera araba l'emergenza immigrazione, originata dai numerosi sbarchi sulle coste italiane, è stata gestita quasi completamente dall'Italia, mentre, ancora una volta, è mancata la solidarietà oltre che un effettivo impegno e concreto coinvolgimento dell'Europa nell'affrontare gli arrivi dei migranti.

Considerato che nel caso dei marò si configura una palese violazione del diritto internazionale a danno di uno Stato membro dell'Unione europea e che una risoluzione positiva della vicenda è nell'interesse di tutta la comunità internazionale, può l'Alto Rappresentante Lady Ashton far sapere se intende sostenere concretamente l'Italia dimostrando maggiore incisività nella politica estera e di sicurezza comune europea?

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

I militari italiani Massimiliano Latorre e Salvatore Girone sono tuttora sotto custodia delle autorità indiane, in attesa di una decisione dell'Alta Corte del Kerala in merito alla giurisdizione da applicare in questo caso. La nave mercantile non ha ancora avuto l'autorizzazione a lasciare il porto di Kochi, in attesa di garanzie adeguate per il pagamento del risarcimento alle famiglie delle vittime.

Su richiesta del governo italiano, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha dato istruzioni al servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE) di intensificare i contatti con le controparti indiane e di attirare la loro attenzione sulla complessità del caso. Pur riconoscendo che la questione è ora innanzi alla giurisdizione indiana, il SEAE a Bruxelles e la delegazione dell'UE a Nuova Delhi hanno discusso con le autorità indiane competenti sui vari elementi del caso e sulla necessità di trovare quanto prima una soluzione soddisfacente.

Anche gli sforzi dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente, sia a Bruxelles che a Nuova Delhi, si sono concentrati sull'apertura di un dialogo con l'India per discutere la questione relativa alla regolamentazione della presenza di soggetti armati a bordo delle navi mercantili come protezione contro la pirateria.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002640/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Italian marines arrested in India

The incident on 15 February 2012 off the Indian coast involving two Italian marines appears to be a direct affront to Italy. India's authorities believe that the soldiers, who were guarding a ship against pirates, are guilty of killing two local fishermen. Pressure from the Italian Government has prevented the marines from being jailed like common criminals and divested of their uniforms. Thanks to diplomatic efforts by Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the riflemen are currently being held in custody in a separate area of Thiruvananthapuram prison.

The Italian Government intends to ensure that international law is respected and bring the soldiers home. Following the ballistic tests currently under way, it should be the Italian judicial system that decides whether to prosecute the marines or release them, and certainly not the court of Kollam.

While this episode has created considerable diplomatic tension between India and Italy, the EU has remained completely indifferent. The Italian Undersecretary, Staffan de Mistura, stressed that this episode could set a dangerous precedent for countries undertaking international missions. The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Lady Ashton, has stated, however, that this is a bilateral matter, despite the fight against piracy falling within the EU's competence.

Europe has abandoned Italy on previous occasions too. During the Arab Spring, the immigration emergency, caused by the countless landings on Italian coasts, was managed almost entirely by Italy, while, once again, Europe failed to provide support, a tangible commitment or meaningful involvement when it came to coping with the arrival of the migrants.

Considering that in the case of the marines, there has been a clear breach of international law to the prejudice of an EU Member State and that a positive outcome to this affair is in the interests of the entire international community, can the High Representative, Lady Ashton, state whether she intends to provide practical support to Italy by taking a more robust approach in the context of the common European foreign and security policy?

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

The Italian marines Mr Massimilano Latorre and Mr Salvatore Girone still remain under Indian custody, awaiting a decision by the Kerala High Court on the jurisdiction over this case. The merchant vessel has not been authorised yet to leave the Cochin harbor, pending agreement on appropriate guarantees for payment of compensations to the families of the victims.

At the request of the Italian Government, the HR/VP has directed the European External Action Service (EEAS) to intensify contacts with Indian counterparts to draw their attention to the complexity of the case. Whilst acknowledging that the matter is now in front of the Indian jurisdiction, both the EEAS Headquarters and the EU Delegation in Delhi have discussed the various elements with the competent Indian authorities and the need to find a satisfactory solution as soon as possible.

The HR/VP efforts both here in Brussels and in New Delhi, have concentrated as well on engaging in a dialogue with India in order to address the issue of the regulation of the presence of armed elements on board merchant vessels with the aim of protecting against piracy.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002641/12
an die Kommission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(8. März 2012)

Betrifft: Konsultation des EU-Gemeinschaftsrahmens für F&E&I; mittelbare Beihilfen bei staatlich geförderten Kooperationsprojekten

Die derzeitige Formulierung des EU-Gemeinschaftsrahmens für F&E&I (Ziffer 3.2.2) sieht vor, dass staatlich geförderten Kooperationen zwischen Forschungseinrichtungen und Unternehmen auch dann keine mittelbare Beihilfe gewährt werden kann, wenn die Rechte an geistigem Eigentum und der Zugang zu den Ergebnissen in ausgewogener Weise zwischen Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft verhandelt werden und bestimmte Bedingungen erfüllen.

Der angesprochene Passus wurde von einigen Forschungseinrichtungen dazu verwendet, über die beabsichtigte Zielsetzung des Rahmens hinausgehend einen höheren Preis einzufordern bzw. die IPR für sich zu reklamieren. Dies hat in der Vergangenheit auf Unternehmensseite vielerorts für Unverständnis gesorgt und Kooperation zwischen Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft zunehmend erschwert oder sogar verhindert.

Derzeit befindet sich der EU-Gemeinschaftsrahmen in Neuausrichtung (EU-Konsultation läuft). Dabei wäre darauf zu achten, dass der Zielsetzung des F&E&I-Gemeinschaftsrahmens, nämlich Forschung und Entwicklung zu fördern, wieder Vorrang eingeräumt wird. Keinesfalls darf es zu einer weiteren Verschärfung dieser bereits jetzt als abschreckend wirkenden Formulierung kommen. Unternehmen leben davon, dass sie bei Vertrieb ihrer Produkte über die Rechte an den Erfindungen verfügen müssen. Wird dieser Umstand bei Kooperationsprojekten erschwert oder sogar durch Verkomplizierung verhindert, so wird dies in verstärktem Maße dazu führen, dass letztlich das Ziel dieser Beihilfenfreistellung, nämlich F&E durch Kooperation mit der Wissenschaft zu stärken, genau durch die gleiche Vorschrift vereitelt wird. Insbesondere KMU werden sich durch komplizierte IPR-Vorgaben verteuerte Kooperationen mit der Wissenschaft nicht leisten können. Wäre es deshalb nicht im Interesse aller, eine offene Lösung zu schaffen, in deren Rahmen sich Partner aus Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft auf die IPR ohne staatliche Vorgaben einigen können?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(27. April 2012)

Ziffer 3.2.2 des Gemeinschaftsrahmens für staatliche Beihilfen für Forschung, Entwicklung und Innovation (im Folgenden „Gemeinschaftsrahmen“) ([1]) zielt nicht darauf ab, die staatliche Finanzierung der Zusammenarbeit zwischen Forschungseinrichtungen und Unternehmen zu verhindern. Ziel ist es vielmehr, Kriterien (in Form alternativer Vereinbarungen zur Kostenteilung und Aufteilung der Rechte des geistigen Eigentums) an die Hand zu geben und klarzustellen, unter welchen Umständen es sich um eine mittelbare staatliche Beihilfe an den aus der gewerblichen Wirtschaft stammenden Projektpartner handelt.

Weder die Bestimmungen unter Ziffer 3.2.2. noch in anderen Teilen des Gemeinschaftsrahmens beinhalten, dass Forschungseinrichtungen ein über dem Marktwert liegendes Entgelt in Rechnung stellen würden, um mittelbare staatliche Beihilfen an Unternehmen zu verhindern. Der Gemeinschaftsrahmen verlangt auch keine staatliche Einflussnahme bei Vereinbarungen zur Aufteilung der Rechte des geistigen Eigentums zwischen Forschungseinrichtungen und Unternehmen.

Sollte es trotzdem der Fall sein, dass Forschungseinrichtungen in Anwendung des Gemeinschaftsrahmens mehr als das marktübliche Entgelt für ihre Rechte des geistigen Eigentums in Rechnung stellen, könnte dies unter anderem darauf hindeuten, dass die Kriterien des Gemeinschaftsrahmens weiterer Erläuterung und Klärung bedürfen.

In der öffentlichen Konsultation im Vorfeld der Überarbeitung des Gemeinschaftsrahmens hatten Beteiligte des öffentlichen und privaten Sektors die Gelegenheit, ihre Ansichten zu den Regeln des Gemeinschaftsrahmens zur Zusammenarbeit von Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft zu äußern. Dieses Thema wird somit im Zuge der Überarbeitung des Gemeinschaftsrahmens weiter behandelt.

([1]) ABl. C 323 vom 30.12.2006, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002641/12
to the Commission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Consultation of the EU framework for R & D&I; indirect aid for state-sponsored collaboration projects

The current wording of the EU framework for R & D&I (point 3.2.2) provides that state-sponsored collaboration projects between research institutions and businesses cannot be granted indirect subsidies, even if the intellectual property rights (IPR) and access to the results are negotiated in a balanced way between science and industry and the arrangements meet specific conditions.

The relevant passage has been used by some research institutions as a justification for disregarding the aims of the framework by demanding a higher price and staking their own claim to the IPR. This attitude has left businesses in many parts of Europe feeling aggrieved and has increasingly hampered and in some cases even prevented collaboration between science and industry.

The EU framework is currently being reviewed (EU consultation is in progress). This opportunity should be taken to shift the focus back to the real aim of the R & D&I framework, namely that of sponsoring research and development. Under no circumstances should the outcome be an even stricter wording which acts as an even stronger deterrent to cooperation. If businesses are to prosper from sales of their products, they must hold the rights to their inventions. If, in the context of collaboration projects, this is made more difficult, or even prevented by overly complicated rules, the result will increasingly be that the aim of the 'no subsidy' rule, namely that of strengthening R & D by means of collaboration with science, will be thwarted by this very provision. SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) in particular will not be able to afford to take part in collaboration projects with science if they are made more expensive by complicated IPR restrictions. Would it not be in everyone's interests to create flexible arrangements which enable partners from the science and industry sectors to reach agreement on the IPR without state interference?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(27 April 2012)

Point 3.2.2 of the EU framework for state aid for research and development and innovation (the 'Framework') ([1]) is not intended to prevent any public funding for collaboration between research organisations and undertakings. Rather, its purpose is to provide for criteria (in the form of alternative arrangements for cost-sharing and IPR-allocation), to clarify the existence of indirect state aid to the industrial partner.

Neither the provisions set out in point 3.2.2, nor in any other part of the framework, imply that prices above the market rate are charged by research organisations, in order to avoid indirect state aid to undertakings. Nor does the framework require any State-interference in IPR-allocation agreements between research organisations and industry.

Nevertheless, should it be the case that research organisations tend to charge higher-than-market prices for their IPR when applying the framework, this could i.a. indicate that the framework's criteria need further explanation and clarification.

In the public consultation preparatory to the framework's revision, public and private stakeholders had the opportunity to express their view on the framework's rules on science-industry collaboration. This issue will thus be further considered in the revision process.

([1]) OJ C 323, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002642/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(8 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προαγωγή της γυναικείας απασχόλησης ως μέσο διασφάλισης της οικονομικής ανάκαμψης

Σύμφωνα με τα τελευταία στοιχεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Στατιστικής Υπηρεσίας, το μισθολογικό κενό μεταξύ ανδρών και γυναικών εξακολουθεί να υπερβαίνει το 16 %, ενώ σε κάποιες χώρες μπορεί να φτάσει το 22 % ή και το 27 % (Ελλάδα και Εσθονία αντίστοιχα). Με βάση τους επιμέρους στόχους, όπως εκπονήθηκαν στο πλαίσιο των κατευθυντηρίων γραμμών για την απασχόληση, αναγκαία συνθήκη προκειμένου να επιτευχθεί η ανάκαμψη και η διασφάλιση της βιωσιμότητας των δημοσίων οικονομικών -συμπεριλαμβανομένων και των συστημάτων κοινωνικής ασφάλισης- είναι η ενίσχυση της πρόσβασης των γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας, μέσα από την απασχόληση σε ποιοτικές και αξιοπρεπείς θέσεις εργασίας.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιά τα ποσοστά γυναικών που απασχολούνται σε ευέλικτες μορφές απασχόλησης ανά κράτος μέλος και ποιά τα ποσοστά γυναικών φτωχών εργαζομένων;

2. Διαθέτει στοιχεία αναφορικά με τα ποσοστά ανασφάλιστης γυναικείας απασχόλησης;

3. Ποιές είναι οι επίσημες αιτίες για το έντονο μισθολογικό χάσμα που παρατηρείται μεταξύ των δύο φύλων καθώς επίσης και για τα χαμηλά ποσοστά γυναικείας απασχόλησης;

4. Ποιά τα ποσοστά απορρόφησης ευρωπαϊκών κονδυλίων με σκοπό την προώθηση της συμφιλίωση επαγγελματικής και οικογενειακής ζωής ανά κράτος μέλος; Ποιές οι επιδόσεις των κρατών μελών αναφορικά με τη διαθεσιμότητα και της ποιότητα των δομών παιδικής φροντίδας;

5. Οι περικοπές των κοινωνικών δαπανών (μειώσεις επιδομάτων μητρότητας, περιορισμός κρατικών δομών φροντίδας κ.λπ.) έχουν επηρεάσει τη γυναικεία απασχόληση; Υπάρχουν σχετικά στοιχεία για τις χώρες που έχουν υιοθετήσει ένα πρόγραμμα αυστηρής δημοσιονομικής λιτότητας όπως η Ελλάδα, η Πορτογαλία, η Ιταλία κ.λπ.;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Οι ευέλικτες μορφές απασχόλησης μπορεί να είναι διαφόρων ειδών, όπως συμβάσεις προσωρινής εργασίας και συμβάσεις μερικής απασχόλησης. Στον συνημμένο πίνακα παρουσιάζονται οι διάφορες μορφές και παρέχονται στοιχεία για τις φτωχές εργαζόμενες γυναίκες.

2. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει αυτή την πληροφορία.

3. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στην «Έκθεση ([1]) σχετικά με την πρόοδο ως προς την ισότητα μεταξύ γυναικών και ανδρών το 2010».

4. Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα στοιχεία, τα κράτη μέλη διέθεσαν 2,551 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ κατά την τρέχουσα περίοδο προγραμματισμού για μέτρα που έχουν σκοπό να βελτιωθεί η πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση και να αυξηθεί η βιώσιμη συμμετοχή και πρόοδος των γυναικών. Μέχρι το τέλος του 2010 το ποσοστό απορρόφησης ήταν 43,8 % (τα κράτη μέλη υποβάλλουν εκθέσεις σχετικά με την εφαρμογή των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων σε ετήσια βάση· τα στοιχεία για το 2011 θα είναι διαθέσιμα το καλοκαίρι του 2012).

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο περιλαμβάνει προγράμματα που εστιάζονται στη βελτίωση της πρόσβασης των γυναικών στην απασχόληση. Δεν είναι δυνατόν να δοθούν πιο συγκεκριμένα στοιχεία για τα κονδύλια που αποβλέπουν στον συνδυασμό της επαγγελματικής με την οικογενειακή ζωή, διότι ο στόχος αυτός μπορεί να αποτελεί έμμεση μόνο επιδίωξη των προγραμμάτων.

([1]) Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, Μάρτιος 2011 (σελ. 5-7)
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/progressreport_equalwomen_2010_en.pdf.

Τα στοιχεία για τις δομές παιδικής φροντίδας περιλαμβάνονται στον συνημμένο πίνακα, στη στήλη που αφορά την επίσημη παιδική φροντίδα.

5. Στον συνημμένο πίνακα τα ποσοστά απασχόλησης των ανδρών και των γυναικών κατά το 3ο τρίμηνο του 2011 παρουσιάζονται μαζί με την αύξηση της απασχόλησης των ανδρών και των γυναικών κατά το 3ο τρίμηνο του 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002642/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Promotion of female employment as a way of safeguarding the economic recovery

According to Eurostat's latest data, the wage gap between men and women is still over 16 %, while in some countries it is 22 % or even 27 % (Greece and Estonia respectively). Based on the specific aims set out in the guidelines for employment, a prerequisite for a successful recovery and ensuring the viability of public finances — including social insurance systems — is to support women's access to the job market by employing them in high-quality and respectable positions.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission include the percentages, by Member State, of women employed in flexible forms of work and the percentages of women among the working poor?

2. Does it have data regarding the percentage of uninsured female employment?

3. What are the official reasons for the large wage gap between the sexes and the low percentage of female employment?

4. What are the absorption rates of European funds by Member State for promoting work-life balance? What is the performance of the Member States in terms of the availability and quality of childcare facilities?

5. Have the cuts in social expenditure (reductions in maternity benefits, restrictions in state care facilities, etc.) affected female employment? Is information available concerning those countries that have implemented a programme of harsh financial austerity such as Greece, Portugal, Italy, etc.?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

1. Flexible forms of employment can be various types like temporary work contracts and part-time working. The various forms are shown in the attached table as well as the data for female in-work poverty.

2. The Commission does not have this information

3. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its 'Report ([1]) on Progress on Equality between Women and Men in 2010'.

4. According to recent information Member States allocated 2,551 billion euro in the current programming period on measures to improve access to employment and increase sustainable participation and progress of women. By the end of 2010 the absorption rate was 43.8 % (Member States are reporting on Structural Fund implementation on yearly basis, 2011's data will be available during the summer of 2012).

The European Social Fund includes programs that are focusing on the improved access to employment for women. These programs cannot be broken down specifically into reconciliation of work and family life as this might only be an indirect target in the programs.

The table on childcare structure can be seen in the attached table under the column of formal childcare.

5. In the attached table the employment rates for both men and women in the 3rd quarter 2011 can be seen together with the employment growth for the 3rd quarter 2010 for men and women.

([1]) European Commission March 2011 (pages 5-7).
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/progressreport_equalwomen_2010_en.pdf.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-002643/12
Komisi
Jan Březina (PPE)
(8. března 2012)

Předmět: Škodlivé a klamavě označené potraviny

Existují zprávy o tom, že regulační orgány, které vyšetřují případ, kdy tři polské společnosti (a možná mnoho dalších) používaly v potravinách posypovou sůl, vyrozuměly ústřední systém Komise pro včasnou výměnu informací pro potraviny a krmiva (RASFF) a zjišťují ohrožení veřejného zdraví.

Hlavní polská hygienická inspekce prý RASFF oznámila, že polské státní zastupitelstvo zahájilo v únoru právní kroky proti třem společnostem, které prodávaly průmyslovou sůl jako sůl určenou k lidské spotřebě.

Vyžaduje Komise pravidelně aktuální informace od polských úřadů? Pokud ano, s jakými výsledky?

Sdílí Komise názor, že stávající systém výstrahy v případě nevyhovujících potravin není dostatečně účinný, neboť veřejnost není dostatečně informována?

Občané EU jsou poškozováni nejen nevyhovujícími potravinami, ale rovněž potravinami klamavě označenými, např. produkty, které mají rozdílné a méně kvalitní složení, než jak je uvedeno na obalu, což spotřebitele mate a vede ke koupi výrobků s odlišnou kvalitou, než jakou mají právo očekávat.

Jaký je názor Komise na myšlenku zřídit databázi EU pro klamavě označené potraviny, jež by doplňovala RASFF? Co kdyby tato databáze nepokrývala pouze potraviny, ale rovněž např. sušené zboží? Domnívá se Komise, že takovýto výstražný mechanismus by byl přínosem v porovnání se současnou situací? Předloží Komise v této souvislosti příslušné legislativní návrhy?

Odpověď Johna Dalliho jménem Komise
(14. května 2012)

Polské orgány informovaly kontaktní místo systému Komise pro včasnou výměnu informací pro potraviny a krmiva (RASFF) v souladu s článkem 37 nařízení (ES) č. 882/2004 ([1]) (správní pomoc), jelikož Polsko neshledalo v dotčené soli žádné zdravotní riziko. Polské orgány rovněž zaslaly pravidelné aktualizace týkající se počtu odebraných vzorků, druhu provedených analýz a opatření přijatých v Polsku.

Systém RASFF se zaměřuje na informování orgánů o rizicích, produktech, jejich zpětné vysledovatelnosti a přijatých opatřeních. Informace, které veřejnosti poskytuje Komise v rámci systému RASFF, nenahrazují informace, které mají veřejnosti poskytovat členské státy, pokud jde o závažná rizika u produktů dostupných spotřebitelům. Působnost systému RASFF je jasně definována v článku 50 nařízení (ES) č. 178/2002 a zahrnuje pouze zdravotní rizika, a nikoli zavádějící nebo neúplné informace pro spotřebitele, pokud tyto nesprávné nebo chybějící informace nepředstavují riziko pro zdraví.

Komise neustále zvažuje možnosti, jak zlepšit využívání našich systémů varování a reakce. V současné době Komise dokončuje novou verzi standardních operačních postupů pro členské státy. Kromě prováděcích pravidel ([2]) umožní tyto standardní operační postupy vytvořit normy pro komunikaci a podávání zpráv mezi členskými státy prostřednictvím systému RASFF. Kromě toho Komise rovněž zváží potřebu změny tohoto nedávno přijatého prováděcího opatření[2].

Již existuje právní rámec pro ochranu práv spotřebitelů v souvislosti s klamavými výrobky nebo výrobky, které neodpovídají tomu, co prodávající deklaruje. Jedná se zejména o směrnici 2005/29/ES ([3]).

Komise v současnosti neplánuje žádný nový legislativní návrh.

([1]) Nařízení (ES) č. 882/2004 o úředních kontrolách za účelem ověření dodržování právních předpisů týkajících se krmiv a potravin a pravidel o zdraví zvířat a dobrých životních podmínkách zvířat (Úř. věst. L 191, 28.5.2004, s. 1-52).
([2]) Nařízení (ES) č. 16/2011.
([3]) Směrnice Evropského parlamentu a Rady 2005/29/ES ze dne 11. května 2005 o nekalých obchodních praktikách vůči spotřebitelům na vnitřním trhu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002643/12
to the Commission
Jan Březina (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Harmful and misleading food products

It has been reported that regulators investigating the use of de-icing road salt in foodstuffs by three Polish companies — and possibly many more — have notified the Commission's central Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) and are checking for dangers to public health.

The Chief Sanitary Inspectorate of Poland are said to have notified the RASFF that Polish prosecutors commenced legal action in February against three companies that sold industrial salt as salt intended for human consumption.

Is the Commission asking for regular updates from the Polish authorities and, if so, with which results?

Does the Commission share the view that the current alert system for deficient food products is not efficient enough because of lack of public awareness?

EU citizens are harmed not only by deficient food products but also by misleading food products, e.g. products having different and less favourable content than what is claimed on the label, thus misleading consumers into buying products of a different quality than what they have a right to expect.

What does the Commission think about the idea of setting up a EU database for misleading products, complementing the RASFF? What if such a database would cover not only food but also e.g. dry goods? Does the Commission think that such a warning mechanism would represent an added value compared to the current situation? Will the Commission come up with respective legislative proposals in this sense?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2012)

The Polish authorities informed the Commission's RASFF (Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed) contact point in accordance with Article 37 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([1]) (administrative assistance) since no health risk was identified by Poland in the salt in question. The Polish authorities have also sent regular updates on the number of samples taken, the kind of analyses carried out and the measures taken in Poland.

The RASFF focuses on informing authorities of risks, products, their traceability and measures taken. The information given to the public by the Commission under the RASFF does not replace the information that Member States are required to provide to the public about serious risks in products which are available to consumers. The scope of RASFF is clearly defined in Article 50 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 and includes only health risks but not misleading or incomplete consumer information insofar as incorrect or lacking information does not lead to a health risk.

The Commission always considers ways to further improve the use of our alert and response systems. At present the Commission is finalising a new version of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Member States. In addition to the implementing rules ([2]), these SOP will allow for the standardisation of the way Member States communicate and report through the RASFF system. In addition, the Commission will also consider the need to amend the recently adopted implementing measure.

There is already an existing legal framework for defending consumer rights in relation to misleading products or products that do not fulfil the promises made by the seller in particular Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]).

The Commission does not foresee for the moment any new legislative proposal.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (OJ L 191, 28.5.2004, p. 1-52).
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 16/2011.
([3]) 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.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002645/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D) e David-Maria Sassoli (S&D)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Verifica sulla procedura di vendita della compagnia Tirrenia di Navigazione

Premesso che:

— nel mese di novembre 2009 il Gruppo Tirrenia — partecipato al 100 % da Fintecna, società interamente controllata dal Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze, e composto da Tirrenia di Navigazione, Caremar, Toremar, Saremar e Siremar — ha ceduto, rispettivamente alle regioni Campania, Toscana e Sardegna, il 100 % delle società regionali Caremar, Toremar e Saremar;

— nel dicembre 2009 la Fintecna ha pubblicato un «invito a manifestare interesse all'acquisto della Tirrenia di Navigazione», che ha avuto, il 4 agosto 2010, esito negativo perché la Mediterranea Holding, unico soggetto rimasto a competere, non aveva dato il proprio assenso a sottoscrivere il contratto di cessione;

— dal 5 agosto 2010 la Tirrenia di Navigazione è in amministrazione straordinaria e il 12 agosto il Tribunale di Roma — Sezione Fallimentare ha decretato lo stato di insolvenza per l'ammissione alla legge Marzano;

— il 15 settembre 2010 è stato pubblicato un nuovo invito a «manifestare interesse», che si è concluso il 15 marzo 2011 con l'aggiudicazione della Tirrenia di Navigazione alla Compagnia Italiana di Navigazioni (CIN), composta da tre armatori italiani (gruppi Moby, Marinvest e Grimaldi);

— il 25 luglio 2011 è stato sottoscritto il contratto che sancisce la privatizzazione della compagnia Tirrenia di Navigazione;

— allo stato attuale la compagnia ha in forza 1150 unità di personale navigante, cui si aggiungono 209 unità in Turno Generale e copre collegamenti di fondamentale importanza economica e sociale tra la terraferma e le isole italiane;

— la CIN si è impegnata a mantenere intatto l'organico, a sostituire il naviglio obsoleto, a potenziare la rete commerciale, ad adeguare gli standard di bordo ai livelli internazionali e a migliorare i servizi e le condizioni di viaggio dei passeggeri;

— una eventuale valutazione negativa della procedura di vendita comporterebbe immediate e pesanti ricadute in termini occupazionali, per quanti lavorano alle dipendenze della Tirrenia di Navigazione, e sociali, per quanti usufruiscono di un fondamentale servizio di collegamento terraferma/isole;

Può la Commissione far sapere come valuta la procedura di vendita della Tirrenia di Navigazione e se la ritiene compatibile con le normative in materia di concorrenza?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003043/12
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(21 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Tirrenia

Il 21 marzo 2012 scade il contratto tra il commissario straordinario della Tirrenia e la cordata Cin (Compagnia italiana di navigazione), composta dagli armatori Grimaldi, Aponte e Onorato, per la cessione della compagnia di navigazione pubblica Tirrenia.

In data 20.3.2012 l'UE ha messo in mora l'operazione di privatizzazione della Tirrenia perché la proposta sembra prevedere un quasi monopolio su alcune rotte interne italiane, soprattutto quelle che collegano la Sardegna all'Italia. Inoltre, la vicenda della fusione sembra essere strettamente collegata secondo l'UE all'indagine sugli aiuti di Stato, dove vi sono state possibili violazioni delle norme UE (380 milioni di vecchi aiuti di Stato richiesti dall'UE ai nuovi acquirenti).

L'assegnazione di Tirrenia a Cin tramite gara è l'esito di un percorso travagliato, iniziato nel 2007, avviato proprio per rispettare il regolamento (CEE) n. 3577/92 sulla liberalizzazione del cabotaggio europeo, che impone l'assegnazione tramite bando di gara europeo delle convenzioni ultradecennali delle società di navigazione nell'ambito europeo. È assurdo che adesso, a distanza di quattro anni, vengano imposti nuovi vincoli, determinando di fatto la dissoluzione di importanti asset e la perdita di migliaia di posti di lavoro, ed impedendo ad una cordata di imprenditori italiani di investire nel trasporto marittimo e di garantire servizi di collegamento essenziali attraverso una gara corretta e trasparente.

In gioco ci sono i 1 369 dipendenti di personale navigante e 269 amministrativi di Tirrenia quasi tutti provenienti dal Sud Italia ed in particolare dalla regione Campania. Oltre al possibile licenziamento dei circa 1 638 dipendenti della Tirrenia (che arrivano a 2 mila con il personale stagionale!), c'è il possibile caos nel trasporto navale. Sarebbe un vero e proprio disastro per l'occupazione del settore, diretta e indiretta, per i collegamenti marittimi e per la garanzia della continuità territoriale.

Pertanto chiedo alla Commissione, ed in particolare al Commissario Joaquin Almunia, se ha l'intenzione di impegnarsi ad accettare una soluzione con la Cin per evitare il definitivo fallimento della Tirrenia o la vendita di singole navi e di singole rotte («spezzatino») e per quanto riguarda quest'ultimo punto, può spiegare la Commissione perché l'ipotesi dello «spezzatino» è notoriamente preferita dall'UE nonostante costituisce un disastro per migliaia di lavoratori e famiglie?

Risposta congiunta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2012)

La proposta di acquisizione, da parte di CIN, di una controllata di Tirrenia è stata notificata alla Commissione il 21 novembre 2011 ai sensi del regolamento UE sulle concentrazioni ([1]). Il 18 gennaio 2012 la Commissione ha deciso di avviare un'indagine di mercato approfondita per determinare se gli eventuali problemi di concorrenza derivanti da tale concentrazione e individuati durante la fase preliminare fossero confermati.

Nell'ambito di un'indagine di questo tipo, la Commissione deve prendere in considerazione l'interesse generale. In questo caso specifico, la Commissione ha dovuto valutare le conseguenze della vendita di Tirrenia a CIN, una «joint venture» tra imprese concorrenti di Tirrenia, la quale potrebbe comportare ripercussioni su milioni di viaggiatori. Attraverso l'operazione proposta, sommando le quote di mercato di CIN a quelle di Tirrenia, si arriverebbe a detenere quasi il 100 % del mercato su molti dei collegamenti tra la terraferma e le isole italiane, in particolare la Sardegna.

Ad ogni modo, la Commissione ha chiuso il procedimento in quanto le parti notificanti hanno abbandonato la concentrazione notificata. Pertanto, le domande degli onorevoli parlamentari non sono più rilevanti.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 139/2004 del Consiglio, del 20 gennaio 2004, relativo al controllo delle concentrazioni tra imprese («regolamento comunitario sulle concentrazioni»), GU L 24 del 29.1.2004, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002645/12
to the Commission
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D) and David-Maria Sassoli (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Verifying the sale process of the company Tirrenia di Navigazione

In November 2009, the Tirrenia Group — a 100 % subsidiary of Fintecna, a company fully controlled by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and consisting of Tirrenia di Navigazione, Caremar, Toremar, Saremar and Siremar — sold 100 % of its regional companies Caremar, Toremar and Saremar respectively to the regions of Campania, Tuscany and Sardinia.

In December 2009, Fintecna then published a 'call for expressions of interest in the purchase of Tirrenia di Navigazione', which, on 4 August 2010, fell through because Mediterranea Holding, the only entity remaining to compete, did not agree to sign the sale contract.

Since 5 August 2010, Tirrenia di Navigazione has been under special administration and on 12 August the Bankruptcy Division of the Court of Rome decreed a state of insolvency under the Marzano Law.

On 15 September 2010, a new call for 'expressions of interest' was published, which concluded on 15 March 2011 with Compagnia Italiana di Navigazioni (CIN) winning the bid. This company consists of three Italian shipping companies (the Moby, Marinvest and Grimaldi groups).

On 25 July 2011, a contract was signed that officially recognised the privatisation of Tirrenia di Navigazione.

At present, the company employs a crew of 1 150, in addition to 209 general shift workers and covers essential social and economic connections between mainland Italy and its islands.

CIN has pledged to maintain the workforce, replace obsolete ships, strengthen the sales network, bring on-board standards up to international levels and improve passenger travel services and conditions.

A potential negative evaluation of the sale process would have immediate and severe repercussions for employees of Tirrenia di Navigazione, as well as social ramifications for those who use this essential mainland/island connection service.

Can the Commission therefore express its view on the sale process of Tirrenia di Navigazione and say whether it considers it compliant with the competition laws in force?

Question for written answer E-003043/12
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(21 March 2012)

Subject: Tirrenia

The contract between the Official Receiver of Tirrenia and the CIN consortium (*Compagnia Italiana di Navigazione* [Italian Shipping Company]), comprising the shipowners Grimaldi, Aponte and Onorato, for the sale of the public shipping company Tirrenia, is due to expire on 21 March 2012.

On 20 March 2012, the EU halted the privatisation of Tirrenia as the proposal appeared to imply a near total monopoly on some of the Italian domestic routes, particularly those that connect Sardinia to Italy. Moreover, according to the EU, the merger itself appeared to be closely related to the investigation regarding state aid, involving potential violations of EU regulations (EUR 380 000 000 in previous state aid required of the new buyers by the EU).

CIN's success at being awarded Tirrenia as part of the bidding process is the outcome of an arduous process which began in 2007 specifically to comply with Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 on the liberalisation of European cabotage, which requires shipping company conventions over 10 years old to be assigned by a European competitive tender. It is absurd that now, after four years, new constraints are being imposed, resulting in the de facto dissolution of important assets and the loss of thousands of jobs, preventing a consortium of Italian businessmen from investing in maritime transport and ensuring essential links, following a fair and transparent competitive tender process.

The jobs of Tirrenia's 1 369 crew members and 269 administrative employees are at stake — almost all from southern Italy and in particular from the Campania region. Aside from the possible dismissal of approximately 1 638 employees by Tirrenia (rising to 2 000 if one includes seasonal staff), there is also the potential chaos in shipping to consider. It would be a real disaster for direct and indirect employment in the sector, for maritime links and for territorial continuity.

I therefore ask the Commission, and Commissioner Joaquín Almunia in particular, if he intends to make a commitment to accepting a settlement with CIN to prevent the definitive failure of Tirrenia or the sale of individual ships and individual routes ('fragmentation'). With regard to the latter point in particular, can the Commission explain why the 'fragmentation' scenario is preferred by the EU despite it being a disaster for thousands of workers and families?

Joint answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

The proposed purchase by CIN of a branch of Tirrenia was notified to the Commission on 21 November 2011 under the EU Merger Regulation ([1]). On 18 January 2012, the Commission decided to open an in-depth market investigation to determine if the potential competition problems arising from this concentration which had been identified in the preliminary phase were confirmed or not.

In conducting such an investigation the Commission needs to take into account the general interest. In this particular case the Commission has had to assess the consequences of the sale of Tirrenia to CIN, a joint venture among Tirrenia's competitors, which could affect millions of travellers. With the proposed operation, if the market shares of CIN are added to Tirrenia's, they reach nearly 100 % on several routes from mainland Italy to the islands, Sardinia in particular.

However, the Commission has now closed the proceedings as the notifying parties have abandoned the notified concentration. As a result, the Honourable Members' questions relating have been superseded by events.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 of 20 January 2004 on the control of concentrations between undertakings (the EC Merger Regulation), OJ L 24, 29.01.2004, p. 1.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002646/12
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(8 maart 2012)

Betreft: Vervolgvragen inzake zwendel met EU-subsidie bij Nederlands „Moskeeverzamelgebouw"

Op 6 maart 2012 gaf de Commissie antwoord op mijn vragen van 25 januari 2012 (E-000846/2012) betreffende het „Moskeeverzamelgebouw". In punt 1 geeft de heer Hahn aan dat in dit stadium, in verband met het lopende onderzoek door OLAF, geen verdere informatie kan worden verstrekt.

1. Betekent een door OLAF gestart onderzoek dat de eindverantwoording voor de verstrekking van bepaalde subsidies kennelijk niet meer bij de Commissie ligt, maar bij OLAF?

In punt 2 geeft de heer Hahn aan dat er „controlesystemen van hoge kwaliteit" aanwezig zijn om op de desbetreffende autoriteiten toezicht te kunnen houden.

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke autoriteiten voor de management en controle van dit project verantwoordelijk zijn en waren?

3. Mocht na onderzoek van OLAF blijken dat er daadwerkelijk gelden verkeerd besteed zijn, deelt de Commissie dan met de PVV de mening dat deze zogenaamde „controlesystemen van hoge kwaliteit" blijkbaar niet in staat waren om dergelijk misbruik van fondsen op te sporen?

4. Wat gaat de Commissie eraan doen om te voorkomen dat belastinggeld van de burgers in de toekomst verkwanseld wordt?

In punt 3 geeft de heer Hahn aan dat de regels van het cohesiebeleid vereisen dat er „geen specifieke rapportering voor subsidies vereist is voor multiculturele centra".

5. Zijn er überhaupt regels in het cohesiebeleid, die vereisen dat er specifieke rapporten worden gemaakt betreffende de uitvoering en doelmatigheid van deze projecten?

6. Is de Commissie het met de PVV en de Europese Rekenkamer eens dat de projecten die worden betaald uit o.a. het EFRO, het Cohesiefonds, het ESF en het EAFRD, te veel zijn gericht op het door de lidstaten laten absorberen van deze fondsen in plaats van op de resultaten en de doelmatigheid van de bestede fondsen ([1])?

7. Zo ja, wat is de Commissie voornemens om hieraan te doen? Zo nee, twijfelt zij aan de deskundigheid en onafhankelijkheid van de Europese Rekenkamer?

Antwoord van de heer Hahn namens de Commissie
(3 mei 2012)

De Commissie neemt haar taak de financiële belangen van de EU te beschermen ernstig, met inachtneming van de onafhankelijkheid van OLAF bij zijn onderzoeken. Zij zal alle nodige maatregelen nemen, met inbegrip van terugvordering en financiële correcties. De uiteindelijke verantwoordelijkheid voor de verlening van bepaalde subsidies ligt bij de Commissie.

Het ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken (BZK) was verantwoordelijk voor beheer en controle op programmaniveau; op projectniveau was het programmabureau Amsterdam Groot Oost verantwoordelijk voor het beheer en de accountant van Amsterdam (ACAM) voor de controle.

Overeenkomstig het beginsel van gedeeld beheer valt de selectie van projecten in het kader van het cohesiebeleid onder de verantwoordelijkheid van de lidstaat. Op 8 september 2011 heeft de Rekenkamer zijn jaarverslag over het begrotingsjaar 2010 goedgekeurd, dat is gepubliceerd samen met de antwoorden van de instellingen op de opmerkingen van de Rekenkamer. Naar aanleiding van deze en andere analyses worden de controlesystemen voortdurend verbeterd.

([1]) http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/12286731. PDF Deel I: Algemene opmerkingen, punt 6.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002646/12
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Follow-up questions regarding fraud with EU subsidy for Dutch 'multi-purpose mosque building'

On 6 March 2012, the Commission answered my questions from 25 January 2012 (E-000846/2012) regarding the 'multi-purpose mosque building'. In Point 1, Mr Hahn indicates that, at this stage, in connection with the current investigation by OLAF (the European Anti-Fraud Office), no further information can be given.

1. Does an investigation launched by OLAF mean that the final responsibility for the provision of certain subsidies apparently no longer lies with the Commission but with OLAF?

In Point 2, Mr Hahn indicates that 'high quality control systems' are present in order to be able to monitor the relevant authorities.

2. Can the Commission specify which authorities are and were responsible for the management and control of this project?

3. Should it appear after the OLAF investigation that money has actually been spent inappropriately, does the Commission agree with the PVV that these so-called 'high quality control systems' were clearly unable to detect such misuse of funds?

4. What is the Commission going to do in order to prevent citizens' taxes from being squandered in future?

In Point 3, Mr Hahn states that the cohesion policy rules require that 'no specific reporting for grants is required for multicultural centres'.

5. Are there any rules at all in the cohesion policy that require specific reports to be made concerning the implementation and efficacy of these projects?

6. Does the Commission agree with the PVV and the European Court of Auditors that the projects that are paid from, among others, the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Social Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, focus too much on having these funds absorbed by the Member States instead of on the results and the efficacy of the funds spent? ([1])

7. If so, what does the Commission plan to do about this situation? If not, does the Commission doubt the expertise and independence of the European Court of Auditors?

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

The Commission is committed to ensuring the protection of EU financial interests, while respecting the independence of OLAF in its investigative activities. It will take any appropriate measures, including recoveries and financial corrections. The final responsibility for the provision of certain subsidies lies with the Commission.

The Ministry of the Interior (BZK) was responsible for management and control at programme level, *programmabureau Amsterdam Groot Oost* for management and the accountant of Amsterdam (ACAM) for control at project level.

In line with the principle of shared management, project selection under cohesion policy is the responsibility of the Member State. On 8 September 2011, The Court of Auditors adopted its annual reports concerning the financial year 2010, which were published together with the institutions' replies to the Court's observations. Following these and other analyses, control systems are constantly being improved.

([1]) http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/12280727.PDF Part I: General observations, Point 6.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-002648/12
till kommissionen
Marita Ulvskog (S&D), Åsa Westlund (S&D), Anna Hedh (S&D), Göran Färm (S&D), Olle Ludvigsson (S&D) och Jens Nilsson (S&D)
(8 mars 2012)

Angående: Associeringsavtalet mellan EU och Israel gällande produkter från ockuperat område

EU har associeringsavtal med såväl Israel som Palestina och båda avtalen innehåller ett frihandelsavtal med separata och skilda bestämmelser om förmånsbehandling. Ändå har Israels tillämpning av associeringsavtalet mellan EU och Israel på de ockuperade områdena lett till en felaktig tillämpning av EU:s lagstiftning, som inte tillåter medlemsstaternas tullmyndigheter att bevilja förmånsbehandling enligt associeringsavtalet mellan EU och Israel på produkter med ursprung i de områden som ockuperas av Israel. Detta har bekräftats av EU-domstolen i målet Brita GmbH mot Hauptzollamt Hamburg-Hafen.

De europeiska medborgarna har klart och tydligt uttryckt sin vilja när det gäller produkter som kommer från de palestinska ockuperade områdena, en vilja EU bör se till att den respekteras.

Vi är oroade över agerandet från vissa företag som fortsätter att exporterar varor som producerats i de ockuperade områdena enligt associeringsavtalet mellan EU och Israel. Denna praxis är beklagansvärd och går stick i stäv med EU:s internationella politik och innebär ett missbruk av de stora möjligheterna för legitimt förmånstillträde till unionens inre marknad.

Vad har kommissionen för strategier för att komma till rätta med detta problem?

EU har stött på ett flertal problem vid tillämpningen av ursprungsreglerna för produkter med ursprung i bosättningar i de ockuperade områdena. Den tekniska överenskommelsen har visat sig otillfredsställande.

Kommer kommissionen att se över och vid behov omförhandla den tekniska överenskommelsen i syfte att göra den effektivare och enklare?

Hur garanterar kommissionen att Israel följer reglerna i associeringsavtalet med EU gällande produkter från ockuperat område?

Svar från Algirdas Šemeta på kommissionens vägnar
(2 maj 2012)

Vissa israeliska företag exporterar varor som producerats i de ockuperade områdena, med förmånsbehandling enligt associeringsavtalet mellan EU och Israel. Kommissionen anser att denna praxis motverkas av tillämpningen av den tekniska överenskommelsen. Avtalet gör det möjligt för tullmyndigheterna i EU:s medlemsstater att vägra förmånsbehandling för varor där ursprungsintyget anger att produktionen med ursprungsstatus skett på en plats som står under israelisk förvaltning sedan 1967.

Det har konstaterats och effektivt åtgärdats överträdelser, exempelvis uppgift på ursprungsintyget om huvudkontor inom Israels gränser före 1967 fastän produktionen skett utanför dessa. Sådana fall är varken många eller betydande i form av handelsvolym.

Kommissionen anser inte att den tekniska överenskommelsen behöver ändras. Emellertid diskuteras vissa justeringar av hur den tillämpas inom EU.

Kommissionen arbetar på en ändring av meddelandet till importörerna om import från Israel, samtidigt som den förbereder ett offentliggörande av ortförteckningen. Detta kommer att öka medvetenheten bland EU:s importörer om vilka särskilda uppgifter som ska deklareras och göra att tullen effektivare kan granska dessa deklarationer.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002648/12
to the Commission
Marita Ulvskog (S&D), Åsa Westlund (S&D), Anna Hedh (S&D), Göran Färm (S&D), Olle Ludvigsson (S&D) and Jens Nilsson (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: The EU-Israel Association Agreement concerning products from the Occupied Territories

The EU has Association Agreements with both Israel and Palestine, both of which include a Free Trade Agreement containing separate and distinct provisions concerning preferential commercial treatment. Nevertheless, Israel's application of the EU-Israel Association Agreement to the Occupied Territories has resulted in the improper implementation of EC law, which, as confirmed by the Court of Justice in the *Brita GmbH* v *Hauptzollamt Hamburg-Hafen* case, does not permit Member States' customs authorities to grant preferential treatment under the EU-Israel Association Agreement to products from Israeli-occupied territories.

European citizens have clearly expressed their will concerning products from Palestinian occupied territories — and the EU should ensure that this will is respected.

We are concerned about the practices employed by certain companies which persist in exploiting the terms of the EU-Israel Association Agreement by exporting goods produced in the Occupied Territories. This practice is regrettable and flies in the face of the EU's international policies and represents an abuse of the extensive opportunities for legitimate preferential access to the Union's internal market.

What strategies does the Commission have to address this problem?

The EU has been encountering a variety of problems when enforcing the rules of origin with regard to products originating in settlements in occupied territories. The Technical Arrangement has proved unsatisfactory.

Will the Commission review and, if necessary, renegotiate the Technical Arrangement with the intention of making it more effective and simpler?

How does the Commission ensure that Israel adheres to the rules set out in the Association Agreement with the EU concerning products from the Occupied Territories?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2012)

The practice of certain Israeli companies exporting goods produced in the Occupied Territories under cover of preferential proofs of origin issued or made out under the European Union (EU)-Israel Association Agreement is, in the Commission's view, appropriately counteracted through the implementation of the Technical Arrangement. This arrangement makes it possible for EU Member State customs authorities to refuse preference to goods for which the proof of origin indicates that the production conferring originating status has taken place in a location brought under Israeli Administration since 1967.

Cases of abuse, for instance the indication on the proof of origin of a location corresponding to headquarters located within Israel's pre-1967 borders although production took place beyond, have been detected and appropriately tackled. Such cases are neither numerous nor significant in volume of trade.

The Commission does not consider any change in the Technical Arrangement is needed. However, some adjustments in the way it is implemented in the EU are being discussed.

Our services are working on an amended version of the Notice to importers on imports from Israel as well as preparing the publication of the list of settlements. This will raise the awareness of EU importers as regards the particulars to be declared and will allow customs to verify these declarations more effectively.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002651/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Vaccination against SBV

According to the UK National Sheep Association, an SBV vaccine is thought be two years away. Is the Commission funding any efforts to find a vaccine, and if so could it detail where? What is the Commission's view on a possible date for a vaccine to be brought to market and how would such a vaccine be distributed?

Would farmers be aided with the cost of treatment or prevention of SBV?

Scientists in Germany and the Netherlands are also researching the possibility of creating a blood test to detect SBV. Is the Commission aware of this and is it funding any research to that end?

What measures does the Commission plan to take in order to expedite the development and distribution of a vaccine, such as a possible moratorium on potentially cumbersome regulation?

Is the Commission looking into the possible impact recent and past regulation of pesticides may have had on the spread, or future spread, of vector-borne infection?

Would the Commission regard the distribution of the vaccine for Blue Tongue, a vector-borne livestock disease, as a blueprint for the distribution of a potential SBV vaccination? If not, how might it differ?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

In relation to the questions raised on the Schmallenberg virus (SBV) infection and vaccination, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-002301/2012 ([1]).

Some Member States have already started scientific studies and, as requested by the Commission, submitted proposals for studies aimed at gathering scientific information necessary for the development of EU veterinary legislation, particularly regarding the adoption of harmonised rules on monitoring and testing. The Commission will co-finance Member States' efforts in accordance with Council Decision 2009/470/EC ([2]). The outcome of these studies and the previously gained knowledge from other vector-borne diseases will certainly help to establish control measures, if appropriate, and to draw up a possible vaccination strategy if the new scientific data so justifies. It is currently too early to set up a timetable for the development of a vaccine and to define a future vaccination strategy.

With regard to vector-borne spread, the Commission requested the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for an update of previous EFSA scientific opinions. The EFSA Panel on Animal Health and Welfare issued in 2008 a scientific opinion on the effectiveness and suitability of insecticides and repellents for Culicoides species, and on the different measures that can be used to protect animals against attacks by vectors ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) OJ L 155, 18.6.2009.
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/doc/ahaw_op_ej735_bluetongue2008_en,3.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002652/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Cooperating to fight the Schmallenberg virus

Does the Commission agree that in fighting this horrible threat, people are better motivated by voluntary cooperation than by resented regulatory imposition?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

As indicated in its communication on the EU Animal Health Strategy 'Prevention is better than cure' the Commission believes that science-based and proportionate EU harmonised legislation is an important tool against major animal diseases, it brings added value and is in the interest of European citizens.

In relation to the reporting of the Schmallenberg virus infection, the Commission invites the Honourable Member to refer to the replies to questions E-001855/2012 and E-002139/2012 ([1]).

The Commission is continuously assessing the possibility to take legislative measures or other initiatives for this emerging infection, which is in constant evolution. The Commission has been working in a transparent manner and in full partnership with all stakeholders during this process.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002654/12
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Neri africani costretti a mangiare la bandiera della Libia di Gheddafi

Il 5 marzo 2012 il quotidiano britannico «Daily Telegraph» ha riferito di un video proveniente dalla Libia apparso su internet che mostra un gruppo di uomini africani con le mani legate dietro la schiena e in bocca bandiere verdi. Si ritiene che gli uomini siano lavoratori immigrati provenienti dai vicini paesi africani. Durante la rivolta in Libia, centinaia di lavoratori neri immigrati, molti dei quali erano accusati di essere mercenari per il regime di Gheddafi, sono stati catturati e imprigionati da soldati alleati alle nuove autorità provvisorie. Nel video si sente gridare in arabo «Mangia la bandiera, cane. Pazienza, cane, pazienza. Dio è grande». Il quotidiano ritiene che gli attacchi siano stati condotti da una milizia salafita, responsabile anche di aver profanato le tombe del cimitero «Commonwealth War Graves».

1. È la Commissione al corrente dell'incidente sopra riportato?

2. È la Commissione disposta a chiedere alle autorità provvisorie libiche di prendere provvedimenti per arrestare i sospetti coinvolti nel caso in esame?

3. Ritiene la Commissione che le autorità libiche si adoperino sufficientemente per garantire il rispetto delle norme fondamentali in materia di diritti umani?

4. Ha la Commissione discusso con l'amministrazione provvisoria dei problemi concernenti i diritti umani e, in caso affermativo, quali sono i risultati?

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

L'UE è turbata dalle recenti notizie che giungono dalla Libia e che segnalano i maltrattamenti subiti dai detenuti appartenenti a gruppi vulnerabili in alcune strutture di detenzione controllate dalle milizie. La situazione di alcune minoranze e degli sfollati all'interno del paese, in particolare di coloro che vengono associati con il regime precedente, è allarmante.

L'UE ha ripetutamente ribadito la necessità di costruire la nuova Libia sul rispetto dei diritti umani e dei principi democratici, esortando le autorità ad astenersi da azioni di rappresaglia nei confronti dei presunti ex-sostenitori di Gheddafi (in particolare nelle conclusioni del Consiglio «Affari esteri» e attraverso le dichiarazioni dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente). L'Unione ha sottolineato l'importanza del rispetto dello Stato di diritto e di affidare alla giustizia chi è accusato di violazioni dei diritti umani.

Nello specifico, la questione dei maltrattamenti dei detenuti è regolarmente sollevata dall'Unione europea nelle discussioni con le autorità libiche. In una recente dichiarazione, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha chiesto che tutti i detenuti in Libia vengano trattati nel rispetto delle norme internazionali. Il governo libico ha reagito positivamente a questi appelli e ha dichiarato la propria intenzione di accelerare l'attuazione delle misure volte a trasferire il controllo delle strutture di detenzione alle autorità.

L'UE continuerà a seguire da vicino la situazione e a sollevare tali questioni presso le autorità libiche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002654/12
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Black Africans forced to eat former Libyan flag

On 5 March 2012, the UK's *Daily Telegraph* reported that a video from Libya has emerged on the Internet which purportedly shows a group of African men, their hands tied behind their backs, with green flags in their mouths. The men are believed to be migrant workers from neighbouring African countries. During the uprising in Libya, hundreds of black migrant workers were captured and imprisoned by fighters allied to the new interim authorities, as many of them were accused of being mercenaries for Colonel Gaddafi. In the video, a voice can be heard shouting in Arabic, 'Eat your flag, you dog. Patience, you dog, patience. God is great'. The newspaper believes that the attacks were carried out by a salafist militia which was also responsible for kicking the graves in the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery.

1. Is the Commission aware of the incident mentioned above?

2. Is the Commission prepared to ask the transitional authorities to take steps to apprehend the suspects involved in this case?

3. Does the Commission believe that the Libyan authorities are doing enough to ensure basic human rights standards?

4. Has the Commission discussed human rights concerns with the interim administration, and if so, what were some of the outcomes?

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

The EU is concerned about recent reports coming from Libya documenting ill-treatment of detainees belonging to vulnerable groups in certain detention facilities controlled by militias. The situation of certain minorities and of internally displaced people, particularly those who suffer as a result of their being identified with the previous regime, are worrying.

The EU has repeatedly called for the new Libya to be based upon respect for human rights and democratic principles and for the authorities to refrain from retaliation against those suspected of being former-Gaddafi supporters (notably in Foreign Affairs Council conclusions and through High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) statements). It has underlined the importance of respect for the rule of law and for those accused of human rights violations to be brought to justice.

More specifically the EU has raised the issue of ill-treatment of detainees in its dialogue with the Libyan authorities. Most recently the HR/VP issued a statement where she called for the respect of all detainees in Libya in accordance with international standards. The Libyan government has reacted positively to these calls and has stated its intention to accelerate the process of implementing measures aiming at transferring the control of detention facilities to the authorities.

The EU will continue to follow these issues closely and to raise them with the authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002655/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — I leader della città libica di Bengasi dichiarano l'autonomia

Il 6 marzo 2012 diverse fonti di informazione hanno riportato che i leader della città libica di Bengasi hanno dichiarato l'autonomia chiedendo uno Stato federalista. I tremila delegati di un congresso svoltosi in questa città hanno proclamato l'istituzione di un consiglio incaricato di gestire la provincia della Cirenaica. Mustafa Abdel Jalil, capo del Consiglio Nazionale di Transizione (CNT), ha reagito affermando che si tratta di un complotto straniero finalizzato a dividere la Libia e ha dichiarato: «Mi dispiace dire che tali paesi [stranieri] hanno finanziato e sostenuto questo complotto nell'est del paese».

Il congresso di Bengasi ha nominato capo del Consiglio Cirenaico di Transizione Ahmed al-Senussi, parente dell'ex re e prigioniero durante il regime di Gheddafi. Il congresso ha dichiarato tuttavia di accettare che il CNT rimanga «il simbolo dell'unità del paese e il suo rappresentante legittimo in ambito internazionale». Diversi esperti del Medio Oriente ritengono che attualmente la Libia sia composta da diverse città e centri di fatto indipendenti. Il CNT si sforza di affermare la propria influenza sulle milizie e sulle città che ignorano Tripoli. Durante il regime di Gheddafi, la regione orientale del paese era stata emarginata e trascurata dalle autorità della capitale.

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante (VP/HR) in merito all'annuncio dei leader della città di Bengasi?

2. Ha il VP/HP parlato con Mustafa Abdel Jalil, capo del CNT, in merito a tale dichiarazione?

3. È l'UE preparata a riconoscere il nuovo Consiglio Cirenaico di Transizione?

4. Come valuta il VP/HR le difficoltà che il CNT sta incontrando nel consolidare il proprio controllo sul paese nel suo insieme?

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

L'UE ha rilevato la richiesta, da parte di alcuni capi tribù e comandanti militari, di una regione semiautonoma da creare nell'est della Libia, e invita tutte le parti a rispettare il progetto di transizione democratica del Consiglio nazionale di transizione (CNT), che prevede nel giugno 2012 le elezioni del Consiglio costituzionale. Qualsiasi decisione riguardante i rapporti tra il governo centrale e i governi locali andrebbe presa nell'ambito di una nuova Costituzione, che sarà predisposta dal Consiglio costituzionale.

L'AR/VP non ha avuto contatti con il presidente del CNT Abdel Jalil dal momento della dichiarazione di autonomia della Cirenaica. La delegazione dell'UE a Tripoli e le visite di alti funzionari provenienti da Bruxelles garantiscono contatti ad alto livello con il governo provvisorio.

Le sole autorità ad interim in Libia riconosciute dall'UE sono il Consiglio nazionale di transizione e il governo provvisorio.

Nonostante le difficili condizioni, il governo transitorio ha compiuto notevoli progressi nell'opera di organizzazione delle elezioni e sta ottenendo un maggiore controllo sulle forze di sicurezza. Restano ancora importanti sfide da affrontare, ma non ci si può aspettare un successo immediato a distanza così ravvicinata da un grande conflitto. La direzione dei progressi ottenuti resta positiva e il governo transitorio continua a collaborare con le comunità e i miliziani al fine di limitare gli atti di violenza a livello locale e reagire adeguatamente qualora essi dovessero verificarsi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002655/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Leaders in the Libyan city of Benghazi declare autonomy

On 6 March 2012 a number of media sources reported that civic leaders in the Libyan city of Benghazi had declared autonomy and were calling for federalism in the country. Three thousand delegates at a congress in the eastern city announced that they were setting up a council to run the province of Cyrenaica. In response, the National Transitional Council (NTC) chairman, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, said that there was a foreign plot to break up the country, stating: 'I regret to say that these (foreign) countries have financed and supported this plot that has arisen in the east'.

The congress in Benghazi selected Ahmed al-Senussi, who is a relative of the former king and was a prisoner under Gaddafi, as the leader of the self-declared Cyrenaica Transitional Council. However, it said it accepted that the NTC remained 'the country's symbol of unity and its legitimate representative in international arenas'. A number of Middle East experts believe that Libya is now composed of many de facto self-governing towns and cities. The NTC is struggling to assert its influence over militias and towns which ignore Tripoli. During the Gaddafi era, the eastern region was marginalised and neglected by the authorities in the capital.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's position on the announcement made by the civic leaders in Benghazi?

2. Has the VP/HR spoken with the NTC chairman, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, about this declaration?

3. Is the EU prepared to recognise the new Cyrenaica Transitional Council?

4. What is the VP/HR's assessment of the difficulties the NTC is facing in consolidating its control over the country as a whole?

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

The EU has noted the calls by some tribal leaders and military commanders for a semi-autonomous region to be established in eastern Libya. It calls on all parties to respect the National Transitional Council's (NTC) roadmap for democratic transition, which foresees elections in June 2012 of a Constitutional Council. Any decision about the relation between the central and local governments should be taken in the framework of a new Constitution, which will be prepared by this Council.

The HR/VP has not had contact with NTC Chair Abdel Jalil since the Cyrenaica Declaration. High level contact with the interim authority is ensured on an ongoing basis through the Delegation in Tripoli and high level visitors from Brussels.

The EU recognises the National Transition Council and the Interim Government as the interim authority in Libya.

The interim authority has made impressive progress in difficult conditions towards the delivery of elections and the delivery of greater control over security. Significant challenges remain, but we cannot expect instantaneous success so soon after major conflict. The direction of progress remains positive and the transitional administration continues to work with communities and the militias to curtail and respond to local outbreaks of violence when they occur.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002657/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(8 mars 2012)

Objet: Amélioration de l'accès à la justice dans les transactions transfrontalières grâce à l'aide judiciaire

La Commission vient de publier un rapport sur l'évaluation de l'application de la directive 2003/8/CE visant à améliorer l'accès à la justice dans les affaires transfrontalières grâce à des règles minimales relatives à l'aide judiciaire.

La Commission peut-elle faire savoir comment elle entend tenir compte des conclusions de ce rapport et notamment:

1. Comment promouvoir efficacement et activement l'information du public et des professionnels sur les différentes formes d'aide judiciaire?

2. Comment améliorer la transparence de l'information afin que les consommateurs connaissent précisément le nom de l'autorité expéditrice et réceptrice unique d'une telle aide dans chaque État membre?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(2 mai 2012)

La Commission sensibilise déjà les citoyens à l'aide judiciaire transfrontalière. À cette fin, elle a publié un recueil de la législation applicable dans les affaires civiles et commerciales transfrontalières, comprenant notamment la directive sur l'aide judiciaire. Ce recueil a été distribué, à plusieurs occasions, aux professionnels du droit dans les États membres.

En outre, des informations sur l'aide judiciaire sont disponibles sur les sites web de la Commission européenne: (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/civil/document/index_en.htm), du réseau judiciaire européen en matière civile et commerciale:
(http://ec.europa.eu/civiljustice/legal_aid/legal_aid_gen_fr.htm), et de l'atlas judiciaire européen en matière civile:
(http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/judicialatlascivil/html/la_information_fr.htm).

En ce qui concerne la seconde question, des informations sur les autorités expéditrices sont disponibles sur le site web de l'atlas judiciaire européen en matière civile:
(http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/judicialatlascivil/html/la_transmittingautho_fr.jsp#statePage0).

Des informations sur les autorités réceptrices sont également disponibles sur le site web de l'atlas judiciaire européen en matière civile:
(http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/judicialatlascivil/html/la_receivingautho_fr.jsp#statePage0).

La Commission met à jour les coordonnées de ces autorités sur la base des notifications des États membres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002657/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Improving access to justice in cross-border transactions through legal aid

The Commission recently published a report on an assessment of the application of Directive 2003/8/CE to improve access to justice in cross-border disputes by establishing minimum common rules relating to legal aid.

Can the Commission explain how it intends to address the conclusions of this report, in particular:

1. How to actively and effectively promote the provision of information about the various types of legal aid to the public and to professionals?

2. How to improve the transparency of information so that consumers know the exact name of the single transmitting and receiving authority of such aid in each Member State?

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

The Commission raises public awareness about cross-border legal aid. This has already been done through the publication of a Compendium consisting of legislation in cross-border civil and commercial matters, including the Legal Aid Directive. The Compendium has, at several occasions, been distributed to legal professionals in Member States.

In addition, the information on legal aid is available on the website of the European Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/civil/document/index_en.htm), the European Judicial Network in Civil and Commercial Matters (http://ec.europa.eu/civiljustice/legal_aid/legal_aid_gen_en.htm) and the European Judicial Atlas in Civil Matters (http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/judicialatlascivil/html/la_information_en.htm).

As regards the second question, the information on the transmitting agencies is available on the website of the European Judicial Atlas in Civil Matters
(http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/judicialatlascivil/html/la_transmittingautho_en.jsp#statePage0).

The information on the receiving agencies is also available on the website of the European Judicial Atlas in Civil Matters (http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/judicialatlascivil/html/la_receivingautho_en.jsp#statePage0).

The Commission updates the information on the whereabouts of these authorities on the basis of the notifications by the Member States.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002660/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Mecanismo de apoio a catástrofes meteorológicas

Segundo estudos realizados em Portugal, mais de 30 % do território de Portugal continental encontra-se em situação de seca extrema e 70 % em seca severa.

Neste momento, os agricultores Portugueses estão a passar por grandes dificuldades, nomeadamente ao nível das culturas já instaladas, nomeadamente as de sequeiro, que já sofrem graves prejuízos.

Ao nível dos produtores pecuários, as pastagens para a alimentação animal, sem água, não têm qualquer hipótese de vingar, o que irá obrigar os produtores a fazerem um maior investimento económico para alimentarem os seus efetivos.

No que se refere aos produtores de regadio, encontram-se ameaçados pela escassez dos seus recursos hidrológicos, tendo de empreender esforços significativos face aos gastos adicionais de eletricidade na bombagem da água para os seus terrenos agrícolas.

É sabido que as situações de seca, que se têm vindo a agravar todos os anos, prejudicam particularmente os países do sul da Europa, um dos quais Portugal.

Justifica-se, consequentemente, uma intervenção solidária da UE, tendo em conta as especificidades geográficas e climatéricas destes países.

Assim pergunto à Comissão:

Tem a Comissão tem acompanhado esta grave situação?

Qual ou quais os meios disponíveis de apoio aos agricultores portugueses, de forma a minimizarem os prejuízos?

No quadro da futura PAC, tenciona a Comissão criar algum mecanismo de apoio para este tipo de catástrofes meteorológicas, nomeadamente no que se refere ao caso da seca?

Não reconhece que a situação de seca extrema, tendo em conta as especificidades geográficas e climatéricas dos países do sul da Europa, como Portugal, justifica uma intervenção específica da UE, num esforço de coesão e de solidariedade?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(23 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão acompanha de perto a seca que Portugal enfrenta. A situação meteorológica e o seu eventual impacto negativo nas culturas são vigiados semanalmente, por meio dos instrumentos científicos adequados.

Estão disponíveis algumas medidas de desenvolvimento rural a longo prazo para atenuar os danos à produção agrícola causados por catástrofes naturais, mas os *programas* portugueses de desenvolvimento rural não preveem pagamentos compensatórios aos agricultores por perdas. Em caso de seca, os Estados-Membros podem conceder auxílios *de minimis* até 7 500 euros por beneficiário, ao longo de três exercícios orçamentais. Se a perda ascender a 30 % da produção, as regras vigentes em matéria de auxílios estatais permitem também conceder auxílios até 80 % dos danos.

No respeitante às ajudas diretas, a Comissão pode autorizar Portugal a pagar adiantamentos antes de 1 de dezembro de 2012, mas não antes de 16 de outubro de 2012, uma vez efetuados os devidos controlos. Poder-se-á recorrer a algumas disposições para atenuar o impacto da seca no montante da ajuda paga aos criadores de gado bovino, ovino ou caprino. Essas disposições poderão tocar a garantia dos direitos ao prémio e o período de retenção dos animais, a pretexto das condições excecionais e das dificuldades financeiras que os agricultores enfrentam. A Comissão informa o Senhor Deputado de que recebeu um pedido das autoridades portuguesas e está neste momento a avaliar a viabilidade de aplicar algumas medidas excecionais ao abrigo da regulamentação da PAC, para ajudar os agricultores.

Nas suas propostas relativas à reforma da PAC, a Comissão incluiu um novo dispositivo para a gestão dos riscos, no âmbito do Segundo Pilar, aproveitando os instrumentos atualmente disponíveis para subsidiar seguros ou fundos de investimento e acrescentando um instrumento de estabilização do rendimento. Os Estados-Membros poderão combinar estes novos instrumentos com outras medidas de desenvolvimento rural, visando a redução dos riscos e medidas preventivas na agricultura e na silvicultura.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002660/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Meteorological disaster relief facility

According to Portuguese studies, more than 30 % of the Portuguese mainland is suffering extreme drought and 70 % is suffering severe drought.

At present, Portuguese farmers are experiencing significant hardship, particularly as regards crops already planted, especially in non-irrigated areas, which have been seriously damaged.

Without water, livestock farmers have no hope of using pasture to feed their animals and so face increased expenditure to provide them with fodder.

Farmers using irrigation are threatened as their water sources dry up. They have to work extremely hard to meet the additional costs of electricity to pump water to their farmland.

It is well known that droughts are particularly harmful to the countries of southern Europe, including Portugal, and are becoming worse every year.

Given the geographical and climatic characteristics of these countries, the EU should therefore act to show its solidarity.

Has the Commission been monitoring this serious situation?

What support facility or facilities are available to enable Portuguese farmers to minimise their losses?

Will the Commission establish a relief facility for meteorological disasters of this type, particularly for cases of drought, under the future common agricultural policy (CAP)?

Does it not recognise that the extreme drought warrants special EU assistance to promote cohesion and solidarity, taking into account the geographical and climatic characteristics of southern European countries, such as Portugal?

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

The Commission is following closely the drought faced by Portugal. The weather situation and the possible negative impact on crops is being monitored weekly using the appropriate scientific tools.

Some long-term rural development measures are available to help restore the damage to agricultural production caused by natural disasters but compensation payments to farmers for losses is not provided for by the Portuguese Rural Development programmes. In case of drought, Member States may grant *de minimis* aid up to EUR 7,500 per beneficiary over a period of three fiscal years. Or, if the loss reaches 30 % of production, an aid to the value of 80 % of the damage may be granted under existing state aid rules.

About direct aids, the Commission may authorise Portugal to pay advances prior to 1.12.12 but not before 16.10.12, once the appropriate controls have been carried out. Some provisions may be applicable to mitigate the impact of the drought on the amount of aid paid to cattle, sheep and goat breeders. These provisions could concern securing premium rights and the livestock retention period, on the basis of the exceptional conditions and financial difficulties faced by farmers. For your information, the Commission received a request from the Portuguese authorities and is currently evaluating the feasibility to implement under CAP regulations some exceptional measures to help farmers.

In its CAP reform proposals, the Commission has proposed a new Pillar II toolkit for Risk Management, building on the instruments currently available to subsidise insurance or mutual funds and adding an income stabilisation tool. Member States would be able to combine these new tools with other Rural Development measures with the aim of reducing risk and for preventive measures in agriculture and forestry.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002661/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 martie 2012)

Subiect: Relații comerciale cu Republica Moldova în domeniul aviculturii

Autoritățile de la Chișinău (Republica Moldova) au anunțat că își propun să obțină dreptul de a exporta carne de pui și ouă pe piețele din Uniunea Europeană, în baza unui viitor acord. În pregătirea acestui acord, o comisie de experți UE se va deplasa în Moldova pentru a inspecta fermele avicole. Din estimările Ministerului Agriculturii reiese faptul că Republica Moldova poate livra anual în Uniunea Europeană până la 200 milioane de ouă. Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă reglementările privind bunăstarea găinilor ouătoare (Dir. Cons. 1999/74/CE) vor face obiectul verificărilor anunțate și al acordului care urmează să fie încheiat.

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(14 mai 2012)

În 2011, Moldova și-a manifestat interesul de a exporta în UE produse din carne de pasăre, precum și ouă și produse din ouă. În consecință, Moldova a transmis Comisiei o cerere formală de inițiere a procedurii de autorizare la export. În prezent, țările terțe care solicită o autorizație de export către UE trebuie să aibă legislația în vigoare cel puțin echivalentă cu cea a UE cu privire la sănătatea animală și la siguranța alimentelor (inclusiv cu privire la reziduuri). Cu toate acestea, datorită obligațiilor actuale care revin UE în temeiul dreptului internațional, această cerință nu se aplică în privința bunăstării animalelor din acest sector (și anume, în cazul găinilor ouătoare). Totuși, în timpul negocierilor în curs dintre UE și Moldova privind chestiunile sanitare și de protecție a plantelor, desfășurate în cadrul negocierilor pentru un acord de liber schimb aprofundat și cuprinzător, Moldova și-a manifestat dorința de a-și armoniza, în mod prioritar, legislația din sectorul avicol privind sănătatea animală, siguranța alimentelor și bunăstarea animalelor, pentru a corespunde legislației UE relevante. Se estimează că procesul de armonizare se va încheia până în 2015.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002661/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Commercial relations with the Republic of Moldova in the poultry sector

The Chisinau (Republic of Moldova) authorities have announced that they are proposing to obtain the right to export poultry, meat and eggs to European Union markets, on the basis of a future agreement. In preparation for this agreement, a panel of EU experts will travel to Moldova to inspect poultry farms. According to Ministry of Agriculture estimates, the Republic of Moldova can supply 200 million eggs annually to the European Union.

Can the Commission specify whether compliance with the rules concerning the welfare of laying hens (Council Directive 1999/74/EC) will form part of the announced checks and of the agreement to be concluded?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2012)

Moldova manifested its interest in exporting poultry products and eggs and egg products to the EU in 2011. Consequently Moldova sent the Commission a formal request to initiate the procedure for authorisation to export. Currently, third countries applying for export to the EU must have legislation in place at least equivalent to that of the EU with respect to animal health and food safety (including residues). However, due to the current EU obligations under international law, this does not apply to animal welfare in this area (i.e. laying hens). However, during the EU/Moldova ongoing talks on sanitary and phytosanitary matters, in the framework of the negotiations of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, Moldova manifested its willingness to approximate its animal health, food safety and animal welfare legislation pertaining to the poultry sector to the relevant EU legislation as a matter of priority. The finalisation of the approximation process is estimated by 2015.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002662/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 martie 2012)

Subiect: Interzicerea exporturilor de bumbac de către India

Autoritatea pentru comerț exterior din India a anunțat interzicerea exportului bumbacului, pe termen nelimitat. Măsura este de natură a afecta piața globală, determinând creşterea prețurilor internaționale.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze:

1. dacă a evaluat sau urmează să evalueze impactul acestei măsuri asupra companiilor europene din industria textilă şi

2. dacă va aborda acest subiect în cadrul discuțiilor bilaterale cu India.

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(27 aprilie 2012)

La sfârșitul lunii februarie 2012, guvernul indian a impus o restricție imediată privind exportul de bumbac brut. Interdicția a inclus certificatele de înregistrare eliberate deja de guvern. Notificarea nu a prezentat niciun motiv pentru această măsură.

Interdicția privind exportul de bumbac brut reprezintă un risc sistemic pentru industria textilă a UE, dat fiind că India este unul dintre principalii exportatori mondiali de bumbac. Comisia a trimis imediat o scrisoare Ministerului indian al comerțului, prin care a exprimat îngrijorarea profundă a UE și îndoielile sale cu privire la conformitatea acestor măsuri cu normele OMC. La aceasta s-a adăugat o opoziție puternică împotriva măsurii din partea Ministerului indian al Agriculturii și a organizațiilor de agricultori.

La 13 martie 2012, ministrul indian al comerțului a emis o notificare de anulare a interdicției privind exporturile de bumbac brut. Suspendarea eliberării de noi certificate de înregistrare ar fi trebuit să fie anulată de guvern la 23 martie, dar nu există dovezi că acest lucru a avut loc.

Normele OMC, care oferă Uniunii Europene toate instrumentele necesare pentru a aborda acest tip de măsuri, interzic restricțiile cantitative la export, inclusiv această interdicție. Întâlnirile bilaterale, precum negocierile ALS aflate în curs, pot soluționa alte restricții la export cum ar fi taxele de export, deoarece acestea nu sunt avute în vedere în cadrul normelor OMC.

În strânsă cooperare cu industria textilă din Uniunea Europeană, Comisia va continua să monitorizeze situația și impactul măsurii, acțiune care va depinde, de asemenea, de modul în care guvernul indian își va pune în aplicare, în final, decizia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002662/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: The Indian ban on cotton exports

The authority for foreign trade in India announced a ban on cotton exports for an indefinite period. The measure is likely to affect the global market, causing an increase in international prices.

In view of this:

1. Has the Commission evaluated, or will it evaluate, the impact of this measure on companies in the European textile industry?

2. Will it deal with this issue in bilateral discussions with India?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(27 April 2012)

Late in February 2012 the Indian Government imposed an immediate export restriction on raw cotton. The ban included the Registration Certificates already issued by the Government. The notification gave no reason for the measure.

The ban on raw cotton exports represents a systemic threat for the EU textile industry as India is one of the world leading cotton exporters. The Commission swiftly addressed a letter to the Indian Ministry of Commerce expressing EU's deepest concerns and its doubts on the compliance of these measures with WTO rules. This came on top of strong opposition to the measure from the Indian Ministry of Agriculture and farmers organisations.

On 13 March 2012, the Indian Ministry of Commerce issued a notification lifting the ban and freeing raw cotton exports. The suspension of the issuing of new Registration Certificates was due to be lifted by the Government on 23 March, although there is no evidence this has occurred so far.

Quantitative export restrictions, including this ban, are prohibited under the rules of the WTO, which provides the EU with all the necessary tools to tackle this type of measures. The bilateral venue, such as the ongoing FTA negotiations, can address further export restrictions such as export taxes, since they are not contemplated in the WTO rule book.

In close cooperation with the European Textiles Industry, the Commission will continue to monitor the situation and the impact of the measure, which will also depend on how the Indian Government finally implements its decision.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002663/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 martie 2012)

Subiect: Incompatibilitatea cu standardele internaționale ale OIE a restricțiilor comerciale adoptate de Federația Rusă

Ca răspuns la o întrebare adresată anterior (E-000684/2012), Comisia a arătat că, în contextul răspândirii în UE a virusului Schmallenberg, „adoptarea de restricții comerciale pentru exporturile UE nu este justificată și nu este în acord cu standardele internaționale ale OIE". Recent, Serviciul Federal pentru Control Veterinar și Fitosanitar al Federației Ruse (Rosselhoznadzor) a anunțat că va interzice importurile de animale vii din toate statele membre UE începând cu data de 20 martie, ca urmare a extinderii virusului. Autoritățile ruse au invocat, ca motiv, eșecul agențiilor sanitar-veterinare din UE de a oferi părții ruse informații cu privire la epidemie și măsurile de combatere a ei.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze:

1. dacă consideră întemeiate reproșurile părții ruse la adresa agențiilor sanitar-veterinare europene;

2. având în vedere declarația anterioară privind incompatibilitatea unei astfel de măsuri cu standardele internaționale ale OIE, care sunt demersurile pe care își propune să le întreprindă în dialogul cu Federația Rusă.

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(30 aprilie 2012)

La 2 martie 2012, Comisia a primit o scrisoare din partea Federației Ruse prin care aceasta anunța interzicerea, începând cu data de 20 martie 2012, a importurilor de bovine, porcine, ovine și caprine vii din Uniunea Europeană (UE) (cu excepția animalelor de reproducție, a căror carantină este supravegheată de specialiști veterinari din Federația Rusă). Pentru a justifica această interdicție, Federația Rusă menționează o serie de plângeri, printre care notificarea a 128 de cazuri de neconformitate cu normele veterinare ale Federației Ruse în 2011. O analiză a cazurilor de neconformitate notificate de Federația Rusă, pe baza contribuțiilor statelor membre, a arătat că aceste cazuri reprezintă doar 0,6% din exporturi și, în peste 70% dintre ele, neconformitatea s-a datorat unor erori legate de documente.

— Comisia consideră că aceste plângeri nu oferă o justificare proporțională și întemeiată științific pentru o astfel de interdicție. Măsurile anunțate nu sunt legate de cazurile de neconformitate notificate și nu indică existența unui risc clar pentru siguranța alimentară și sănătatea animală. Prin urmare, ele nu sunt în conformitate cu dispozițiile Acordului SPS al OMC pe care Federația Rusă este obligată să-l respecte după aderarea la OMC. În ceea ce privește virusul Schmallenberg, restricțiile impuse de Federația Rusă sunt disproporționate și nejustificate din punct de vedere științific. Comisia a subliniat că nu există standarde ale OIE pentru viruși similari virusului Schmallenberg, că porcii nu sunt afectați de virusul Schmallenberg și că Federația Rusă nu a demonstrat că ia măsuri pe teritoriul său pentru a exclude posibilitatea prezenței acestui virus pe teritoriul rusesc.

— Măsurile luate de Comisie includ discuții cu Federația Rusă la nivel tehnic și politic, pentru a-și exprima profunda îngrijorare privind măsura disproporționată și nejustificată și pentru a solicita ca interdicția anunțată să nu se aplice. Comisia va continua să folosească toate mijloacele aflate la dispoziția sa pentru a rezolva această problemă și pentru a reaminti Federației Ruse de angajamentele asumate în calitate de viitor membru al OMC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002663/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Incompatibility with World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) International Standards of trade restrictions adopted by the Russian Federation

In response to a previously addressed question (E-000684/2012), the Commission stated that, in the context of the spreading of the Schmallenberg virus in the EU, 'the adoption of trade restrictions *vis-à-vis* EU exports is not justified and not in line with OIE International Standards'. Recently, the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance of the Russian Federation (Rosselhoznadzor) announced that it will prohibit the importation of live animals from all EU Member States starting from 20 March 2012 as a result of the spreading of the virus. The reason invoked by the Russian authorities was the failure of the EU veterinary agencies to provide the Russians with information regarding the epidemic and the measures for combating it.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission consider the Russian censure of the European veterinary agencies to be justified;

2. Taking into account the previous declaration of the incompatibility of such measures with OIE International Standards, what measures does it intend to take in the dialogue with the Russian Federation?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

On 2 March 2012, the Commission received a letter from the Russian Federation (RF) announcing a ban on imports from the European Union (EU) of live cattle, pigs, sheep and goats as of 20 March 2012 (except for breeding animals, the quarantine of which is supervised by the RF veterinary specialists). To justify this ban the RF mentions a series of complaints, amongst which: a notification of 128 cases of non-compliances with RF veterinary norms found in 2011. An analysis of the non-compliances notified by the RF, on the basis of Member States input, showed that these cases represent only 0.6% of exports and in more than 70% of those the non-compliance was connected to documentary errors.

— The Commission considers that these complaints are far from providing a proportionate and scientifically based justification for such a ban. The measures announced are unconnected to the non-compliances notified and do not reveal any evident risk for food safety and animal health; therefore they are not in line with the WTO SPS Agreement which will bind the RF upon accession to the WTO. Regarding the Schmallenberg virus, the restrictions imposed by RF are disproportionate and scientifically unjustified. The Commission underlined that there are no OIE standards for viruses similar to the Schmallenberg virus, that pigs are not affected by the Schmallenberg virus and that the RF has not demonstrated that it is taking measures within its territory to exclude all possibility that this virus is present in the Russian territory.

— The steps undertaken by the Commission include contacts with the RF at technical and political level in order to express our serious concern for the disproportionate and unjustified measure and request that the announced ban is not applied. The Commission will continue to use all means at its disposal to address this issue and to remind RF of its commitments as a future WTO Member.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002665/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 martie 2012)

Subiect: Răspândirea ambroziei, plantă care poate provoca alergii grave

În prezent, la nivel european nu există nicio reglementare legală privind lupta împotriva ambroziei (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*), plantă care ridică numeroase probleme de sănătate în rândul locuitorilor din zonele afectate, provocând alergii grave.

Unii specialişti implicați consideră că răspândirea ambroziei este, în ultima perioadă, stimulată de încălzirea globală.

Ambrozia este o specie invazivă în Europa şi, fiind periculoasă pentru sănătatea populației, ar trebui recunoscută oficial ca plantă de carantină şi ar trebui să facă obiectul unor acțiuni împotriva proliferării. Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă are în vedere măsuri împotriva răspândirii acestei plante, mai ales în contextul inițiativei recente de consultare publică „Mediu: ce părere aveți despre musafirii nepoftiți?”

Având în vedere că această plantă găseşte un mediu de dezvoltare propice mai ales pe terenurile lipsite de vegetație şi prost întreținute, Comisia este rugată de asemenea să precizeze ce politici are în vedere pentru a stimula statele membre şi autoritățile locale să igienizeze şi să recupereze aceste categorii de terenuri.

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(27 aprilie 2012)

Comisia este pe deplin conştientă de problemele din ce în ce mai grave cauzate de speciile alogene invazive (SAI), inclusiv *Ambrosia artemisiifolia,* cunoscută în general sub denumirea de ambrozie. Comisia nu are în vedere măsuri specifice privind ambrozia. Astfel cum s-a subliniat în Comunicarea privind o strategie a UE în domeniul biodiversității pentru 2020 ([1]), Comisia intenționează să dezvolte un instrument legislativ privind speciile alogene invazive, cu scopul de a aborda problemele care nu intră sub incidența domeniului de aplicare a reglementărilor UE existente. Propunerea Comisiei este prevăzută pentru sfârşitul anului 2012. Ea va permite îndeplinirea unuia dintre obiectivele globale privind biodiversitatea pentru anul 2020, obiective convenite prin Convenția privind diversitatea biologică, care prevede în mod expres necesitatea identificării şi controlării sau gestionării speciilor alogene invazive şi a căilor de introducere a acestora ([2]).

În acest context, Comisia analizează diferitele opțiuni, inclusiv cea privind refacerea habitatelor afectate, dar nu este în măsură să furnizeze, în această etapă, detalii suplimentare privind conținutul proiectului de propunere, deoarece acesta se află încă în curs de pregătire.

([1]) COM (2011) 244 final.
([2]) Cea de-a zecea Conferință a Părților la Convenția privind diversitatea biologică, Decizia X/2, Nagoya, Japonia, 18-29 octombrie 2010, obiectivul SAI: „Identificarea şi prioritizarea, până în 2020, a SAI şi a căilor de introducere a acestora, controlarea sau eradicarea speciilor prioritare şi luarea de măsuri pentru gestionarea căilor de introducere, pentru a preveni introducerea şi stabilirea acestor specii”.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002665/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: The spreading of ragweed, a plant that can cause severe allergies

There are no legal regulations in Europe at present on the fight against ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia)*, a plant that raises numerous health problems among the residents of affected areas, causing severe allergies.

Some specialists consider that the spreading of ragweed has recently been stimulated by global warming.

Ragweed is an invasive species in Europe and, since it is harmful to the health of the population, it should be officially recognised as a quarantined plant and be the subject of measures against its proliferation.

Does the Commission intend to take measures to prevent the spread of this plant, especially in the context of the recent public consultation initiative: 'Environment: what are your views on uninvited guests?'

Taking into account that this plant finds a favourable environment for growth particularly in poorly maintained land with no vegetation, can the Commission specify what policies it envisages to encourage Member States and local authorities to clean and recover these categories of land?

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

The Commission is well aware of the accelerating problems caused by invasive alien species (IAS), including Ambrosia artemisiifolia, commonly known as ragweed. The Commission does not envisage specific measures regarding Ambrosia. As outlined in the communication on an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ([1]), the Commission intends to develop a dedicated legislative instrument on IAS, to address the problems that do not fall under the scope of existing EU rules. The Commission proposal is planned for the end of 2012 and will allow compliance with one of the 2020 biodiversity global targets agreed by the Convention on Biological Diversity, which specifically requires IAS and pathways to be identified and controlled or managed ([2]).

In this context, the Commission is considering various options, including on restoration of damaged habitats, but is not in a position to provide further details on the content of the draft proposal at this stage as it is still under preparation.

([1]) COM(2011)244 final.
([2]) Tenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, decision X/2, Nagoya, Japan, 18-29 October 2010, IAS target: 'By 2020, IAS and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment'.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002667/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(8 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Απειλούνται οι πληθυσμοί ψαριών στα ελληνο-τουρκικά ύδατα

Σύμφωνα με μια τριετή διεθνή έρευνα της National Geographic, τα ελληνικά και τα τουρκικά ύδατα αδειάζουν λόγω υπεραλίευσης. Το ανεξέλεγκτο ψάρεμα στην περιοχή έχει τεράστιες επιπτώσεις στο θαλάσσιο οικοσύστημα.

Αποδείχθηκε ότι ο σημαντικότερος παράγοντας που κάνει τη διαφορά μεταξύ υγιών και νεκρών οικοσυστημάτων είναι το επίπεδο νομικής προστασίας της εκάστοτε περιοχής: όσο πιο προστατευμένη είναι, τόσο περισσότερα ψάρια επιβιώνουν.

Πέρα από την υπεραλίευση, οι βασικές απειλές είναι η καταστροφή των βιοτόπων των ψαριών, η ρύπανση και η αύξηση της θερμοκρασίας στην επιφάνεια της θάλασσας εξαιτίας της κλιματικής αλλαγής.

Επιπρόσθετα. η υγεία των δασών φυκιών που υποστηρίζουν τα ψάρια εξαρτάται από άλλους παράγοντες και όχι απαραίτητα από το επίπεδο νομικής προστασίας της εκάστοτε περιοχής. Σημειώνεται ότι η ανάκαμψή τους απαιτεί περισσότερο χρόνο από την ανάκαμψη των αποθεμάτων ψαριών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Πώς σκοπεύει να ενεργήσει ώστε να δημιουργηθούν οι κατάλληλες προϋποθέσεις για την ύπαρξη περισσότερων προστατευόμενων περιοχών με σκοπό την αύξηση της βιομάζας των αποθεμάτων;

Με ποιους τρόπους προτίθεται να προστατέψει εκτός από τα αποθέματα ψαριών και την θαλάσσια χλωρίδα που αποτελεί αναπόσπαστο τμήμα του θαλάσσιου οικοσυστήματος και συνδέεται με την οικοσυστημική βιωσιμότητα και την διατήρηση της βιοποικιλότητας;

Ποια μέτρα σκοπεύει να λάβει η Επιτροπή για τη μείωση της ρύπανσης και την οικολογική διατήρηση τον βιοτόπων; Έχει λάβει δεόντως υπόψη ότι η προστασία των θαλασσίων βιοτόπων είναι άμεσα συνυφασμένη με την συνέχιση της θαλάσσιας ζωής;

Απάντηση του κ. Potocnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Η οδηγία για τους οικότοπους ([1]) και το δίκτυο Natura 2000 των προστατευόμενων περιοχών καλύπτουν το θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον. Η οδηγία προβλέπει ότι τα κράτη μέλη λαμβάνουν τα δέοντα μέτρα διατήρησης για τη συντήρηση και την αποκατάσταση της ευνοϊκής κατάστασης διατήρησης των οικολογικών ενδιαιτημάτων και των ειδών λόγω των οποίων έχουν ήδη χαρακτηρισθεί οι εν λόγω περιοχές. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει ασμένως τη δημιουργία περισσότερων θαλάσσιων προστατευόμενων περιοχών από όλα τα συμβαλλόμενα μέρη (συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Τουρκίας) που θα πρέπει να χαρακτηρισθούν σε περιοχές που εμπίπτουν στην εθνική δικαιοδοσία και σε ανοικτές θαλάσσιες περιοχές, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των βαθέων υδάτων, στο πλαίσιο της Σύμβασης της Βαρκελώνης.

2. Όπως προαναφέρθηκε, η οδηγία για τους οικοτόπους αφορά τη διατήρηση των φυσικών ενδιαιτημάτων, των ενδιαιτημάτων ορισμένων βιολογικών ειδών καθώς και των εν λόγω ειδών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της θαλάσσιας χλωρίδας.

([1]) Οδηγία 92/43/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου, της 21ης Μαΐου 1992, για τη διατήρηση των φυσικών οικοτόπων καθώς και της άγριας πανίδας και χλωρίδας, ΕΕ L 206 της 22.7.1992.

3. Τέλος, η ΕΕ ως συμβαλλόμενο μέρος της Σύμβασης της Βαρκελώνης έχει επικυρώσει διάφορα πρωτόκολλα που αποσκοπούν στην πρόληψη τυχόν ζημιών στα θαλάσσια οικοσυστήματα της Μεσογείου. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, επιβάλλεται να συνδυαστούν και, εν ανάγκη, να συμπληρωθούν οι υπό εξέλιξη και οι μελλοντικές δράσεις της ΕΕ (όπως η οδηγία πλαίσιο για τα ύδατα ([2]), η οδηγία για τα αστικά λύματα ([3]) και η οδηγία για τη νιτρορρύπανση ([4])) με στόχο τη μείωση της ρύπανσης και τη διατήρηση των φυσικών ενδιαιτημάτων, ώστε να επιτευχθεί η επιδιωκόμενη καλή τους κατάσταση. Η οδηγία για τη θαλάσσια στρατηγική-πλαίσιο ([5]) έχει θεσπιστεί για την αποτελεσματικότερη προστασία του θαλάσσιου περιβάλλοντος σε όλη την Ευρώπη μέσω της επίτευξης της καλής περιβαλλοντικής κατάστασης των θαλάσσιων υδάτων της ΕΕ μέχρι το 2020. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή ετοιμάζει μια στρατηγική της ΕΕ για την προσαρμογή στην αλλαγή του περιβάλλοντος που προβλέπεται να εγκριθεί το Μάρτιο του 2013 και στην οποία θα πρέπει να περιλαμβάνονται οι δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις της κλιματικής αλλαγής στο θαλάσσιο τομέα.

([2]) Οδηγία 2000/60/ΕΚ της 22ας Δεκεμβρίου 2000 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση πλαισίου κοινοτικής δράσης στον τομέα της πολιτικής των υδάτων, ΕΕ L 327 της 22.12.2000.

([3]) Οδηγία 91/271/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου, της 21ης Μαΐου 1991 για την επεξεργασία των αστικών λυμάτων, ΕΕ L 135 της 30.5.1991.

([4]) Οδηγία 91/676/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου, της 12ης Δεκεμβρίου 1991, σχετικά με την προστασία των υδάτων από τη ρύπανση που προκαλείται από νιτρικά ιόντα γεωργικής προέλευσης, ΕΕ L 375 της 31.12.1991.

([5]) Οδηγία 2008/56/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 17ης Ιουνίου 2008 για τη θέσπιση πλαισίου κοινοτικής δράσης στον τομέα της θαλάσσιας πολιτικής για το περιβάλλον, ΕΕ L 164 της 25.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002667/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Fish populations in Greco-Turkish waters are under threat

According to a triennial international report by National Geographic, Greco-Turkish waters are becoming barren due to overfishing. Uncontrolled fishing in the area is having an enormous impact on the marine ecosystem.

It has become evident that the most important distinguishing factor between healthy and dead ecosystems is the degree of legal protection of the area in question: the more protected the area, the more fish survive.

In addition to overfishing, the basic threats are the destruction of fish habitats, pollution and the increase in sea surface temperature as a result of climate change.

Furthermore, the health of the seaweed forests that support fish depend on other factors, not necessarily on the level of legal protection of the area in question. It seems that their recovery takes longer than the recovery of fish stocks.

In view of this:

What action will the Commission take to create suitable conditions for the establishment of more protected areas, with a view to increasing the biomass of fish stocks?

Apart from fish stocks, how does it intend to protect the marine flora that are an integral part of the marine ecosystem and linked to the viability of ecosystems and the conservation of biodiversity?

What measures does the Commission intend to take to reduce pollution and conserve habitats? Has it given due consideration to the fact that the protection of marine habitats is inseparably interwoven with the survival of marine life?

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

1. The Habitat Directive ([1]) and the Natura 2000 network of protected sites include the marine environment. The directive requires that EU Member States take appropriate conservation measures to maintain and restore favourable conservation status for the habitats and species for which these sites have been designated. Furthermore, the Commission strongly supports the establishment of more marine protected areas by all contracting parties (including Turkey) to be designated in areas within national jurisdiction and in open sea areas, including deep-sea, under the framework of the Barcelona Convention.

2. As mentioned above the Habitat Directive refers to the conservation of natural habitats, habitats of species and species themselves, including marine flora.

3. Finally, the EU as contracting party of the Barcelona Convention has ratified several protocols aim at preventing any damage to the Mediterranean marine ecosystems. Within this framework, all ongoing and future EU actions (e.g. Water Framework Directive ([2]), Urban Waste Water Directive ([3]) and Nitrates Directive ([4])) to reduce pollution and conserve habitats will need to be combined and complemented, where necessary, to achieve good status. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([5]) is set to protect more effectively the marine environment across Europe by achieving good environmental status of the EU's marine waters by 2020. Moreover, the Commission is preparing an EU Adaptation Strategy foreseen for adoption in March 2013 and the adverse impacts of climate change on the marine sector will be included.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) Directive 2000/60/EC of 22 December 2000 of the Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([3]) Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste-water treatment, OJ L 135, 30.5.1991.
([4]) Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources, OJ L 375, 31.12.1991.
([5]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environment policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002668/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(8 ta' Marzu 2012)

Suġġett: L-għalliema fl-UE

Minħabba żvilupp tal-karriera li jiffavorixxi l-irtirar bikri, ħafna għalliema qed jirtiraw fl-età ta' 50 sena. Simultanjament, l-istudji jirrapurtaw li l-karrieri fl-edukazzjoni huma fost l-inqas għażliet mixtieqa għall-gradwati żgħar fl-UE, minkejja l-salarji li qed jiżdiedu. Peress li hemm ħafna programmi bbażati fuq l-edukazzjoni li l-Kummissjoni qed tippjana li timplimenta fl-għaxar snin li ġejjin, inklużi l-programmi Edukazzjoni u Taħriġ 2010 u ET 2020, il-Kummissjoni qieset din it-tendenza meta kejlet is-sostenibilità ta' dawn il-politiki?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(30 ta' April 2012)

L-Onorevoli Membru jista' jkun konxju li, fil-kriżi ekonomika attwali, is-salarji tal-għalliema tnaqqsu f'bosta Stati Membri.

L-aħħar dejta disponibbli min-network Eurydice turi li filfatt l-età tal-irtirar għall-għalliema tvarja b'mod konsiderevoli minn pajjiż għal ieħor; il-firxa hija minn 55 sena sa 67 sena.

Il-bidliet riċenti fl-etajiet statutorji tal-irtirar inġenerali ħallew impatt ukoll fuq l-għalliema u minħabba f'hekk wieħed jistenna li togħla l-età medja tal-irtirar tal-għalliema madwar l-UE.

Xi pajjiżi qed jiffaċċjaw proporzjonijiet partikolarment għoljin tal-forza tax-xogħol tal-għalliema li se jirtiraw fis-snin li ġejjin, l-aktar il-Ġermanja, l-Italja u l-Awstrija. Din hija kwistjoni li l-Kummissjoni diġà identifikat fil-Komunikazzjoni tagħha tal-2007 "Intejbu l-Kwalità tal-Edukazzjoni tal-Għalliema". Din ipproponiet li l-Istati Membri jieħdu miżuri ħalli t-tagħlim isir għażla ta' karriera aktar attraenti, sabiex jingħażlu l-aqwa kandidati u sabiex il-persuni jitħajru jibdlu l-karriera tagħhom għat-tagħlim, u li jheġġu l-għalliema tal-esperjenza biex jibqgħu fil-professjoni.

Permezz tal-Metodu Miftuħ ta' Koordinazzjoni, il-Kummissjoni qed taħdem mill-qrib ma' esperti mill-Istati Membri biex tidentifika approċċi politiċi li jistgħu jgħinu biex it-tagħlim isir professjoni aktar attraenti. Studju dwar dan se jkun ippubblikat aktar tard fl-2012

Hemm bosta fatturi interrelatati li huma involuti biex jiġu attirati u jinżammu l-aħjar għalliema. Permezz tal-Metodu Miftuħ tal-Koordinazzjoni, il-Kummissjoni diġà ppubblikat gwida għal dawk li jfasslu l-politika dwar: it-titjib fil-kwalità u r-relevanza tal-Edukazzjoni Inizjali tal-Għalliema, l-appoġġ lill-għalliema l-ġodda waqt l-ewwel snin fil-professjoni, u t-titjib fit-tmexxija tal-iskejjel.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002668/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Teachers in the EU

Due to a career path that favours early retirement, many teachers retire at age 50. Simultaneously, studies report that careers in education are one of the least desired options for young graduates in the EU, despite rising salaries. Given the numerous education-based programmes the Commission plans on implementing in the next decade, including Education and Training 2010 and ET 2020, has the Commission taken this trend into account in gauging the sustainability of these policies?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

The Honourable Member may be aware that, in the current economic crisis, teacher salaries have been reduced in several Member States.

The latest data available from the Eurydice network show that, in fact, the retirement age for teachers varies very considerably from country to country; the range is from 55 years to 67 years.

Recent changes to statutory retirement ages in general have also had an impact upon teachers and can be expected to lead to a rise in the average age of teacher retirement across the EU.

Some countries face particularly high proportions of their teaching workforce retiring in the coming years, notably Germany, Italy and Austria. This is an issue that the Commission already identified in its 2007 Communication 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education'. It proposed that Member States take measures to make teaching an attractive career choice, in order to recruit the best candidates and to attract people to switch careers in favour of teaching, and encouraging experienced teachers to remain in the profession.

Through the Open Method of Coordination, the Commission is working closely with Member State experts to identify policy approaches that can help make teaching a more attractive profession. A study on this will be published later in 2012.

Many inter-related factors are involved in attracting and retaining the best teachers. Through the Open Method of Coordination, the Commission has already published guidance for policymakers on: improving the quality and relevance of Initial Teacher Education, supporting beginning teachers during their first years in the profession, and improving school leadership.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002669/12
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Tracciabilità dei prodotti ittici

Una recente indagine pubblicata in Italia dimostra come circa due terzi dei pesci che vengono abitualmente consumati nei ristoranti italiani non siano in realtà quello per cui vengono venduti.

Un ignaro consumatore può infatti essere convinto di avere a che fare con un prodotto del Mar Tirreno, ma che in realtà proviene dal Vietnam; sovente ad esempio viene servito del pangasio del Mekong venduto come cernia, oppure halibut atlantico spacciato per sogliola.

Gli esempi sono molteplici e le cause differenti: nell'ultimo anno le importazioni di pesce in Italia sono aumentate dell'11 %, e questo non è dovuto alla poca pescosità dei nostri mari, che in realtà sono molto floridi, ma dipende dal fatto che i pesci provenienti da altri mari sono molto meno costosi; tuttavia questi pesci presentano caratteristiche differenti rispetto ai nostri, e con questi non possono essere assolutamente confusi. In alcuni Paesi asiatici sono consentiti ad esempio trattamenti a base di antibiotici, che da noi sono vietati perchè ritenuti dannosi.

Questi episodi sempre più frequenti si verificano poiché i controlli e l'etichettatura di origine del pescato sono limitati alla vendita al dettaglio o all'ingrosso, ma nulla è invece richiesto per i servizi di ristorazione.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questa situazione molto dannosa soprattutto per i pescatori nostrani e altamente fuorviante per i consumatori?

Quali misure intende applicare per garantire la piena e completa tracciabilità del prodotto ittico, dall'origine alla tavola?

Risposta data da Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(21 maggio 2012)

Per quanto riguarda le norme dell'UE sulla tracciabilità dei prodotti ittici, in particolare sotto il profilo sanitario, si rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-2741/2010 ([1]).

Il ristorante che scientemente serve alla clientela pesce di una specie diversa da quella indicata nel menù si rende colpevole di una pratica fraudolenta e ingannevole che induce in errore il consumatore e, quindi, di una violazione del regolamento generale dell'UE sulla legislazione alimentare (regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 ([2]), articolo 8).

I prodotti alimentari preimballati venduti nei ristoranti sono disciplinati dalla normativa vigente sull'etichettatura degli alimenti che però non contempla gli alimenti che nel ristorante hanno subito ulteriori trasformazioni. La situazione sarà rettificata dalle nuove norme sulla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori (regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 ([3])) applicabili a decorrere dal dicembre 2014.

Sulla tracciabilità vigono disposizioni particolareggiate nell'ambito del regime di controllo e delle norme di mercato della politica comune della pesca (regolamenti (CE) n. 1224/2009 ([4]), articolo 58; (UE) n. 404/2011 ([5]), articolo 67; (CE) n. 104/2000 ([6]), articolo 4), finalizzate, tra l'altro, ad assicurare che i prodotti della pesca e dell'acquacoltura destinati alla vendita al dettaglio, compresi i prodotti importati, rechino l'indicazione della denominazione commerciale e del nome scientifico della specie.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) GU L 31 dell'1.2.2002, pag. 1.
([3]) GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag. 18.
([4]) GU L 343 del 22.12.2009, pag. 1.
([5]) GU L 112 del 30.4.2011, pag. 1.
([6]) GU L 17 del 21.1.2000, pag. 22.

Sono in via di sviluppo tecnologie nuove che, permettendo l'identificazione delle diverse specie anche nei prodotti trasformati, costituiranno in futuro strumenti preziosi per i controlli e le verifiche sui prodotti della pesca e dell'acquacoltura.

Spetta agli Stati membri assicurare l'attuazione sia della normativa dell'UE sugli alimenti sia della legislazione specifica della politica comune della pesca.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002669/12
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Traceability of fish products

A recent investigation published in Italy shows that around two-thirds of the fish that are normally consumed in Italian restaurants are not in reality what they are sold as.

An uninformed consumer can in fact be led to believe that they are eating a product from the Tyrrhenian Sea, which in reality comes from Vietnam. It is a common occurrence, for example, for Mekong catfish (pangasius) to be sold as grouper, or for Atlantic halibut to be passed off as sole.

There are numerous examples and reasons for this: over the last year fish imports to Italy rose by 11 %, and this is not due to a lack of fish in our seas, which in reality are thriving. It simply comes down to the fact that fish from other seas cost a lot less. However, these fish have different features from ours, and the two should absolutely not be mixed up. In some countries in Asia, for example, antibiotic-based treatments are allowed which are banned in our region since they are considered harmful.

These increasingly frequent episodes occur because the controls and labelling of the origin of the fish are limited to retail or wholesale, but nothing is required of the restaurant sector.

Is the Commission aware of this situation which is very damaging, especially for our fishermen, and highly misleading for consumers?

What measures does it intend to implement to guarantee full and complete traceability of fish products, from their point of origin to the table?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2012)

The Honourable Member is referred to the reply to Written Question E-2741/2010 regarding EU rules for traceability of fisheries products, particularly as regards health aspects ([1]).

For a restaurant to knowingly present a customer with a species of fish other than the one listed on the menu is a misleading, fraudulent and deceptive practice which is in breach of the EU General Food Law Regulation (EC 178/2002 ([2]), Article 8).

While pre-packed food sold in a restaurant is covered by the current food labelling legislation, food that has been further prepared in the restaurant is not covered. This will be rectified by the new legislation on provision of food information to consumers (EU 1169/2011 ([3])) which is to apply from December 2014.

Detailed traceability provisions are in place under the control and market rules of the common fisheries policy (EC 1224/2009 ([4]), Article 58, EU 404/2011 ([5]), Article 67 and EC 104/2000 ([6]), Article 4) to ensure that, *inter alia*, the commercial designation and scientific name of the species are indicated for fisheries and aquaculture products offered for retail sale, including imported products.

New technologies are being developed to make it possible to identify species even in processed products. In future, these will represent useful tools for control and verification regarding fishery and aquaculture products.

Member States are responsible for ensuring the application of both the EU food legislation and the specific common fisheries policy legislation.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([4]) OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 1.
([5]) OJ L 112, 30.4.2011, p. 1.
([6]) OJ L 17, 21.1.2000, p. 22.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002670/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Violazione dei diritti umani in Siria. La situazione dei cristiani siriani

Il 15 marzo 2011, nell'ambito del più ampio movimento della primavera araba, iniziarono in Siria le insurrezioni popolari contro il regime Baath di Bashar al-Assad, il quale ha reagito reprimendo le proteste attraverso l'uso della forza. Sotto tale regime i cristiani godevano di una certa libertà, seppur limitata; con lo scoppio delle insurrezioni, tuttavia, essi sono ripetutamente vittime della repressione, in quanto si oppongono alle violenze poste in essere dal regime nei confronti della popolazione e sono attivi nella cura dei ribelli feriti e nella distribuzione di viveri e medicine. Il 28 febbraio 2012, le forze armate di Assad hanno effettuato un raid nell'Università di Aleppo, arrestando un esponente del Partito dell'Unione dei Cristiani Siriani, Barsawm Yakup Barsawm, ed un membro dell'Associazione per la Cultura cristiano-siriana, Malik Yakup Hanna, sottoponendoli a tortura; i monasteri, le chiese e le scuole cristiane subiscono attacchi e perquisizioni; oltre 200 vittime civili, inoltre, appartengono a tale minoranza.

Con il peggiorare della situazione economica e la crescente influenza dell'Islam più radicale nel Paese, i cristiani siriani ed i cristiani iracheni rifugiati in Siria si trovano nella situazione di dover scegliere tra la politica repressiva dell'attuale governo e la possibilità che, dopo una eventuale caduta di Assad, il potere possa essere assunto dai fondamentalisti islamici.

Considerando la condanna dell'Unione Europea al regime;

considerando le misure restrittive adottate dall'Unione europea nei confronti dei responsabili della repressione;

considerando la sospensione dei programmi di cooperazione bilaterale con il governo siriano;

si chiede alla VP/HR:

1. di stilare un primo bilancio degli effetti implicati dal regime sanzionatorio imposto dall'UE alla Siria, specificando in particolare se vi siano stati dei miglioramenti nelle condizioni della minoranza cristiana;

2. come intenda agire per favorire un maggior rispetto della libertà religiosa nel paese, sia durante sia nel periodo che seguirà gli scontri.

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

Nei messaggi rivolti al regime siriano, l'UE ha condannato con il massimo vigore la brutale repressione in corso e le diffuse violazioni dei diritti umani, insistendo sulla necessità di rispettare i principi della libertà di religione e di credo e di evitare le divisioni tra diverse fazioni ed etnie.

L'UE ha ripetutamente sollecitato l'opposizione siriana ad aderire a una serie di principi per dar vita a un paese in cui tutti i cittadini godano di uguali diritti, indipendentemente dalla loro appartenenza politica, etnica o religiosa e ha ribadito il proprio sostegno al popolo siriano e alla sua legittima speranza di vivere in un paese democratico rispettoso dei diritti di tutte le sue comunità.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha condannato nelle sue dichiarazioni tutti gli atti di istigazione al conflitto interetnico e interreligioso, confermando il proprio appoggio al popolo siriano nella sua aspirazione al rispetto dei diritti fondamentali degli individui indipendentemente dalla loro religione o credo.

Essendo la libertà di religione o di credo un diritto umano universale, la sua tutela rientra tra le priorità della politica dell'UE in materia di diritti dell'uomo. L'UE si avvale dell'intera gamma di strumenti diplomatici e di cooperazione a sua disposizione per far fronte al problema su base bilaterale. L'Unione s'impegna inoltre a livello multilaterale nei consessi internazionali per ottenere consenso sulle norme in materia di libertà di religione e di credo e sulla lotta all'intolleranza religiosa e alla violenza.

Per aumentare la pressione sul regime siriano affinché si conformi alla richiesta sopra indicata, l'UE ha prorogato per 14 volte, dal maggio 2011, le misure restrittive adottate ed incoraggia anche la comunità internazionale ad applicare sanzioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002670/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Violation of human rights in Syria: the situation of Syrian Christians

On 15 March 2011, as part of the wider Arab Spring movement, popular insurrections started in Syria against the Baath regime of Bashar al-Assad, who reacted by suppressing the protests by force. Under the regime in question, Christians had enjoyed some, albeit limited, freedom; however, with the outbreak of the insurrection, they have repeatedly been victims of repression, since they oppose the violence used by the regime against the population and are active in caring for injured rebels and in distributing food and medical supplies. On 28 February 2012, Assad's armed forces raided the University of Aleppo, arresting and torturing a member of the Party of the Union of Syrian Christians, Barsawm Yakup Barsawm, and a member of the Association for Christian-Syrian Culture, Malik Yakup Hanna. Monasteries, churches and Christian schools have been attacked and searched; moreover, over 200 civilian victims of the conflict were members of the Christian minority.

With the worsening of the economic situation and the growing influence of more radical Islam in the country, Syrian Christians and Iraqi Christians who have fled to Syria are in the position of having to choose between the policy of repression of the current Government and the possibility that, should Assad fall, power may be assumed by Islamic fundamentalists.

In view of the European Union's condemnation of the regime, the restrictions adopted by the European Union against those responsible for the repression and the suspension of the bilateral cooperation programmes with the Syrian Government,

1. Would the Vice-President/High Representative draw up an initial report on the effects of the sanctions imposed by the EU on Syria, specifying in particular whether there have been improvements in the conditions of the Christian minority?

2. What action does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take to encourage greater respect for religious freedom in the country, both during and after the current conflict?

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

In its messages to the Syrian regime, the EU has condemned in the strongest terms the ongoing brutal repression and widespread human rights violations and reiterated its request to uphold the principles of freedom of religion and belief and to refrain from sectarian and ethnic division.

The EU has repeatedly urged the Syrian opposition to agree on a set of principles for working towards a Syria where all citizens enjoy equal rights regardless of their affiliations, ethnicities or beliefs and reaffirmed its support to the Syrian people and their aspirations for a democratic Syria respectful of the rights of all its communities.

High Representative/Vice-President Ashton has in her statements condemned all acts aimed at inciting interethnic and inter-confessional conflict and affirmed that she stands with the Syrian people as they seek the respect of fundamental rights of individuals regardless of their religion or belief.

As a universal human right, freedom of religion or belief is a priority under the EU's human rights policy. The EU uses its full range of diplomatic and cooperation instruments to address the issue on a bilateral basis. It also has recourse to multilateral engagement in international fora to gather consensus on freedom of religion and belief standards and against religious intolerance and violence.

To increase pressure on the Syrian regime to comply with the abovementioned demand the EU has extended its restrictive measures 14 times since May 2011. It encourages the international community to apply sanctions on its part.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002671/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Inchiesta su Tempa Rossa

La Commissione europea — secondo i referenti di una associazione ambientalista di Taranto — ha aperto un'inchiesta su Tempa Rossa dopo la presentazione di una petizione al Parlamento europeo per fare chiarezza sul progetto dell'Eni che promette di portare petrolio grezzo dalla Val d'Angri da raffinare nello stabilimento tarantino.

Violazione della direttiva Seveso, valutazione di impatto ambientale approssimativa, assenza di uno studio sull'effetto domino per la costruzione di due nuovi serbatoi della capacità di 180 000 m^3 accanto agli impianti già esistenti, aumento delle emissioni diffuse e fuggitive, nuovo rischio di sversamento di greggio in Mar Grande per la manipolazione e il trasporto di greggio. Queste le denunce presentate dall'associazione ecologista al Parlamento europeo, che ha giudicato ricevibile la petizione n. 1107/2011.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. nel caso fosse stata aperta l'inchiesta, quali sono gli esiti del procedimento?

2. se è in contatto con le autorità competenti ovvero se sta intervenendo attraverso la Rappresentanza permanente dello Stato membro interessato al fine di indagare sulla questione sollevata dal testo della petizione?

3. se ritiene la che la petizione in questione possa dar luogo ad una sua iniziativa politica?

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

La Commissione è al corrente della situazione ambientale esistente a Taranto e nei suoi dintorni, in particolare a seguito delle segnalazioni negli ultimi tempi di violazioni ambientali che invaliderebbero alcuni finanziamenti del FESR a favore di questa zona e della recente sospensione della commercializzazione di molluschi bivalvi a causa di una contaminazione da PCB. La Commissione sta inoltre discutendo con l'Italia in merito all'applicazione della direttiva Seveso, discussione che si trova per il momento nella fase del parere motivato, e presenterà in tempo utile osservazioni sui rilievi specifici contenuti nella petizione in questione. Questi rilievi concernono segnatamente gli aspetti della direttiva Seveso che sono già oggetto di un approfondito esame da parte della Commissione.

La Commissione sta attualmente procedendo alla valutazione della petizione cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare e, a tempo debito, invierà una risposta alla commissione per le petizioni del Parlamento. Nel caso riscontri una violazione del diritto dell'UE, la Commissione adotterà tutte le iniziative che riterrà opportune.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002671/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Investigation into Tempa Rossa

According to sources in an environmental association in Taranto, the Commission has opened an investigation into Tempa Rossa after the presentation of a petition to the European Parliament to shed light on the ENI project which promises to bring crude oil from Val d'Angri to be refined at the Taranto plant.

The environmental association's petition to the European Parliament — Petition No 1107/2011 — was deemed admissible and made the following allegations: infringement of the Seveso Directive; inadequate environmental impact assessment; failure to conduct a study on the domino effect of the construction of two new 180 000-cubic-metre tanks next to existing facilities; increase in diffuse and fugitive emissions, and a further risk of oil spills in the Mar Grande through the handling and transportation of crude oil.

In view of the above facts, can the Commission say:

1. if an investigation has indeed been opened, what the outcome of that investigation has been so far;

2. whether it is in contact with the appropriate authorities or is taking action through the Permanent Representative of the Member State concerned in order to look into the issue raised in the petition;

3. whether it considers that the petition in question could lead to a political initiative on its part?

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

The Commission is well aware of the environmental situation in and around Taranto, not least through the recent allegations that environmental violations invalidate some FEDER funding there, and through a recent suspension of bivalve mollusc commercialisation because of PCB contamination. The Commission is also in discussions with Italy over the application of the Seveso directive, which are currently at the Reasoned Opinion stage. The Commission will be making observations in due course on the specific allegations contained in the petition referred to, and which largely focus on those aspects of the Seveso directive which are already receiving the Commission's full attention.

The Commission is currently analysing the petition referred to by the Honourable Member. A reply will be provided to the Petitions Committee of the Parliament in due course. Should evidence of a breach of EC law emerge, the Commission would then take, any action deemed appropriate.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002672/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Moria di pecore in Salento

A Villa Convento, in Salento, pecore e capre muoiono dopo aver pascolato vicino gli impianti fotovoltaici. Nelle campagne, vicino a Lecce, gli allevatori hanno segnalato al comune il decesso di circa dieci animali. A lanciare l'allarme a livello nazionale è stato il comitato contro il fotovoltaico e l'eolico nelle aree verdi, che ha messo in allerta governo, Arpa e Regione Puglia. Gli ambientalisti sospettano l'uso di diserbanti nei campi fotovoltaici (malgrado vi sia un preciso divieto normativo) e che quindi col vento le particelle di questi erbicidi abbiano raggiunto i campi vicini avvelenando le bestie.

L'Asl di Lecce conferma che i campi fotovoltaici sono un potenziale pericolo per l'ambiente, non esclude che il decesso degli animali sia legato alla costruzione di questi impianti e assicura che presto partiranno i controlli. Intanto il comitato critica la costruzione degli impianti in aree agricole e naturali e chiede lo smantellamento.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza di casi simili a quelli verificatisi in Salento, ovvero la moria di pecore nelle vicinanze degli impianti fotovoltaici,

2. se intende approfondire la questione con uno studio scientifico che metta in luce il nesso tra la morte delle bestie e la vicinanza con gli impianti fotovoltaici

3. se, appurata una connessione tra la moria di pecore e i pannelli fotovoltaici, ritiene di rivedere la normativa riguardante l'installazione di impianti fotovoltaici.

Risposta data da Gunther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(30 aprile 2012)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza di casi simili a quelli cui si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare.

La Commissione non ha sinora effettuato alcuna ricerca in merito ad eventuali ripercussioni degli impianti fotovoltaici sulle pecore né prevede di farlo nel prossimo futuro. Stando alle informazioni diffuse dai media sul caso verificatosi nel Salento, il nesso tra la morte delle bestie e la vicinanza dei pannelli fotovoltaici deve ancora essere dimostrata.

La normativa riguardante l'installazione di impianti fotovoltaici, inoltre, è stabilita — in linea di massima — a livello degli Stati membri. I relativi progetti, a seconda delle loro dimensioni e di altre caratteristiche, potrebbero essere soggetti alle corrispondenti procedure di valutazione dell'impatto ambientale, definite dal diritto europeo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002672/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Death of sheep in Salento

At Villa Convento, in Salento, sheep and goats have been dying after grazing near photovoltaic plants. In the countryside surrounding Lecce, farmers have informed the local authorities of the death of around ten animals. The alarm has been raised at a national level by the Committee against photovoltaic and wind energy in green areas, which has put the Government, the ARPA (Regional Agency for Environmental Protection) and the Region of Apulia on alert. The environmentalists suspect the use of weed killers in photovoltaic fields (despite a specific regulation prohibiting their use) and that particles of these weed killers have been blown into the adjoining fields and poisoned the animals.

The local health authority of Lecce confirms that photovoltaic fields are a potential danger to the environment. It does not rule out the possibility that the death of the animals may be linked to the construction of these plants and has offered assurances that checks will soon be carried out. In the meantime, the Committee has criticised the construction of photovoltaic plants in agricultural and nature areas and is asking for them to be dismantled.

In view of the above facts, can the Commission therefore state:

1. whether it is aware of similar cases to those that have occurred in Salento, in other words the death of sheep near photovoltaic plants;

2. whether it intends to look further into the question with a scientific study on the connection between the death of animals and proximity to photovoltaic plants;

3. whether, having ascertained a connection between the death of sheep and the photovoltaic panels, it will consider reviewing the regulations concerning the installation of photovoltaic plants?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

The Commission is not aware of cases similar to those referred to by the Honourable Member.

The Commission has so far not carried out research on the impacts of solar photovoltaic panels on sheep, and does not plan to do so in the foreseeable future. According to media reports on the case in Salento, the connection between the deaths of the animals and the installation of solar photovoltaic panels is still to be proved.

Concerning regulations related to the installation of photovoltaic plants, these are predominantly established at the level of Member States. Depending on the size and other characteristics of such projects they could be subject to the relevant Environmental Impact Assessment procedures, as defined by EC law.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002673/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(8 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Críticas da comunidade científica à proposta de programa «Horizonte 2020»

Nos últimos meses, vários setores da comunidade científica, na Europa, têm vindo a alertar para algumas questões relacionadas com a proposta da Comissão Europeia para o próximo Quadro Estratégico Comum para a Investigação, Inovação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico, o também chamado programa «Horizonte 2020».

Entre outras, destacam-se as tomadas de posição da ISE (Initiative for Science in Europe), da Eurodoc (European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers) e da MCFA (Marie Curie Fellows Associations). Estas organizações queixam-se, por exemplo, do desinvestimento que, em termos relativos, é feito nas Ações Marie Curie, comparativamente com o atual Programa-Quadro, não obstante os bons resultados obtidos com estas ações até à data. São também questionadas algumas das prioridades definidas pela Comissão, como a que tem tradução num aumento muito substancial do orçamento do Instituto Europeu de Tecnologia.

Em termos gerais, estes setores da comunidade científica têm vindo a criticar uma aparente e substancial reorientação de fundos para o desenvolvimento tecnológico, em detrimento da investigação mais fundamental. Esta reorientação tem vindo a ser defendida por alguns lóbis industriais poderosos.

Em face do exposto, perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento das análises, comentários e críticas destas organizações? Que avaliação faz das mesmas?

2. Qual o envolvimento das organizações representativas da comunidade científica no processo de discussão e elaboração da proposta apresentada pela Comissão?

3. De que forma pretende a Comissão promover a investigação livre ou «descomprometida» («curiosity driven research») e o desenvolvimento do trabalho de pesquisa em áreas «mais distantes do mercado»?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(7 de maio de 2012)

1. A Comissão tem conhecimento das posições dessas organizações no que se refere à proposta Horizonte 2020 ([1]). Ao examinar a proposta da parte de orçamento futuro para as *Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions* (MSCA), convém recordar que a proposta Horizonte 2020 abrange elementos que têm em vista a investigação fundamental e que são atualmente parte de outros programas da UE.

2. A consulta pública sobre o Quadro Estratégico Comum para o financiamento da investigação e da inovação da UE terminou em 20 de maio de 2011, vários meses antes de a Comissão ter adotado a sua proposta Horizonte 2020. Foram recebidos 775 documentos de tomada de posição, dos quais mais de 600 provenientes de instituições de investigação/ensino superior, ou de associações/grupos de interesse. Por conseguinte, o contributo da comunidade científica foi bastante significativo.

Em abril de 2011, a Comissão lançou uma consulta pública aberta sobre o Instituto Europeu de Inovação e Tecnologia (IET). O processo de consulta foi realizado com vista a permitir à Comissão tomar conhecimento do ponto de vista dos interessados sobre as futuras áreas prioritárias e o papel do IET no panorama da inovação europeia. O resultado mostrou um forte apoio à missão do IET e ao seu conceito subjacente, que assenta numa abordagem integrada do triângulo do conhecimento, bem como ao modelo de financiamento proposto. Existe um consenso de que o principal valor acrescentado do IET é a integração sem descontinuidades do ensino superior, do empreendedorismo, da investigação e da inovação.

3. Tanto as MSCA como o CEI continuarão a acolher propostas de investigação fundamental provenientes de qualquer domínio (exceto as abrangidas pelo Tratado Euratom). As MSCA também financiarão mais investigação aplicada.

([1]) COM(2011)809 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002673/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Criticism of the 'Horizon 2020' programme from the scientific community

In recent months, parts of Europe's scientific community have been raising issues related to the Commission proposal for the next research and innovation framework programme, also known as the 'Horizon 2020' programme.

They include the ISE (Initiative for Science in Europe), EURODOC (European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers), and the MCFA (Marie Curie Fellowship Association). These organisations complain, for example, that investment in Marie Curie Actions is, in relative terms, being scaled back compared with the current framework programme, in spite of the good results which these actions have obtained so far. They also question some of the Commission's priorities, as reflected in, for instance, the decision to make a very substantial increase in the budget of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology.

In general terms, these sectors of the scientific community have been criticising the fact that substantial amounts of funds are apparently being channelled towards technological development at the expense of more fundamental research. Several powerful industrial lobbies have been advocating this change of direction.

1. Is the Commission aware of the analyses, comments and criticisms of these organisations? What is its assessment?

2. In what ways were organisations representing the scientific community involved in the process of discussing and drafting the Commission proposal?

3. How does the Commission intend to promote free or 'uncommitted' research — curiosity-driven research — and the development of research work in areas further from the market?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the positions of these organisations on the Horizon 2020 proposal ([1]). When considering the proposed future budget share for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), it should be recalled that the Horizon 2020 proposal covers elements that address fundamental research and that are currently part of other EU programmes.

2. The public consultation on the Common Strategic Framework for EU research and innovation funding closed on 20 May 2011, several months before the Commission adopted its proposal for Horizon 2020. 775 position papers were received, of which over 600 were from either research/higher education institutions, or associations/interest groups. Therefore input from the scientific community was extensive.

In April 2011 the Commission launched an open public consultation (OPC) on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). The consultation was undertaken in order to provide the Commission with stakeholders' views on the EIT's future priority areas and role in the European innovation landscape. The result showed strong support for the EIT's mission and its underlying concept of an integrated approach to the knowledge triangle, as well as for the suggested funding model. There is a consensus that the main added value of the EIT is the seamless integration of higher education, entrepreneurship, research and innovation.

3. Both the MSCA and the ERC will continue to invite curiosity driven frontier research proposals from any field (except those covered by the Euratom Treaty). MSCA will also fund more applied research.

([1]) COM(2011) 809 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002675/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Orçamento do «Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos» (2013)

Tendo em conta que:

— No ano de 2013 será celebrado o 20.° aniversário da instituição da cidadania da União definida pelo Tratado de Maastricht, que entrou em vigor a 1 de novembro de 1993;

— Em agosto de 2011, a Comissão Europeia apresentou a proposta relativa ao «Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos» que deve ter lugar em 2013, tendo como principal objetivo reforçar o estatuto de cidadania na União Europeia, estimular uma crescente participação dos cidadãos na vida democrática e esclarecer a importância e o papel desempenhado pelas várias instituições europeias;

— Segundo o inquérito realizado a nível europeu, apenas 43 % dos cidadãos conhecem o termo «Cidadão da União Europeia» e 67 % referem que estão mal informados sobre os seus direitos a nível europeu. Importa ainda sublinhar que 49 % referiram não estarem familiarizados com o normal funcionamento das instituições europeias;

— O objetivo do «Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos» está em consonância com os objetivos enunciados na estratégia Europa 2020, dado que facilita a aplicação de algumas iniciativas emblemáticas, como é o caso da «Juventude em Movimento» e da «Agenda para as novas qualificações e emprego»;

— Apesar de a Comissão Europeia pretender estimular uma crescente participação dos cidadãos, apenas foi definido para o «Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos» um orçamento de aproximadamente 1 milhão de Euros, sendo evidente que é inapropriado para alcançar os superiores objetivos estipulados;

— Este facto é ainda mais saliente quando, em 2010, foi definido um orçamento de 17 milhões de Euros para o Ano Europeu contra a Pobreza e, em 2011, 11 milhões de Euros para o Ano Europeu do Voluntariado, deparando-se o Parlamento Europeu com uma forte alteração orçamental;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual a disponibilidade da Comissão para reforçar substancialmente o orçamento do «Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos»?

2. Poderá a Comissão financiar diretamente projetos dinamizados por movimentos de cidadãos com objetivos similares ou apenas pretende organizar as suas próprias atividades?

3. Em caso afirmativo, quais os procedimentos que os movimentos de cidadãos deverão adotar para terem acesso ao orçamento do Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos? Qual a entidade responsável por este propósito na Comissão e os respetivos contactos?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(27 de abril de 2012)

1. O orçamento proposto pela Comissão para o Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos 2013 permitirá uma campanha de comunicação orientada essencialmente para os parceiros e intermediários estratégicos no âmbito da Comissão, das instituições da UE e da comunidade de partes interessadas. A Comissão incentivá-los-á a desenvolver e implementar ações subordinadas ao tema comum do «Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos 2013» fazendo igualmente uso dos seus próprios recursos, para, assim, alcançar um maior impacto.

2.-3. A campanha anual será reforçada por um número de políticas e programas pertinentes da UE, que também abordarão temas de interesse para os cidadãos. O programa Europa para os Cidadãos ([1]) abrange prioridades temáticas relevantes para o Ano nos seus programas de trabalho anuais de 2012 e 2013, podendo financiar projetos relacionados.

([1]) (http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002675/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Budget for the 'European Year of Citizens' (2013)

The Maastricht Treaty, which came into force on 1 November 1993, created EU citizenship, and 2013 will be its 20th anniversary year.

In August 2011, the Commission submitted a proposal on the 'European Year of Citizens', to take place in 2013, with the principal objective of strengthening the status of citizenship in the European Union, encouraging greater citizen participation in democratic life and clarifying the importance of, and the role played by, the various European institutions.

According to a Europe-wide survey, only 43 % of citizens know of the term 'citizen of the European Union' and 67 % say they are ill-informed about their rights at European level. Furthermore, 49 % have said that they are not familiar with the normal workings of the European institutions.

The goal of the 'European Year of Citizens' is in line with those set out in the Europe 2020 strategy, since it facilitates the implementation of certain flagship initiatives, such as 'Youth on the Move' and the 'Agenda for new skills and jobs'.

Although the Commission intends to promote increased citizen participation, the budget set aside is only about EUR 1 million and clearly inappropriate for achieving the overriding goals laid down.

This point is underlined especially by the fact that, in 2010, a budget of EUR 17 million was set aside for the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion and, in 2011, EUR 11 million was set aside for the European Year of Volunteering; Parliament had to deal with sweeping budget changes.

1. Is the Commission prepared to make a substantial increase in the budget for the 'European Year of Citizens'?

2. Could the Commission directly fund projects organised by citizens' movements with similar aims or does it intend to confine itself to its own activities?

3. If funding is to be provided, what procedures should citizens' movements follow in order to gain access to the budget for the 'European Year of Citizens'? Which Commission unit is responsible for this area and who are its contact persons?

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

1. The budget proposed by the Commission for the European Year of Citizens 2013 will allow a targeted communication campaign which focuses mainly on strategic partners and intermediaries within the Commission, the EU institutions and in the stakeholders' community. The Commission will encourage them to develop and implement actions under the common label 'European Year of Citizens 2013' using also their own resources. In this way greater impact will be leveraged.

2.-3. The Year's campaign will be reinforced by a number of relevant EU policies and programmes that also address citizens' concerns. The Europe for Citizens Programme ([1]) covers thematic priorities relevant to the Year in its annual work programmes 2012 and 2013 and could fund related projects.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002676/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Devolução de verbas comunitárias à Região Autónoma da Madeira

Tendo em conta que:

— No período de programação 2007/2013, Portugal teve direito a receber 21,4 mil milhões de Euros de fundos comunitários, tendo optado por aplicar aos seus projetos uma taxa de cofinanciamento de 70 %;

— Na visita realizada a Portugal de 17 a 19 de novembro de 2011, o Comissário Europeu da Política Regional, Johannes Hahn, referiu que as sucessivas alterações da contrapartida comunitária permitirão ao país poupar cerca de 3,5 mil milhões de Euros no atual período de programação (2007/2013);

— A 1 de dezembro de 2011, o Parlamento Europeu deu luz verde ao aumento das taxas de cofinanciamento para os fundos da União Europeia (UE) destinados a Portugal e a outros cinco países mais afetados pela crise económica, nomeadamente Grécia, Irlanda, Roménia, Letónia e Hungria;

— A contribuição da UE poderá evoluir 10 pontos percentuais, cobrindo até 95 % dos custos totais de projetos que reforcem a competitividade, o crescimento e o emprego;

— Do valor total anunciado por Johannes Hahn, Bruxelas assumiu o compromisso de devolver, até ao final de 2011, cerca de 629 milhões de Euros que correspondem à contrapartida nacional de projetos já aprovados e gastos;

— Nas Regiões Autónomas da Madeira e dos Açores, são os Governos Regionais responsáveis por financiar a contrapartida nacional, tendo ao longo dos últimos anos despendido elevados montantes no apoio à realização de projetos.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual o valor exato que Portugal irá receber com as sucessivas alterações das taxas de cofinanciamento acordadas com a Comissão para o período 2007/2013? Do valor global a que Portugal tem direito, qual o montante que é devido à Região Autónoma da Madeira por ter comparticipado uma parte da realização dos projetos?

2. Qual o valor que efetivamente já foi devolvido a Portugal e quando é que o país recebeu o dinheiro em causa? Deste montante global, qual o valor que é devido por projetos executados na Região Autónoma da Madeira?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(25 de abril de 2012)

Na sequência da alteração das taxas de cofinanciamento para Portugal, no âmbito das intervenções dos Fundos Estruturais para o período de 2007/2013, o cálculo do total das poupanças orçamentais para Portugal é de 3,5 mil milhões de euros, o que corresponde a uma diminuição de 2,9 mil milhões de euros do cofinanciamento nacional e a 0,6 mil milhões de euros de novos pagamentos adicionais.

Foi pago um total de 467 milhões de euros pela Comissão em dezembro de 2011 e em janeiro de 2012. 419 milhões de euros do montante acima referido correspondem a alterações das taxas de cofinanciamento, no seguimento da reprogramação aprovada pela Comissão, ao passo que 48 milhões de euros correspondem ao complemento, até 10 %, da contribuição da UE para 5 programas do FEDER e do Fundo de Coesão relativos ao programa de Valorização do Território.

Dos montantes acima referidos, os seguintes valores referem-se à Madeira: 4,2 milhões de euros (reprogramação) e 3,9 milhões de euros (complemento).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002676/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Refunds to the Autonomous Region of Madeira

In the 2007-2013 programming period, Portugal has been entitled to EUR 21 400 million in EU funds, as it has opted to apply a 70 % co-financing rate to its projects.

When he visited the country from 17 to 19 November 2011, the Regional Policy Commissioner, Johannes Hahn, stated that the successive changes in the EU contribution will enable Portugal to save approximately EUR 3 500 million in the current programming period (2007-2013).

On 1 December 2011, the European Parliament gave the green light to increased co-financing rates for EU funds intended for Portugal and the other five countries hit hardest by the economic crisis, namely Greece, Ireland, Romania, Latvia and Hungary.

The EU contribution could increase by 10 %, thus covering up to 95 % of the total cost of projects to strengthen competitiveness, growth and employment.

Out of the total announced by Commissioner Hahn, Brussels promised to refund about EUR 629 million by the end of 2011, that being the sum corresponding to the national contribution to projects already approved for which the funding had already been disbursed.

In the autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores, the regional governments are responsible for financing the national contribution, and they have spent significant sums on supporting project implementation in recent years.

1. What is the exact sum that Portugal will receive as a result of the successive changes in co-financing rates agreed with the Commission for the period from 2007 to 2013? Out of Portugal's overall entitlement, how much is owed to the Autonomous Region of Madeira on account of its contributions to project implementation?

2. What amount of refund has in fact been made to Portugal and when did the country receive the money? Out of that total, how much is owed in respect of projects implemented in the Autonomous Region of Madeira?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

Following the modification of the co-financing rates for Portugal, under the Structural Funds' interventions for the period 2007-2013, the overall calculated budgetary relief to Portugal is EUR 3.5 billion, corresponding to EUR 2.9 billion decrease in national co-financing and EUR 0.6 billion of additional top-up payments.

A total of EUR 467 million have been paid by the Commission in December 2011 and January 2012. EUR 419 million of the aforementioned amount corresponds to changes to the co-financing rates following the reprogramming approved by the Commission, whereas EUR 48 million corresponds to the top-up of the EU contribution by up to 10 % for five 5 ERDF programmes and the Cohesion Fund for the Territorial Enhancement programme .

Out of the above amounts, the following amounts relate to Madeira: EUR 4.2 million (reprogramming) and EUR 3.9 million (top-up).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002677/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Taxas de cofinanciamento aplicadas em Portugal

Tendo em conta que:

— No período de programação 2007/2013, Portugal teve direito a receber 21,4 mil milhões de Euros de fundos comunitários, tendo optado por aplicar aos seus projetos uma taxa de cofinanciamento de 70 %;

— No intuito de apoiar Portugal e os restantes países em dificuldades, a Comissão Europeia propôs inicialmente aumentar a taxa de cofinanciamento de 70 % para 85 %, atingindo o máximo permitido pelos regulamentos comunitários;

— Na visita realizada a Portugal de 17 a 19 de novembro de 2011, o Comissário Europeu da Política Regional, Johannes Hahn, confirmou que «está em marcha a proposta de aumentar para 95 % a taxa de cofinanciamento média europeia, o que permitirá a Portugal — ao setor público, mas também ao privado — ter de assegurar apenas 5 % do financiamento dos projetos quando se candidata ao acesso a fundos europeus»;

— A 1 de dezembro de 2011, o Parlamento Europeu deu luz verde ao aumento das taxas de cofinanciamento para os fundos da União Europeia (UE) destinados a Portugal e a outros cinco países mais afetados pela crise económica, nomeadamente Grécia, Irlanda, Roménia, Letónia e Hungria;

— A contribuição da UE poderá evoluir 10 pontos percentuais, cobrindo até 95 % dos custos totais de projetos que reforcem a competitividade, o crescimento e o emprego;

— Segundo algumas notícias, Portugal passou a beneficiar de uma taxa de cofinanciamento de 85 % nas regiões de objetivo de convergência, Algarve e eixos prioritários de investimento público;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quando se verificaram as diversas alterações à taxa de cofinanciamento da aplicação dos fundos estruturais?

2. Qual a taxa que está atualmente em vigor nas diversas regiões portuguesas?

3. Qual a taxa que está atualmente em vigor em toda a tipologia de fundos que Portugal recebe, nomeadamente nos eixos do Programa Operacional Fatores de Competitividade (POFC), Programa Operacional Valorização do Território (POVT) e Programa Operacional Potencial Humano (POPH?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão confirma que algumas taxas de cofinanciamento para Portugal foram alteradas no âmbito das intervenções da política de coesão para o período de 2007/2013.

A Comissão aprovou uma reprogramação geral do quadro de referência estratégico nacional em dezembro de 2011, de modo a permitir uma melhor adequação dos programas portugueses à situação económica e financeira. Desta reprogramação resultou um aumento geral das taxas de cofinanciamento para o investimento público no que respeita às ações prioritárias. As taxas atualmente em vigor para os programas portugueses oscilam entre 56 % e 85 %. No que se refere ao Programa «Fatores de Competitividade», a taxa de cofinanciamento passou para 56 % (taxa limitada em razão das regras em matéria de auxílios estatais), a do Programa «Valorização do Território» é de 85 % e a do Programa «Potencial Humano» é de 72 %.

Além disso, em dezembro de 2011, o Conselho aprovou uma proposta da Comissão que permite que a Comissão efetue pagamentos com uma taxa majorada de cofinanciamento de 10 % aos países que beneficiam de programas de assistência financeira. Esta medida aplica-se a Portugal em relação ao período para o qual se tornou elegível para o programa de assistência financeira até 31 de Dezembro de 2013. No que diz respeito ao FSE, as autoridades portuguesas decidiram não apresentar qualquer pedido de aumento da taxa de cofinanciamento da UE de 10 % para os programas operacionais, tendo em conta a elevada taxa de execução de tais programas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002677/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Co-financing rates applied in Portugal

In the 2007-2013 programming period, Portugal has been entitled to EUR 21.4 billion in EU funds, as it has opted to apply a 70 % co-financing rate to its projects.

With a view to helping Portugal and the other countries in difficulty, the Commission initially proposed to increase the co-financing rate from 70 % to 85 %, which is the maximum permitted by EU regulations.

When he visited Portugal from 17 to 19 November 2011, the Regional Policy Commissioner, Johannes Hahn, said that there was a proposal on foot to increase the average European co-financing rate to 95 %, which would mean that Portugal — where the public sector as well as the private sector was concerned — would have to provide only 5 % of the project funding when applying for European funds.

On 1 December 2011, the European Parliament gave the green light to increased co-financing rates for EU funds intended for Portugal and the other five countries hit hardest by the economic crisis, namely Greece, Ireland, Romania, Latvia and Hungary.

The EU contribution could increase by 10 %, thus covering up to 95 % of the total cost of projects to strengthen competitiveness, growth and employment.

According to some news reports, Portugal has started to enjoy an 85 % co-financing rate for convergence regions and the Algarve and in priority areas for public investment.

1. When were the changes made to the co-financing rate under the Structural Funds?

2. What rate is currently in force for the Portuguese regions?

3. What rate is currently in force for all the types of funding that Portugal receives, specifically for the 'Thematic Factors of Competitiveness' operational programme, the 'Territorial Enhancement' operational programme, and the 'Human Potential' operational programme?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

The Commission confirms that some co-financing rates for Portugal were changed under cohesion policy interventions for the period 2007-2013.

The Commission approved a general reprogramming exercise of the National Strategic Reference Framework in December 2011, to allow the Portuguese programmes to better fit with the economic and financial situation. This reprogramming resulted in a general increase of co-financing rates for public investment related priority actions. The rates currently in force for the Portuguese programmes range from 56 % to 85 %. For the thematic 'Factors of Competitiveness' programme the co-financing rate is now 56 % (rate is limited because of state aid rules), for the 'Territorial Enhancement' programme the rate is 85 %, and for the 'Human Potential' programme the rate is 72 %.

In addition, the Council approved in December 2011 a proposal of the Commission, enabling the Commission to make payments to the countries under financial assistance programmes with an increased co-financing rate of 10 %. This measure applies to Portugal as well for the period it became eligible for the financial assistance programme until 31 December 2013. As regards ESF the Portuguese Authorities have decided not to submit a request for an increase of the EU co-financing rate by 10 % for operational programmes, given the high execution rate of these programmes.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002679/12
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(8 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Turismo marítimo y pesquero

En las costas europeas existe un rico patrimonio que, en no pocos casos, corre el peligro de desaparecer. En su conjunto conforma un gran potencial turístico que puede contribuir al desarrollo social, económico y laboral de las zonas costeras. El turismo marítimo puede contribuir a mantener el empleo y la población en las zonas costeras, así como las tradiciones, el patrimonio y la cultura marinera. De hecho, su complementariedad con la actividad principal de la pesca y del marisqueo lo configura como una opción que está siendo explorada por el sector de la pesca y que merece de un reconocimiento institucional.

Esta misma semana, una delegación de eurodiputados socialistas miembros de la Comisión de Pesca del Parlamento Europeo visitaremos la región de la Haute-Normandie, entre otras finalidades, para conocer de primera mano su experiencia en el desarrollo de esta nueva modalidad de promoción económica en las localidades de Fécamp y Dieppe. En España, desde Málaga hasta Vilagarcía de Arousa, es creciente el número de iniciativas que comienzan a ponerse en marcha en esta innovadora línea de desarrollo económico.

La Unión Europea debe estimular este nuevo tipo de turismo como elemento de diversificación, procurar su puesta en valor y alentar su difusión.

A este respecto, ¿es la Comisión favorable al impulso de programas de recuperación de entornos naturales, urbanos y etnográficos vinculados a la actividad pesquera y marinera, para su transformación en productos turísticos de calidad, de tal manera que permitan la conservación de oficios y técnicas tradicionales, junto al desarrollo de actividades formativas en este ámbito? y, en este sentido, ¿tiene en marcha algún tipo de iniciativa de promoción del turismo y la cultura marinera o prevé desarrollarla en el futuro?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de mayo de 2012)

La Comisión otorga gran importancia a la promoción del turismo en las zonas costeras, lo que comprende la protección y el fomento del patrimonio, las tradiciones y la cultura pesquera.

En su Comunicación «Una política marítima integrada para la Unión Europea» ([1]), la Comisión se comprometió a fomentar el turismo costero y marítimo y propuso crear una estrategia de desarrollo sostenible del turismo costero y marítimo en la Comunicación «Europa, primer destino turístico del mundo: un nuevo marco político para el turismo europeo» ([2]).

El turismo costero y marítimo también formará parte de la futura Comunicación de la Comisión sobre el crecimiento azul: crecimiento sostenible en las regiones costeras y los sectores marítimos (aprobación prevista en 2012) y, en reconocimiento del potencial de este sector y de los retos futuros, la Comisión tiene la intención de presentar en 2012 una comunicación específica sobre los desafíos y oportunidades del turismo costero y marítimo en la UE.

Además, el eje prioritario 4 del Fondo Europeo de Pesca apoya las medidas de desarrollo sostenible de las zonas pesqueras, entre otras cosas, incluidas la reestructuración y reorientación de las actividades económicas, especialmente mediante la promoción del turismo ecológico, así como medidas dirigidas a proteger el medio ambiente en las zonas pesqueras a fin de mantener su atractivo, regenerar y desarrollar las aldeas y pueblos costeros con actividad pesquera y conservar y mejorar su patrimonio natural y arquitectónico.

El desarrollo sostenible de las zonas pesqueras se ha reforzado en el propuesto Fondo Europeo Marítimo y de Pesca (2014-2020), que seguirá prestando apoyo a la creación de puestos de trabajo por medio de la diversificación de las comunidades pesqueras europeas, el aprovechamiento de los recursos medioambientales locales y el patrimonio cultural (marítimo).

([1]) COM(2007) 575 final.
([2]) COM(2010) 352 final de 30.6.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002679/12
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Maritime and fishing tourism

The European coasts have a rich heritage that, in more than a few cases, risks disappearing. Taken together, they have a large potential for tourism that could contribute to social, economic and job development in the coastal areas. Maritime tourism can contribute to keeping jobs and people in the coastal areas, as well as traditions, heritage and fishing culture. In fact, given that it complements the principal activity of fishing, it is an option that is being explored by the fishing sector and deserves recognition at institutional level.

This week, a delegation of Socialist MEPs on Parliament's Committee on Fisheries, myself included, will visit the towns of Fécamp and Dieppe in the region of Haute-Normandie to learn at first hand what they can teach us about this new model of economic development. Furthermore, in Spain, from Málaga to Vilagarcía de Arousa, the number of projects developing this innovative form of tourism is growing.

The European Union should promote this new type of tourism, in the interests of diversification, attempt to raise its profile and encourage its spread.

Is the Commission willing to promote programmes to improve natural, urban and cultural environments linked to fishing and maritime activity, to make them into high-quality tourist destinations while conserving of traditional techniques and ways of life, including training activities in this field? Is the Commission currently pursuing any such initiatives to promote tourism and fishing culture, or does it intend to do so in future?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2012)

The Commission attributes great importance to the promotion of tourism in coastal areas, including by protecting and promoting heritage, traditions and the fishing culture.

In its communication 'An Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union' ([1]), the Commission committed to promote coastal and maritime tourism and proposed to develop a strategy for sustainable coastal and marine tourism in the communication 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe' ([2]).

Coastal and maritime tourism will also form part of the Commission's planned Communication on Blue Growth: sustainable growth from oceans, seas and coasts (for adoption in 2012) and, acknowledging the potential of this sector as well as the challenges ahead, the Commission intends to present a specific Communication on the challenges and opportunities in maritime and coastal tourism in the EU in 2012.

Moreover, the Priority Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund supports measures for the sustainable development of fisheries areas, among others, including for the restructuring and redirection of economic activities, in particular by promoting eco-tourism, as well as measures which protect the environment in fisheries areas to maintain its attractiveness, regenerating and developing coastal hamlets and villages with fisheries activities and protecting and enhancing the natural and architectural heritage.

The sustainable development of fisheries areas has been strengthened in the proposed European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (2014-2020), which will continue to support job creation through diversification in Europe's fishing communities, capitalising on local environmental assets and (maritime) cultural heritage.

([1]) COM(2007) 575 final.
([2]) COM(2010) 352 final of 30.6.2010.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002680/12
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(8. März 2012)

Betrifft: Anpassung von Rechtsakten an die neue allgemeine Datenschutzregelung

In der Mitteilung der Europäischen Kommission vom 4. November 2010 zum Gesamtkonzept für den Datenschutz in der Europäischen Union (KOM(2010)0609) hat die Kommission angekündigt, in einem zweiten Schritt zu prüfen, „ob andere Rechtsakte an die neue allgemeine Datenschutzregelung angepasst werden müssen. An erster Stelle betrifft dies die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 45/2001".

Hat die Kommission bereits einen Zeitplan, wann die zweite Phase des Reformprozesses beginnen soll? Falls nein, warum nicht und wann ist mit diesem Zeitplan zu rechnen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2012)

Die Kommission hat am 25. Januar 2012 ihr Datenschutz-Reformpaket angenommen und vorgelegt und damit den ersten Schritt zur Datenschutzreform in der Europäischen Union getan. Die Verhandlungen im Europäischen Parlament und im Rat über die Rechtsinstrumente des Reformpakets — eine Datenschutz-Grundverordnung ([1]) und eine Richtlinie zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten durch die zuständigen Behörden zum Zwecke der Verhütung, Aufdeckung, Untersuchung oder Verfolgung von Straftaten oder der Strafvollstreckung sowie zum freien Datenverkehr ([2]) — wurden im Februar 2012 nach dem ordentlichen Rechtsetzungsverfahren aufgenommen.

Je nach dem Ergebnis dieses Verfahrens wird die Kommission in einem zweiten Schritt prüfen, ob andere Rechtsinstrumente der neuen Datenschutzregelung angepasst werden müssen und wenn ja, und welche. Insofern lässt sich gegenwärtig noch kein Zeitplan für die zweite Phase des Reformprozesses festlegen.

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

([2]) KOM(2012)10 endg. — Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten durch die zuständigen Behörden zum Zwecke der Verhütung, Aufdeckung, Untersuchung oder Verfolgung von Straftaten oder der Strafvollstreckung sowie zum freien Datenverkehr.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002680/12
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Adaptation of legal instruments to the new general data protection framework

In its communication of 4 November 2010 entitled 'A comprehensive approach on personal data protection in the European Union' (COM(2010) 0609), the Commission announced that as a second step it would be assessing 'the need to adapt other legal instruments to the new general data protection framework. This concerns, first of all, Regulation (EC) No 45/2001'.

Has the Commission already set a date for the start of the second phase of the reform process? If not, why not, and when is that date likely to be set?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

Through the adoption and presentation of its data protection reform package on 25 January 2012, the Commission has undertaken the first step of the reform of data protection in the European Union. For both legal instruments which are proposed by this reform package, a General Data Protection Regulation ([1]) and a directive for data protection in the area of police and criminal justice ([2]), the negotiations in the European Parliament and in the Council have just started in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure in February 2012.

Building on the outcome of this legislative procedure, the Commission will, in a second step, assess whether and which other legal instruments need to be adapted to the new data protection framework. Therefore, at present, it is premature to establish a schedule for the second phase of the reform process.

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

([2]) COM(2012)10 final — Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and the free movement of such data.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002681/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(8 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δηλώσεις του υπουργού Μπαγίς

Σε δήλωσή του, ο Τούρκος Υπουργός για Ευρωπαϊκές Υποθέσεις κ. Εγκεμέν Μπαγίς είπε ότι «μια από τις επιλογές της Τουρκίας για την Κύπρο είναι και η ένωση του κατεχόμενου τμήματος με την Τουρκία», κάτι το οποίο προκάλεσε θύελλα διαμαρτυριών και οξύτατες αντιδράσεις από τους Τουρκοκυπρίους.

Σύμφωνα με τον τύπο, ατυχή και απαράδεκτη χαρακτήρισε ο ηγέτης του Ρεπουμπλικανικού Τουρκικού Κόμματος (ΤΡΚ), Οζκάν Γιοργαντζίογλου, τη δήλωση Μπαγίς και ειδικά, όπως είπε, σε μια περίοδο που συνεχίζονται οι προσπάθειες για εξεύρεση μιας περιεκτικής λύσης στο Κυπριακό, τις οποίες υποστηρίζει και η Τουρκία. Ο κ. Γιοργαντζίογλου κάλεσε τον κ. Μπαγίς να ανασκευάσει την απαράδεκτη αυτή δήλωση για ενσωμάτωση, επισημαίνοντας επίσης ότι η τουρκική πλευρά θα θεωρηθεί ως αυτή που δεν επιθυμεί τη λύση. Ο ηγέτης του Κόμματος Κοινοτικής Δημοκρατίας, Μεχμέτ Τσακιτζή είπε ότι ο κ. Μπαγίς δεν έχει το δικαίωμα να μιλά με τον τρόπο αυτόν, διαμηνύοντας ότι επιθυμία των Τουρκοκυπρίων είναι μια διζωνική, δικοινοτική ομοσπονδιακή λύση που να βασίζεται στην πολιτική ισότητα. Είπε ακόμη, ότι τη λύση στο Κυπριακό δεν θα την επιβάλει ο κ. Μπαγίς αλλά γι' αυτήν θα αποφασίσουν οι Τουρκοκύπριοι.

Ο κ. Μπαγίς αναγκάστηκε χθες να κάνει διορθωτική δήλωση, όχι όμως ανασκευή.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω, καθώς και άλλες παρόμοιες επίσημες θέσεις του κ. Μπαγίς, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πως αξιολογεί την επίσημη τουρκική θέση, μιας υπό ένταξη στην ΕΕ χώρας, μερικούς μήνες πριν αναλάβει η Κύπρος την προεδρία της ΕΕ;

2. Τι θέση θα τηρούσε εάν η Τουρκία προσπαθούσε να υλοποιήσει την προσάρτηση του κατεχόμενου τμήματος της Κύπρου;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει στα συμπεράσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου της 9ης Δεκεμβρίου 2011, στα οποία το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο εκφράζει τη σοβαρή ανησυχία του για τις τουρκικές δηλώσεις και απειλές και ζητεί τον πλήρη σεβασμό του ρόλου της Προεδρίας του Συμβουλίου, η οποία αποτελεί θεμελιώδες θεσμικό χαρακτηριστικό γνώρισμα της ΕΕ, προβλεπόμενο στη Συνθήκη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002681/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Statements by Turkish Minister Bagis

In a statement, Turkish Minister for European Affairs, Egemen Bagis, said that 'one of Turkey's options for Cyprus is the unification of the occupied part of the island with Turkey', which provoked angry protests and acrimonious reactions from Turkish Cypriots.

According to the press, the leader of the Republican Turkish Party (TKP), Özkan Yorgancıoğlu, described Bagis' statement as unfortunate and unacceptable, especially at a time when ongoing attempts are being made to reach a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem, which Turkey supports. Mr Yorgancıoğlu invited Mr Bagis to retract this unacceptable statement on annexation, noting that the Turks would be seen as reluctant to find a solution. Mehmet Cakici, the leader of the Social Democracy Party (TDP), said that Mr Bagis had no right to speak in this way, pointing out that Turkish Cypriots want a bi-zonal, bi-community, federal solution based on political equality. He also said that the solution to the Cyprus problem will not be imposed by Mr Bagis but will be decided on by Turkish Cypriots.

Mr Bagis was yesterday forced to make a corrected statement — however, he did not retract his previous one.

In view of the above, as well as other, similar official statements by Mr Bagis:

1. What does the Commission think of this official Turkish position, coming from a country that is a candidate for accession to the EU, just months before Cyprus takes up the Presidency of the EU?

2. What position would it take if Turkey tried to annex the occupied part of Cyprus?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 April 2012)

The Commission refers to the conclusions of the European Council of 9 December 2011, in which the European Council expresses serious concern with regard to Turkish statements and threats and calls for full respect of the role of the Presidency of the Council, which is a fundamental institutional feature of the EU provided for in the Treaty.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002682/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Cellule della Repubblica islamica operative in Thailandia

Il 14 febbraio 2012, alcune fonti mediatiche hanno riferito che un iraniano residente a Bangkok, Said Moradi, ha lanciato una granata contro la polizia tailandese, nel tentativo di sfuggire alla cattura. Nel primo pomeriggio, si erano verificate esplosioni in una casa in affitto nella zona sud-est della città che tre uomini, compreso lo stesso Moradi, avevano quindi abbandonato. Benché ferito, Moradi ha tentato di fermare l'autista di un taxi, che si è rifiutato di prenderlo a bordo; il fuggitivo ha reagito scagliando una granata contro il veicolo. La polizia, accorsa in seguito alle esplosioni, ha tentato di catturare Moradi, il quale ha lanciato contro gli agenti una granata che, dopo avere urtato un albero, è rimbalzata all'indietro colpendo Moradi alle gambe. Un altro iraniano è stato arrestato all'aeroporto Suvarnabhumi di Bangkok mentre tentava di lasciare il paese: i servizi di intelligence e le forze di sicurezza lo stanno ancora cercando. Questo incidente si è verificato poco dopo un precedente episodio, in cui un motociclista aveva collocato un ordigno in un'auto diplomatica israeliana a Nuova Delhi. In Georgia, un ordigno destinato a colpire diplomatici israeliani è rimasto inesploso.

In seguito agli attacchi aventi come obiettivo le missioni diplomatiche in India e Georgia, l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha condannato gli «attentati ai membri delle missioni diplomatiche, così come condanna tutti gli atti di terrorismo, che non possono essere giustificati in alcuna circostanza».

1. Alla luce dei recenti attentati orchestrati in Thailandia e Georgia, che iniziative sta attualmente intraprendendo l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente per valutare la probabilità di potenziali attentati da parte di cellule iraniane in Europa?

2. É disposto ad offrire sostegno logistico alle autorità tailandesi e indiane per rintracciare i possibili sospetti terroristi che pianificano attentati contro obiettivi pubblici e diplomatici?

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

Come rilevato dall'onorevole parlamentare, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha condannato gli attacchi contro i membri delle ambasciate israeliane in India e Georgia in una dichiarazione rilasciata dal suo portavoce il 13 febbraio 2012.

In risposta alle domande poste dall'onorevole parlamentare si precisa che:

1. La questione sollevata è essenzialmente compito degli Stati membri, dato che, a norma dell'articolo 72 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, le misure nazionali in materia di mantenimento dell'ordine pubblico e salvaguardia della sicurezza interna sono di competenza degli Stati membri. Hanno tuttavia luogo scambi regolari di informazioni e di esperienze con le agenzie competenti dell'UE, come Europol. È inoltre missione del SITCEN dell'UE fornire analisi d'intelligence, allarme rapido e una conoscenza della situazione all'Alta Rappresentante Catherine Ashton, al servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE), ai vari organi decisionali dell'UE (in materia di politica estera e di sicurezza comune, politica di sicurezza e di difesa comune e antiterrorismo) e agli Stati membri.

2. Simili richieste di aiuto non sono pervenute né dalle autorità thailandesi, né da quelle indiane. Dovessero pervenire richieste in tal senso, esse saranno valutate individualmente, tenendo conto delle competenze degli organismi che potrebbero essere coinvolti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002682/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Islamic Republic operatives in Thailand

On 14 February 2012, media sources reported that an Iranian man based in Bangkok, Saeid Moradi, had thrown a grenade at Thai police in a bid to escape capture. In the early afternoon, explosives detonated in a rented house in the south-east of the city, following which three men, including Moradi, fled the scene. Although injured, Moradi attempted to hire a taxi which refused to take him, and in response threw a grenade at the vehicle. Police who arrived in response to the blasts tried to apprehend Moradi, who threw a grenade at them which hit a tree and then blew back hitting his legs. Another Iranian man was arrested trying to leave the country at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi airport: the intelligence and security forces are still looking for him. This incident comes shortly after another in which a motorcyclist attached an explosive device to an Israeli diplomatic car in New Delhi. In Georgia, a device targeting Israeli diplomats failed to detonate.

Following the attacks targeting Israeli diplomatic missions in India and Georgia, the High Representative/Vice-President condemned 'attacks on members of diplomatic missions as she condemns all acts of terrorism, which cannot be justified under any circumstances'.

1. In light of the recent attacks orchestrated in Thailand and Georgia, what steps is the HR/VP taking at present to assess the potential for attacks by Iranian operatives within Europe?

2. Is the HR/VP prepared to offer logistical support to the Thai and Indian authorities in order to track down possible suspects plotting attacks against public and diplomatic targets?

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

As the Honourable Member has noted, the High Representative/Vice-President condemned the targeting of personnel of the Israeli Embassies in India and Georgia in a statement issued by her spokesperson on 13 February 2012.

In reply to the Honourable Member's detailed questions:

1. This is primarily the task of the relevant agencies of the Member States, as pursuant to Article 72 TFEU, national measures in the field of maintenance of public order and safeguarding of internal security fall within the competence of Member States. There are, however, regular exchanges of information and experience through the relevant agencies of the EU such as Europol. It is also the mission of EU SITCEN to provide intelligence analyses, early warning and situational awareness to the High Representative Catherine Ashton, to the European External Action Service (EEAS), to the various EU decision making bodies (in the fields of the common foreign and security policy, the Common Security and Defence Policy, and Counter Terrorism), as well as to the Member States.

2. No request for such assistance has been received from the authorities of Thailand or India. Any such request would be treated on its merits, taking account of the competences of the bodies which might be involved.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002683/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(8 Μαρτίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αέριο από σχιστόλιθους και υγροποιημένο φυσικό αέριο (LNG) στο πλαίσιο του Συμβουλίου Ενέργειας ΕΕ-ΗΠΑ

Η αγορά αερίου της ΕΕ έχει ήδη επωφεληθεί από το αέριο από σχιστολίθους χωρίς όμως να υπάρξει καμιά περίπτωση επιτυχούς εκμετάλλευσης εντός της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Φτηνό υγροποιημένο φυσικό αέριο (ΥΦΑ) το οποίο προοριζόταν για την αγορά των ΗΠΑ και ευρίσκετο σε υπερπροσφορά, αναδρομολογήθηκε προς την Ευρώπη, εκτοπίζοντας το αέριο από τη Ρωσία που ήταν πιο ακριβό. Ως αποτέλεσμα, η εταιρία Gazprom ευρίσκεται συνεχώς σε αναδιαπραγματεύσεις τιμών με σημαντικούς ευρωπαίους πελάτες και έχει εν μέρει αναθεωρήσει τον τρόπο υπολογισμού των τιμών της.

Επιπλέον, ο Διεθνής Οργανισμός Ενέργειας εκτιμά ότι το συνολικό δυναμικό υγροποίησης θα αυξηθεί από 380 δισεκατομμύρια κυβικά μέτρα (δ.κ.μ.) το 2011 σε 540 δ.κ.μ. το 2020. Μια προσεκτική αύξηση των εξαγωγών από τις ΗΠΑ θα μπορούσε να παράσχει την απαιτούμενη τιμολογιακή βάση για τη διατήρηση των επενδύσεων ενώ ταυτόχρονα θα βοηθούσε την ΕΕ παρέχοντας φτηνή προσφορά για ηλεκτρική ενέργεια.

Υπό το φως της σημαντικής αύξησης του αερίου από σχιστόλιθο στις ΗΠΑ και της αλματώδους αύξησης του δυναμικού παραγωγής ΥΦΑ, τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή για να εξασφαλίσει ότι οι εξελίξεις στην παγκόσμια αγορά αερίου θα τύχουν της δέουσας προσοχής; Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να επιδιώξει τη συμπερίληψη του θέματος των εξαγωγών ΥΦΑ στην ημερήσια διάταξη για τη συνεδρίαση του Συμβουλίου Ενέργειας ΕΕ-ΗΠΑ;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή συνεχίζει να παρακολουθεί από κοντά τις εξελίξεις στις παγκόσμιες αγορές φυσικού αερίου, στο πλαίσιο του στόχου της ενεργειακής πολιτικής της ΕΕ για την εξασφάλιση ασφαλούς, διαφοροποιημένου και ανταγωνιστικού εφοδιασμού με φυσικό αέριο για την εσωτερική αγορά. Το θέμα αυτό συζητήθηκε με τα κράτη μέλη στο πλαίσιο της Ομάδας συντονισμού για το φυσικό αέριο, στο οποίο η Ομάδα ανταλλάσσει επίσης απόψεις με τους σημερινούς, αλλά και τους πιθανούς εταίρους των προμηθευτών εφοδιασμού με φυσικό αέριο και με υγροποιημένο φυσικό αέριο, με στόχο τη διευκόλυνση της διαρκούς συνεργασίας και του διαλόγου σχετικά με τις πτυχές ασφαλείας κατά τον εφοδιασμό με φυσικό αέριο. Ο ενδεχόμενος συγκεκριμένος αντίκτυπος στην παγκόσμια αγορά φυσικού αερίου από τον ασφαλτούχο σχιστόλιθο θα διερευνηθεί στη μελέτη που διεξάγεται τη στιγμή αυτή από το Κοινό Κέντρο Ερευνών σχετικά με τις πιθανές επιπτώσεις που μπορεί να έχουν οι μη συμβατικές πηγές φυσικού αερίου στην ενεργειακή αγορά της ΕΕ.

Όσον αφορά το θέμα των εξαγωγών υγροποιημένου φυσικού αερίου από τις ΗΠΑ, η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση του γεγονότος ότι διάφορα σχέδια είναι υπό εξέταση και προβλέπει τη διεξαγωγή συζητήσεων για το θέμα αυτό στο πλαίσιο του Συμβουλίου Ενέργειας ΕΕ-ΗΠΑ σύμφωνα με το κοινό ανακοινωθέν τύπου που εκδόθηκε με την ευκαιρία της τελευταίας συνεδρίασης της 28ης Νοεμβρίου 2011, στο οποίο διατυπώνεται ρητά η άποψη ότι «η ΕΕ και οι ΗΠΑ διακήρυξαν την πρόθεσή τους να συνεχίσουν τον στρατηγικό τους διάλογο σχετικά με τις παγκόσμιες αγορές φυσικού αερίου, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του ρόλου που προβλέπεται να διαδραματίσουν οι μη συμβατικές πηγές φυσικού αερίου, όπως για παράδειγμα οι ασφαλτούχοι σχιστόλιθοι, με στόχο την ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών σχετικά με τις ρυθμιστικές πτυχές και τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002683/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Shale gas and LNG within the context of the EU-US Energy Council

The EU gas market has already benefited from shale gas without a single case of successful exploitation taking place within the European Union. Cheap liquefied natural gas (LNG) destined for an oversupplied US market has been re-routed to Europe, displacing more expensive Russian gas. As a result, Gazprom has been continuously locked in price renegotiations with major European customers and has partially revised its pricing formula.

Furthermore, the International Energy Agency estimates that global liquefaction capacity will increase from 380 billion cubic metres (bcm) in 2011 to 540 bcm in 2020. A careful build-up of US exports could provide the necessary price floor to keep up investments while simultaneously helping the EU by providing cheap supplies for electric power.

In light of the shale gas boom in the US and the exponential increase in LNG production capacity, what is the Commission doing to ensure that the developments in the global gas market are given the attention they deserve? Will the Commission endeavour to include the issue of LNG exports on the agenda for the meeting of the EU-US Energy Council?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission continues to closely monitor developments on the global gas markets in the context of the EU's energy policy objective of assuring secure, diversified and competitive gas supply for the internal market. This issue is discussed with the Member States in the framework of the Gas Coordination Group, where the Group also exchanges views with existing and potential gas and LNG suppliers' partners aiming to facilitate the continuous cooperation and discussion on the aspects of security of gas supply. Possible specific impacts on the global gas market due to shale gas will be addressed in a study currently conducted by the Joint Research Centre on potential impacts of unconventional gas on the EU energy market.

With respect to the issue of US LNG exports, the Commission is aware that there are a number of projects under consideration and envisages discussions of this issue in the framework of the EU-US Energy Council in line with the joint press statement from the last meeting of 28th November 2011 where it was expressed that 'The EU and the U.S. stated their intention to continue their strategic dialogue on global gas markets, including the role of unconventional gas, for example shale gas, with the objective of exchanging information on regulatory aspects and best practices'.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002684/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(8 de março de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Os planos do governo chinês para repatriar refugiados para a Coreia do Norte

Um numeroso grupo de norte-coreanos capturados nas últimas semanas está na iminência de ser repatriado para a Coreia do Norte contra a sua própria vontade, sendo possível que lhes seja aplicada uma pena severa, ou mesmo que sejam executados, caso regressem ao seu país. Têm surgido notícias segundo as quais o novo líder norte-coreano, Kim Jong-un, declarou que os refugiados que abandonaram a RPDC durante o período de luto pela morte do pai seriam «aniquilados», juntamente com a totalidade das respetivas famílias.

O parlamento sul-coreano já aprovou uma resolução bipartidária sobre o repatriamento forçado. A resolução, apresentada pelo deputado Park Sun-young e assinada por 29 dos seus pares, condena a política de repatriamento da China, exorta Pequim a mudar de posição no que diz respeito aos foragidos norte-coreanos, reconhecendo-os como refugiados, e não como migrantes económicos, e apela a um maior apoio da comunidade internacional aos trânsfugas da Coreia do Norte.

Neste contexto:

1. Terá a Alta Representante exercido pressões sobre a China, na sua qualidade de Estado Parte da Convenção de Genebra sobre o Estatuto dos Refugiados, de 1951, para que este país respeite as suas obrigações internacionais no tocante ao princípio de não repulsão?

2. Que medidas concretas tenciona tomar a Alta Representante para garantir que este grupo de norte-coreanos não seja repatriado para a Coreia do Norte?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(23 de maio de 2012)

A UE tem abordado a questão dos requerentes de asilo e dos refugiados norte-coreanos com a China, em especial no âmbito do diálogo sobre os direitos humanos UE-China. Todos os países deveriam, por uma questão de princípio, honrar os compromissos assumidos no âmbito da Convenção de Genebra sobre o Estatuto dos Refugiados, de 1951, bem como do seu Protocolo de 1967, abstendo-se de repatriar pessoas para o seu país de origem, sempre que incorram no risco de pena de morte ou de violação de outros direitos humanos. A posição da China não se alterou até hoje. A China não reconhece os refugiados norte-coreanos, que encara como migrantes económicos. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente continuará a acompanhar atentamente a situação dos refugiados norte-coreanos e a sensibilizar a China para este problema.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002684/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Chinese Government's plans to return refugees to North Korea

A large group of North Koreans captured in recent weeks are on the verge of being sent back to North Korea against their will, with the possibility of harsh punishment and even execution if returned home. It has been reported that the new North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, has declared that refugees who escaped DPRK during the mourning period for his father would be 'annihilated' together with their entire families.

South Korean lawmakers have already adopted a bipartisan resolution regarding the forced repatriation. The resolution, submitted by Rep. Park Sun-young and signed by 29 lawmakers, condemns China's repatriation policy, urges Beijing to change its stance on North Korean defectors by recognising them as refugees instead of economic migrants, and calls for stronger support for North Korean defectors from the international community.

Against this background:

1. Has the High Representative pressed China, as State Party to the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees, to respect its international obligations in respect of the principle of non-refoulement?

2. What concrete measures does the High Representative envisage taking to ensure that the group of North Koreans is not repatriated to North Korea?

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

The EU has raised the issue of North Korean asylum-seekers and refugees with China, in particular in the framework of the EU-China Human rights dialogue. All countries should as a matter of principle fulfil their commitments under the 1951 Convention related to the status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol by refraining from refouling people to their country of origin where they might face the death penalty or other human rights abuses. The Chinese position has remained unchanged until now. It does not recognise North Korean refugees and regards them as economic migrants. The High Representative/Vice-President will continue to follow closely the situation of North Korean refugees and to engage China on this issue.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002686/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per il complesso orchestrale stabile presso l'Auditorio Aureliano nel XVIII Municipio di Roma

Nel XVIII Municipio di Roma è in via di ultimazione la costruzione del nuovo Auditorio Aureliano, una struttura destinata a promuovere le attività culturali, artistiche e creative (concerti, danza, laboratori, proiezioni, etc.) all'interno di una prestigiosa cornice. L'apertura dell'Auditorio offrirà anche la possibilità di invitare giovani talenti da tutta Europa e da paesi terzi, coinvolgendo in particolar modo ragazzi appartenenti a zone povere e disagiate, i quali verranno selezionati tramite audizioni-concorso. I giovani musicisti diplomati al conservatorio che verranno selezionati, avranno così la possibilità di lavorare in questa struttura continuando la loro formazione, affiancati, fra l'altro, da esperti professori d'orchestra scelti fra le prime parti dell'orchestra nazionale di S. Cecilia, oltre che attraverso il confronto con altri complessi musicali italiani e stranieri presenti all'Auditorio Aureliano durante la stagione musicale.

Premesso che il progetto richiede un rilevante sostegno finanziario per mantenere alta la qualità dell'offerta artistica oltre che delle infrastrutture e dei servizi offerti, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. esistono programmi o finanziamenti che possano sostenere la realizzazione di un complesso orchestrale stabile presso l'Auditorio Aureliano?

2. esistono finanziamenti o programmi per creare una partnership tra complessi di eccellenza europei ed extra-europei?

3. può fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta data da Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2012)

La Commissione europea incoraggia e sostiene le orchestre attive a livello europeo nell'ambito del programma Cultura.

Le orchestre che danno concerti in diversi paesi europei possono chiedere una so**vvenzione di funzionamento nell'ambito della categoria** «Ambasciatori» (asse 2 del programma). Gli «Ambasciatori» sono organizzazioni che, per la loro influenza in campo culturale a livello europeo, hanno la vocazione ad essere «rappresentative» della cultura europea. Per aver titolo a ricevere tale sostegno l'orchestra deve essere legalmente stabilita da almeno due anni in uno dei paesi partecipanti e deve esibirsi in almeno sette paesi partecipanti al programma.

Al di là di questo sostegno specifico agli Ambasciatori, il programma Cultura offre delle opportunità anche alle orchestre che desiderino partecipare a progetti di cooperazione con partner di diversi paesi (asse 1.1 progetti di cooperazione pluriennali e asse 1.2.1 misure di cooperazione).

Tutte le informazioni necessarie in merito a tale sostegno (compresa la guida al programma Cultura, il calendario e i moduli di candidatura) sono reperibili al seguente indirizzo:
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm.

Gli operatori culturali dovrebbero rivolgersi al punto di contatto culturale nel loro paese. Punti di contatto culturali, aventi il compito di promuovere il programma e di agevolarne l'accesso, sono stati istituiti nei paesi che partecipano al programma. L'elenco dei punti di contatto culturali è reperibile all'indirizzo:
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/culture2007/contacts/national_pts_en.html.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002686/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Possible funding for the permanent orchestral ensemble at the Aurelian Auditorium in the 18th sub-municipality of Rome

The construction of the new Aurelian Auditorium is nearing completion in Rome's 18th sub-municipality, a building designed to promote cultural, artistic and creative activities (concerts, dances, workshops, screenings, etc.) within a prestigious setting. The opening of the Auditorium will also provide an opportunity to invite young talent from all over Europe and third countries, particularly young people from poor and disadvantaged areas, who will be selected by means of competitive auditions. The young music graduates from the conservatory who are chosen will thus have the opportunity to work in this establishment and continue their training alongside, amongst others, expert orchestral teachers selected from among the leading lights of the S. Cecilia national orchestra. They will also be able to mix with other musical ensembles, from Italy and abroad, which visit the Aurelian Auditorium during the music season.

Given that the project requires considerable financial support to maintain the high quality of the artistic offering as well as the infrastructure and services provided, can the Commission state whether:

1. any programmes or funding exist which could support the creation of a permanent orchestral ensemble at the Aurelian Auditorium;

2. any programmes or funding exist to create a partnership between preeminent ensembles from around Europe and beyond?

3. Can it also give a general overview of the situation?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission encourages and supports orchestras active at European level within the framework of the Culture **Programme.**

Orchestras carrying out their activities in different European countries can apply for an operating grant under the 'Ambassadors' category (Strand 2 of the programme). 'Ambassadors' are organisations which, through their influence in the cultural field at European level, have a clear aptitude to be 'representatives' of European culture. To be qualified to receive such support, the orchestra must be legally established for at least two years in one of the participating countries and must carry out its activities in at least seven countries taking part in the programme.

Besides this specific support to Ambassadors, the Culture Programme also offers opportunities for orchestras which would like to be involved in cooperation projects with partners from different countries (strand 1.1 multiannual cooperation projects and strand 1.2.1 cooperation measures).

All the necessary information about this support (including the Culture Programme guide, the calendar and the applications forms) is available at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

Cultural operators are advised to get in touch with the Cultural contact point in their country. Cultural contact points have been established in the countries taking part in the programme and are responsible for promoting the programme and facilitating access to it. The list of cultural contact points is available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/culture2007/contacts/national_pts_en.html

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002687/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 8 d.)

Tema: Švietimas Baltijos jūros regione

Sėkmingas ekonomikos vystymas vis daugiau priklauso nuo to, kokios bus investicijos į žmones ir intelektualinio potencialo išsaugojimą bei plėtrą. Akademinės bendruomenės turi aktyviai bendradarbiauti ir neapsiriboti veikla tik savo šalyje. Šiandien būtina keistis sukaupta patirtimi ir ieškoti partnerių užsienyje. Svarbu ne tik ugdyti visų, kurie mokosi, kompetenciją, bet ir sudaryti galimybes jauniems specialistams įsilieti į kaimyninių šalių darbo rinkas.

Viena iš prioritetinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos sričių – išsaugoti ir didinti Baltijos jūros regiono patrauklumą, ypač švietimo ir jaunimo, turizmo, kultūros ir sveikatos srityse.

Ar galėtų Komisija informuoti, kaip stiprinamas savarankiškas regioninių Baltijos jūros regiono universitetų bendradarbiavimas?

Kokiomis programomis bandoma padėti MVĮ užmegzti ryšius su akademine bendruomene?

Kokios tyrėjų ir studentų judėjimo kliūtys Baltijos jūros regione šiuo metu nustatytos?

Ar kuriami Baltijos jūros regiono mokyklų partnerių tinklai? Kokias funkcijas jie atliks?

Kas įgyvendinama projektu „Baltijos mokymo programa“?

Ar kuriamas jaunimo išteklių centras?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 26 d.)

1. Pagal ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategiją įgyvendinama Baltijos universitetų programa, kurią koordinuoja Upsalos universitetas, jungia 227 unversitetus iš 14 šalių. Pagal ją siūlomos studijų programos, dėstytojų rengimas, studentų veikla, studentų mainai, bendradarbiavimo projektai ir konferencijos. Programa pagrindinis dėmesys skiriamas tvariam vystymuisi ir švietimui apie jį.

2. Projektu „BSR-Quick“, kurį koordinuoja *Hanseparlament e. V.*, steigiama Baltijos jūros akademija, teikianti akademinį lavinimą ir profesinį mokymą MVĮ darbuotojams ir verslininkams. Akademijos tikslas – patenkinti išaugusią kvalifikuoto personalo paklausą ir paskatinti MVĮ inovacinius pajėgumus.

3. Svarbus tyrimas, kurį koordinavo Danijos, Vokietijos ir Lietuvos mokslo ministerijos, rodo, kad judumui vis dar kliudo informacijos apie studijų galimybes, finansavimą ir studijų programas anglų kalba stoka. Be to, reikia, kad regiono universitetų programos ir suteikti mokymosi kreditai būtų pripažinti.

4. Programomis „Comenius“ ir „Leonardo“ bei nacionaliniu finansavimu remiamas mokyklų bendradarbiavimas aktualiais klausimais, kaip antai kokybės ir mokyklų tobulinimo, ir sudaromos mokinių mainų galimybės. Būsimi tikslai – stiprinti bendradarbiavimą ir keitimąsi informacija siekiant strategijos „Europa 2020“ tikslų ir įgyvendinant Baltijos jūros strategiją suartinti regiono šalis.

5. Įgyvendinant „Baltijos mokymo programą“ sukurtos tarpvalstybinės stažuotės, suartinančios studentus ir įmones, o tai paskatino verslumą ir praktinį mokymą.

6. Jaunimo išteklių centras kol kas nesukurtas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002687/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Education in the Baltic Sea Region

Successful economic development is becoming increasingly dependent on what kinds of investments are made in people and on maintaining and developing intellectual potential. The academic community must cooperate actively and must not limit its work to its own country. Today, it is essential to exchange experience gained and to search for partners abroad. It is important not just to develop the skills of all students, but to create opportunities for young specialists to access the labour markets of neighbouring countries.

One of the priority areas of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is to maintain and reinforce the attractiveness of the Baltic Sea Region, in particular through education, tourism, culture and health.

Could the Commission indicate how cooperation between the regional universities of the Baltic Sea Region is being enhanced on a voluntary basis?

What programmes are being used to try to help SMEs establish links with the academic community?

What barriers have currently been identified hampering the mobility of researchers and students in the Baltic Sea Region?

Are networks of partner schools being created in the Baltic Sea Region? What functions will they perform?

What is being accomplished through the 'Baltic Training Programme' project?

Is a youth resource centre being established?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

1. Within the framework of the EU Strategy for Baltic Sea Region, the Baltic University Programme, coordinated by the University of Uppsala, unites 227 universities from 14 countries. It offers university courses, teacher training, student activities, exchange of students, cooperation projects and conferences. It focuses on (education on) sustainable development.

2. The project 'BSR-Quick' coordinated by the Hanseparlament e. V. is putting into place the Baltic Sea Academy which offers academic education and vocational training for employees and entrepreneurs of SMEs. The objective is to address the increased need for skilled staff and boost the innovation capacities of SMEs.

3. An important study, coordinated by the Science Ministries of Denmark, Germany and Lithuania, shows that mobility is still hampered by a lack of information on study possibilities, funding and university courses offered in English. Acknowledgment of the courses and credit points given by universities in the Region is also needed.

4. Comenius and Leonardo programmes, as well as national funding, support schools to cooperate on relevant topics like quality and school improvement and enable the exchange of pupils. Future objectives are to increase cooperation and exchange on the Europe 2020 strategy goals and to bring the Region closer together with the help of the Baltic Sea Strategy.

5. The Baltic Training Programme has put in place cross-border work placements bringing together students and enterprises and has fostered entrepreneurship and practical training.

6. So far the establishment of a youth resource centre has not been put into place.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002688/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 8 d.)

Tema: Baltijos jūros regiono visuomenės sveikata

Sveika visuomenė – tvarios šalies pagrindas. Įvairios socialinės ir ekonominės problemos lemia trumpėjantį žmonių amžių. Tai neišvengiamai atsiliepia BVP – jis mažėja, taip pat didina ir taip brangios sveikatos priežiūros sistemos išlaidas, blogina gyventojų gyvenimo kokybę. Pagrindinis siekis turi būti toks Baltijos jūros regiono išvystymas, kad jis taptų klestinčiu „sveikatos regionu".

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos trečiojo ramsčio projektų numatyta „išsaugoti ir didinti Baltijos jūros regiono patrauklumą, ypač švietimo ir jaunimo, turizmo, kultūros ir sveikatos srityse".

Ar Komisija galėtų nurodyti, kokiomis priemonėmis remiamos visiems prieinamų aukštos kokybės pirminės sveikatos priežiūros sistemos?

Kaip siekiama padėti didinti visuomenės sveikatos sistemos išlaidų efektyvumą?

Kas įgyvendinta jaunimo alkoholio ir narkotikų vartojimo prevencijos srityje?

Kas pasiekta stiprinant socialinius gebėjimus naudotis e. sveikatos technologijomis, atsižvelgiant į visuomenės senėjimo problemą?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 26 d.)

Su pirmine sveikatos priežiūra ir visuomenės sveikatos sistemos išlaidų efektyvumu susiję klausimai priklauso valstybių narių kompetencijai. Taryba šiuo metu svarsto, kaip sveikatos investicijų ir skurdo rodiklių ir (arba) sveikos darbo jėgos sąsajas būtų galima įtraukti į nacionalines reformų programas. Iki 2012 m. rugpjūčio mėn. bus paskelbta pažangos ataskaita.

ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategija užtikrinama, kad su sveikata ir socialine gerove susijusi veikla Šiaurės dimensijos šalyse būtų įgyvendinama koordinuojant visų susijusių subjektų veiklą. Tai praktinis ES ir ES nepriklausančių šalių bendradarbiavimas bendroje sistemoje. Kelios valstybės narės šiuo metu ragina labiau atsižvelgti į sveikatos klausimus Baltijos jūros regione ir sukurti atskirą prioritetinę sritį.

Įgyvendinant susijusį pavyzdinį projektą parengti šie regioniniai veiksmai: „Jaunimo alkoholio ir narkotikų vartojimo prevencija Baltijos jūros regiono bendruomenėse" ir „Baltijos jūros regiono projektas su alkoholiu ir narkotikais susijusiai žalai, daromai jaunimui, mažinti". Šiais veiksmais remiama alkoholio ir narkotikų prevencija, įvertinami dalyvaujančių bendruomenių poreikiai ir sukuriamas tarpvalstybinis visuomenės sveikatos specialistų, praktikų ir politikos formuotojų tinklas.

E. sveikatos veiksmais visų pirma siekiama didinti e. sveikatos priemonių pripažinimą ir mokyti sveikatos specialistus bei piliečius, kaip geriau pasinaudoti e. sveikatos priemonėmis kuriant standartizuotus sprendimus ([1]), naudojantis internetine informavimo ir stebėsenos programa lėtiniu širdies nepakankamumu sergantiems pacientams ([2]), ir skatinant skaidrią informaciją apie sveikatą Europoje, tokiu būdu remiant piliečių judumą užsienyje ([3]).

([1]) Keturi e. sveikatai skirti leidiniai (pateikiami www.ictforhealth.net).
([2]) Programa SALUDA (http://www.saluda-asd.de/en/index.php).
([3]) Per „Viva-Port" – daugiakalbį asmeninės sveikatos portalą (šiuo metu rengiamas), kuriame sudaromos sąlygos lėtinėmis ligomis sergančių pacientų sveikatos duomenis registruoti elektroniniu būdu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002688/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Public health in the Baltic Sea region

A healthy society is the basis for a sustainable country. Various social and economic problems are responsible for shortening people's lives. This inevitably has an impact on GDP, which declines, while it also increases the costs of the already expensive healthcare system and causes people's quality of life to deteriorate. The main objective must be the development of the Baltic Sea region so that it becomes a prosperous 'region of health'.

One of the main projects of the third pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is to 'reinforce the attractiveness of the Baltic Sea Region in particular through education, tourism and health'.

Could the Commission indicate what measures are being taken to support high quality primary healthcare systems that are accessible to all?

What measures are being taken to help increase cost-efficiency of the public health system?

What has been accomplished in terms of alcohol and drug prevention among young people?

What has been achieved in terms of strengthening social capacities to use e-health technologies, taking into account the problem of an ageing population?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

Issues related to primary healthcare and the cost-efficiency of the public health system fall under the competence of the Member States. The Council is currently considering how links between health investments and poverty rates/ healthy workforce can be included in the National Reform Programmes. A progress report will be issued by August 2012.

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) ensures that health and social well-being activities in the Northern Dimension area are implemented with all relevant actors in a coordinated way. This is a practical collaboration between EU and non-EU countries within a joint framework. Several Member States are now calling for a better recognition of health issues in the BSR through the setting up a of separate priority area.

Under the related flagship project, the following regional actions have been developed: 'Alcohol and Drug Prevention among Young People in BSR Communities' and 'BSR Project on Reducing Alcohol and Drug related Harm among Young People'. These actions facilitate alcohol and drug prevention, assess needs in participating communities, and create a cross-border network of public health specialists, practitioners and policy-makers.

e-Health actions have concentrated on raising acceptance and educating medical professionals and citizens on a better utilisation of e-Health tools through generating standardised solutions ([1]), using a web-based education and monitoring programme for chronic heart failure patients ([2]) and facilitating transparent health information in Europe and thereby supporting citizen's mobility abroad ([3]).

([1]) Four publications on eHealth (available at www.ictforhealth.net).
([2]) SALUDA programme (http://www.saluda-asd.de/en/index.php).
([3]) Through 'Viva-Port' — a multi-lingual personal health portal (currently under development), enabling citizens with chronic diseases to document electronically their health data.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002689/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 8 d.)

Tema: Energijos rinkos Baltijos jūros regione

Gerinant Baltijos jūros regiono valstybių energetinį saugumą būtina kurti veiksmingą, funkcionuojančią ir integruotą energijos rinką ir infrastruktūrą. Naudojant tarptautines energijos jungtis reikėtų integruoti Baltijos jūros regiono valstybių energijos rinkas. Jų integracija ne tik užtikrintų konkurencija grindžiamus santykius, bet ir sumažintų energetinę, ekonominę bei politinę grėsmę visam Baltijos jūros regionui.

Baltijos jūros regione gausu bioenergijos žaliavų išteklių, kuriamos naujos atsinaujinančios energijos plėtros technologijos. Bioenergija tampa labai svarbi siekiant tvarios plėtros ne tik pasauliniu ar regioniniu mastu, bet ir konkrečioje vietovėje.

Remiantis Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos trečiojo ramsčio pirmąja prioritetine sritimi, pagrindinis siekis yra gerinti energijos rinkų pasiekiamumą, efektyvumą ir saugumą.

Ar Komisija galėtų informuoti, kokia padaryta pažanga įgyvendinant Baltijos jūros šalių energijos rinkos jungčių planą (BEMIP)?

Kas įgyvendinama bioenergetikos skatinimo Baltijos jūros regione projektu?

Ar plečiamas Šiaurės šalių elektros energijos rinkos modelis (NORDEL)?

Kokios šalys dalyvauja įgyvendinant šį projektą?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 27 d.)

BEMIP veiksmų plano įgyvendinimą nuolat stebi aukšto lygio darbo grupė, kurią sudaro Komisijos ir valstybių narių atstovai. Pagrindiniai energijos infrastruktūros projektai įgyvendinami sėkmingai, o pagrindinis uždavinys yra Baltijos jūros valstybių narių integracija į ES energijos rinką. Be to, vyksta diskusijos dėl regioninio suskystintų gamtinių dujų terminalo ir atominės elektrinės. Daugiau išsamios informacijos bus pateikta ketvirtojoje BEMIP pažangos ataskaitoje, kurią aukšto lygio darbo grupė patvirtins birželio mėn.

Regioninės bioenergijos programos remiamos ir valdomos pagal Baltijos jūros regiono programą. Daugiau informacijos apie konkrečius projektus galima rasti programai skirtoje interneto svetainėje

http://eu.baltic.net/The_Baltic_Sea_Region_Programme_2007_2013.2.html

Šiuo metu kartu su Estijos, Latvijos ir Lietuvos atstovais vertinamos techninės Baltijos jūros valstybių narių integracijos į Šiaurės šalių elektros energijos rinką galimybės ir laiko aspektai.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002689/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Energy markets in the Baltic Sea region

Improving the energy security of the countries in the Baltic Sea region requires the creation of an effective, functioning and integrated energy market and infrastructure. The energy markets of the countries of the Baltic Sea region should be integrated by using international energy interconnections. Their integration would not only ensure relations based on competition, but would also reduce the energy, economic and political threat to the entire Baltic Sea region.

The Baltic Sea region is rich in bioenergy raw materials and new technologies are being created to develop renewable energy. Bioenergy is becoming very important for sustainable development not just globally or regionally, but in particular localities.

According to the first priority area of the third pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the main objective is to improve the accessibility, efficiency and security of energy markets.

Could the Commission say what progress has been made in implementing the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP)?

What is being implemented through the Baltic Sea Region Bioenergy Promotion project?

Is the Nordic electricity market model (Nordel) being extended?

Which countries are participating in the implementation of this project?

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

Implementation of the BEMIP Action Plan is continuously monitored by the High Level Group, consisting of representatives of the Commission and the Member States. Implementation of the key energy infrastructure projects is on good track, and integration of the Baltic Member States in the EU's energy market is the main objective. Furthermore, discussions are ongoing regarding a regional LNG terminal and a nuclear power plant. The fourth BEMIP progress report — to be adopted by the High Level Group in June — will contain more detailed information.

Regional bio-energy programs are supported and managed within the framework of the Baltic Sea Region Programme. Detailed information on the specific projects can be found on the programme's website: http://eu.baltic.net/The_Baltic_Sea_Region_Programme_2007_2013.2.html

Assessment of technical possibilities and timeframes for integration of the Baltic Member States in the Nordic power market is under way — with the participation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002690/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. kovo 8 d.)

Tema: Transporto plėtra Baltijos jūros regione

Vienoje iš prioritetinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos sričių įvardijama „gerinti vidaus ir išorės transporto jungtis“. Transporto plėtra turi didinti Baltijos jūros regiono šalių tarpusavio ryšius ir pasiekiamumą, užtikrinti sklandų prekių ir asmenų judėjimą bei mažinti regiono atskirtį. Transporto infrastruktūros modernizavimas yra viena svarbiausių ekonomikos pažangą užtikrinančių priemonių regione. Turime investuoti į transporto infrastruktūrą, kad sukurtume rinkas ir naujas verslo galimybes bei užtikrintume ir sustiprintume regiono konkurencines pozicijas ir išnaudotume jo plėtros potencialą.

Noriu paklausti Komisijos, kokia pažanga pasiekta kuriant suderintas prioritetines transporto infrastruktūras?

Kas įgyvendinama Šiaurės dimensijos transporto ir logistikos partnerystės srityje?

Ar kuriami funkciniai oro erdvės blokai Baltijos jūros regione?

Kas įgyvendinta kuriant Baltijos jūros greitkelių tinklą?

Komisijos nario S. Kallaso atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. balandžio 25 d.)

ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategija padeda užtikrinti visapusiškesnį požiūrį į transporto veiklos planavimą Baltijos jūros regione. Joje dėmesys sutelkiamas į dideles infrastruktūros problemas, kurios vis dar lemia susiskaidymą regione.

Šiaurės matmens transporto ir logistikos partnerystės (NDPTL) administracinės struktūros jau visiškai parengtos. 2011 m. antroje pusėje pradėta keletas Europos Komisijos remiamų tyrimų (bendra vertė – 600 000 EUR), kuriais siekiama nustatyti prioritetines veiksmų sritis, pavyzdžiui, priemones, kurių reikia imtis, kad būtų mažinama spūsčių sienos perėjimo punktuose. 2011 m. lapkričio mėn. visi partneriai parėmė pasiūlymą sukurti fondą su NDTPL susijusiems tyrimams ir projektams remti.

Baltijos jūros regione kuriami du funkciniai oro erdvės blokai (FAB): Baltijos funkcinis oro erdvės blokas, kurį drauge kuria Lenkija ir Lietuva, ir Šiaurės Europos funkcinis oro erdvės blokas, kurį drauge kuria Latvija, Estija, Suomija ir Norvegija. Abu šie funkciniai oro erdvės blokai ribosis su trečiu funkciniu oro erdvės bloku, kuris yra į vakarus nuo jų išilgai Baltijos jūros, t. y. su Danijos ir Švedijos funkciniu oro erdvės bloku. Visi trys funkciniai oro erdvės blokai turi pradėti veikti ne vėliau kaip 2012 m. gruodžio 4 d.

Paramos jūrų greitkeliams pagal TEN-T programą srityje projektai, susiję su Baltijos jūros zona, sudaro apie 60 % visų esamų Europos jūrų greitkelių projektų (įskaitant Klaipėdos-Karlshamno jungtį). Šiems projektams skiriama 122 mln. EUR ES dotacijų, o iš viso – 730 mln. EUR investicijų. Trys projektai sutelkti į išlakų mažinimą; tuo tikslu sprendžiamas standartų klausimas ir remiama veikla, susijusi su suskystintų gamtinių dujų degalinių tinklo kūrimo iki 2015 m. generaliniu planu. Siekiant užtikrinti tinkamą jūrų greitkelių projekto koordinavimą, su projektų įgyvendinimu susijusios valstybės narės, Transporto generalinis direktoratas (MOVE generalinis direktoratas) ir jūrų greitkelių Europos koordinatorius sukūrė specialią darbo grupę.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002690/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Development of transport in the Baltic Sea region

The strategy for the Baltic Sea Region mentions improving 'internal and external transport links' as one of its priority areas. The development of transport must increase interconnections between the countries of the Baltic Sea region and accessibility, ensure the smooth movement of goods and people and reduce the region's isolation. The modernisation of transport infrastructure is one of the most important means of ensuring economic progress in the region. We must invest in transport infrastructure so that we create markets and new business opportunities, as well as guarantee and strengthen the region's competitive position and exploit its development potential.

I would like to ask the Commission what progress has been made in creating the agreed priority transport infrastructures.

What is being accomplished in the area of the *Northern Dimension Partnership* on *Transportation and Logistics?*

Are functional airspace blocks being created in the Baltic Sea region?

What has been accomplished in terms of developing the Baltic Motorways of the Seas network?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The EU Strategy for the Baltic helps to ensure a more comprehensive approach to transport planning in the Baltic Sea Region. It focuses on addressing the big infrastructure challenges that is still dividing the region.

Regarding the Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics (NDPTL), the administrative structures are now fully operational. A series of studies — supported by the EC — for a total of EUR 600 000 were launched in the second half of 2011 in order to identify priority areas of action, such as the necessary measures to reduce the bottlenecks at the border crossings. In November 2011, the principle to set up a 'fund' to support studies/projects relating to NDTPL was endorsed by all partners.

Two functional airspace blocks (FABs) are under development in the Baltic Sea region: the Baltic FAB, which is developed jointly by Poland and Lithuania, and the Northern European FAB which is developed jointly by Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and also Norway. Both of these FABs will be adjacent to a third FAB on their western side along the Baltic Sea, which is the Danish/Swedish FAB. All three FABs must be operational by 4 December 2012 at the latest.

Regarding support for Motorways of the Seas (MoS) under the TEN-T programme, projects involving the Baltic Sea Area currently make up 60 % of all existing European MoS projects (amongst which the Klaipéda-Karlshamn link). These projects receive EUR 122 million of EU grants and amount to EUR 730 million of total investments. Three projects focus on the reduction of emissions by addressing the issue of standards and supporting work on a master plan for the deployment before 2015 of an LNG re-fuelling network. To ensure proper coordination of the MoS project, the Member States concerned by the projects, the Transport Directorate-General (DG MOVE) and the European Coordinator for MoS, have jointly set up a dedicated task force.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002691/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(8 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Powyborcze zatrzymania w Rosji

Dnia 5 marca 2012 r. w Moskwie i Petersburgu odbyły się demonstracje przeciwko sfałszowanym wyborom prezydenckim. Funkcjonariusze OMON-u rozgromili pokojowe demonstracje. Według różnych źródeł zatrzymano od 550 nawet do1300 osób, w tym przedstawicieli opozycji Aleksieja Nawalnego, Ilję Jaszyna, Eduarda Limonowa i Siergieja Udalcowa. Jak donoszą media, OMON-owcy interweniowali bardzo brutalnie. Protestujących przewracano, wykręcano im ręce. Odpychano też dziennikarzy.

„Obywatele Federacji Rosyjskiej mają prawo gromadzić się w sposób pokojowy, bez broni, oraz organizować zebrania, wiece i demonstracje, pochody i pikiety" – tak głosi 31 artykuł konstytucji Federacji Rosyjskiej. Niestety prawo to zdaje się być odbierane obywatelom tego kraju.

Unia Europejska powinna wyrazić zdecydowany sprzeciw wobec łamania swobód obywatelskich w Federacji Rosyjskiej. W związku z tym zwracam się do Komisji z zapytaniem, czy poza wystosowanymi oświadczenia ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie brutalnego zatrzymania pokojowych demonstrantów w tym kraju?

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

Komisja oraz Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca są świadome, że doszło do zatrzymań osób, które protestowały w dniu 5 marca 2012 r.

Jak Szanowny Pan Poseł został wcześniej poinformowany, Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca i Komisja nieustannie wyrażają zdecydowany sprzeciw wobec łamania swobód obywatelskich w Rosji. Kwestie naruszania prawa i nadużyć są stale podnoszone przez UE na różnych szczeblach i na spotkaniach prowadzonych w różnych formułach, w szczególności na szczycie UE-Rosja i w trakcie odbywających się regularnie konsultacji na temat praw człowieka.

Kwestie dotyczące zagwarantowania wolności zgromadzeń w Rosji, zatrzymywania działaczy, oraz – bardziej ogólnie – realizacji wspólnych zobowiązań, jakie UE i Rosja podjęły w ramach Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych (ONZ), Rady Europy i Organizacji Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie (OBWE), zostały ostatnio poruszone podczas spotkania na szczycie w Brukseli w dniu 15 grudnia 2011 r., również w związku z powyborczymi protestami w Rosji w grudniu 2011 r. W dniu 29 listopada 2011 r., podczas konsultacji UE-Rosja na temat praw człowieka, szczegółowo przeanalizowano wdrażanie ustawy federalnej w sprawie zebrań, wieców, demonstracji, pochodów i pikiet. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca i Komisja będą nadal wzywać Rosję do przestrzegania jej zobowiązań.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002691/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Detentions in Russia following elections

On 5 March 2012, demonstrations took place in Moscow and St Petersburg against the rigged presidential elections. The peaceful demonstrations were crushed by OMON officials. According to various sources, between 550 and 1 300 people were detained, including opposition representatives such as Alexei Navalny, Ilya Yashin, Eduard Limonov and Sergei Udaltsov. The media described the intervention by OMON officials as very brutal. Protesters were knocked to the ground and had their arms twisted. Journalists were also pushed back.

According to Article 31 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, 'Citizens of the Russian Federation shall have the right to gather peacefully, without weapons, and to hold meetings, rallies, demonstrations, marches and pickets'. Unfortunately, the citizens of this country seem to be deprived of this right.

The European Union should voice its resolute opposition to the violation of civil liberties in the Russian Federation. In connection with the above, can the Commission say whether, in addition to the statements it has issued, it intends to intervene in connection with the brutal detention of peaceful demonstrators in this country?

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

The Commission and the HR/VP are aware of the detention of protesters on 5 March 2012.

As the Honourable Member has been informed on earlier occasions, the HR/VP and the Commission are continuously taking a very strong stand against the violation of civil liberties in Russia. Such violations and abuses are consistently being raised by the EU at various levels and in various formats, most notably the EU-Russia Summits and in regular Human Rights Consultations.

Regarding concerns with the freedom of assembly in Russia, the arrests of the activists, and, more generally, the joint commitments the EU and Russia have undertaken in the United Nations (UN), the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) frameworks, these have been last addressed at the 15 December 2011 Summit in Brussels, also in conjunction with post-election protests in Russia in December 2011. The implementation of the Federal Law on meetings, rallies, marches and pickets has been looked into in detail during the 29 November 2011 meeting of the EU-Russia Human Rights Consultations. The HR/VP and the Commission will continue calling on Russia to respect its obligations.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002692/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(8 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: „Czarna lista" osób objętych zakazem wyjazdu z Białorusi

W ubiegłą środę portal Tut.by podał, że białoruskie władze rozważają możliwość objęcia zakazem wyjazdu z kraju osób, które wprost apelowały o wprowadzenie przez Zachód sankcji wobec Białorusi.

Portal informował, że wstępnie na liście miałoby się znaleźć 108 osób, w tym były przewodniczący parlamentu Stanisław Szuszkiewicz oraz szefowa niezależnego Białoruskiego Stowarzyszenia Dziennikarzy (BAŻ) Żanna Litwina.

7 marca na granicy białorusko-litewskiej został zatrzymany lider opozycyjnej białoruskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Obywatelskiej, Anatol Labiedźka. Został on poinformowany, że nie może wjechać do krajów UE. Labiedźka uważa, że odmówienie mu przekroczenia granicy ma związek z ową „czarną listą" osób objętych zakazem wyjazdu z Białorusi.

W związku z tym zwracam się z zapytaniem, czy Komisja posiada informacje na temat „czarnej listy" białoruskich opozycjonistów i wie, jakie nazwiska się na niej znajdują?

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

Komisja i Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji otrzymały doniesienia o istnieniu „czarnej listy" osób objętych zakazem wyjazdu z Białorusi. Komisja i Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji odnotowały również zwiększoną liczbę doniesień o przypadkach odmowy zgody na wyjazd z Białorusi przedstawicielom społeczeństwa obywatelskiego oraz opozycji politycznej. Jednak istnienie takiej „czarnej listy" nie może zostać potwierdzone, nie ma również dostępnych informacji co do nazwisk umieszczonych na liście.

W tym kontekście Komisja oraz Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji pragną zwrócić uwagę Szanownego Pana Posła na konkluzje przyjęte dnia 23 marca 2012 r. przez Radę do Spraw Zagranicznych, w których wezwano władze białoruskie do zaprzestania wszelkich prześladowań członków opozycji, obrońców praw człowieka, dziennikarzy oraz społeczeństwa obywatelskiego oraz do zapewnienia im swobody przemieszczania się.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002692/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: 'Blacklist' of people banned from leaving Belarus

Last Wednesday, the Internet portal tut.by reported that the Belarusian authorities were considering the possibility of imposing a ban on leaving the country for people who had openly called for sanctions by the West against Belarus.

The portal stated that initially there were approximately 108 people on the list, including the former speaker of parliament, Stanislau Shushkevich, and the head of the independent Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ), Zhanna Litvina.

On 7 March 2011, Anatoly Lebedko, the leader of the Belarusian opposition party, the United Civil Party, was arrested on the border between Belarus and Lithuania. He was informed that he could not travel to EU Member States. Lebedko believes that the refusal to allow him to cross the border is connected to this 'blacklist' of people banned from leaving Belarus.

In view of the above, I would like to ask whether the Commission has any information regarding the 'blacklist' of Belarusian opposition activists, and whether it knows the names of those on this list?

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

The Commission and the High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) are aware of reports on the existence of a 'blacklist' of people banned from leaving Belarus. The Commission and the HR/VP have also taken note of the increasing amount of reports on incidents of representatives from civil society and the political opposition who have been denied permission to leave the country. However, the existence of such a 'black list' cannot be confirmed and neither is information available concerning any names included on the list.

In this context, the Commission and the HR/VP would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the Conclusions adopted on 23 March 2012 by the Foreign Affairs Council, which call on the Belarusian authorities to stop all harassment of members of the opposition, human rights defenders, journalists and civil society, and not to hinder their freedom of movement.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-002694/12
do Komisji
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(8 marca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Współpraca z Ukrainą w celu zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa energetycznego UE

Zgodnie z raportem ([1]) Polskiego Instytutu Spraw Międzynarodowych Rosja wywiera na Ukrainę presję w kwestii cen gazu, w celu obniżenia wartości ukraińskiego przedsiębiorstwa Naftohaz i następnie przejęcia ukraińskiej infrastruktury gazowej. Ukraina, jako sygnatariusz Traktatu o Wspólnocie Energetycznej, zobowiązała się do respektowania zapisów unijnego trzeciego pakietu energetycznego, w tym o rozdzieleniu produkcji, przesyłu i dystrybucji surowca. Przejęcie przez rosyjski Gazprom aktywów Naftohazu mogłoby zagrozić bezpieczeństwu energetycznemu Unii. Jednocześnie wysokie ceny gazu utrudniają ukraińskim władzom wypełnianie zobowiązań wobec Międzynarodowego Funduszu Walutowego i tym samym kontynuację reform.

W styczniu 2012 r. komisarz ds. Energii Gunther Oettinger zapewnił, że Unia zaangażuje się w negocjacje gazowe pomiędzy Ukrainą a Rosją. W związku z tym chciałbym zapytać o to:

1. Jakie realne działania, we współpracy z Ukrainą podejmuje Komisja w celu zapewnienia Unii bezpieczeństwa energetycznego?

2. Jakie są prawne podstawy unijnego zaangażowania w negocjacje gazowe pomiędzy Ukrainą a Rosją?

3. Czy na działania Komisji w kwestii reformy ukraińskiego systemu gazu, a tym samym na bezpieczeństwo energetyczne krajów UE, wpływają kontrowersje związane ze sprawą uwięzienia przez władze ukraińskie Julii Tymoszenko?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Güntera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(2 kwietnia 2012 r.)

1. Współpraca energetyczna UE-Ukraina na mocy podpisanego w 2005 r. protokołu ustaleń obejmuje m.in. bezpieczeństwo dostaw energii i tranzytu węglowodorów. W tym kontekście jednym z najważniejszych projektów jest przyjęty na konferencji międzynarodowej w marcu 2009 r. wspólny projekt UE, Ukrainy i międzynarodowych instytucji finansowych (EBI, EBOR i Bank Światowy), dotyczący modernizacji ukraińskiego systemu przesyłu gazu. Komisja zapewniła, że w negocjowanym ostatnio układzie o stowarzyszeniu również uwzględniono przepisy dotyczące kwestii energetycznych, w tym systemu wczesnego ostrzegania.

2. UE wyraziła gotowość do uczestniczenia w trójstronnych konsultacjach z Ukrainą i Rosją, jeżeli zostanie do nich zaproszona przez obie strony.

3. Unia w dalszym ciągu w pełni wspiera trwające obecnie prace, które mają na celu wdrożenie projektu UE, Ukrainy i międzynarodowych instytucji finansowych w zakresie modernizacji ukraińskiego systemu przesyłu gazu. Wyroki wobec Julii Tymoszenko i Jurija Łucenki są dla UE rozczarowujące, bowiem zostały ogłoszone w wyniku postępowania sądowego niezgodnego z międzynarodowymi standardami dotyczącymi sprawiedliwości, przejrzystości i niezawisłości. Należy pamiętać, że po szczycie UE-Ukraina w dniu 19 grudnia 2011 r. wydano oświadczenie, iż kluczowe znaczenie dla tempa politycznego stowarzyszenia i gospodarczej integracji Ukrainy z UE będzie miało poszanowanie rządów prawa. Komisja pragnie także zwrócić uwagę Szanownego Pana Posła na wydaną ostatnio rezolucję Zgromadzenia Parlamentarnego Rady Europy dotyczącą funkcjonowania instytucji demokratycznych na Ukrainie.

([1]) http://www.pism.pl/publications/bulletin/no-23-356.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002694/12
to the Commission
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Cooperation with Ukraine with the aim of ensuring energy security for the EU

According to a report ([1]) from the Polish Institute of International Affairs, Russia is putting pressure on Ukraine on the issue of gas prices in order to reduce the value of the Ukrainian company Naftogaz and then take over the Ukrainian gas infrastructure. As a signatory to the Energy Community Treaty, Ukraine has undertaken to comply with the provisions of the EU's Third Energy Package, including the separation of fuel production, transmission and distribution. A take-over of Naftogaz assets by Russia's Gazprom could pose a threat to the energy security of the EU. At the same time, high gas prices are making it difficult for the Ukrainian authorities to fulfil their obligations to the International Monetary Fund, and thus to continue reforms.

In January 2012, the Commissioner for Energy, Günther Oettinger, gave his assurance that the EU would be involved in gas negotiations between Ukraine and Russia. In this connection, I should like to put the following questions:

1. What concrete measures is the Commission taking in cooperation with Ukraine in order to ensure the EU's energy security?

2. What is the legal basis for the EU's involvement in the gas negotiations between Ukraine and Russia?

3. Is the controversy surrounding the imprisonment of Yulia Tymoshenko by the Ukrainian authorities having any effect on the measures taken by the Commission in respect of the reform of the Ukrainian gas system, and thus on the energy security of EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

1. The EU-Ukraine energy cooperation under the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed in 2005 covers *inter alia* security of energy supplies and the transit of hydrocarbons. One of the most important projects in this context is the joint EU-Ukraine-IFI (EIB, EBRD and World Bank) project on the modernisation of the Ukrainian gas transit system agreed at an international conference in March 2009. The Commission has also ensured that energy provisions, including an Early Warning Mechanism, have been included in the recently negotiated Association Agreement.

2. The EU has indicated its willingness to enter into tripartite consultations with Ukraine and Russia if invited by both parties.

3. The EU continues to be fully supportive of the ongoing work towards the implementation of the EU-Ukraine-IFI project on the modernisation of the Ukrainian gas transit system. The EU is disappointed with the verdicts against Mrs Tymoshenko and Mr Lutsenko which came after trials which did not respect international standards as regards the fairness, transparency and independence of legal processes. It should be recalled that the EU-Ukraine Summit of 19 December 2011 stated that respect for the Rule of Law will be of crucial importance for the speed of Ukraine's political association and economic integration with the EU. The Commission would also like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the recent resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the functioning of democratic institutions in Ukraine.

([1]) http://www.pism.pl/publications/bulletin/no-23-356.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002695/12
an die Kommission
Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE)
(8. März 2012)

Betrifft: Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1223/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über kosmetische Mittel

Die Kosmetikverordnung (Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1223/2009) sieht vor, dass ab 11. März 2013 Tierversuche, die die Toxizität bei wiederholter Verabreichung, die Reproduktionstoxizität und die Toxikokinetik betreffen, verboten werden.

Folgende Fragen ergeben sich, wenn Produkte oder Substanzen, die ausschließlich mit Alternativmethoden getestet und in der EU auf den Markt gebracht worden sind, nachträglich außerhalb der EU anhand von Tierversuchen getestet werden:

1. In China zum Beispiel müssen alle kosmetischen Produkte und Substanzen, die in Kosmetikprodukten eingesetzt werden, vor ihrer Einführung in den chinesischen Markt an Tieren getestet werden. Muss die Substanz, nachdem sie in China an Tieren getestet wurde, vom europäischen Markt genommen werden oder wird es bei nachträglichen Tests an Tieren eine automatische Ausnahme vom Verbot geben?

2. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Problematik, die durch „hostile testing" (gezieltes Durchführen von Tierversuchen, um Mitbewerbern Schaden zuzufügen) oder zum Beispiel wissenschaftliche Testversuche an Tieren entstehen könnte, was zum Beispiel ausländische Mitbewerber zu ihrem Vorteil nutzen könnten, um Produkte europäischer Konkurrenten vom Markt zu drängen, wenn 2013 das Verbot in Kraft tritt?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2012)

Gemäß Artikel 18 Absatz 1 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1223/2009/EG ([1]) ist das Inverkehr-bringen kosmetischer Produkte verboten, wenn die Zusammensetzung, die Bestandteile oder Kombinationen von Bestandteilen zur Einhaltung der Bestimmungen der Verordnung in Tierversuchen getestet wurden. Nach Auffassung der Kommission werden Versuche dann „zur Einhaltung der Bestimmungen [der] Verordnung" durchgeführt, wenn die aus den Tierversuchen gewonnen Daten die Grundlage für die im Rahmen des Zulassungsverfahrens vorzulegende Sicherheitsbewertung des kosmetischen Mittels bilden. In den beiden Fällen, die der Herr Abgeordnete anführt, wäre dies nicht der Fall; daher würde das Verbot nicht greifen. Der betreffende Stoff könnte also weiterhin in der EU in Verkehr gebracht werden. Wird bei solchen Untersuchungen eine bestimmte Gefahr für die menschliche Gesundheit festgestellt, so können die Mitgliedstaaten gemäß den geltenden Rechtsvorschriften unter speziellen Bedingungen eine Ausnahmegenehmigung für Tierversuche beantragen.

([1]) ABl. L 342 vom 22.12.2009; gleicher Wortlaut in Artikel 4a Absatz 1 der Richtlinie 76/768/EWG, die bis Juli 2013 gilt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002695/12
to the Commission
Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on cosmetic products

The Cosmetics Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009) provides for the prohibition of animal tests concerning repeated-dose toxicity, reproductive toxicity and toxicokinetics with effect from 11 March 2013.

The following questions arise if products or substances which have been tested using alternative methods only and have been placed on the market in the EU are subsequently tested outside the EU on animals:

1. In China, for instance, all cosmetic products and substances used in cosmetic products must be tested on animals before being placed on the Chinese market. Will substances which are tested on animals in China then have to be removed from the European market, or will an automatic exemption be granted from the ban in the event of subsequent testing on animals?

2. How does the Commission assess the problems that may arise in connection with hostile testing (conducting animal tests with the express intention of harming competitors) or, for example, scientific tests on animals, practices which foreign firms, say, could use to their advantage in order to force the products of their European competitors off the market when the ban comes into force in 2013?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

Article 18 (1) of Regulation 1223/2009/EC ([1]) prohibits the marketing of cosmetic products where the final formulation, or ingredients, or combinations of ingredients, have been subject to animal testing in order to meet the requirements of the regulation. The Commission considers that testing is carried out in this sense 'in order to meet the requirements of the regulation' if the animal testing data is relied on in the safety assessment file of the cosmetic product. In the two situations referred to by the Honourable Member, this would not be the case and the marketing ban would not apply. The substances in question could therefore continue to be placed on the European market. In case a specific human health problem is identified in such tests, the existing legislation permits Member States to request a derogation from the testing ban under specific conditions.

([1]) OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, same wording in Article 4a (1) of Directive 76/768/EEC, applicable until July 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002696/12
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(8. März 2012)

Betrifft: Umsetzung der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie

Die EU-Wasserrahmenrichtlinie ist im Dezember 2000 in Kraft getreten und soll eine integrierte Gewässerschutzpolitik in Europa sicherstellen. Die Richtlinie befindet sich derzeit in der Umsetzungsphase.

Dies vorausgeschickt frage ich die EU-Kommission:

1. Auf welchem Stand befindet sich die Umsetzung?

2. Welche Ergebnisse und Maßnahmen sind bei der Umsetzung positiv aufgefallen?

3. Welche Probleme tauchen bei der Umsetzung auf?

4. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um die Probleme zu beheben?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(30. April 2012)

Die Kommission hat dem Europäischen Parlament und den Rat bereits in den Jahren 2007 und 2009 zwei Berichte über die Umsetzung der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie (2000/60/EG ([1])) vorgelegt. Darin werden wichtige vorbereitende Schritte für die Annahme der Bewirtschaftungspläne für die Flusseinzugsgebiete behandelt, die das wichtigste Instrument für die Umsetzung der Richtlinie darstellen ([2]).

Die Kommission ist derzeit mit der Ausarbeitung des dritten Berichts gemäß Artikel 18 der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie auf der Grundlage der von den Mitgliedstaaten übermittelten Bewirtschaftungspläne für die Flusseinzugsgebiete befasst. Sie hat vor, ihre Schlussfolgerungen im November 2012 als Teil des Konzepts für den Schutz der europäischen Wasserressourcen zu veröffentlichen. In dem Bericht werden die wichtigsten Erfolge und Lücken sowie Vorschläge für Folgemaßnahmen beleuchtet.

([1]) ABl. L 327 vom 22.12.2000.
([2]) Die Umsetzungsberichte finden sich unter:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/implrep2007/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002696/12
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Implementation of the Water Framework Directive

The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) entered into force in December 2000 and is intended to lead to the establishment of an integrated water protection policy in Europe. The directive is currently in the implementation phase.

1. What stage has been reached in the implementation of the WFD?

2. What positive results have been achieved and what successful measures have been taken?

3. What problems have arisen?

4. What steps does the Commission intend to take to eliminate the problems?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

The Commission has published already two reports to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC ([1])), in 2007 and 2009. They cover important preparatory steps for the adoption of the river basin management plans, the key tool to implement the directive ([2]).

The Commission is currently preparing a third report on the basis of the river basin management plans reported by Member States, and in accordance with WFD Article 18. It intends to publish its conclusions in November 2012 as part of the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources. The report will highlight the main achievements, gaps and proposals for follow-up.

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([2]) The implementation reports are available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/implrep2007/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002697/12
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: European VAT legislation and assistance dogs

From my understanding of European VAT legislation, the zero rate is not featured in the EU Sixth Directive or the recast Directive 2006/112/EC, as it was intended that the minimum VAT rate throughout Europe would be 5 %. However, zero-rating remains in some Member States, most notably the UK and Ireland, as a legacy of pre-EU legislation. These Member States have been granted a derogation allowing them to continue existing zero-rating, but cannot add new goods or services.

In the UK, current VAT legislation requires that food for assistance and guide dogs be standard-rated whereas food for dogs classed as 'working dogs' is zero-rated, i.e. VAT-exempt. This scenario is based on the fact that working dogs, such as sheepdogs and greyhounds, require a high-protein diet in comparison with every other type of dog, as their 'work' necessitates an increased amount of physical activity on a daily basis.

But assistance dogs provide a vital service to their owners, and the cost of training and supporting just one dog from birth is nearly EUR 60 000. In the UK, guide dog charities pay for most of their food. For example, the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association supported 8 000 dogs in 2010, incurring a VAT spend of EUR 360 000 on food alone. If the food were VAT-exempt, these voluntary organisations, which rely entirely on donations, would be able to provide more assistance dogs and more support for those citizens suffering from disabilities.

In light of this situation, I would be most grateful if the Commission could inform me, firstly, if it is aware of these circumstances and, secondly, if there is any way that a Member State such as the UK could negotiate either a new zero-rating for assistance-dog food or a derogation from the existing legislation?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission confirms that zero rates constitute exceptions to the general rules on VAT rates laid down in the EU VAT Directive ([1]). Since they form part of temporary derogations granted to certain Member States on the basis that such rates were in force before 1st January 1991 and continue to be limited to the goods to which they were applied at the time, their scope cannot be extended.

Subject to Category c of Annex III to the VAT Directive, Member States may however apply a reduced VAT rate set no lower than 5 % to foodstuffs for animal consumption. Since reduced VAT rates are optional, it is for each Member State to decide whether to apply them or not.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax, OJ L 347, 11.12.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002698/12
alla Commissione
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Centri estetici e parrucchieri cinesi

Negli ultimi anni si è registrato un aumento vertiginoso di negozi di parrucchiere e centri estetici gestiti da cittadini cinesi su tutto il territorio europeo. Come nel caso degli esercizi commerciali che vendono generi alimentari o abbigliamento, le indagini delle forze dell'ordine hanno evidenziato che, spesso, in questi negozi si utilizzano prodotti potenzialmente pericolosi per la salute dei clienti, per non parlare poi delle condizioni di lavoro dei dipendenti sottopagati e, in molti casi, clandestini.

La manodopera a basso costo e l'utilizzo di prodotti di dubbia provenienza, spesso privi del marchio europeo, con prezzi enormemente inferiori rispetto al regolare mercato, permettono a questi esercenti di offrire un servizio economicamente vantaggioso per il cliente, a danno però dei saloni che seguono le normative italiane ed europee.

Questo rappresenta una chiara violazione delle regole che garantiscono una concorrenza leale.

In riferimento a quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza del problema e se intende intervenire?

2. che cosa intende fare per tutelare la salute di migliaia di consumatori, considerando l'enorme quantitativo di prodotti importati illegalmente?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2012)

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni specifiche sul problema enunciato dall'onorevole deputata.

I prodotti cosmetici immessi sul mercato dell'Unione europea devono essere sicuri, indipendentemente dal luogo di fabbricazione. Essi devono inoltre ottemperare ai requisiti stabiliti dalla legislazione dell'UE ([1]) per quanto concerne la composizione, l'etichettatura e la documentazione.

La responsabilità di assicurare che i prodotti rispettino tutte le disposizioni del caso e siano stati sottoposti a un'opportuna valutazione di conformità ricade sugli operatori economici. La responsabilità di far rispettare la legislazione applicabile spetta agli Stati membri. Le informazioni sui prodotti che presentano gravi rischi sono scambiate tra gli Stati membri e la Commissione per il tramite del sistema RAPEX ([2]).

([1]) Direttiva 76/768/CEE del Consiglio, del 27 luglio 1976, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri relative ai prodotti cosmetici, GU L 262 del 27.9.1976, pag. 169.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002698/12
to the Commission
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Chinese beauty salons and hairdressers

In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of hairdressing and beauty salons run by Chinese citizens throughout Europe. As in the case of shops selling foodstuffs or clothing, investigations carried out by the authorities have reported that products are often used in these shops which could be potentially harmful to customers, to say nothing of the working conditions of the underpaid staff who, in many cases, are working illegally.

Cheap labour and the use of products of dubious origin, often lacking European labels and with prices significantly lower than the regular market price, enable these businesses to offer a service that is economically advantageous for the customer, but at the expense of those salons that respect Italian and European regulations.

This is in clear breach of the rules guaranteeing fair competition.

With reference to the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the problem and if it intends to intervene;

2. what it intends to do to protect the health of thousands of consumers, considering the enormous quantity of illegally imported products?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission does not possess specific information about the problem the Honourable Member refers to.

Cosmetic products placed on the European Union (EU) market must be safe, regardless of the place of manufacture. In addition, they must comply with the requirements established by the EU legislation ([1]) regarding composition, labelling and documentation.

Responsibility for ensuring that products comply with all applicable requirements and have undergone appropriate conformity assessment lies with the economic operators. Responsibility for enforcing the applicable legislation lies with Member States. Information about products posing serious risks is exchanged between the Member States and the Commission through the RAPEX system ([2]).

([1]) Council Directive of 27 July 1976 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products (76/768/EEC), OJ L 262, 27.9.1976, p.169.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002699/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(8 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Abuso dell'utilizzo dell'elicottero per irrorazione di pesticidi nelle colline dei vigneti del Prosecco della Marca Trevigiana e conseguenti danni alla salute dei residenti e all'ambiente

In molti comuni della zona DOCG (denominazione di origine controllata e garantita) del Prosecco, in provincia di Treviso, l'utilizzo dell'elicottero irroratore di pesticidi, consentito dalla Direttiva 2009/128/CE solo in situazioni di eccezionalità per combattere focolai di malattie in luoghi inaccessibili, è diventato, di fatto, sistematico anche in molti vigneti ubicati in luoghi facilmente accessibili dai normali mezzi agricoli.

La non necessità del ricorso a questo mezzo è confermata dal fatto che in alcuni comuni collinari della DOCG del Prosecco, l'elicottero non viene utilizzato, a dimostrazione che i pesticidi possono essere irrorati con i normali mezzi agricoli.

L'utilizzo improprio dell'elicottero per la gestione della viticoltura è stato anche oggetto di esposti da parte del WWF Alta Marca, di associazioni locali e singoli cittadini alla magistratura, al prefetto e ai sindaci dei comuni interessati. Nonostante il ricorso all'elicottero sia esplicitamente vietato dall'articolo 9 della direttiva 2009/128/CE sull'utilizzo sostenibile dei pesticidi, le aziende sanitarie e la Direzione servizi fitosanitari regionali del Veneto, autorizzano troppo frequentemente, in deroga al predetto articolo, l'utilizzo di elicotteri irroratori in vigneti prossimi ad abitazioni e strade.

Da circa trenta anni ormai, nella zona del Prosecco DOCG si utilizza il pesticida Mancozeb che è stato irrorato con elicottero fino al 2007. Solo nell'anno 2009 nel territorio dell'azienda sanitaria ULSS 7 (zona del Prosecco), sono stati utilizzati ben 107 013 chilogrammi di tale pesticida ([1]), riconosciuto interferente endocrino come l'amianto e quindi causa di effetti deleteri sulla salute nel corso degli anni. Stando ai dati forniti dalla stessa ULSS7, in questa zona si registra una continua, preoccupante crescita dell'incidenza delle neoplasie maligne e solo nel 2010 si è registrato un incremento del 7,2 % con un ammalato ogni 20 abitanti1.

Visto il considerando 15 della Direttiva 2009/128/CE che recita anche che «L'irrorazione aerea dei pesticidi può avere notevoli ripercussioni negative sulla salute umana e sull'ambiente, in particolare per la dispersione del prodotto», la Commissione non ritiene che la situazione illustrata sia una chiara violazione del citato articolo 9 della direttiva 2009/128/CE? La Commissione non ritiene necessario, nell'ottica della prevenzione primaria e ai fini della tutela della salute umana e dell'ambiente, eliminare definitivamente ogni possibilità di ricorrere a deroghe al divieto dell'uso di mezzi aerei per l'irrorazione dei pesticidi?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2012)

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni sull'eventuale violazione delle disposizioni dell'articolo 9 della direttiva 2009/128/CE ([2]) ad opera dell'Italia cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato. Informeremo tuttavia le autorità competenti italiane della questione affinché vi diano seguito.

La direttiva è il risultato di un lungo processo di codecisione sfociato, tra l'altro, nel divieto dell'irrorazione aerea con la possibilità di eventuali deroghe in condizioni estremamente limitate e controllate.

La direttiva è pienamente applicabile a decorrere dal 14 dicembre 2011 e considerato il periodo relativamente breve intercorso da tale data la Commissione non vede la necessità in questa fase di riesaminarne le disposizioni per quanto concerne l'irrorazione aerea.

([1]) Dati forniti dall'ULSS n. 7 alla sezione WWF Alta Marca.
([2]) GUJ L 309 del 24.11.2009, pag. 71.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002699/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Abusive use of a helicopter for spraying pesticides along the hillsides of the Marca Trevigiana Prosecco vineyards and the resulting damage to the health of residents and the environment

In many towns of the Prosecco DOCG (*denominazione di origine controllata e garantita*) region in the province of Treviso, the use of a helicopter to spray pesticides, only permitted by Directive 2009/128/EC in exceptional situations to combat outbreaks of disease in inaccessible areas, has in fact become systematic even in many vineyards situated in places that are easily accessible by conventional agricultural vehicles.

Proof that such methods are not necessary is given by the fact that helicopters are not used in some hillside towns of the Prosecco DOCG region, demonstrating that pesticides can be sprayed using normal agricultural vehicles.

The improper use of helicopters in the management of viticulture has also been the subject of complaints from the WWF *Alta Marca*, local associations and individual citizens to the judiciary, prefects and mayors of the towns concerned. Despite the fact that the use of helicopters is explicitly prohibited under Article 9 of Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides, the health authorities and the Veneto region's plant protection services division authorise the use of helicopters all too frequently for the spraying of vineyards near houses and roads.

For around 30 years, up to 2007 in fact, the pesticide Mancozeb has been sprayed by helicopters in the Prosecco DOCG region. In 2009 alone, 107 013 kg of the pesticide — a recognised endocrine disruptor similar to asbestos that is harmful to health over the course of years — were used in the ULSS 7 health authority area (the Prosecco region) ([1]). According to the data provided by ULSS7, this region has recorded a continuous and worrying increase in the incidence of malignant tumours and there was a 7.2 % rise in 2010 alone, with one in twenty inhabitants affected.

In view of Recital 14 of Directive 2009/128/EC, which states that 'aerial spraying of pesticides has the potential to cause significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment, in particular from spray drift', does the Commission not consider that the situation illustrated is in clear breach of the cited Article 9 of Directive 2009/128/EC? Does the Commission not consider it necessary, from the point of view of primary prevention and for the purposes of safeguarding human health and the environment, to permanently eliminate any possibility of exemptions to the ban on the use of aircraft for the spraying of pesticides?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission does not have information on the possible violation of provisions of Article 9 of Directive 2009/128/EC ([2]) by Italy, as referred to by the Honourable Member. However, we will inform the Italian competent authorities of this issue for follow-up on their side.

The directive represents the outcome of a long co-decision process, which resulted, among other things, in the prohibition of aerial spraying, with provisions for possible derogations, subject to very restricted and monitored conditions.

The directive is fully applicable since 14 December 2011, and given this relatively short period, the Commission does not see a need at this stage to review the provisions as regards aerial spraying.

([1]) Data provided by ULSS No 7 to the WWF Alta Marca department.
([2]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 71.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-002702/12
a la Comisión
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(8 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Reorientación de los Fondos Estructurales pendientes de asignación para combatir el desempleo juvenil y ayudar a las PYME

En el Consejo Europeo del 30 de enero de 2012, el Presidente de la Comisión Europea propuso a los Estados miembros reorientar los Fondos Estructurales pendientes de asignación en el marco de las perspectivas financieras para el periodo 2007-2013 para destinarlos a la ayuda a las PYME y a la lucha contra el desempleo juvenil. Se estimó que los fondos disponibles se elevaban a un total de 82 000 millones de euros, hasta 22 000 millones del Fondo Social Europeo y 60 000 millones de los Fondos Regionales y de Cohesión. El objetivo es trabajar con el gobierno y los agentes sociales de los ocho países que superan el 30 % de paro juvenil para ver la mejor manera en que se pueden reorientar dichos fondos.

Dado que todos los Fondos Estructurales para el periodo 2007-2013 ya se han distribuido entre los Estados miembros y se han asignado a su vez a distintos programas operativos y prioridades, ¿tiene la Comisión detectado qué programas se van a quedar sin fondos y por qué?

¿Hay alguna evaluación de impacto sobre esta retirada de fondos?

Habida cuenta de que los Estados miembros con un paro juvenil superior al 30 % poseen escaso margen de actuación en el marco de las políticas económicas nacionales debido al impacto de la crisis en las cuentas públicas, ¿no ha pensado la Comisión en aumentar la tasa de cofinanciación de los Fondos Estructurales para estos países con el fin de ayudarles a compensar el escaso margen de sus políticas nacionales? ¿Ha considerado encontrar fondos adicionales procedentes de otras fuentes de financiación para este fin?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión puede ofrecer a los Estados miembros apoyo en el diseño y la puesta en práctica de medidas destinadas al empleo juvenil, en particular a través de la Iniciativa de Oportunidades para la Juventud ([1]).

La situación nacional determinará la forma en que los recursos de los Fondos Estructurales de la UE disponibles en cada uno de los Estados miembros pueden utilizarse con mayor eficacia para financiar medidas que beneficien a la juventud. Es posible que se haya producido un retraso en su aplicación, y que los recursos estén infrautilizados en muchos Estados miembros que hayan asignado recursos procedentes de los Fondos Estructurales de la UE a medidas en favor de los jóvenes desempleados. En reuniones bilaterales organizadas por la Comisión en febrero de 2012 con los Estados miembros que mostraban los índices de desempleo juvenil más altos y unos porcentajes de absorción de los fondos de la UE bajos, se buscaron soluciones conjuntas para intentar acelerar la ejecución de los programas en curso o garantizar que estos alcancen a un número más elevado de jóvenes desempleados a través de un aumento del presupuesto o de una mejora en su orientación. Muchos Estados miembros han mostrado interés por optimizar las medidas actuales mediante una utilización más eficaz de los fondos comunitarios, así como por explorar otras posibles líneas de acción, incluyendo la redistribución de fondos de la UE no destinados o no utilizados con el objetivo de reforzar las medidas de apoyo al empleo juvenil y de facilitar el acceso de las PYMES a la financiación. No se ha previsto una reasignación entre los Estados miembros.

Cuando sea necesario, la Comisión prestará su ayuda para la reprogramación de los recursos no asignados procedentes de los Fondos Estructurales de la UE. Aunque no existe ningún acuerdo específico de cofinanciación para las medidas destinadas al empleo juvenil, los Estados miembros con mayores dificultades presupuestarias tienen derecho a índices de cofinanciación más elevados (hasta un 95 %) en todos los casos de ayudas procedentes de los Fondos Estructurales. Además, se anima a los Estados miembros a utilizar los instrumentos financieros para mejorar el acceso de las PYMES a la financiación con el objetivo de crear más puestos de trabajo para los jóvenes.

([1]) Véase la Comunicación de la Comisión COM(2011) 933 final, de 20 de diciembre de 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002702/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Redirecting Structural Funds not yet allocated towards combating youth unemployment and helping SMEs

At the European Council of 30 January 2012, the Commission President proposed that Member States redirect Structural Funds not yet allocated under the 2007-2013 financial perspective with a view to supporting SMEs and combating youth unemployment. The funds available were estimated to total EUR 82 000 million, with up to EUR 22 000 million from the European Social Fund and EUR 60 000 million from the Regional and Cohesion Funds. The intention is to work with governments and the social partners in the eight countries with youth unemployment above 30 %, in order to determine how these funds can be redirected to the most useful effect.

Given that all the Structural Funds for 2007-2013 have already been distributed among the Member States and assigned to operational programmes and priorities, has the Commission established which programmes will be left without funds and why?

Has there been any assessment of the impact likely to result from the withdrawal of funds?

Given that Member States with youth unemployment over 30 % have little room for manoeuvre under national economic policies due to the impact of the crisis on public finances, has the Commission not considered increasing the Structural Fund co-financing rate in order to help them offset the limitations of their national policies? Has it considered seeking additional funds for that purpose from other sources of finance?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

The Commission can provide the Member States with support in designing and delivering on youth employment measures, in particular through the Youth Opportunities Initiative ([1]).

The national situation will determine the way EU Structural Fund resources available in each Member State can be used more effectively to fund measures benefiting youth. Implementation may be behind schedule and resources under-used in many Member States which have allocated EU Structural Fund resources to measures for young unemployed people. At bilateral meetings organised by the Commission in February 2012 with the Member States with the highest youth unemployment rates and low EU fund absorption rates, joint solutions were sought on how to speed up implementation of programmes under way or ensure they covered more young unemployed people by increasing the budget or improving targeting. Many Member States have shown interest in optimising current policy measures by using EU funds more effectively and explore the possibilities for further action including by rechanneling uncommitted or unused EU funds to bolster youth employment measures and providing access to finance for SMEs. No reallocation between Member States has been envisaged.

Where necessary, the Commission will provide help in reprogramming unallocated EU Structural Fund resources. Although there is no specific co-financing arrangement for youth employment measures, the Member States with the greatest budgetary difficulties are entitled to higher rates of co-financing (up to 95 %) for all Structural Fund assistance. Furthermore Member States are encouraged to use financial instruments to improve access to finance for SMEs, with a view to creating more jobs for young people.

([1]) See Commission Communication COM(2011) 933 final of 20 December 2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002703/12
a la Comisión
Alejandro Cercas (S&D)
(8 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Reorientación de los Fondos Estructurales pendientes de asignación para combatir el desempleo juvenil y ayudar a las PYME

En el Consejo Europeo del 30 de enero de 2012, el Presidente de la Comisión Europea propuso a los Estados miembros reorientar los Fondos Estructurales pendientes de asignación en el marco de las perspectivas financieras para el periodo 2007-2013 para destinarlos a la ayuda a las PYME y a la lucha contra el desempleo juvenil. Se estimó que los fondos disponibles se elevaban a un total de 82 000 millones de euros, hasta 22 000 millones del Fondo Social Europeo y 60 000 millones de los Fondos Regionales y de Cohesión. El objetivo es trabajar con el gobierno y los agentes sociales de los ocho países que superan el 30 % de paro juvenil para ver la mejor manera en que se pueden reorientar dichos fondos.

Dado que todos los Fondos Estructurales para el periodo 2007-2013 ya se han distribuido entre los Estados miembros y se han asignado a su vez a distintos programas operativos y prioridades, ¿tiene la Comisión detectado qué programas se van a quedar sin fondos y por qué?

¿Hay alguna evaluación de impacto sobre esta retirada de fondos?

Habida cuenta de que los Estados miembros con un paro juvenil superior al 30 % poseen escaso margen de actuación en el marco de las políticas económicas nacionales debido al impacto de la crisis en las cuentas públicas ¿no ha pensado la Comisión en aumentar la tasa de cofinanciación de los Fondos Estructurales para estos países con el fin de ayudarles a compensar el escaso margen de sus políticas nacionales? ¿Ha considerado encontrar fondos adicionales procedentes de otras fuentes de financiación para este fin?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de abril de 2012)

Tras el Consejo Europeo de 30 de enero de 2012, la Comisión propuso organizar reuniones bilaterales y grupos de acción con los Estados miembros más afectados por el desempleo juvenil. Se anima a los Estados miembros a optimizar las medidas estratégicas actuales mediante un uso más eficaz de los fondos de la Unión Europea (UE), incluida la reorientación de fondos de la UE no utilizados con el objetivo de reforzar las medidas de apoyo al empleo juvenil y facilitar a las PYME, principales creadores de empleo de la UE, el acceso a la financiación.

El objetivo de estas reuniones, que tuvieron lugar en febrero de 2012, era encontrar la mejor forma de redistribuir los fondos en el marco del mismo programa o entre programas distintos si no se encontraba otra solución. No obstante, de lo que se trata en el presente ejercicio es de la eficacia de los programas. Aunque no debería quedar ningún programa sin financiación, se insta a los Estados miembros a que reinviertan los recursos en medidas eficaces. Independientemente de esto, algunos países también han iniciado un ejercicio de reprogramación.

Dadas las circunstancias, la Comisión trabaja con los Estados miembros a fin de centrarse más en medidas relacionadas con la juventud, pero la reorientación no afectará a ninguno de los programas actuales que presentan buenos resultados en otros ámbitos de las ayudas del FEDER y el FSE. Por lo que se refiere a la sugerencia de incrementar la cofinanciación de los fondos estructurales, la Comisión ha propuesto incrementar la cofinanciación de la UE hasta un 95 %. El Parlamento ha aceptado la propuesta y la posibilidad de que los Estados miembros puedan beneficiarse de este incremento con carácter retroactivo y hasta finales de 2013 ([1]). Por ahora, Grecia, Rumanía y Hungría han solicitado acogerse al porcentaje de cofinanciación incrementado en el marco del Fondo de Cohesión, el FEDER y el FSE . Grecia ya se ha beneficiado del incremento.

([1]) Noticias del FSE: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=67&langId=es&newsId=7903
Comunicado de prensa: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/126789.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002703/12
to the Commission
Alejandro Cercas (S&D)
(8 March 2012)

Subject: Redirecting Structural Funds not yet allocated towards combating youth unemployment and helping SMEs

At the European Council of 30 January 2012, the Commission President proposed that Member States redirect Structural Funds not yet allocated under the Financial Perspective for 2007-2013 towards supporting SMEs and to the fight against youth unemployment. It was estimated that the available funds amounted to a total of EUR 82 000 million; up to EUR 22 000 million from the European Social Fund and EUR 60 000 million from the Regional and Cohesion Funds. The aim is to work with governments and stakeholders of the eight countries with more than 30 % youth unemployment, in order to find the best way to redirect these funds.

Since all the Structural Funds for 2007-2013 have already been shared out among the Member States and, in turn, have been earmarked to various operational programmes and priorities, has the Commission identified which programmes will be left without funds and why?

Has an impact assessment of this withdrawal of funds been made?

Given that the Member States with over 30 % youth unemployment have given little room for manoeuvre within the framework of national economic policies due to the impact of the crisis on public finances, has the Commission not considered increasing the rate of co-financing of Structural Funds for these countries to given them greater leeway within their national policies? Has it considered seeking additional funds for this purpose from other sources of finance?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

Following the European Council of 30 January 2012, the Commission proposed to organise bi-lateral meetings and action teams with the Member States most concerned with youth unemployment. Member States are encouraged to optimise current policy measures by using European Union (EU) funds more effectively, including rechannelling or unused EU funds to bolster youth employment measures and providing access to finance for SMEs as the main creator of employment in the EU.

The objective of these meetings which took place in February 2012 was to find the simplest solutions to shifting funds within a programme or between programmes if no other solutions were possible. Nevertheless, this exercise is about the effectiveness of the programmes. While no programme should be left without funding, Member States are encouraged to reshift resources to effective measures. Independent of this some countries have also started a reprogramming exercise.

Given the circumstances, the Commission is working with Member States to focus more on youth related measures but none of the running programmes which deliver good results in other fields of ERDF and ESF support will be tributary of this refocusing. Regarding the suggestion to increase structural funds' co-financing, the Commission has proposed to increase co-financing up to 95 % on the EU side. The Parliament accepted the proposal and the possibility for Member States to benefit from this increase retroactively and until end 2013 ([1]). For the moment, Greece, Romania and Hungary have applied for using the increased co-financing rate under CF, ERDF and ESF and Greece has already benefitted from the increase.

([1]) ESF news item: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=67&langId=en&newsId=7903
Press release: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/126789.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-002706/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(9 de março de 2012)

Assunto: Acordos de Parceria no domínio da Pesca da União Europeia

Considerando que:

— A União Europeia tem estabelecido vários Acordos de Parceria no domínio da pesca (APP) com países do Oeste Africano;

— Destes APP, destacam-se, pela sua importância em termos de contrapartidas financeiras, capturas e dimensão da frota envolvida, os APP com Marrocos, Mauritânia e Guiné-Bissau;

— Estes APP permitem a exploração de recursos demersais (como a pescada, o camarão, o polvo e outros recursos) e de pequenos pelágicos (como a sardinha, a sardinela, o carapau e a sarda);

— As frotas de pesca de 12 Estados-Membros (Alemanha, Espanha, França, Grécia, Irlanda, Itália, Letónia, Lituânia, Países Baixos, Polónia, Portugal e Reino Unido) utilizam estes três acordos, com importâncias relativas distintas e atividades dirigidas a diferentes componentes e stocks;

— A não renovação dos protocolos em vigor pode pôr em causa a viabilidade económica de grande parte da frota de pesca longínqua europeia, devido à falta de alternativas válidas;

— O Parlamento Europeu votou, no passado dia 14 de dezembro, contra o prolongamento até fevereiro do presente acordo com Marrocos;

— Esta decisão pode comprometer uma futura parceria com este país e dificultar as negociações de um futuro acordo e protocolo, tal como sucede presentemente com o acordo da Mauritânia;

— Nas últimas décadas, a atividade da frota pesqueira da União Europeia tem sido sujeita a um aumento dos condicionalismos técnicos que, na prática, resultou na redução da atividade de pesca e consequente inviabilidade económica de vários operadores.

Pergunto à comissão:

Está a Comissão a analisar os Acordos de Parceria no domínio da pesca como um todo, e não de forma isolada, tendo em conta que a atividade da frota europeia de pesca longínqua não atuneira se distribui globalmente pelos três acordos?

Tenciona rever os Acordos de Parceria no domínio da Pesca da União Europeia face às presentes dificuldades de negociação dos dois principais acordos, e estudar alternativas válidas noutros pesqueiros, que garantam a continuidade da atividade das frotas que dependem dos mesmos?

Em que ponto se encontra atualmente o acordo com a Mauritânia?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(20 de abril de 2012)

Os acordos de parceria no domínio da pesca são todos sujeitos a uma avaliação. Essas avaliações são efetuadas separadamente, uma vez que são específicas para cada país e coincidem com o calendário de renovação próprio de cada APP. Além disso, a Comissão tem em conta a complementaridade entre acordos relativos à mesma região e a natureza partilhada de determinadas espécies, como se verifica no caso de Marrocos, da Mauritânia e da Guiné-Bissau.

No contexto da reforma da PCP, a Comissão propôs orientações para a reforma dos APP, nomeadamente para efeitos de melhorar o seu funcionamento e eficácia e reforçar a transparência da atividade dos navios da UE nas águas de países terceiros. Um dos principais objetivos da reforma é também melhorar a análise científica subjacente à negociação dos APP. No contexto dos APP, a identificação de novos pesqueiros dependerá do estado da unidade populacional para que é dirigida a pesca, estado esse que a Comissão analisa com a maior atenção, nomeadamente nas organizações regionais de gestão das pescas e no comité científico conjunto.

No que respeita à Mauritânia, o processo de negociação está ainda em curso. A Comissão prossegue os seus esforços para que haja progresso nas negociações, com o objetivo de reconciliar as posições das duas partes e de chegar a um acordo mutuamente satisfatório.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002706/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: EU fisheries partnership agreements

The European Union has concluded several fisheries partnership agreements (FPAs) with West African countries.

The FPAs with Morocco, Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau stand out, given the scale of the financial contributions, catches, and fleets involved.

These FPAs allow the exploitation of demersal species, including hake, shrimp, and octopus, and of small pelagic species such as sardines, sardinella, horse mackerel and mackerel.

The fishing fleets of 12 Member States (Germany, Spain, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and the United Kingdom) make use of these three agreements to varying degrees, focusing their activities on different components and stocks.

The non-renewal of the protocols in force could jeopardise the economic viability of much of the European distant-water fishing fleet, given that there are few viable alternatives.

On 14 December 2011, the European Parliament voted against extending the current agreement with Morocco until February 2012.

This decision could put a future partnership with Morocco in doubt and hamper the negotiations on a future agreement and protocol, as is currently happening in the case of Mauritania.

In recent decades, the activity of the European Union's fishing fleet has been subjected to increased technical constraints which, in practice, have reduced fishing activity and consequently destroyed operators' economic viability.

Is the Commission analysing the fisheries partnership agreements collectively, rather than individually, considering that the overall activity of the European non-tuna distant-water fishing fleet is governed by the three agreements?

Will it revise the EU's fisheries partnership agreements, given the current difficulties in negotiating the two main agreements, and study sound alternatives in other fishing grounds so as to guarantee continuity in the fishing activity of the fleets that depend on these agreements?

What is the current state of play regarding the agreement with Mauritania?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

Fisheries Partnership Agreements are all subject to an evaluation. These evaluations are made separately since they are country-specific and coincide with the relevant renewal timing of each FPA. In addition, the Commission is taking into account the complementarity between agreements occurring in the same region and the shared nature of certain species, as it is the case for Morocco, Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau.

In the context of the CFP reform, the Commission has proposed orientations for reforming FPAs, in particular to improve their functioning and their effectiveness and reinforce the transparency of the activity of EU vessels in third countries' waters. One of the main objectives of this reform is also to improve the scientific analysis underpinning the negotiation of FPAs. In this regard, identifying new fishing grounds would depend on the state of the stock targeted which the Commission looks at carefully, notably within Regional Fisheries Management Organisations and in the joint scientific committee in the context of the FPAs.

Concerning Mauritania, the negotiation process is still ongoing. The Commission is continuing its efforts to make progress in the negotiations with the aim of reconciling the positions of the two parties and reaching a mutually satisfactory deal.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002707/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(9. marts 2012)

Om: EU's handelsnormer for importeret frugt og grønt fra tredjelande

I henhold til EU's handelsnormer for importeret frugt og grønt fra tredjelande skal oplysninger om import angives til myndighederne i det pågældende modtagerland senest 24 timer før ankomst. Jeg støtter importreglerne, der skal sikre forbrugerne sikre og sunde produkter. Dog har der været nogle eksempler i Danmark, hvor der er opstået misforståelser om denne anmeldelsespligt mellem myndighed og importør. Reglerne er klare: Selv om frugterne/grøntsagerne ikke indeholder sundhedsskadelige stoffer eller lignende, men blot er blevet anmeldt for sent, så skal de sendes tilbage til afsenderlandet. Det fører desværre til øget madspild, da maden fordærver. Jeg opfordrer ikke til en generel lempelse, men til at give myndighederne en dispensationsmulighed, hvor sagen berettiger det.

Mit spørgsmål er derfor, om Kommissionen i forbindelse med den forestående revision af reglerne vil foreslå en mere fleksibel ordning, der giver myndighederne mulighed for at give dispensation for reglerne i særlige tilfælde?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli
(30. april 2012)

I øjeblikket kræves forudgående importanmeldelse af frugt og grøntsager kun, hvis der er blevet identificeret risici for fødevaresikkerheden og der er specifikke kontrolforanstaltninger i kraft i henhold til Kommissionens forordning (EF) nr. 669/2009 om en mere intensiv offentlig kontrol af importen af visse foderstoffer og fødevarer af ikke-animalsk oprindelse.

Langt det meste af importen af frugt og grøntsager er derfor ikke ramt af kontrolforanstaltninger.

Inden for rammerne af revisionen af forordning (EF) nr. 882/2004 ([1]) overvejer Kommissionen muligheden for at udvikle et fuldt integreret system for grænsekontrol.

Idéen er at fjerne fragmenteringen af de forskellige regelsæt, som regulerer tilrettelæggelsen af importkontrol i forskellige sektorer, hver med sektorspecifikke kriterier for prioritering af kontrolforanstaltninger, og erstatte det med et enkelt strømlinet system, hvor de samme generelle principper gælder for alle sektorer og varer. Revisionen vil give mulighed for fleksibilitet, hvor det er nødvendigt.

([1]) EUT L 165 af 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002707/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: EU trading standards for imported fruit and vegetables from third countries

In accordance with EU trading standards for imported fruit and vegetables from third countries, import information must be sent to the authorities in the relevant recipient country at least 24 hours before arrival. I support the import rules, which are intended to ensure that the products offered to consumers are safe and healthy. However, there have been a number of cases in Denmark of misunderstandings arising between the authority and the importer with regard to the notification obligation. The rules are quite clear on this: late notification will result in fruit and vegetables being returned to the sender country, even if they do not they contain harmful substances or similar. Unfortunately, because the food is perishable, this increases food wastage. I am not proposing a general dispensation, but that the authorities be allowed the option of a dispensation in appropriate circumstances.

My question in relation to this is whether, in connection with the forthcoming revision of the rules, the Commission will propose a more flexible scheme, allowing the authorities the option of granting a dispensation from the rules in special circumstances?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

Currently pre import notification of fruit and vegetables is only foreseen when food safety risks have been identified and specific control measures are in force under Commission Regulation (EC) No 669/2009 regarding the increased level of official controls on imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin.

Imports of the vast majority of fruit and vegetables are therefore not affected by control operations.

In the context of the review of Regulation 882/2004 ([1]), the Commission is considering the possibility to develop a fully integrated system of border controls.

The idea is to eliminate the fragmentation of the different sets of rules which govern the organisation of import controls in different sectors, each with sectoral criteria for the prioritisation of control action, and replace it with a single streamlined system in which the same general principles apply to all sectors and commodities. The review will provide for flexibility where necessary.

([1]) OJ L 165, 30.4.2004.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002708/12
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(9. marts 2012)

Om: Allokering af loddekvote

I forbindelse med Rådsmødet 15-16 december 2011 erklærede Kommissionen, at man hurtigst muligt ville igangsætte forhandlinger om en fast allokering af EU's loddekvote i grønlandsk EEZ, og at man tilstræber at afslutte forhandlingerne inden loddesæsonen 2012/2013 indledes den 21. juni 2012. Hvad er status for Kommissionens og Rådets arbejde med etableringen af en permanent allokering af EU's loddekvote i grønlandsk EEZ?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Maria Damanaki
(26. april 2012)

I den omtalte rådserklæring udtalte Kommissionen, at den ville indlede drøftelser med medlemsstaterne om mulig tildeling af de af Grønland tilbudte fiskerimuligheder for lodde.

I forbindelse med mødet i Den Blandede Komité EU-Grønland i december 2011 blev parterne enige om nedsættelse af en arbejdsgruppe, der skulle mødes for at undersøge en ny tidsramme med henblik på at sikre videnskabelig rådgivning angående den foreløbige samlede fangstmængde (TAC) i tide inden fangstsæsonens begyndelse.

I januar 2012 enedes arbejdsgruppen om, at Grønland beder ICES om at ændre tidsplanen for den første rådgivning om lodde til begyndelsen af maj. Desuden opnåede man under forhandlingerne om fornyelsen af den fremtidige protokol, at Grønland meddeler den foreløbige TAC senest i slutningen af maj.

Efter den vellykkede afslutning af disse forhandlinger med Grønland i begyndelsen af februar 2012 holdt Kommissionen i midten af april et teknisk møde med medlemsstaterne for at drøfte muligheden for at fastlægge den endelige fordeling af disse kvoter mellem dem. Flere medlemsstater tilkendegav deres interesse i dette fiskeri, og der blev drøftet flere forskellige muligheder med hensyn til det videre forløb, uden at man nåede frem til en konklusion. Der vil blive holdt et nyt teknisk møde med medlemsstaterne om en løsning på tildelingsspørgsmålet, og det vil sandsynligvis finde sted i slutningen af maj.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002708/12
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: Allocation of capelin quotas

In connection with the Council meeting of 15-16 December 2011, the Commission stated that it would open negotiations on a fixed allocation of EU capelin quotas in the Greenlandic exclusive economic zone (EEZ) as quickly as possible, and that it would attempt to conclude these negotiations before the beginning of the 2012/2013 capelin season on 21 June 2012. What is the status of the Commission's and the Council's work to establish a permanent allocation of EU capelin quotas in the Greenlandic EEZ?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

In the Council declaration in question the Commission stated that it undertakes to enter into discussion with the Member States on the possibility of allocating between them the fishing opportunities for capelin offered by Greenland.

During the last Joint Committee Meeting between the EU and Greenland in December 2011, it was agreed that a Working Group would be established and met to examine a new timeframe to ensure the provision of scientific advice sufficiently in advance of the opening of the fishing season for the preliminary total allowable catch (TAC).

The Working Group agreed in January 2012 that Greenland will ask ICES to modify the time schedule for delivering the first advice on capelin for the beginning of May. Moreover, during the negotiations for a renewal of the future Protocol, it was also included that Greenland will communicate the preliminary TAC by the end of May at the latest.

Following the successful conclusion of these negotiations with Greenland in the beginning of February 2012, the Commission held a technical meeting with the Member States in mid-April to discuss the possibility of finalising an allocation between them of this quota. Several Member States showed their interest in this fishery and several possible options on the way forward were discussed, without conclusion. Another technical meeting with the Member States will likely be held by the end of the May to resolve the allocation issue.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002709/12
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(9. März 2012)

Betrifft: Französisches Gesetz zur Mitführung von Alkoholteströhrchen

In Frankreich ist laut dem „Journal Officiel de la République Française" am 28. Februar 2012 ein Gesetz verabschiedet worden, welches das Mitführen von Alkoholteströhrchen im Fahrzeug im Straßenverkehr ab dem 1. Juli 2012 zur Vorschrift macht (Décret n° 2012-284 du 28 février 2012 relatif à la possession obligatoire d'un éthylotest par le conducteur d'un véhicule terrestre à moteur).

Nach einer viermonatigen Einführungsfrist werden die französischen Behörden ab November 2012 bei Kontrollen das Fehlen der Teströhrchen mit Bußgeldern ahnden.

Als Hintergrund der Gesetzgebung wird die Verhinderung von Fahrten unter Alkoholeinfluss genannt.

Dies vorausgeschickt frage ich die Kommission:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission dieses Gesetz?

2. Gilt das Gesetz auch für andere EU-Bürger, wenn sie in Frankreich am Straßenverkehr teilnehmen?

3. Welcher Handlungsbedarf auf europäischer Ebene ergibt sich aus der Gesetzgebung?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2012)

Die Kommission prüft zurzeit den Inhalt der von dem Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochenen Rechtsvorschriften und wird bei Bedarf Kontakt mit der französischen Regierung aufnehmen, um gegebenenfalls um Klärung zu bitten. Die Kommission wird den Herrn Abgeordneten über das Ergebnis dieser Prüfung so bald wie möglich unterrichten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002709/12
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: French law requiring drivers to carry alcohol test tubes

According to the Journal Officiel de la République Française, a law was passed in France on 28 February 2012, requiring that alcohol test tubes be carried in motor vehicles as of 1 July 2012 (*Décret n° 2012-284 du 28 février 2012 relatif à la possession obligatoire d'un éthylotest par le conducteur d'un véhicule terrestre à moteur*, Decree concerning the obligatory possession of a breathalyser by drivers of motorised land vehicles No 2012-284 of 28 February 2012).

After a four-month introductory period, the French authorities are to impose fines from November 2012 onwards if drivers fail to carry the test tubes.

The reason given for the legislation is the wish to prevent people from driving under the influence of alcohol.

This being the case, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. How does the Commission assess this law?

2. Does the law also apply to other EU citizens using French roads?

3. What action is required at European level as a result of this legislation?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission is examining the content of the legal provisions referred to by the Honourable Member and will, if need be, get in contact with the French authorities for clarification if this is necessary. The Commission will inform the Honourable Member of the outcome of this examination as soon as possible.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002711/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9. März 2012)

Betrifft: Bearbeitung von verloren gegangenem Gepäck durch Luftfahrtunternehmen

Ich nehme Bezug auf die Petition Nr. 1336/2011, eingereicht von dem österreichischen Staatsbürger Rudolf Karlberger. Herr Karlberger klagt über die Bearbeitung von verloren gegangenem Gepäck durch Luftfahrtunternehmen. Medienberichten zufolge gehen immer mehr Gepäckstücke auf österreichischen Flughäfen verloren. Dieses Problem wurde von der Presse aufgegriffen, ohne dass sich die Situation jedoch verbessert hat.

Die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 261/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 11. Februar 2004 über eine gemeinsame Regelung für Ausgleichs- und Unterstützungsleistungen für Fluggäste und die Mitteilung der Kommission mit dem Titel „Eine europäische Perspektive für Reisende: Mitteilung über die Rechte der Benutzer aller Verkehrsträger“ sehen ausdrücklich bessere Leistungen für Passagiere vor. In der Realität jedoch werden diese Fluggastrechte von den Airlines häufig ignoriert.

1. Ist sich die Kommission dieses Problems bewusst? Wenn ja, durch welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission nunmehr die legalen Rechte der Fluggäste besser durchzusetzen?

2. „Austrian Airlines“ will diesem Missstand mit speziellen Dienstleistungen auf ihrer Internetseite oder mit einem sogenannten „Overnight-Kit“ abhelfen. Will die Kommission diese oder ähnliche Maßnahmen auch anderen Fluglinien empfehlen?

3. Denkt die Kommission unter Umständen auch daran, Sanktionsmaßnahmen gegen jene Fluglinien zu ergreifen, die weiterhin Fluggastrechte ignorieren?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(19. April 2012)

1. Im Jahr 2009 hat die Kommission einen Bericht über die Probleme vorgelegt, die Flugreisenden durch Gepäckverlust entstehen. Der Bericht kommt zu dem Ergebnis, dass die Zahl der verloren gegangenen Gepäckstücke zwar im Verhältnis zur Gesamtzahl der Flugreisenden rückläufig ist, dass die Flugreisenden jedoch wegen unzureichender Kenntnis ihrer Rechte auf Schwierigkeiten stoßen, wenn sie nach Bestimmungen des internationalen und des EU-Rechts Schadenersatz entsprechend dem Wert der verloren gegangenen Gegenstände fordern.

Seit der Veröffentlichung dieses Berichts bemüht sich die Kommission im Rahmen einer EU-weiten Informationskampagne, die Fluggäste über ihre Rechte in den genannten Situationen aufzuklären.

2. Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass derartige Ausgleichs- und Unterstützungsleistungen in solchen Fällen für die Luftfahrtunternehmen als „beste Praxis“ zur Wahrung der Fluggastrechte gelten sollten.

3. Die Kommission kann keine Sanktionen gegen Luftfahrtunternehmen verhängen, die Rechtsvorschriften über Fluggastrechte nicht einhalten. Die Verpflichtung zur Einführung und Anwendung von Sanktionen bei Verstößen gegen die Rechtsvorschriften über Fluggastrechte ist Sache der Mitgliedstaaten. Die Kommission wird jedoch die Maßnahmen der Mitgliedstaaten beobachten, um sicherzustellen, dass die einschlägigen Rechtsvorschriften durchgängig und angemessen angewendet werden, und wird bei Feststellung von Mängeln geeignete Maßnahmen ergreifen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002711/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: Processing of lost luggage by airlines

I refer to Petition No 1336/2011, submitted by Rudolf Karlberger, an Austrian citizen. Mr Karlberger complains about the processing of lost luggage by airlines. According to reports in the media, more and more luggage is being lost at Austrian airports. Even though this problem has been taken up by the press, the situation has not improved.

Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers and the Commission Communication entitled 'A European vision for passengers: Communication on passenger rights in all transport modes' expressly provide for better services for passengers. In reality, however, airlines often ignore these passenger rights.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem? If so, what steps is it thinking of taking in order to enforce the legal rights of airline passengers more effectively?

2. Austrian Airlines is trying to alleviate this problem by providing details of special services on its website or by issuing passengers with a so-called 'overnight kit'. Does the Commission intend recommending this or similar measures to other airlines too?

3. Under certain circumstances, might the Commission consider imposing penalties on those airlines that continue to ignore passenger rights?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

1. In 2009 the Commission published a report on the impact of lost baggage on passengers. This report concluded that whilst the overall trend on the number of lost bags was decreasing in comparison to the number of passengers that travelled, passengers were encountering difficulties in obtaining re-imbursement for the value of lost belongings under international and EU legislation due to a lack of awareness of their rights.

Since the publication of that Report the Commission has continued to undertake an information campaign across the Union to advise passengers of their rights in such situations.

2. The Commission considers that the provision of such assistance should be adopted as 'best practice' by air carriers to protect passengers in these circumstances.

3. The Commission cannot impose penalties on airlines which do not respect Passengers Rights legislation. The obligation to have in place and apply sanctions for non-compliance with Air Passenger Rights legislation is a matter for Member States. The Commission will however monitor the actions of Member States to ensure that such legislation is being applied on a consistent and proportionate basis, and take appropriate action where deficiencies are identified.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002712/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: EU funding for small business start-ups

I have received a letter from a constituent who would like to know what funding might be available from the EU to support small business start-ups or property-related businesses.

Can the Commission supply a list of schemes to which his business might apply for funding?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

The European Union (EU) seeks to support seed and start-up SMEs in particular through the High Growth and Innovative SME Facility of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP, 2007-2013). Under the first window of this facility the European Investment Fund (EIF) makes investments in venture capital funds which target innovative SMEs in their early stages. SMEs interested in applying for an equity investment need to contact the funds that have signed an agreement with the EIF ([1]).

EU financial support is also available from the Structural Funds through Member States' managing authorities. Among other priority areas, the Operational programme 'London' addresses market failures in businesses' access to finance, in particular with regard to risk capital. Information on the financial schemes available can be obtained from the managing authority of the Operational Programme, the London Development Agency ([2]).

Another possible funding source for SMEs in the UK is the European Investment Bank's (EIB) 'Loans for SMEs' programme, which channels financial resources to enterprises via commercial banks. Between 2008 and 2011 EUR 43 billion was made available to SME financing through the programme, which is foreseen to continue in 2012 at a similar pace. A number of UK banks are benefitting from the EIB credit lines ([3]).

([1]) A list of the funds benefitting from CIP investments can be found here:
http://www.access2finance.eu/en/Attachments/List_of_Deals_20_09_2011.pdf
A list of all UK-based venture capital funds in which the EIF has invested can be accessed at:
http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/where/gb/.

([2]) A summary of the <QT.START>"</QT.START>London<QT.END>"</QT.END> Operational Programme as well as the contact details of the managing authority can be found at the following location:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/prordn/details_new.cfm?
gv_OBJ=ALL&gv_PAY=UK&gv_reg=ALL&gv_THE=ALL&gv_PGM=1017&LAN=7&gv_per=2&gv_defL=7#tab.

([3]) A list of the contracts signed by the EIB with UK commercial banks for SME financing is available at:
http://www.eib.org/projects/loans/sectors/global-loans-grouped-loans.htm?start=2007&end=2012&region=&country=united+kingdom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002713/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: The assassination of Mr Kamel Shiaa

I have been contacted by a constituent who is a close relative of Mr Kamel Shiaa, a Belgian national, who was assassinated on 23 August 2008 in Baghdad, while working in Iraq as a senior advisor to the Ministry of Culture.

Can the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of this case?

2. What action it has taken to press the Iraqi authorities to launch an investigation into the death of Mr Shiaa and to bring his killers to justice?

3. What further representations it intends to make?

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

We are aware of the tragic death of Mr Shiaa that took place in Baghdad on 23 August 2008. Concerning the Honourable Member's questions regarding actions undertaken relating to a possible investigation — as well as regarding further representations — the Commission takes this opportunity to recall that consular protection is within the competence of Member States. It has been in close contact with the relevant Member State concerning this case.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002714/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: New EU rules on Internet cookies

I have been contacted by a constituent whose business provides personalised TV and radio services on behalf of media companies.

He is concerned at the damage to the businesses of content publishers and technology companies caused by the new rules requiring Internet users to opt in to receive cookies on the site that they are viewing.

1. Has the Commission consulted with representatives of Internet-browser companies with the aim of reaching an agreement on a friendly form of words requesting permission to use anonymised cookies?

2. Is the Commission aware of the dramatic fall in the number of visitors to the website of the UK's Information Commissioner's Office after the website was changed to accommodate the new EU rules?

3. What is the Commission's estimate of the number of jobs that will be lost if other sites that use cookies register a similar decline in the number of visitors?

4. What plans does the Commission have to review and revise the EU's Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

Article 5(3) of the ePrivacy Directive, as amended following an amendment suggested by the European Parliament, requires user consent to store or gain access to information in the user's terminal equipment. Consent is not needed if the storage or access to information is strictly necessary to provide the service requested by the user.

The Commission is aware that the UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has a banner on its website requesting user consent for cookies and that a relatively high number of visitors chose not to accept them. In the Commission's understanding, this may have hindered the ICO's ability to determine the number of visitors to its website, but does not necessarily point to an actual decline in that number. The Commission has no reason to believe that the use of similar consent mechanisms by other websites would lead to a loss of jobs. Indeed, the Commission promotes the development of innovative solutions to comply with Article 5(3) and is aware of companies already offering such tools or services.

To assist compliance with Article 5(3), the Commission has facilitated stakeholder discussions on the development of self-regulatory initiatives for online behavioural advertising, and on the 'Do Not Track' (DNT) standard being developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). In this context, the Commission has contacted browser manufacturers with a view to discussing their role in the implementation of DNT.

The amended ePrivacy Directive came into force in May 2011. The Commission has to submit to the Parliament and the Council a report on its application by May 2014 and make appropriate proposals. In addition, the Commission is committed to assessing the consequences of the proposed Data Protection Regulation on the ePrivacy Directive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002715/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: High-speed rail link between London and Birmingham, UK

I have been contacted by a constituent who believes that in formulating its plan to build the HS2 high-speed rail link between London and Birmingham, the UK Government has abused process and is failing to abide by existing EC law such as the Habitat Directive.

Could the Commission indicate whether:

1. It has examined the British Government's proposal for the route of the HS2 high-speed rail link?

2. The proposed route contravenes any EU directives or regulations?

3. It has raised — or plans to raise — any objections with the British Government?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

1. The Commission was informed by the UK Government that it has planned to start with phase 1 of the HS2 high-speed rail link.

2.-3. The Commission is not aware of contravention of any EU directives or regulations and has not therefore raised any objections with the UK Government.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002716/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: Widespread atrocities by the Somaliland regime

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned by reports of ill-treatment of minorities by the Somaliland authorities.

In this regard:

1. What has the Commission discovered about the events that occurred in the Buuhoodle District on 14 and 15 January 2012?

2. What plans does the Commissioner have to establish the facts?

3. What is the extent of its aid programme to the government there, and what conditions — such as the protection of minority groups — does it attach to providing aid?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2012)

1. The Commission has seen reports in the media in Hargeisa that military confrontations took place between the Somaliland Army and a local clan militian in Buuhoodle on 15 January 2012. According to the media reports, the Somaliland Army then withdrew from Buuhoodle and took positions outside the town.

2. The Commission has no means to establish further facts on these violent confrontations but has repeatedly appealed to all parties to resolve disputes over territorial control in these areas through peaceful dialogue.

3. The EU has mobilised around EUR 500 million in development cooperation, on top of the EUR 567 million mobilised for humanitarian assistance and for the African Union mission to Somalia (Amisom) which aims to help Somali authorities to bring security to its people and progress in the peace process. The priorities for this development aid are supporting effective governance, education and stimulating economic development. EU support to governance includes support to institution building, reconciliation, rule of law, human rights and support to Somali civil society. It should be stressed that no EU assistance is channelled directly through the various Somali authorities, but implementation is ensured by United Nations agencies and international NGOs. Protection of human rights (including minority rights) is a cross-cutting issue in all EU programmes and as such is verified in a systematic way during project design implementation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002717/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 de marzo de 2012)

Asunto: Paquete aeroportuario: datos incoherentes en la propuesta de Reglamento relativa al ruido

La evaluación de impacto de la Comisión que acompaña a la propuesta de Reglamento relativo al ruido en los aeropuertos contiene datos incorrectos e incoherentes.

Por ejemplo, en el apéndice 8, los aviones certificados dentro del capítulo 4 se describen como si lo fueran dentro del capítulo 3, se incluyen los aviones militares, se atribuyen a las compañías aéreas tipos de aviones con los que no operan, etc. Además, los márgenes previstos en el apéndice 9 difieren de la información facilitada por las compañías aéreas, en algunos casos hasta en 6 EPNdB.

A la vista de lo anterior y con miras a mejorar mi trabajo como ponente alternativo del Grupo ALDE sobre este informe:

1. ¿Puede confirmar la Comisión que estos son los datos que se utilizaron para establecer la definición de aeronaves marginalmente conformes?

2. ¿Podría facilitar la Comisión las fuentes de información utilizadas para la evaluación de impacto?

3. ¿Considera la Comisión que, habida cuenta de las incoherencias detectadas, su evaluación de impacto es suficientemente exhaustiva y fiable?

4. ¿Puede facilitar la Comisión el número total exacto de aviones afectados por la definición propuesta de aeronaves marginalmente conformes, incluidos los utilizados por operadores no europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de abril de 2012)

1.-2. La Comisión utilizó en su día una serie de datos para evaluar la revisión de la definición de «aeronave marginalmente conforme», procedentes en su mayoría de Eurocontrol, la Organización Europea para la Seguridad de la Navegación Aérea, que controla todos los vuelos en Europa y dispone también de información sobre las distintas aeronaves. Estos datos se completaron con los datos de certificación de la Agencia Europea de Seguridad Aérea ([1]), que dispone de información sobre todos los tipos de aeronave certificados. La tercera fuente de información fue un limitado número de aeropuertos, que facilitaron datos sobre las distintas aeronaves que aterrizaron o despegaron en los mismos. Estos datos fueron evaluados por expertos en contaminación acústica, por lo que no son incoherentes ni incorrectos. Representan una combinación de varias fuentes y puntos de vista de expertos.

3. La combinación de datos utilizada en la evaluación de impacto permite obtener los datos más representativos disponibles en el momento de la redacción.

4. No es posible facilitar un número total global exacto de aeronaves afectadas partiendo de la información actualmente disponible. La información detallada requerida solo está disponible a escala nacional o a nivel de los distintos aeropuertos, por lo que la evaluación de impacto de la Comisión ha completado sus datos globales con esta información facilitada por los aeropuertos y con los puntos de vista de expertos.

La noción de «aeronave marginalmente conforme» corresponde a una medida que las autoridades competentes pueden utilizar para paliar el ruido, en caso de considerarla una medida rentable tras la necesaria evaluación y la consulta apropiada. No se trata en modo alguno de una medida de obligado cumplimiento.

([1]) La AESA está extendiendo certificados a las aeronaves en función de su nivel acústico. Las normas aplicables en la materia son las de la Organización de Aviación Civil Internacional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002717/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: Airport package: incoherent data in the proposal for a regulation on noise

The data provided in the Commission's impact assessment accompanying the proposal for a regulation on noise at EU airports contains incorrect and incoherent data.

For example, in Appendix 8, aircraft certified under Chapter 4 are described as being so under Chapter 3, military aircraft are included, and airlines are attributed aircraft types that they do not operate, etc. Furthermore, the margins provided in Appendix 9 differ from the information provided by airlines, in some cases by as much as 6 EPNdB.

In the light of the above and with a view to improving my work as shadow for the ALDE group on this report:

1. Can the Commission confirm that these are the data that were used to decide on the definition of marginally compliant aircraft?

2. Could the Commission provide the sources of the information used for the impact assessment?

3. Does the Commission believe that, given the inconsistencies identified, its impact assessment is sufficiently comprehensive and reliable?

4. Can the Commission provide an accurate aggregated number of aircraft impacted by the proposed definition of marginally compliant aircraft, including those used by non-European operators?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

1-2. The Commission has been using a range of data to assess the review of the definition of 'marginally compliant aircraft'. Most data come from Eurocontrol, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigations, which monitors all flights over Europe and has also information on the individual aircraft. These data were completed by certification data of the European Aviation Safety Agency ([1]) which is in the possession of information on all certificated aircraft types. A third source was information from a limited number of airports, which contain data on all individual aircraft that have ever been landing or taking-off at these airports. These data were assessed by noise experts. Consequently, the data are neither inconsistent nor incorrect. They represent the combination of various sources and expert views.

3. The combination of data used in the impact assessment produces the most representative available data at the time of drafting.

4. On the basis of the current information available, it is not possible to give an accurate aggregated number of aircraft affected. The required detailed information is only available at national or individual airport level. That is why the Commission Impact Assessment has been complementing its aggregated information with such information at airport level and with expert views.

The notion of 'marginally compliant aircraft' is a measure which competent authorities may use to mitigate noise, if deemed a cost-effective measure after the necessary assessment and appropriate consultation. It is by no means a compulsory measure.

([1]) EASA is certificating aircraft according to their noise performance. The noise standards are taken from the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002720/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: End-of-Life Vehicles Directive

What is the Commission's assessment of the current state of implementation of the above directive?

In particular, what is now the average rate of recycling and/or recovery of end-of-life vehicles (ELVs), and how does this compare with the situation in 2000 when the legislation was adopted?

In best practice, what are the principal components of the recycling stream and in what proportions?

Does data supplied by Member States to the Commission still take into account only those vehicles that have been issued with Certificates of Destruction and duly recorded, and if so, what is the Commission's best estimate of the proportion of ELVs that are not being duly processed either because their disposal does not meet the requirements of the directive or because they are being exported out of the EU?

What is the extent of variation between those Member States that are most successfully meeting the requirements of the directive and those that are not, and what steps is the Commission taking to secure its better implementation?

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

Directive 2000/53/EC on end-of life vehicles (ELV Directive) ([1]) has been successful in increasing the rates of reuse/recovery and reuse/recycling of end-of-life vehicles (ELVs) in the EU. No systematic data exist prior to 2006 ([2]) when the reporting on annual data became compulsory ([3]). Data from 2006 onwards (including data on materials from de-pollution, dismantling and shredding) can be found on the website of DG ESTAT ([4]). Data for 2009 (most recent available) indicate that 24 Member States met the 2006 80 % target for reuse/recycling (while 8 already met the 85 % target set for 2015) and 20 Member States met the 2006 85 % target for reuse/recovery (while 1 already met the 95 % target set for 2015). The Commission has requested clarification from the Member States that have not yet met the 2006 targets.

Member States are not legally bound to report the number of ELVs for which no Certificates of Destruction (CoDs) have been issued. However, given that recent studies estimate that the number of ELVs not reported as such, or exported as second-hand vehicles, may be between 3.315.400 and 4.620.700 ([5]), the Commission has recently requested detailed information on this issue from all Member States.

To improve implementation of the directive, the Commission encourages the exchange of best practices and new available technologies, and, where appropriate, launches infringement procedures. There are currently four open infringement cases for incorrect transposition of the directive and the ECJ has already ruled in favour of the Commission in two cases.

Article 9 of the ELV Directive requires Member States to report to the Commission on its implementation every three years and the third report on implementation for 2008-2011 will be published soon.

([1]) OJ L 269, 21.10.2000.
([2]) 'Study to examine the benefits of the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive and the costs and benefits of a revision of the 2015 targets for recycling, re-use and recovery under the ELV Directive' GHK/BIOIS, May 2006.
([3]) Article 7(2) of the ELV Directive and Commission Decision 2005/293/EC.
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/waste/data/wastestreams/elvs.
([5]) Study on European Second-Hand Car Market Analysis http://www.oeko.de/publications/reports_studies/dok/659.php?id=&dokid=1114&anzeige=det&ITitel1=&IAutor1=&ISchlagw1=&sortieren=&dokid=1114.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002722/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9. März 2012)

Betrifft: Mammografie und Brustkrebs in Europa

Die Sterblichkeit bei Brustkrebs ist in Österreich sowie in anderen entwickelten Ländern und Industriestaaten wie Kanada, den Vereinigen Staaten und im Vereinigten Königreich offenbar zurückgegangen. Dies ist möglicherweise auf die Durchführung von Mammografie-Screenings, andere Früherkennungsmethoden von Brustkrebs und die Verbesserung von Therapien zurückzuführen.

In manchen europäischen Ländern jedoch, wie Spanien, Portugal, Griechenland und Italien, ist ein solcher Rückgang der Sterblichkeitsrate nicht zu verzeichnen.

1. Ist der Kommission dieser Umstand bekannt?

2. Hat sie bereits eine Informationskampagne durchgeführt, um europaweit das Bewusstsein für dieses Thema zu fördern und diesbezügliche Informationen bereitzustellen?

3. Wenn nicht, beabsichtigt sie, eine entsprechende Maßnahme zu ergreifen?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2012)

Gemäß den der Kommission vorliegenden Informationen von Eurostat ist die Brustkrebssterblichkeit in Österreich und anderen Industriestaaten, darunter Spanien, Portugal, Griechenland und Italien, rückläufig. In diesen Ländern liegen die Sterblichkeitsraten bei Brustkrebs sogar unter dem EU-Durchschnitt, so dass der Rückgang der Sterblichkeitsraten in diesen Ländern nicht so ausgeprägt ist wie in anderen Mitgliedstaaten, in denen die Sterblichkeit überdurchschnittlich hoch ist. Informationen zur Sterberate bei Brustkrebs können unter dem Link: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_asdr&lang=en sowie in der Datenbank HEIDI der Europäischen Kommission unter: http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/indicators/index_en.htm abgerufen werden.

In puncto Informationskampagnen hat Europa Donna mit Finanzmitteln aus dem EU-Gesundheitsprogramm eine Kurzanleitung („Short Guide“) zum Leitfaden „European Guidelines for quality assurance in breast cancer screening and diagnosis“ verfasst. Ziel dieser Anleitung ist es, bei Frauen, Aktivisten und politischen Entscheidungsträgern das Bewusstsein für das Thema zu fördern und darauf hinzuwirken, dass der Leitfaden in der Europäischen Union breitere Verwendung findet. Die Europäische Partnerschaft für Maßnahmen zur Krebsbekämpfung wird mit ihrem Aktionsbereich „Prävention und Früherkennung“ stärker darauf abstellen, wie die Hindernisse bei der Umsetzung der Empfehlung des Rates zur Krebsfrüherkennung aus dem Weg geräumt werden können und dass alle Bürgerinnen und Bürger bei Bedarf Zugang zur Früherkennung erhalten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002722/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: Mammography and breast cancer in Europe

Breast cancer mortality is said to be declining in Austria as well as in other developed and industrialised countries such as Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. This is possibly due to the use of mammographic screening, other breast cancer early-detection methods and improvements in therapies.

However, other European nations such as Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy have not experienced the same decline in mortality rates.

1. Is the Commission aware of this?

2. Has it already conducted an information campaign for increasing awareness and providing information about this issue throughout Europe?

3. If not, does it intend to take such action?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

According to the information available to the Commission through Eurostat, breast cancer mortality is declining in Austria and other industrialised countries including Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy. In fact these Member States have lower mortality rates from breast cancer than the European Union (EU) average and therefore their decline in mortality is not as marked as in other Member States which higher than average mortality. Information on breast cancer mortality rates is available at: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_asdr&lang=en and in the European Commission Heidi data tool, at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/indicators/index_en.htm

With regard to information campaigns, Europa Donna produced a short guide to the European Guidelines for quality assurance in breast cancer screening and diagnosis, with financial support from the EU Health Programme. This guide aims to raise awareness among women, advocates, and policy-makers and improve implementation of the guidelines across the European Union. The European Partnership for Action against Cancer, through its 'screening and early diagnosis' pillar will further focus on how to overcome barriers to implementing the Council Recommendation on cancer screening of and to provide access to screening to all citizens who may benefit from it.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002723/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9. März 2012)

Betrifft: Geschlechtsspezifisches Lohngefälle in Griechenland

Das geschlechtsspezifische Lohngefälle in Griechenland liegt offiziell bei 22 %, während der europäische Durchschnitt 17 % beträgt.

In den letzten Jahren hat sich das griechische Parlament allgemeiner Themen aus dem Bereich der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter angenommen und diese erörtert; das besondere Problem des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles ist dabei jedoch nicht separat behandelt worden.

1. Wie kann die Kommission Griechenland beim Abbau des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles unterstützen?

2. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass die Überwindung des Lohngefälles eine Hilfe für die Bevölkerung und Wirtschaft Griechenlands zu diesem entscheidenden Zeitpunkt, an dem die Konjunkturperspektiven schlecht sind, darstellen würde?

3. Wenn ja, welche wirtschaftlichen Auswirkungen würde die Kommission erwarten?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(27. April 2012)

Die Beseitigung des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles gehört zu den Hauptprioritäten der Kommissionsstrategie für die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern 2010-2015. Der Grundsatz der Lohngleichheit ist sowohl im Vertrag als auch in den Richtlinien 97/81/EG und 2006/54/EG verankert. In ihrer Rolle als Hüterin der Verträge überwacht die Kommission fortlaufend, ob der geltende Rechtsrahmen für die Gleichbehandlung von Teilzeitkräften und die Lohngleichheit auf nationaler Ebene ordnungsgemäß umgesetzt wird. Ein Bericht über die Durchführung der Richtlinie 2006/54/EG ist für 2013 geplant.

Mit ihrer EU-weiten Sensibilisierungskampagne machte die Kommission 2009 auf das Lohngefälle zwischen Männern und Frauen aufmerksam. Am 2. März 2012 organisierte sie zum zweiten Mal den Europäischen Tag der Lohngleichheit. Auf der Webseite der Kampagne ([1]) finden sich zahlreiche Beispiele für nationale Maßnahmen zur Beseitigung geschlechtsspezifischer Lohnunterschiede.

2011 leitete die Kommission eine Initiative ein, um in Unternehmen das Bewusstsein für diese Thematik zu schärfen. Dazu bietet sie Schulungsmaßnahmen und den Austausch bewährter Verfahren für Unternehmen aus allen Mitgliedstaaten zum „Businesskonzept" Geschlechtergleichstellung an.

— Im Rahmen des Kommissionsprogramms zum Austausch bewährter Verfahren auf dem Gebiet der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern ([2]) fand im Dezember 2011 in Deutschland eine Veranstaltung zur gegenseitigen Information über Instrumente zum Abbau des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles statt. Dabei erläuterten Vertreter der deutschen und der österreichischen Regierung vor Vertretern der anderen Mitgliedstaaten und der EWR-Ländern, wie sie das Problem der Lohndifferenz angehen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_de.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/tools/good-practices/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002723/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: Gender pay gap in Greece

The official gender pay gap in Greece is 22 %, while Europe's average is 17 %.

In recent years the Hellenic Parliament has addressed and debated general issues of gender equality; however, the specific issue of the gender pay gap has not been addressed individually.

1. How can the Commission support Greece in tackling the gender pay gap?

2. Does the Commission believe that closing the gap will support the Greek people and their economy at this crucial time when the economic outlook is bad?

3. If so, what kind of economic effects does the Commission expect?

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

Tackling the gender pay gap is one of the Commission's priorities in its Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015. The principle of equal pay is enshrined in the Treaty and in Directives 97/81/EC and 2006/54/EC. The Commission, in its role as guardian of the Treaties, is constantly monitoring whether the existing legal framework on equal treatment of part-time staff and on equal pay is being correctly applied in practice at national level. A report on the implementation of the directive 2006/54/EC is envisaged for 2013.

The Commission launched in 2009 an EU-wide awareness-raising campaign on the gender pay gap. On 2 March 2012 the Commission held the second European Equal Pay Day. The campaign website ([1]) provides numerous examples of actions at national level to tackle the gender pay gap.

The Commission launched in 2011 an initiative which will help to raise awareness in companies about the gender pay gap. It will do so through training activities and exchanges of good practices for companies of all Member States on the 'business case' for gender equality.

— In the framework of its exchange of good practices programme on gender equality ([2]), the Commission organised in December 2011 in Germany an exchange on instruments to tackle the gender pay gap. Representatives from the German and Austrian governments presented to other Member States and EEA countries representatives their actions to tackle the gender pay gap.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/tools/good-practices/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002724/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9. März 2012)

Betrifft: Geschlechtsspezifisches Lohngefälle in Europa

Frauen in der EU verdienen im Durchschnitt immer noch 16,4 % weniger als Männer, wie aus neuesten Zahlen hervorgeht, welche die Kommission anlässlich des Europäischen Tages der Lohngleichheit veröffentlicht hat. Diese Zahlen bestätigen, dass das Lohngefälle in den letzten Jahren leicht abgenommen hat (es lag zuvor bei rund 17 %). Die Spannbreite des Lohngefälles reicht von 2 % in Polen bis zu über 27 % in Estland.

1. Welche Strategien und Maßnahmen verfolgt die Kommission, um das fortbestehende geschlechtsspezifische Lohngefälle in Europa zu bekämpfen?

2. Wie kann die Kommission eine engere Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten bei der Erforschung und Analyse des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles fördern?

3. Kann die Kommission mit Bezug auf die Richtlinie des Rates zu der Rahmenvereinbarung über Teilzeitarbeit (Richtlinie 97/81/EG [1]) vom 15. Dezember 1997) zur Überwindung des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles beitragen?

4. Beabsichtigt die Kommission beispielsweise, den Mitgliedstaaten Beispiele bewährter Praktiken für die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter aus solchen Mitgliedstaaten, denen es in den letzten Jahren gelungen ist, das geschlechtsspezifische Lohngefälle zu verringern, zur Verfügung zu stellen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2012)

Die Beseitigung des geschlechterspezifischen Lohngefälles gehört zu den Prioritäten der Strategie der Kommission für die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern 2010-2015. Der Grundsatz des gleichen Arbeitsentgelts ist im Vertrag sowie in den Richtlinien 97/81/EG und 2006/54/EG niedergelegt. Die Kommission überwacht als Hüterin der Verträge ständig, ob der Rechtsrahmen für die Gleichbehandlung von Teilzeitbeschäftigten und die Gleichheit des Arbeitsentgelts auf nationaler Ebene in der Praxis korrekt angewendet wird. Ein Bericht über die Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2006/54/EG ist für 2013 vorgesehen.

Die Kommission hat im Jahre 2009 eine EU-weite Sensibilisierungskampagne über das geschlechtsspezifische Lohngefälle durchgeführt. Am 2. Mai 2012 veranstaltete die Kommission den zweiten Europäischen Tag der Lohngleichheit. Die Webseite dieser Kampagne [2] bietet zahlreiche Beispiele für Maßnahmen auf nationaler Ebene zum Abbau des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles.

Die Kommission hat im Jahre 2011 eine Initiative eingeleitet, die in Unternehmen für geschlechtsspezifische Lohnunterschiede sensibilisieren soll. Maßnahmenschwerpunkte sind Fortbildungsmaßnahmen und der Austausch bewährter Verfahren für Unternehmen aller Mitgliedstaaten im Bereich der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern.

— Im Rahmen des Programms zum Austausch bewährter Verfahren auf dem Gebiet der Geschlechtergleichstellung [3] veranstaltete die Kommission im Dezember 2011 in Deutschland einen Austausch über Maßnahmen zur Verringerung des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles. Deutsche und österreichische Regierungsvertreter stellten den Vertretern anderer Mitgliedstaaten und der EWR-Länder ihre Maßnahmen zum Abbau des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles vor.

---

[1] ABl. L 14 vom 20.1.1998, S. 9.
[2] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_de.htm
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/tools/good-practices/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002724/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: The gender pay gap in Europe

Women across the EU continue to earn an average of 16.4 % less than men, according to up-to-date figures released by the Commission on European Equal Pay Day. These data confirm a slight downward trend in recent years, when the figure circled around 17 %. The rate ranges from around 2 % in Poland to more than 27 % in Estonia.

1. What are the Commission's strategies and actions to combat the persistent gender pay gap in Europe?

2. How can the Commission foster closer coordination among the Member States in relation to research into and analysis of the gender pay gap?

3. With reference to the Council Directive concerning the framework Agreement on part-time work (Directive 97/81/EC of 15 December 1997 ([1])), can the Commission contribute to the elimination of the gender pay gap?

4. Does the Commission intend for example to provide Member States with best-case examples of practice relating to gender equality from those Member States which have managed to reduce the gender pay gap during recent years?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

Tackling the gender pay gap is one of the Commission's priorities in its Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015. The principle of equal pay is enshrined in the Treaty and in Directives 97/81/EC and 2006/54/EC. The Commission, in its role as guardian of the Treaties, is constantly monitoring whether the existing legal framework on equal treatment of part-time staff and on equal pay is being correctly applied in practice at national level. A report on the implementation of Directive 2006/54/EC is envisaged for 2013.

The Commission launched in 2009 an EU-wide awareness-raising campaign on the gender pay gap. On 2 March 2012 the Commission held the second European Equal Pay Day. The campaign website ([2]) provides numerous examples of actions at national level to tackle the gender pay gap.

The Commission launched in 2011 an initiative which will help to raise awareness in companies about the gender pay gap. It will do so through training activities and exchanges of good practices for companies of all Member States on the 'business case' for gender equality.

— In the framework of its exchange of good practices programme on gender equality ([3]), the Commission organised in December 2011 in Germany an exchange on instruments to tackle the gender pay gap. Representatives from the German and Austrian governments presented to other Member States and EEA countries representatives their actions to tackle the gender pay gap.

([1]) OJ L 14, 20.1.1998, p. 9.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/tools/good-practices/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002725/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9. März 2012)

Betrifft: Maßnahmen der Kommission im Hinblick auf das geschlechtsspezifische Lohngefälle

Im Jahr 2011 verdienten Frauen in Europa im Durchschnitt 17 % weniger als Männer. Neue Daten, die am 2. März 2012 veröffentlicht wurden, belegen, dass Frauen heute 16,4 % weniger verdienen als Männer.

Die negativen Auswirkungen der Wirtschaftskrise in Europa auf Beschäftigung und Einkommen machen sich insbesondere bei Frauen deutlich bemerkbar.

1. Wie wird die Kommission gewährleisten, dass das Ziel ihrer Strategie Europa 2020, die Beschäftigungsquote der 20- bis 64-Jährigen auf 75 % anzuheben, erreicht wird?

2. Wie sehen Zeitplan und Strategie der Kommission für die öffentliche Konsultation zum Thema des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles aus?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(7. Mai 2012)

In der Strategie Europa 2020 heißt es ausdrücklich, dass die angestrebte Beschäftigungsquote von 75 % in der Altersgruppe 20-64 Jahre durch die vermehrte Einbeziehung der Frauen erreicht werden sollte. Daher war die erhöhte Arbeitsmarktbeteiligung von Frauen bereits im ersten Europäischen Semester ein vorrangiges Ziel. Im Jahreswachstumsbericht 2012 (AGS) wird hervorgehoben, dass das Steuer- und Sozialleistungssystem entsprechend ausgestaltet und angewandt werden muss, um die Beteiligung von Zweitverdienern zu fördern. Die Kommission wird prüfen, wie die Mitgliedstaaten dieses Problem in ihren nationalen Reformprogrammen angehen und gegebenenfalls neue, länderspezifische Empfehlungen unterbreiten.

Eine öffentliche Konsultation zum Thema Lohngleichheit steht zurzeit nicht an. Allerdings zählt die Beseitigung des geschlechtsspezifischen Lohngefälles weiterhin zu den Prioritäten der Kommission, wie dies in der Strategie für die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern 2010-2015 vorgesehen ist und in einer breiten Palette von Maßnahmen der Kommission zum Ausdruck kommt. So wurde 2009 eine EU-weite Sensibilisierungskampagne zum Lohngefälle zwischen Männern und Frauen eingeleitet und am 2. März 2012 zum zweiten Mal der Europäische Tag der Lohngleichheit organisiert. Auf der Webseite der Kampagne ([1]) finden sich zahlreiche Beispiele für nationale Maßnahmen zur Beseitigung geschlechtsspezifischer Lohnunterschiede.

Des Weiteren sei die Frau Abgeordnete auf die Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-002608/2012 ([2]) verwiesen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_de.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002725/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: The Commission's actions regarding the gender pay gap

In 2011 women across Europe earned on average 17 % less than men. According to new data published on 2 March 2012, women today earn 16.4 % less than men. There has been a slight reduction in the gap, but it applies to and affects all Member States.

The negative impact of the European economic crisis on employment and income is having a major effect on women.

1. How will the Commission ensure that the target set by its Europe 2020 strategy of raising the employment rate to 75 % of the population aged 20-64 is met?

2. What is the Commission's timetable and strategy for public consultation on the gender pay gap?

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

The Europe 2020 strategy explicitly states that the 75 % employment rate target in the age group 20-64 should be achieved through the greater involvement of women. Therefore, increasing female labour market participation has been prominent already during the first European Semester. The 2012 Annual Growth Survey (AGS) package stressed the need for implementation and for adequately designed tax- and benefit systems to help second earners participation. The Commission will examine the responses given by Member States in their National Reform Programmes and eventually make new country-specific recommendations.

For the moment, the Commission does not plan a public consultation concerning specifically the equal pay. Tackling the gender pay gap however remains one of the Commission's priorities, as enshrined in the strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 as well as evidenced in a broad range of actions carried out by the Commission. The Commission launched in 2009 an EU-wide awareness-raising campaign on the gender pay gap. On 2 March 2012, the Commission held the second European Equal Pay Day. The campaign website ([1]) provides numerous examples of actions at national level to tackle the gender pay gap.

In this context, the Honourable Parliamentarian is invited to refer to the reply given to the Written Question E-002608/2012 ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002726/12
aan de Commissie
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(9 maart 2012)

Betreft: Beschikking C(2007)1697 betreffende de Nederlandse biermarkt

In beschikking C(2007)1697 van 18 april 2007 was de Commissie tot de conclusie gekomen dat vier Nederlandse brouwerijen tussen 26 februari 1996 en 3 november 1999 aan een kartel hadden deelgenomen op de Nederlandse markt. Naar haar mening hadden de brouwerijen samengespannen om de prijzen op te drijven en de markt onderling te verdelen.

Alle brouwerijen behalve InBev hebben bij het Gerecht beroep aangetekend met het verzoek de beschikking nietig te verklaren. In zijn uitspraak van 16 juni 2011 heeft het Gerecht de beschikking met betrekking tot Heineken en Bavaria echter in grote lijnen bevestigd. In september 2011 werd uitspraak gedaan in het beroep van Grolsch, met de conclusie dat de Commissie niet genoeg bewijs had geleverd om de betrokkenheid van Grolsch N. V. aan te tonen. Het Gerecht heeft daarom de beschikking nietig verklaard voor het deel met betrekking tot Grolsch.

Tengevolge van de uitspraak hebben slechts twee van de vier grootste bedrijven op de markt vanwege hun gedrag een boete opgelegd gekregen, terwijl de andere twee brouwerijen hieraan zijn ontkomen.

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven wat haar visie is op de huidige situatie, waarin slechts twee van de vier bedrijven een boete opgelegd hebben gekregen?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven of deze uitspraak het beginsel van eerlijke mededinging ondermijnt?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat de aan Bavaria en Heineken opgelegde boetes nog steeds evenredig zijn, nu slechts twee van de vier bedrijven een boete hebben gekregen?

4. Is de uitkomst van deze zaak niet in strijd met het beginsel van gelijke behandeling, dat, zoals geformuleerd door het Hof van Justitie, een van de grondbeginselen is van de Europese Unie?

5. Recentelijk zijn er nog beschikkingen tegen Unipetrol, Aalberts en Aragonesas nietig verklaard. Wat is de Commissie van plan te doen om zulke fouten in de toekomst te voorkomen?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(24 april 2012)

Een arrest van het Gerecht kan een kartelbesluit van de Commissie nietig verklaren ten aanzien van één partij, zonder dat dit enige invloed heeft op de positie van de andere partijen. Het desbetreffende arrest is het resultaat van de toetsing door het Gerecht van de bewijsstukken en feiten met betrekking tot één partij, en is niet in strijd is met de beginselen van eerlijke mededinging, evenredigheid en gelijke behandeling.

In 2011 heeft de EU-rechter meer dan 80 arresten uitgesproken over 19 verschillende kartelbesluiten vastgesteld tussen 2000 en 2008. Het overgrote deel hiervan bevestigde de besluiten van de Commissie, of verminderde de opgelegde boete licht. In arresten over 9 van de 19 kartelbesluiten, waaronder de drie gevallen die het geachte Parlementslid vermeldt, heeft de EU-rechter de besluiten van de Commissie ten aanzien van bepaalde partijen nietig verklaard. De Commissie heeft beroep ingesteld tegen het arrest in de zaak-Aalberts bij het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie ([1]). Na het arrest in de zaak Aragonesas heeft de Commissie op 27 maart 2012 haar oorspronkelijke besluit gewijzigd ten aanzien van de moedermaatschappij Uralita, en een boete opgelegd die de inbreukperiode weerspiegelt zoals die bevestigd was door het Gerecht.

De Commissie staat positief tegenover de rechterlijke toetsing van haar besluiten en zal ook toekomstige onderzoeken en praktijken aanpassen aan de Europese rechtspraak.

([1]) Zaak C-287/11p.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002726/12
to the Commission
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: Decision C(2007) 1697 concerning the Dutch beer market

On 18 April 2007 the Commission issued Decision C(2007)1697, in which it concluded that four Dutch brewers had participated in a cartel on the Dutch market between 26 February 1996 and 3 November 1999. According to the Commission, the Dutch brewers had conspired to raise prices and divide customers amongst themselves.

All the brewers, with the exception of InBev, appealed the decision before the General Court and requested that the General Court annul the Commission's decision. In its judgment of 16 June 2011 the General Court largely confirmed the decision with regard to Heineken and Bavaria. In September 2011 the General Court ruled on the appeal by Grolsch and found that the Commission had not provided sufficient evidence to impute the infringement to Grolsch N.V. The General Court therefore annulled the decision with regard to Grolsch.

As a result of this judgment, only two of the four largest companies on the market have been fined for their behaviour, while the other two brewers have escaped the imposition of any fine.

1. Could the Commission indicate how it views the current situation whereby only two out of four companies have been fined?

2. Can the Commission indicate whether this decision infringes the principle of fair competition?

3. Is the Commission of the opinion that the fines imposed on Bavaria and Heineken are still proportionate, now that only two out of four companies have been fined?

4. Does the outcome of this particular case not contradict the principle of equal treatment, a basic principle of the European Union as defined by the European Court of Justice?

5. Recent decisions against Unipetrol, Aalberts and Aragonesas have also been annulled. What will the Commission do to avoid such mistakes in the future?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

A judgment of the General Court that annuls a Commission cartel decision with respect to one party does not affect the position of the other parties. The current outcome is the effect of the review carried out by the General Court of the evidence and factual situation applicable to that particular party and does not infringe the principles of fair competition, proportionality or equal treatment.

In 2011, the EU Courts delivered more than 80 judgments concerning 19 different cartel decisions adopted between 2000 and 2008. The vast majority of judgments fully upheld the Commission decisions or modestly reduced the fines. In judgments concerning 9 of the 19 cartel decisions, the EU Courts annulled the decisions in respect of certain parties, including the three cases mentioned by the Honourable Member. Of these, the Commission has appealed the Aalberts judgment before the European Court of Justice ([1]). Giving effect to the Aragonesas judgment, the Commission has, on 27 March 2012, amended the original decision as concerns the parent company Uralita and imposed a fine reflecting the infringement period confirmed by the General Court.

The Commission welcomes the scrutiny of the European Courts and adapts its future investigations and practices to the case law as set out by the Courts.

([1]) Case C-287/11P.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002727/12
alla Commissione
Vincenzo Iovine (ALDE)
(9 marzo 2012)

Oggetto: Diritto alla mobilità per le persone disabili

La Convenzione sui diritti delle persone con disabilità è stata il primo strumento internazionale sui diritti umani ratificato dall'Unione europea. Il 4 luglio 2009 la Convenzione risultava firmata da tutti gli Stati membri, diciannove dei quali hanno anche firmato il Protocollo opzionale alla Convenzione.

Il Parlamento europeo ha spesso rivolto la sua attenzione alle persone con disabilità e ha approvato recentemente la Relazione sulla mobilità e l'integrazione delle persone con disabilità, invitando gli Stati membri e la Commissione a elaborare norme giuridiche e atti legislativi a livello dell'UE.

La libertà di circolazione è un diritto fondamentale all'interno dell'Unione europea; al giorno d'oggi le città italiane sembrano non essere tecnicamente adatte a garantire la libera circolazione. Per disabili e non vedenti muoversi in città significa affrontare, quotidianamente, un vero e proprio percorso a ostacoli. I marciapiedi sono invasi da auto e motorini, i passaggi per le sedie a rotelle spesso bloccati, su tram e autobus non ci sono le pedane per permettere la salita e la discesa, nelle metropolitane mancano gli avvisi sonori delle fermate.

L'articolo 4 della Convenzione annovera tra gli Obblighi Generali misure volte a intraprendere o promuovere la ricerca e lo sviluppo di beni, servizi e apparecchiature secondo la definizione di cui all'articolo 2 della Convenzione, che dovrebbero richiedere il minimo adattamento possibile e il costo più contenuto possibile per venire incontro alle esigenze specifiche delle persone con disabilità, promuoverne la disponibilità e l'uso nonché incoraggiare la progettazione universale nell'elaborazione di norme e linee guida.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, non ritiene la Commissione che questi impedimenti costituiscano una violazione dell'articolo 21 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, secondo cui è vietata qualsiasi forma di discriminazione fondata, in particolare, sul sesso, la razza, il colore della pelle o l'origine etnica o sociale, le caratteristiche genetiche, il patrimonio, la nascita, la disabilità o l'orientamento sessuale? Quali azioni intende intraprendere la Commissione affinché la Convenzione venga effettivamente applicata sul territorio italiano?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2012)

L'Unione europea (UE) è vincolata dalla convenzione sui diritti delle persone con disabilità ([1]) entro i limiti delle sue competenze ([2]). Soltanto ove gli Stati membri stiano attuando il diritto dell'UE la Commissione può valutare se una legge o una misura nazionale sia conforme alla convenzione e ai diritti sanciti dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali.

L'Italia ha ratificato la convenzione ed è vincolata alle disposizioni in materia di accessibilità di cui all'articolo 9. Il rispetto di tali disposizioni sarà sottoposto all'esame del comitato ONU sui diritti delle persone con disabilità dopo che l'Italia avrà presentato il suo rapporto sull'attuazione della convenzione.

Benché la maggior parte degli articoli della convenzione rientri nella sfera di competenza primaria degli Stati membri, la Commissione sostiene e integra l'impegno nazionale per adempiere agli obblighi della convenzione ([3]).

Nell'ambito della strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020 la Commissione ha intenzione di proporre una legge europea sull'accessibilità entro la fine del 2012, finalizzata a migliorare il mercato interno dei prodotti e dei servizi accessibili secondo l'impostazione «design for all».

([1]) In appresso denominata «la convenzione».
([2]) La dichiarazione relativa alla competenza di cui all'allegato II della decisione 2010/48/CE del Consiglio del 26 novembre 2009 relativa alla conclusione della convenzione elenca gli strumenti dell'UE che attestano la competenza dell'UE nell'ambito disciplinato dalla convenzione.
([3]) Cfr. la strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020: un rinnovato impegno per un'Europa senza barriere, COM(2010)636 definitivo. Gli ambiti principali di intervento sono i seguenti: accessibilità, partecipazione, uguaglianza, occupazione, istruzione e formazione, protezione sociale, salute e azioni esterne. Cfr. inoltre l'elenco delle azioni per il periodo 2010-2015 figurante nell'allegato della strategia, SEC(2010)1324.

La vigente normativa dell'UE stabilisce la tutela dalla discriminazione a causa di disabilità soltanto in materia di occupazione e di condizioni di lavoro ([4]). La proposta della Commissione volta a estendere tale tutela all'accesso ai beni e ai servizi disponibili al pubblico, compresi i trasporti ([5]), è tuttora all'esame del Consiglio.

Tuttavia, la normativa dell'UE in materia di diritti dei passeggeri contribuisce a combattere la discriminazione dei passeggeri con disabilità e/o a mobilità ridotta garantendo loro il diritto di viaggiare in condizioni di parità rispetto agli altri cittadini.

([4]) Direttiva 2000/78/CE del Consiglio, del 27 novembre 2000, che stabilisce un quadro generale per la parità di trattamento in materia di occupazione e di condizioni di lavoro (GU L 303 del 2.12.2000).

([5]) Proposta della Commissione riguardante una direttiva recante applicazione del principio di parità di trattamento fra le persone indipendentemente dalla religione o le convinzioni personali, la disabilità, l'età o l'orientamento sessuale, per le questioni al di fuori del mondo del lavoro, COM(2008)426 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002727/12
to the Commission
Vincenzo Iovine (ALDE)
(9 March 2012)

Subject: Right of mobility for the disabled

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was the first international instrument on human rights ratified by the EU. On 4 July 2009, the Convention was signed by all Member States, 19 of which have also signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

The European Parliament has often turned its attention to people with disabilities and recently adopted the report on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities, calling on Member States and the Commission to draft legal standards and legislation at EU level.

Freedom of movement is a fundamental right within the European Union. At the present time, Italian cities do not seem to be technically suited to guarantee freedom of movement. Getting around the city for disabled and blind people means facing a veritable obstacle course on a daily basis. The pavements are invaded by cars and motorbikes, wheelchair access paths are often blocked, there are no ramps to allow the disabled to get on and off trams and buses and the underground stations are completely lacking stop sound signals.

The general obligations cited in Article 4 of the Convention include measures for undertaking or promoting research and development of goods, services and equipment as defined in Article 2 of the Convention, which should require the minimum possible adaptation and cost to meet the specific needs of people with disabilities, to promote their availability and use and to promote universal design in the development of standards and guidelines.

In view of the points raised above, does the Commission not feel that these impediments constitute a violation of Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, under which all forms of discrimination, in particular based on sex, race, skin colour or ethnic or social origin, genetic features, property, birth, disability or sexual orientation are prohibited? What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the Convention is effectively implemented in Italy?

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

The European Union (EU) is bound by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([1]) to the extent of its competence ([2]). Only where member states are implementing EC law can the Commission assess whether a national law or measure is compliant with the Convention and the rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Italy has ratified the Convention and is bound by the accessibility provisions of Article 9. Its compliance will be subject to an examination by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities after Italy has submitted its report on the implementation of the Convention.

While most of the Convention's articles fall under the primary competence of the Member States, the Commission supports and complements national efforts to meet the obligations of the Convention ([3]).

As part of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, the Commission has the intention to propose a European Accessibility Act by the end of 2012. The aim is to improve the internal market for accessible products and services following a 'design for all' approach.

([1]) Hereafter referred to as the Convention.

([2]) The Declaration of Competence in Annex II of Council Decision 2010/48/EC of 26 November 2009 concluding the Convention lists EU instruments which attest the competence of the EU in matters governed by the Convention.

([3]) See the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 'A renewed commitment to a barrier-free Europe', COM(2010) 636 final. The key areas of action are: accessibility, participation, equality, employment, education and training, social protection, health, and external action. See also the list of actions for 2010-2015 detailed in the annex to the strategy, SEC(2010) 1324.

Existing EC law provides protection against discrimination on the ground of disability only in the fields of employment and occupation ([4]). The Commission's proposal to extend such protection to the access to goods and services which are available to the public, including transport ([5]), is still under discussion in the Council.

However, EU passenger rights legislation helps to combat discrimination of passengers with disabilities and/or reduced mobility by ensuring their right to travel on an equal basis with other citizens.

([4]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation (OJ L 303, 2.12.2000).

([5]) Commission's proposal COM(2008) 426 final for a directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in matters outside the area of employment.