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 143 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003811/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Le migliori pratiche del programma MEDIA Formazione (2007-2013)

Il programma MEDIA Formazione (2007-2013) è rivolto ai professionisti dell'industria audiovisiva. Intende offrire un aiuto agli operatori del settore audiovisivo affinché si possano adattare alla dimensione europea ed internazionale del mercato attraverso la promozione di una formazione professionale permanente e l'utilizzo delle nuove tecnologie.

Gli obiettivi operativi del programma MEDIA Formazione sono i seguenti: rafforzare le competenze dei professionisti audiovisivi europei al fine di migliorare la qualità e le potenzialità delle opere audiovisive europee e rafforzare la dimensione europea delle attività di formazione nel settore audiovisivo.

I destinatari del programma sono gli studenti delle scuole di cinematografia o di altri istituti di istruzione superiore per l'acquisizione di competenze legate al settore audiovisivo e i formatori presso scuole cinematografiche o istituti di istruzione superiore per l'acquisizione di competenze legate al settore audiovisivo.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere quali sono stati i casi di eccellenza risultanti dallo strumento MEDIA Formazione (2007-2013)?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2012)

Il programma MEDIA Formazione (2007-2013) si articola lungo due assi:

1) Il programma di formazione continua: l'obiettivo è sostenere corsi di formazione paneuropei di elevata qualità nell'ambito dei quali gli operatori dell'industria audiovisiva possano acquisire nuove competenze, condividere pratiche ottimali e costituire forti reti professionali. MEDIA investe attualmente più di 6,8 milioni di EUR all'anno per cofinanziare (a un massimo del 60 %) più di 60 di tali corsi che formano più di 1 500 operatori all'anno. Importanti organizzazioni europee come EAVE (LU), Media Business Schools (ES), Maya o TorinoFilm lab (IT); Esodoc (IT), Eurodoc (FR) o Documentary campus (DE), Cartoon (BE) (per citare soltanto alcuni tra tanti altri corsi di formazione sostenuti da MEDIA) hanno formato e collegato in rete centinaia di operatori professionali. Queste reti sono state utili per contribuire a ristrutturare il settore audiovisivo e hanno agevolato lo sviluppo, il finanziamento o la distribuzione di centinaia di film (in coproduzione).

2) Il programma di formazione iniziale: l'obiettivo in questo caso è incoraggiare gli scambi e la cooperazione tra le scuole del cinema e l'industria a livello europeo affinché possano condividere le pratiche ottimali e, cosa essenziale, sviluppare la dimensione europea dei curricula. Il programma sostiene la mobilità degli studenti del settore audiovisivo in Europa ed agevola la loro integrazione nel settore professionale.

Dal 2007 sono stati cofinanziati 18 progetti. Essi sono stati implementati da 46 istituzioni di 19 paesi europei tra cui progetti efficaci e di alto profilo come Adaptation for Cinema, gestito dal Centro Studi Holden in Italia insieme alla London Film School e alla Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME) di Budapest.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003811/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Best practices from the MEDIA Training programme (2007-2013)

The MEDIA Training programme (2007-2013) is aimed at professionals in the audiovisual industry. It is designed to provide help for employees in the audiovisual sector so that they can adapt to the European and international dimensions of the market through the promotion of continuous professional training and the use of new technologies.

The operational objectives of the MEDIA Training programme are as follows: to develop the skills of European audiovisual professionals with the aim of improving the quality and potential of European audiovisual works, and to strengthen the European dimension of training activities in the audiovisual sector.

The programme is aimed at students at film schools or other higher-education institutions where skills linked to the audiovisual sector are taught and at instructors at the same schools and institutions.

In view of the above, could the Commission state which cases produced excellent results as part of the MEDIA Training instrument (2007-2013)?

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

The MEDIA Training programme (2007-2013) contains two strands:

1) The Continuous training scheme: the objective is to support high-quality paneuropean training courses, where professionals from the audiovisual industry may acquire new skills, share best practices and build strong professional networks. MEDIA currently invests more than EUR 6.8 million per year to co-finance (max 60%) more than 60 such courses, which train more than 1 500 professionals per year. Top European organisations such as EAVE (LU), Media Business Schools (ES), Maya or TorinoFilm lab (IT); Esodoc (IT), Eurodoc (FR) or Documentary campus (DE); Cartoon (BE) (to name a few among many other MEDIA supported training courses) have trained and networked hundreds of professionals. These networks have been instrumental in helping to re-structure the audiovisual sector and have facilitated the development, financing or distribution of hundreds of (coproduced) films.

2) The Initial Training scheme: the aim here is to encourage exchanges and cooperation between film schools and the industry at European Level so that they can share best practices and, crucially, develop the European dimension of the curricula. It supports the mobility of students studying in the audiovisual sector in Europe and facilitates their integration in the professional world.

Since 2007 18 projects have been co-financed. These have been implemented by 46 institutions from 19 different European Countries, including successful and high profile ones like Adaptation for Cinema, led by Centro Studi Holden from Italy together with the London Film School and Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME), Budapest.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003812/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Immatricolazioni auto all'estero, nuove norme

La Commissione presenta agli Stati membri e ai cittadini dell'Unione europea una panoramica delle norme comunitarie applicabili in materia d'immatricolazione dei veicoli originari di un altro Stato membro ed informa i cittadini in merito ai vari mezzi di cui possono disporre per far valere i propri diritti.

Sebbene acquistare o trasferire veicoli in un altro Stato membro sia sempre più agevole, molti cittadini e molte imprese temono ancora di dover far fronte a formalità amministrative, costi supplementari e procedure vincolanti, come rivelano alcune statistiche del 2010. Lo stesso problema lo affrontano le agenzie di noleggio auto, nel momento in cui devono trasferire i veicoli oltre frontiera.

Ora, la Commissione europea vuole facilitare ulteriormente il trasferimento di un veicolo da uno Stato membro ad un altro per evitare perdite di tempo, molteplici pagamenti e burocrazie tecniche ancora legate a questo procedimento.

La nuova proposta che è stata presentata il 4 aprile scorso, sebbene risulti in procedure semplificate per molti aspetti, solleva anche molte preoccupazioni.

In particolare si chiede quindi alla Commissione:

non ritiene che la proposta in merito agli obblighi degli Stati membri di riconoscere le immatricolazioni straniere rischi di aumentare i rischi di frode o di sicurezza all'interno dello Stato stesso?

Risposta data da Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

La proposta di regolamento volto a semplificare il trasferimento dei veicoli a motore immatricolati in un altro Stato membro all'interno del mercato unico ([1]) intende migliorare il funzionamento del mercato unico eliminando gli ostacoli amministrativi legati alla reimmatricolazione dei veicoli a motore che attualmente costituisce un ostacolo alla libera circolazione dei beni, senza peraltro pregiudicare l'affidabilità di tali procedure. Un obiettivo specifico della proposta è ridurre gli oneri amministrativi a carico di tutti gli attori interessati senza pregiudicare la sicurezza stradale o la prevenzione degli illeciti e delle frodi.

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che a volte la reimmatricolazione di un veicolo a motore immatricolato in un altro Stato membro potrebbe essere usata quale strumento per legalizzare veicoli rubati o i documenti di accompagnamento di tali veicoli. Per quanto concerne le immatricolazioni straniere cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato, la proposta riguarda esclusivamente l'immatricolazione dei veicoli a motore precedentemente immatricolati in un altro Stato membro, ed esclude in particolare dal proprio campo di applicazione l'immatricolazione dei veicoli a motore già immatricolati in un paese terzo.

Inoltre, per prevenire le frodi e ridurre i rischi per la sicurezza stradale, la proposta definisce chiaramente i casi in cui le autorità preposte all'immatricolazione hanno diritto di rifiutare l'immatricolazione di un veicolo a motore precedentemente immatricolato in un altro Stato membro. La proposta prescrive inoltre una stretta cooperazione tra le autorità preposte all'immatricolazione e un accresciuto scambio di informazioni, contribuendo così in modo diretto ad aumentare la trasparenza, le informazioni in merito allo scambio transfrontaliero di veicoli e, di conseguenza, a prevenire le frodi e il traffico di veicoli rubati. In tale contesto sono ancora d'applicazione le vigenti decisioni del Consiglio sulla lotta contro la criminalità connessa con veicoli e sullo scambio di informazioni tra le autorità di forza pubblica. ([2])

([1]) COM/2012/0164 definitivo — 2012/0082 (COD).

([2]) Decisione 2004/919/CE del Consiglio, del 22 dicembre 2004, relativa alla lotta contro la criminalità connessa con veicoli e aventi implicazioni transfrontaliere, GU L 389 del 30.12.2004, pagg. 28-30; Decisione 2008/615/GAI del Consiglio, del 23 giugno 2008, sul potenziamento della cooperazione transfrontaliera, soprattutto nella lotta al terrorismo e alla criminalità transfrontaliera, GU L 210 del 6.8.2008, pagg. 1-11; e Decisione 2008/616/GAI del Consiglio, del 23 giugno 2008, relativa all'attuazione della Decisione 2008/615/GAI sul potenziamento della cooperazione transfrontaliera, soprattutto nella lotta al terrorismo e alla criminalità transfrontaliera, GU L 210 del 6.8.2008, pagg. 12-72.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003812/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Car registrations abroad: new standards

The Commission provides Member States and the citizens of the European Union with an overview of the EU rules applicable for the registration of vehicles originating in another Member State and informs citizens of the various means available to them to assert their rights.

Some 2010 statistics reveal that even though buying or transferring vehicles to another Member State is becoming easier, many citizens and enterprises still shy away from paperwork, extra costs and burdensome procedures. Car rental agencies face the same problem when they have to transfer vehicles across borders.

The Commission now wants to make transferring a vehicle from one Member State to another even easier, to avoid the time wasting, multiple payments and technical formalities still associated with this process.

Although its new proposal, which was submitted on 4 April 2012, includes procedures that are simplified in many ways, it still raises a number of concerns.

More specifically, does the Commission not agree that the proposal relating to the obligations of Member States to recognise foreign registrations could increase fraud or security risks within the Member States?

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

The proposal for a regulation simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles previously registered in another Member State within the single market ([1]) is intended to improve the functioning of the single market through the elimination of administrative barriers related to the re-registration procedure of motor vehicles, which currently hinder the free movement of goods, without prejudicing the reliability of such procedures. A specific objective of the proposal is to reduce the administrative burdens of all actors involved without hindering road safety or the prevention of crimes and fraud.

The Commission is aware that sometimes re-registration of a motor vehicle registered in another Member State could be used for legalising stolen vehicles or vehicle documents. As regards foreign registrations referred to by the Honourable Member, the proposal concerns exclusively the registration of motor vehicles previously registered in another Member State, and specifically excludes from its scope the registration of motor vehicles registered in a third country.

Furthermore, with a view to preventing fraud and reducing risks to road safety, the proposal precisely defines the cases in which registration authorities are entitled to refuse the registration of a motor vehicle previously registered in another Member State. Also, the proposal requires close cooperation between registration authorities and increased exchange of information, thus contributing directly to enhancing transparency, increasing cross-border exchange of vehicle information and, consequently, to preventing frauds and trafficking of stolen vehicles. In this context, the existing Council Decisions on cross border vehicle crime and exchange of information among law enforcement authorities are still applicable ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012) 0164 final — 2012/0082 (COD).

([2]) Council Decision 2004/919/EC of 22 December 2004 on tackling vehicle crime with cross-border implications, OJ L 389, 30.12.2004, p. 28-30; Council Decision 2008/615/JHA of 23 June 2008 on the stepping up of cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime, OJ L 210, 6.8.2008, p. 1-11; and Council Decision 2008/616/JHA of 23 June 2008 on the implementation of Decision 2008/615/JHA on the stepping up of cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime, OJ L 210, 6.8.2008, p. 12-72.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003813/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Iniziative in favore delle lingue minoritarie

Nell'Unione si contano oltre sessanta lingue regionali o minoritarie, parlate da circa 40 milioni di persone. Tra le più diffuse ci sono il catalano, il basco, il frisone, le lingue sami, il gallese e lo yiddish. La definizione di lingua minoritaria o regionale non include i dialetti delle lingue ufficiali e nemmeno le lingue parlate da comunità di immigranti.

Allo scopo di tutelare il patrimonio culturale delle lingue minoritarie e regionali, l'Unione ha istituito una rete di raccolta, analisi e studio della relativa documentazione chiamata Mercator, le cui sedi si trovano in Catalogna, Frisia e Galles.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1) se, dopo l'indagine del 2006, condotta dalla stessa UE, dove risultava che il 28 % degli intervistati parlava già due lingue straniere, mentre il 56 % solo una, è in possesso di dati più recenti che mostrano come il dato sia variato;

2) se ci sono provvedimenti adottati a protezione di lingue minoritarie parlate in Italia, come il ladino, il friulano, il sardo e l'occitano?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(19 giugno 2012)

Nell'esercizio delle sue competenze la Commissione sostiene le lingue europee meno usate. Il trattato di Lisbona non prevede una competenza legislativa diretta della Commissione europea nel campo dell'istruzione e delle lingue. Gli Stati membri sono gli unici responsabili della salvaguardia delle lingue minoritarie e del sostegno alle lingue a rischio di estinzione. Diversi programmi dell'UE, segnatamente negli ambiti dell'istruzione e della formazione, della cultura e della gioventù, sostengono attività relative alle lingue regionali e minoritarie. In particolare, il programma di apprendimento permanente finanzia progetti volti a promuovere l'apprendimento delle lingue e la diversità linguistica per il tramite di diversi sottoprogrammi (Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci o Grundtvig) o attraverso il suo programma trasversale (attività chiave 2 «Lingue»).

Per il tramite del programma di apprendimento permanente la Commissione ha sostenuto nel periodo 2009-2011 la rete Mercator. Diverse reti e progetti patrocinati da programmi europei hanno tra i loro beneficiari le lingue minoritarie in Italia. È il caso della rete per la promozione della diversità linguistica (occitano), di «Le lingue incontrano lo sport» (friulano), o del Netzwerk für Mehrsprachigkeit und sprachliche Vielfalt in Europa — RML2Future (Europäische Akademie Bozen/Accademia Europea Bolzano) nonché di diversi altri progetti che interessano indirettamente queste comunità.

Se è vero che non si è dato seguito all'indagine del 2006 sulle lingue parlate dai cittadini europei, una nuova indagine 2012 dell'UE sulle competenze linguistiche tra gli allievi del livello secondario è stata condotta nel 2012 e i suoi risultati saranno pubblicati entro la fine di giugno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003813/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Measures to promote minority languages

In the European Union there are over sixty regional and minority languages spoken by around 40 million people. The more widespread include Catalan, Basque, Frisian, the Sami languages, Welsh and Yiddish. The definition of a minority or regional language does not include dialects of official languages or languages spoken by immigrant communities.

In order to protect the cultural heritage of minority and regional languages, the European Union has established a network which collects, analyses and studies the relevant documentation, known as Mercator, which has offices in Catalonia, Frisia and Wales.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether, after the 2006 survey conducted by the EU itself, which revealed that 28% of those polled already spoke two foreign languages while 56% spoke only one, it has any more recent data to show how the issue has evolved, and

2. whether any measures have been adopted to protect the minority languages spoken in Italy, such as Ladin, Friulian, Sardinian and Occitan?

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

The Commission supports less-used European languages within the scope of its competences. The Lisbon Treaty does not provide any direct legislative competence to the European Commission in the fields of education and languages. Member States are solely responsible for the safeguarding of minority languages and for support to languages in danger of extinction.

A variety of EU programmes, notably in the areas of education and training, culture and youth, support activities on regional and minority languages. In particular, the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) finances projects to promote language learning and linguistic diversity, either through the different sub-programmes (Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci or Grundtvig) or through its transversal programme (key activity 2 'Languages').

The Commission has supported the Mercator network through the LLP in the period 2009-2011. Several networks and projects supported by EU programmes include minority languages in Italy among their beneficiaries. It is the case of the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (Occitan), of 'Languages meet Sport' (Friulan), of the Netzwerk für Mehrsprachigkeit und sprachliche Vielfalt in Europa — RML2Future (Europäische Akademie Bozen/Accademia Europea Bolzano), as well as of many other projects indirectly addressing these communities.

While there has been no follow up to the 2006 survey of languages spoken by European citizens, a new EU 2012 survey on language competences among second-level pupils was carried out in 2012 and its results will be published by the end of June.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003815/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Statistiche sulla propensione al risparmio

Secondo gli ultimi dati Istat, nel 2011 la propensione al risparmio delle famiglie si è attestata al 12 %, il valore più basso dal 1995, con una diminuzione di 0,7 punti percentuali rispetto all'anno precedente. Nel quarto trimestre essa è stata pari al 12,1 %, in aumento di 0,3 punti percentuali rispetto al trimestre precedente, ma più bassa di 0,8 punti percentuali rispetto al quarto trimestre del 2010.

Nel 2011 il reddito disponibile delle famiglie in valori correnti è aumentato del 2,1 %. Nell'ultimo trimestre dell'anno, esso ha registrato un aumento dello 0,5 % rispetto al trimestre precedente e dell'1,1 % rispetto a quello corrispondente del 2010.

1. Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere se è informata sugli ultimi dati Istat in riferimento alla propensione al risparmio delle famiglie?

2. Può fornire un quadro generale della propensione al risparmio delle famiglie nei vari stati europei?

3. Con quali politiche comuni intende favorire il risparmio delle famiglie, vessate dalla crisi e dall'inflazione che stanno colpendo i paesi dell'Unione?

Risposta data da Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2012)

1. La Commissione raccoglie dati annuali sui risparmi delle famiglie per il tramite del programma di trasmissione SEC (regolamento (CE) n. 2223/96 del Consiglio, del 25 giugno 1996 relativo al sistema europeo di conti nazionali e regionali nella Comunità ([1])) e dati trimestrali come da regolamento (CE) n. 1161/2005 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 luglio 2005 ([2]).

2. Conformemente a quest'ultimo regolamento l'istituto statistico nazionale italiano (ISTAT) — Istituto Italiano di Statistica) ha trasmesso il 30 marzo 2012 alla Commissione (Eurostat) i suoi ultimi dati relativi alla contabilità settoriale trimestrale. Le percentuali relative ai risparmi dei nuclei familiari basate su tali dati sono pubblicate sul sito web della Commissione ([3]). Si noti che i dati trimestrali pubblicati da ISTAT sono aggiustati stagionalmente, ciò che non vale per i dati (per paese) pubblicati dalla Commissione.

3. Per quanto concerne i risparmi dei nuclei familiari, la tabella riportata nell'allegato inviato direttamente all'onorevole deputato e al segretariato del Parlamento europeo fornisce un quadro dei risparmi dei nuclei familiari nei vari paesi (dati annuali). Le differenze possono essere spiegate, tra l'altro, dalla struttura demografica (gli anziani tendono a risparmiare di più), dai meccanismi di credito (l'assenza di soglie d'indebitamento favorisce i consumi e comporta un minore risparmio), dalle aspettative negative per quanto concerne le prospettive economiche (disoccupazione elevata, previsti tagli delle prestazioni pensionistiche) e dalle differenze culturali.

4. Considerato il gran numero di fattori che influenzano i risparmi e le conseguenti differenze tra paese e paese, non è facile influenzare i tassi di risparmio nazionali facendo leva su politiche comuni a livello di UE. Per tale motivo la Commissione non dovrebbe formulare proposte in tal senso per il momento.

([1]) GU L 310 del 30.11.1996.
([2]) GU L 191 del 22.7.2005.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/sectoraccounts, dominio «Quarterly sector accounts».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003815/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Statistics on the propensity to save

According to the latest data from the Italian National Institute for Statistics (Istat), households' saving ratio was 12% in 2011, the lowest level since 1995, representing a fall of 0.7% over the previous year. In the fourth quarter, it was 12.1%, an increase of 0.3% over the previous quarter, but down 0.8% compared with the fourth quarter of 2010.

In 2011, households' disposable income at current values increased by 2.1%. In the final quarter of the year, this increased by 0.5% over the previous quarter and 1.1% over the same quarter in 2010.

1. In view of these facts, can the Commission state whether it is aware of the latest Istat data on households' propensity to save?

2. Can it give an overview of households' propensity to save in the various European states?

3. Which common policies does it intend to use to encourage households to save, beset as they are by the crisis and inflation affecting EU countries?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2012)

1. The Commission collects annual data on households saving rates, through the ESA transmission programme (Council Regulation (EC) No 2223/96 of 25 June 1996 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the Community ([1])) and quarterly data through Regulation (EC) No 1161/2005 of the EP and of the Council of 6 July 2005 ([2]).

2. In accordance with the latter regulation, the Italian National Statistical Institute (Istat — Istituto Italiano di Statistica) has transmitted on 30 March 2012 its latest quarterly sector accounts data to the Commission (Eurostat). The household saving rates based on these data are published on the Commission's website ([3]). Please note that the quarterly data published by Istat are seasonally adjusted, which is not the case for the (country) data released by the Commission.

3. Concerning household saving, the table in the annex sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat gives an overview of the household saving rates across countries (annual data). Differences can be explained, among others, by the demographic structure (the elderly tend to save more), credit facilities (the absence of indebtedness thresholds favours higher consumption and lower saving), negative expectations concerning the economic outlook (high unemployement, expected cuts in pension benefits) and cultural differences.

4. In view of the large number of factors influencing savings rates and the resulting cross-country differences, it is not easy to influence national saving rates through common policies at EU level. Therefore, the Commission is not at the moment expected to make proposals in that sense.

([1]) OJ L 310, 30.11.1996.
([2]) OJ L 191, 22.7.2005.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/sectoraccounts, domain 'Quarterly sector accounts'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003817/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Chiusura dello stabilimento della Stock Spirits Group

La Stock Spirits Group annuncia la chiusura della storica fabbrica di Trieste e il trasferimento da giugno della produzione nello stabilimento in Repubblica Ceca. La decisione, dice una nota della società triestina, è dettata da un contesto commerciale che risente della contrazione dei consumi e dalla necessità di restare competitivi, consolidando la produzione per ridurre i costi e aumentare l'efficienza.

Nello stabilimento di Trieste, secondo i dati dell'azienda, oggi lavorano su una linea di produzione 28 persone che perderanno il posto di lavoro.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. É informata sulla vicenda?

2. Il governo italiano ha fatto richiesta di attivazione del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione, al fine di aiutare i lavoratori a trovare un nuovo impiego e a riqualificarsi?

3. In caso affermativo, a quale stadio è la procedura di richiesta del fondo?

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(25 maggio 2012)

1. La Commissione non era finora al corrente della situazione menzionata dall'onorevole deputato.

2.-3. L'Italia non ha presentato una domanda di finanziamento del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) relativo ai piani di trasferimento dello Stock Spirits Group. Per sapere se sia previsto di presentare tale domanda l'onorevole deputato farebbe bene a rivolgersi alla persona di contatto del FEG per l'Italia ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003817/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Closure of Stock Spirits Group facilities

The Stock Spirits Group has announced that its long-established plant in Trieste is to close in June and all production operations are to be transferred to its plant in the Czech Republic. According to a statement issued by the Trieste-based company, the decision was dictated by a business environment hard-hit by the decline in consumer spending and the need to remain competitive by consolidating production operations in order to reduce costs and increase efficiency.

According to the company, 28 people currently work on the production line in the plant in Trieste, all of whom will lose their jobs.

1. Is the Commission aware of this matter?

2. Has the Italian Government applied for the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund to be mobilised in order to help the workers retrain and find new employment?

3. If so, what stage has been reached in the application process?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(25 May 2012)

1. The Commission was not, until now, aware of the situation referred to by the Honourable Member.

2-3. Italy has not submitted any application for funding from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) related to the plans of the Stock Spirits Group. To find out whether there are plans to submit such an application, the Honourable Member is advised to get in touch with the EGF Contact Person for Italy ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003818/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Protezione del consumatore — revisione della normativa

Negli ultimi anni l'UE si è fortemente impegnata a proteggere il consumatore dalle perdite finanziarie e dai danni che deriverebbero nell'acquisto di beni e servizi fraudolenti negli Stati Membri.

Nella revisione della legislazione corrente, come la direttiva per i diritti dei consumatori, la Commissione ha migliorato notevolmente i diritti di questi ultimi, soprattutto per quanto concerne la rivalsa sulla compagnia (ad esempio in relazione ai fallimenti dei tour operator). Tuttavia, la protezione finanziaria nell'acquisto di biglietti aerei presenta ancora notevoli lacune. Attualmente la miglior forma di protezione per le vacanze offerta ai consumatori è la «direttiva viaggi tutto compreso» che è entrata in vigore nel 1990. Al momento dell'abbozzo della direttiva, il maggior numero di vacanze vendute era sotto forma di «pacchetti vacanze». Oggigiorno però la situazione è cambiata e milioni di vacanze sono vendute sotto forma di contratti diversi, talvolta direttamente dalle stesse compagnie aeree, il che solleva un difetto normativo in quanto la normativa precedentemente citata non fornisce più la protezione adeguata al consumatore.

Alla luce delle statistiche sovraesposte, si chiede perciò alla Commissione:

Non intende utile rivedere la direttiva 90/314/CEE che risale ormai al 1990, visto il riassetto del mercato e le nuove abitudini dei consumatori che richiedono sì un servizio adeguato alle nuove esigenze, ma che necessitano al contempo di protezione contro le frodi e le insolvenze?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(31 maggio 2012)

La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare la risposta data all'interrogazione scritta E-012497/2011 ([1]) relativa all'azione legislativa sull'insolvenza delle compagnie aeree e la risposta all'interrogazione E-002810/2011 sulle misure specifiche per agenzie di viaggio on-line.

La Commissione sta attualmente esaminando le diverse opzioni per una revisione della direttiva sui viaggi «tutto compreso» (90/314/CEE). Entro la fine del 2012 si prevede che verrà presentata una proposta che tenga il dovuto conto delle iniziative in corso per quanto riguarda l'insolvenza delle compagnie aeree e i diritti dei passeggeri aerei.

Secondo l'attuale direttiva sui viaggi «tutto compreso» i consumatori beneficiano di una protezione in caso d'insolvenza anche quando quest'ultima deriva da frodi dell'organizzatore/rivenditore, così come chiarito recentemente dalla Corte di Giustizia dell'Unione europea ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sidesSearch/sipadeMapUrl.do?L=IT&PROG=QP&SORT_ORDER=DAA&REF_QP=2011-12497&F_REF_QP=12497/2011&S_RANK=%&LEG_ID=7.

([2]) Sentenza nella causa C-134/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003818/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Consumer protection-review of legislation

The EU has shown strong commitment in recent years to protecting consumers purchasing goods and services in the Member States from financial loss and damage resulting from fraudulent practices.

In reviewing current legislation, such as the directive for consumer rights, the Commission has significantly improved the rights of the consumer, especially as regards compensation from companies (for example in relation to tour operator bankruptcies). However, there are still significant gaps that need to be plugged as regards financial safeguards in the purchase of airline tickets. The best holiday protection currently offered to consumers is the 'Package Travel Directive' which came into force in 1990. When the directive was drafted, the majority of holidays were sold in the form of 'package holidays'. Today, however, the situation has changed and millions of holidays are sold according to various types of contracts, sometimes directly by the airlines themselves, which gives rise to a regulatory shortcoming in that the aforementioned legislation no longer provides adequate protection to the consumer.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to revise Directive 90/314/EEC that dates back to 1990, given the changing structure of the market and new consumer habits, which require a service that is suited to the new requirements but with the same levels of protection against fraud and bankruptcy?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to the Written Question E-012497/2011 ([1]) on legislative action on airline insolvency and to the Written Question E-002810/2011 on specific measures on online travel agencies.

The Commission is currently analysing different options for a reform of the Package Travel Directive (90/314/EEC). In order to take good account of the ongoing works in the area of airline insolvency and Air Passengers' rights, it can be expected that a proposal will be presented before the end of 2012.

Under the current Package Travel Directive, consumers do also benefit from insolvency protection if the insolvency results from fraud of the organiser/retailer. This has recently been clarified by the European Court of Justice ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) Judgment in Case C-134/11.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003819/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Versamento di petrolio nel mar Grande, Taranto

A causa di una falla nel serbatoio, una nave battente bandiera panamense ha riversato alcune tonnellate di carburante nel mar Grande, a Taranto. L'incidente è avvenuto nella notte ma solo la mattina dopo, con le prime luci del giorno, ci si è accorti di quello che stava accadendo. La nave è ormeggiata in corrispondenza del terzo sporgente del porto. La falla ha causato una chiazza di olio di circa 800 metri quadrati. Immediatamente si è messa in moto la macchina dei soccorsi. La zona interessata dal versamento è stata circoscritta e si sta procedendo alla bonifica del sito grazie ai mezzi della Guardia costiera, della Marina militare e di una ditta che è specializzata in interventi di questo genere. Presente sul posto anche personale dell'Arpa per le analisi del materiale versato in mare.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Non ritiene di dover rivedere le attuali regole in materia di sicurezza delle navi che trasportano petrolio e quali iniziative intende avviare a livello internazionale affinché l'ambiente marino sia protetto nei confronti delle fughe di petrolio e di altre sostanze chimiche pericolose?

2. Intende adottare azioni concrete, in cooperazione con gli Stati membri, per l'applicazione della direttiva quadro 2008/56/CE relativa alla strategia per l'ambiente marino?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2012)

1. La Commissione ritiene che il vigente quadro giuridico dell'UE ([1]), che rende obbligatorio l'uso di navi a doppio scafo per il trasporto di olio pesante, sia soddisfacente e non intende proporre modifiche a tale normativa.

La legislazione dell'UE prevede ([2]) già l'obbligo di applicare sanzioni, anche penali, per lo scarico illecito di sostanze inquinanti nel mare da parte di una nave.

A livello internazionale, la Convenzione internazionale sull'istituzione di un fondo internazionale per il risarcimento dei danni dovuti a inquinamento da idrocarburi (IOPC), la Convenzione Bunker Oil ([3]) e la Convenzione internazionale sulla responsabilità e sul risarcimento dei danni prodotti dal trasporto via mare di sostanze pericolose e nocive (Convenzione HNS) stabiliscono un sistema di norme relative alla responsabilità e al risarcimento in seguito allo sversamento accidentale o intenzionale di petrolio o di altre sostanze chimiche pericolose.

2. La direttiva quadro sulla strategia per l'ambiente marino ([4]) impone agli Stati membri di adottare misure, che riguardino tutte le attività umane con un impatto sull'ambiente marino, al fine di conseguire uno stato ecologico soddisfacente nelle acque marine dell'UE entro il 2020.

Ai sensi della suddetta direttiva, gli Stati membri sono tenuti a presentare entro il 15 ottobre 2012 una valutazione iniziale dello stato ecologico attuale delle acque considerate, che tenga in considerazione le sfide o le minacce presenti per l'ambiente marino. In tale valutazione devono essere definiti, se del caso ([5]), gli effetti di contaminanti dovuti a «*episodi di inquinamento gravi (ad esempio fuoriuscite di petrolio e di prodotti petroliferi)*» e il «*loro impatto sul biota fisicamente colpito dall'inquinamento*». Il Mare Grande di Taranto dovrebbe rientrare nelle analisi condotte dalle autorità nazionali.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 417/2002 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 18 febbraio 2002, sull'introduzione accelerata delle norme in materia di doppio scafo o di tecnologia equivalente per le petroliere monoscafo e che abroga il regolamento (CE) n. 2978/94 del Consiglio, GU L 64 del 7.3.2002, pag.1.

([2]) Direttiva 2005/35/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 7 settembre 2005, relativa all'inquinamento provocato dalle navi e all'introduzione di sanzioni per violazioni, GU L 255 del 30.9.2005, pag. 11.

([3]) Convenzione internazionale sulla responsabilità civile per i danni derivanti dall'inquinamento determinato dal carburante delle navi (convenzione Bunker Oil).

([4]) Direttiva 2008/56/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 17 giugno 2008, che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria nel campo della politica per l'ambiente marino, GU L 164 del 25.6.2008.

([5]) Decisione 2010/477/UE della Commissione, dell'1 settembre 2011, sui criteri e gli standard metodologici relativi al buono stato ecologico delle acque marine, GU L 132 del 2.10.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003819/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Oil spill in the Mar Grande, Taranto

Due to a breach in its fuel tank, a ship flying the Panamanian flag has leaked several tonnes of fuel into the Mar Grande in Taranto. The incident occurred during the night but it was not until the next morning, with the first light of day, that people realised what was happening. The boat is moored at the third jetty of the port. The breach has created an oil slick of approximately 800 square metres. The rescue operation began immediately. The area affected by the spill has been cordoned off and the clean-up of the site has begun using Coast Guard and Naval vessels and a company that specialises in operations of this type. ARPA personnel are also on site to perform tests on the material spilt into the sea.

In light of the above, the Commission is asked:

1. Does it not consider it essential to review the current rules relating to the safety of boats transporting oil? What initiatives does it intend to launch on an international level to protect the marine environment against spills of oil and other harmful chemicals?

2. Does it intend to take concrete actions, in cooperation with Member States, for the enforcement of Framework Directive 2008/56/EC relating to the strategy for the marine environment?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2012)

1. The Commission considers that the current EU legal framework ([1]) imposing the use of double hull ships for the carriage of heavy oil is satisfactory and has no plans to propose modifications for this legislation.

EC law already provides ([2]) for an obligation for sanctions, including penal sanctions, following an illegal discharge of polluting substances from a ship into the sea.

At the international level, the International Oil Pollution Compensation Convention (IOPC) as well as the Bunkers Convention ([3]) and the Hazardous and Noxious Substances Convention (HNS) provide for a system of rules related to liability and compensation following an accidental or deliberate spill of oil or other harmful chemicals.

2. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([4]) requires Member States to take measures to achieve good environmental status in EU marine waters by 2020 addressing all human activities that have an impact on the marine environment.

Under this directive Member States have to submit by 15 October 2012 an initial assessment of the current environmental status of the waters concerned, including existing challenges or threats to the marine environment. It must identify, if relevant ([5]), effects of contaminants due to '*acute pollution events (e.g. slicks from oil and oil products) and their impact on biota physically affected by this pollution*'. The Mar Grande in Taranto should be included in the analysis of the national authorities.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 417/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 February 2002 on the accelerated phasing-in of double hull or equivalent design requirements for single hull oil tankers and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 2978/94, OJ L 64/1, 07.03.2002.
([2]) Directive 2005/35/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on ship-source pollution and on the introduction of penalties for infringements, OJ L 255/11, 30.09.2005.
([3]) International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damag.
([4]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([5]) Commission Decision 2010/477/EU on criteria and methodological standards on good environmental status of marine waters of 1st September 2010, O.J. L 132, 2.10.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003820/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Richiesta di fondi diretti

L'associazione «Comunità Frontiera Onlus» svolge attività e opera di promozione sociale di ispirazione cristiana tesa all'educazione di fanciulli, adolescenti e giovani attraverso uno stile familiare.

Il progetto porta in sé la logica della prevenzione e non del recupero, una logica molto più impegnativa perché richiede di inserirsi in un territorio con un intervento mirato all'infanzia, all'adolescenza e alla gioventù offrendo occasioni di formazione umana, spirituale-morale e professionale, pur scontrandosi con interessi privati illeciti che non hanno mai permesso tale sviluppo, ottenendo il massimo rendimento dai giovani come manovalanza.

Ogni anno l'associazione è impegnata a organizzare, in Puglia e in Sicilia, manifestazioni sportive che coinvolgono principalmente il mondo giovanile e che testimoniano lo stretto legame tra i ragazzi che lo sport è in grado di produrre.

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

1. se l'associazione ha in precedenza fatto richiesta di fondi europei;

2. in caso di risposta negativa, se è possibile per la suddetta associazione, visto il grande impegno messo in atto nel campo dello sport, e in virtù dell'interesse dell'Unione europea verso l'inclusione sociale nello sport e attraverso lo sport, usufruire di fondi diretti per migliorare le manifestazioni organizzate.

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(20 luglio 2012)

I dati relativi a coloro che si candidano a un finanziamento dell'UE non sono disponibili a livello centrale presso la Commissione. Ottenere tali informazioni dai diversi servizi della Commissione richiede tempi lunghi. La Commissione si dichiara tuttavia disposta a raccogliere tali dati per un insieme di candidati potenziali e di programmi UE che rivestono interesse per l'onorevole deputato.

I dati relativi ai finanziamenti UE concessi ai candidati selezionati in un settore particolare possono essere consultati nel Sistema di trasparenza finanziaria (FTS) ([1]), che conserva le informazioni sugli impegni finanziari nell'ambito di fondi UE gestiti direttamente dalla Commissione e dalle sue agenzie esecutive, ad esclusione del Fondo europeo di sviluppo e delle spese del personale.

Attualmente nel FTS sono disponibili soltanto dati per gli esercizi finanziari 2007-2010.

La Commissione attira l'attenzione dell'onorevole deputato sul fatto che il nome dell'organizzazione introdotto nella base dati FTS è il nome ufficiale completo, che non sempre coincide con quello comunemente usato dal pubblico. Detto questo, nel periodo 2007-2010 non risulta siano stati concessi finanziamenti all'associazione *Frontiera*.

Per quanto concerne la richiesta dell'onorevole deputato di un finanziamento diretto a tale organizzazione, la Commissione applica i principi di parità di trattamento e di trasparenza e organizza inviti aperti a presentare proposte ai fini della concessione di sovvenzioni.

La Commissione ha fornito informazioni dettagliate sulle opportunità attuali e future di finanziamento alle organizzazioni sportive in diverse risposte ad interrogazioni scritte come ad esempio P-8604/10 dell'onorevole Joanna Senyszyn, E-1630/10 dell'onorevole Ivo Belet, E-2970/11 dell'onorevole Roberta Angelilli, E-4422/11 dell'onorevole Nessa Childers ed E-1946/12 dell'onorevole Angelika Werthmann ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003820/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Application for direct funds

The *Frontiera* community, a non-profit association, carries out social activities and work based on Christian values, aimed at educating children, adolescents and young people in an informal manner.

The project adopts an approach of prevention rather than rehabilitation. This is a very demanding approach because it means going into an area with action aimed at children, adolescents and young people, providing opportunities for human, spiritual, moral and vocational development, while clashing with unlawful private interests that have never allowed this to happen, as they have always exploited young people as much as possible as a source of labour.

Each year, the association is committed to organising, in Apulia and Sicily, sporting events that involve mainly young people, and which bear witness to the close ties between children that sport can produce.

In view of the above:

1. Can the Commission say whether this association has previously applied for EU funding?

2. If not, given the great efforts the association has made in relation to sport, and in view of the EU's interest in social inclusion in and through sport, would it be possible for it to receive direct funds in order to improve the events it organises?

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

Data on applicants for EU funding is not available at central level in the Commission. Obtaining such information from different departments of the Commission is a lengthy process. The Commission would, nevertheless, be prepared to gather such data for a batch of potential applicants and EU programmes that are of interest to the Honourable Member.

Data on EU funding granted to successful applicants in a particular field can be consulted in the Financial Transparency System (FTS) ([1]), which holds information on budgetary commitments under EU funds managed directly by the Commission and its executive agencies, excluding the European Development Fund and staff related expenditures.

At this time, only data for 2007-2010 financial years is available in the FTS.

The Commission would like to draw the attention to of the Honourable Member to the fact that the name of an organisation introduced in the FTS database is its full official name, that does not always match the name commonly used in the public domain. On this basis, no funding appears to have been provided to the *Frontiera* association in the period 2007-2010.

With regard to the request of the Honourable Member for direct funding to this organisation, the Commission applies the principles of equal treatment and transparency and organises open calls for proposals for the purpose of awarding grants.

The Commission has provided detailed information on current and future funding opportunities for sport organisations in several answers to written questions, such as P-8604/10 by Joanna Senyszyn, E-1630/10 by Ivo Belet, E-2970/11 by Roberta Angelilli, E-4422/11 by Nessa Childers and E-1946/12 by Angelika Werthmann ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003821/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Recepimento direttiva 2009/12/CE

Con la direttiva 2009/12/CE si è inteso introdurre un sistema di diritti aeroportuali basato, in un quadro di libera concorrenza, sul confronto fra gestori e utenti aeroportuali. La nuova disciplina si applica obbligatoriamente a tutti gli aeroporti il cui volume di traffico annuale supera la soglia di 5 milioni di passeggeri (in Italia, secondo i dati relativi al 2010, tali aeroporti sono Roma Fiumicino, Milano Malpensa, Milano Linate, Bergamo, Venezia, Catania, Napoli e Bologna), mentre è facoltativa l'applicazione agli aeroporti con soglie di traffico inferiori. La direttiva prevede, tra l'altro, la designazione o l'istituzione di un'autorità di vigilanza nazionale indipendente, incaricata di assicurare la corretta applicazione delle misure adottate per conformarsi ai principi sanciti dalla direttiva.

Va ricordato che la riscossione dei diritti aeroportuali (diritto di approdo e di partenza degli aeromobili, diritto per il ricovero o la sosta allo scoperto di aeromobili, diritto per l'imbarco passeggeri), posti a carico delle compagnie aeree, consente alle società di gestione degli aeroporti il recupero del costo delle infrastrutture e dei servizi connessi all'esercizio degli aerei e alle operazioni relative ai passeggeri e alle merci, che le società stesse mettono a disposizione delle compagnie.

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

se la direttiva in esame è stata recepita da tutti gli Stati membri, dal momento che il termine ultimo per il recepimento risale allo scorso marzo e, in caso di risposta negativa, quali provvedimenti intende prendere l'UE per garantire che i principi della direttiva vengano adottati al più presto in tutta l'UE.

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2012)

Il termine di recepimento della direttiva 2009/12/CE era il 5 marzo 2011. Al momento, ventidue Stati membri ne hanno comunicato il pieno recepimento nel loro ordinamento nazionale e la Commissione sta esaminando approfonditamente la conformità delle misure nazionali ai principi e agli obiettivi enunciati nella direttiva.

La Commissione ha avviato procedimenti d'infrazione nei confronti di diversi Stati membri e il 25 novembre 2011 ha inviato a Germania, Austria e Lussemburgo un parere motivato per il mancato recepimento della direttiva. Il 26 marzo 2012 un parere motivato è stato indirizzato anche a Grecia e Polonia per aver recepito la direttiva solo parzialmente.

Come previsto dall'articolo 12 della direttiva in oggetto, la Commissione presenterà nel marzo 2013 una relazione sull'applicazione della direttiva stessa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003821/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Transposal of Directive 2009/12/EC

The purpose of Directive 2009/12/EC was to introduce a system of airport charges based on discussion between airport managers and users in the context of open competition. The compulsory new rules apply to all airports with an annual volume of traffic exceeding 5 million passengers (in Italy, according to 2010 data, these airports are Rome Fiumicino, Milan Malpensa, Milan Linate, Bergamo, Venice, Catania, Naples and Bologna), whereas their application in airports with lower levels of traffic is optional. Among other things, the directive requires an independent, national supervisory authority to be appointed to ensure the correct application of the measures adopted and to comply with the principles established by the directive.

It should be remembered that the collection of airport charges (charges for aircraft take-off and landing, charges for the hangaring or parking of aircraft outdoors and charges for boarding passengers) borne by the airlines, allows the airport management companies to recover the cost of the infrastructure and services connected with aircraft operation and passenger and cargo operations, which the companies themselves provide for the airlines.

In light of these facts, we ask the Commission:

Whether the directive in question has been transposed in all of the Member States, as the final deadline for its transposal was March 2011 and, if not, what measures the EU intends to take to guarantee that the principles of the directive are adopted as soon as possible throughout the EU.

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2012)

The deadline for transposition of Directive 2009/12/EC was 5 March 2011. At the time of writing, 22 Member States had notified full transposition of the directive and the Commission is undertaking an in-depth review of the conformity of these national measures with the principles and objectives set out in the directive.

The Commission has launched infringement proceedings against the remaining Member States. Reasoned opinions were addressed by the Commission to Germany, Austria and Luxembourg on 25 November 2011 over their failure to transpose the directive. Reasoned opinions were also addressed to Greece and Poland on 26 March 2012 due to their partial implementation of the directive.

As provided for in Article 12, the Commission will report in March 2013 on the application of the directive.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003822/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Gusci d'uova trasformati in plastica

Recuperare i gusci delle uova destinati alla discarica per trasformarli in materiali plastici adatti a ogni uso, dall'edilizia alla farmaceutica fino agli imballaggi per alimenti. È questo l'obiettivo di un progetto di ricerca che alcuni chimici britannici stanno per lanciare subito dopo le festività pasquali.

Il curioso progetto di riciclo, che potrebbe alleggerire le aziende produttrici e trasformatrici di uova dai costi dello smaltimento dei gusci, è affidato ai «cervelli» specializzati in chimica «verde» e materiali sostenibili. I loro studi si stanno ora concentrando sul metodo migliore da impiegare per estrarre dai gusci i glicosamminoglicani, proteine che trovano già impiego nelle applicazioni biomedicali e che potrebbero rivelarsi molto utili in campo farmaceutico. I ricercatori stanno anche cercando di capire in che modo usare i gusci come elementi riempitivi per diversi tipi di plastica, con applicazioni che spaziano dalle confezioni per cibi già pronti fino all'officina di montaggio e riparazione. L'obiettivo finale è quello di dare una seconda vita ai gusci usandoli per imballare e proteggere proprio i prodotti alimentari a base di uova.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, si chiede alla Commissione:

è a conoscenza della nuova ricerca e non ritiene che si debba finanziare un progetto di tale portata che porterebbe attraverso il riciclaggio ad una riduzione della quantità dei rifiuti prodotti?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

Ringrazio l'onorevole parlamentare per l'interessante informazione. La Commissione non è al corrente di un nuovo progetto che trasforma i gusci d'uovo in materia prima per la produzione di plastica.

Questo progetto sarebbe in linea con gli obiettivi di prevenzione e riciclaggio dei rifiuti contenuti nella direttiva 2008/98/CE ([1]). Tuttavia, in base alle informazioni attualmente disponibili, non è possibile determinare l'ammissibilità del progetto ai finanziamenti dell'UE. Potrebbero esserci opportunità nei futuri inviti a presentare proposte nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca che sarà pubblicato ai primi di luglio 2012, anche non si possono finanziare progetti già avviati.

([1]) Direttiva 2008/98/CE, GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003822/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Egg shells transformed into plastic

Recycling egg shells that would have been sent to landfill to transform them into plastic materials suitable for all uses, from building materials to pharmaceuticals and even food packaging is the aim of a research project that a group of British chemists is due to launch immediately after Easter.

This curious research project, which could reduce the costs sustained by egg processing and manufacturing companies for the disposal of shells, has been entrusted to specialist 'eggheads' specialising in 'green' chemistry and sustainable materials. Their research is currently focusing on the best method for extracting glycosaminoglycans from the shells, proteins that are already being used in biomedical applications and that could turn out to be very useful in the pharmaceutical field. The researchers are also trying to find out how the shells could be used as fillers for different types of plastic, with applications that range from ready-meal packaging to assembly and repair workshops. The ultimate aim is to give egg shells a second life by using them to actually package and protect egg-based food products.

In light of the above, the Commission is asked:

Is it aware of the new research and does it not think that a project of this importance, which would lead to a reduction in the amount of waste produced, should be funded?

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

I would like to thank the Honourable Member for this interesting information. The Commission is not aware of a new project transforming egg shells into a raw material for plastics production.

Such a project would be in line with the objectives of waste prevention and recycling as laid down in Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]). However, on the basis of the presently available information, it is not possible to determine whether the project may be eligible for EU funding. There may be opportunities in future calls for proposals of the 7th Framework Programme for Research to be published in early July 2012, however projects that have already started cannot be funded.

([1]) Directive 2008/98/EC, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003825/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Morte improvvisa nello sport

Purtroppo le cronache dello sport segnalano sempre più frequentemente morti e patologie che non hanno alcun riscontro, a parità di età, nella popolazione normale. Morti improvvise per gravi danni cardiaci, neoplasie in giovane età fino a particolari malattie degenerative del sistema nervoso sono state chiaramente o parzialmente collegate all'abuso protratto di farmaci.

Nella stragrande maggioranza si tratta di cardiopatie o anomalie cardiache silenti, cioè difficili da individuare con gli esami di routine, anche se approfonditi, cui vengono sottoposti gli atleti.

Ci si trova di fronte ad atleti che non riescono più ad accettare i propri limiti e che sostituiscono all'impegno fisico e nervoso l'uso di sostanze sintetiche che possono far rendere di più in termini di risultati.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Non ritiene che sia opportuno individuare regolamenti più rigidi nello sport che garantirebbero una maggiore sicurezza e tutela degli atleti?

2. Quali sono i progressi fatti dall'Unione europea nel campo dello sport dal 2009, anno di inserimento nella politica europea, ad oggi?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che certe pratiche sportive — compreso il doping, ma non solo questo — possono nuocere alla salute degli atleti come ha già affermato nelle sue risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-000702/2010 e P-005136/2010 ([1])e ad altre interrogazioni relative ai diversi tipi di lesioni sportive, alcune delle quali legate a condizioni di morbilità.

Le regole di sicurezza applicabili allo sport sono fissate a livello nazionale. Per tale motivo, conformemente al principio di sussidiarietà nonché nel rispetto dell'autonomia del movimento sportivo la Commissione non contempla di varare proposte legislative in tema di sicurezza e protezione degli atleti sulla base del mandato in tema di sport conferitole dall'articolo 165 del TFUE.

La Commissione sviluppa tuttavia un processo politico nel campo dello sport sulla base delle azioni enunciate nella comunicazione «Sviluppare la dimensione europea dello sport». Il capitolo consacrato allo sport nella proposta di programma «Erasmus for All» intende supportare questo processo politico.

In tale contesto la Commissione ha adottato diverse iniziative nel campo dell'antidoping. Tra le iniziative della Commissione vi sono: il sostegno a reti pluriattore in tale ambito, la cooperazione politica con gli Stati membri in seno al Consiglio e al Gruppo di esperti UE antidoping istituito dal Consiglio, la preparazione e la presentazione all'Agenzia mondiale antidoping di un contributo UE relativo alla revisione del Codice mondiale antidoping nonché una cooperazione regolare con il Consiglio d'Europa.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003825/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Sudden death in sport

Unfortunately, sports reports increasingly contain news of deaths and illnesses that are not reflected in the normal population of the same age. Sudden deaths due to serious damage to the heart, tumours at a young age, specific degenerative diseases of the nervous system are all clearly or partially linked to long-term drug abuse.

In the vast majority of cases these relate to silent heart diseases or abnormalities, meaning that they are difficult to spot during the routine examinations, even in-depth ones, which athletes undergo.

We now have athletes who are unable to accept their limits and who replace physical and mental effort with synthetic substances that can allow them to perform better in terms of results.

In light of the above, the Commission is asked:

1. Does it not consider it appropriate to identify more stringent regulations in sport which would guarantee greater safety and protection for athletes?

2. What progress has been made in the European Union in the field of sports since 2009, the year it became part of European policy?

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

The Commission is aware of the fact that some practices in sports — including but not limited to doping — may prejudice the health of athletes, as set out in its replies to written questions E-000702/2010, P-005136/2010 ([1])and other questions on various types of sport injuries, some of them linked to morbidity.

Safety rules applicable to sports are set at national level. Therefore, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, as well as the autonomy of the sport movement, the Commission is not considering any legislative proposals for regulations regarding safety and protection for athletes on the basis of the mandate for sport contained in Article 165 TFEU.

However, the Commission is developing a policy process in the field of sport on the basis of the actions announced in the communication 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport'. The sport chapter in the proposed 'Erasmus for All' programme is intended to support this policy process.

In this context the Commission has already taken many different initiatives in the field of anti-doping. The Commission's initiatives include: support to multi-actor networks in this area; political cooperation with Member States in the Council and in the EU Expert Group Anti-Doping set up by the Council; the preparation and submission to the World Anti-Doping Agency of an EU contribution to the revision of the World Anti-Doping Code; and regular cooperation with the Council of Europe.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003826/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Alimenti capaci di stimolare le difese immunitarie

La salute passa dal cibo, persino dai primissimi anni di vita. Un istituto di oncologia ha iniziato a progettare alimenti e molecole funzionali capaci di stimolare le difese immunitarie dei bambini, con lo scopo di ridurre il rischio di malattie immunitarie come allergie, patologie infiammatorie, morbo celiaco e alcuni tumori.

Gli studi saranno condotti da un gruppo di ricercatori guidati da esperti di immunoterapia antitumorale. Gli scienziati si focalizzeranno in particolare sugli alimenti funzionali, cibi che oltre ad avere un valore nutrizionale agiscono positivamente su una o più funzioni dell'organismo, e sono quindi in grado di migliorare lo stato di salute e di ridurre il rischio di malattie. Tali effetti sono di particolare interesse in età pediatrica, quando l'organismo non è ancora completamente maturo, perché possono aiutare il corretto sviluppo del bambino fornendo benefici sia a breve che a lungo termine. Le aspettative sono notevoli: si aprono infatti le porte alla possibilità di sviluppare prodotti innovativi in grado di supportare il particolare momento della crescita, attraverso alimenti della dieta quotidiana, in modo naturale senza pillole o capsule.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto e della sempre maggiore attenzione dell'Unione europea verso le politiche concernenti la salute pubblica, può la Commissione rispondere a quanto segue:

È a conoscenza del nuovo studio e ritiene che la ricerca summenzionata si possa finanziare attraverso il Settimo programma quadro (7° PQ) oppure attraverso il Programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

Nell'ambito del Sesto e del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (6° PQ, 2002-2006 e 7° PQ, 2007-2013), la Commissione finanzia diversi progetti (60 milioni di EUR) al fine di migliorare la comprensione delle conseguenze a breve e a lungo termine degli alimenti sul sistema immunitario e la salute (ad esempio, PREVENT CD ([1]), EARNEST ([2]), TORNADO ([3]), GA2LEN ([4]), FIBEBIOTIC ([5]), EARLY NUTRITION ([6]), METAHIT ([7])).

Recentemente si è scoperto che le specie e la composizione del microbioma intestinale umano potrebbero essere fattori fondamentali per lo sviluppo dell'immunità innata e acquisita, della sindrome metabolica e dell'obesità e per lo sviluppo del cervello e del comportamento.

È pertanto necessario esaminare ulteriormente gli effetti di prodotti e regimi alimentari (ivi compresi i metodi di produzione degli alimenti) e di altri fattori connessi allo stile di vita sul microbioma intestinale umano, nonché il ruolo di quest'ultimo nella salute, nelle patologie e nell'invecchiamento.

La Commissione intende presentare un tema in questo settore nell'ambito del programma di lavoro 2013 del 7° PQ relativo alla bioeconomia basata sulla conoscenza ([8]). Inoltre, nel quadro del programma Orizzonte 2020 proseguiranno gli studi su alimenti e regimi alimentari in quanto principali fattori per promuovere e conservare la salute e per ridurre il rischio di sviluppare malattie.

Il programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP) non sostiene alcun tipo di ricerca e pertanto, nell'ambito di tale programma, non sono state finanziate attività correlate.

([1]) http://www.preventceliacdisease.com/index.php?lang=it.
([2]) http://www.metabolic-programming.org/.
([3]) http://fp7tornado.eu/.
([4]) http://www.ga2len.net/.
([5]) http://www.fibebiotics.eu/.
([6]) http://www.early-nutrition.org/related-projects.html
([7]) http://www.metahit.eu/.
([8]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003826/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Foods that can stimulate immune defences

Food is vital for health, including in the very first years of life. An oncology institute has started to design functional foods and molecules that can stimulate children's immune defences, with the aim of reducing the risk of immune diseases such as allergies, inflammatory conditions, coeliac disease and certain tumours.

The research will be conducted by a group of researchers led by antitumour immunotherapy experts. The researchers will focus in particular on functional foods, which are foods that, as well as having nutritional value, have a positive effect on one or more bodily functions and are thus capable of improving health and reducing the risk of illness. These effects are of particular interest in childhood, when the body is not yet fully developed, because they can aid proper development by providing both short- and long-term benefits. There are high hopes for this research: the way is open for the development of innovative products — in the form of everyday foods, rather than pills or capsules — that can help children to grow healthily.

In view of the above and the increasing attention being paid by the European Union to policies relating to public health, can the Commission say whether it is aware of the new study and whether it believes that this research could be financed through the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) or through the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

In the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006 and FP7, 2007-2013), the Commission funds several projects (EUR 60 million) to better understand the short and long-term consequences of food on the immune system and health (e.g. PREVENT CD ([1]), EARNEST ([2]), TORNADO ([3]), GA2LEN ([4]), FIBEBIOTIC ([5]), EARLY NUTRITION ([6]), METAHIT ([7])).

The species and composition of the human gut microbiome have recently been discovered to be potential key factors in the development of innate and adaptive immune function, in development of metabolic syndrome and obesity and in brain development and behaviour.

There is, therefore, a need to further investigate the effects of food and diet (including food production methods) and other lifestyle factors on the human gut microbiome and its role in health, disease and ageing.

The Commisison intends to publish a topic in this area in the Knowledge-based bio-economy FP7 Work Programme 2013 ([8]). Horizon 2020 will continue to explore food and diet as the main factors for promoting and sustaining health and for reducing the risk of diseases development.

As the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) does not support any kind of research, no related activities have been funded under this programme.

([1]) http://www.preventceliacdisease.com/.
([2]) http://www.metabolic-programming.org/.
([3]) http://fp7tornado.eu/.
([4]) http://www.ga2len.net/.
([5]) http://www.fibebiotics.eu/.
([6]) http://www.early-nutrition.org/related-projects.html
([7]) http://www.metahit.eu/.
([8]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003828/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Risparmio energetico

Sotto il nome di risparmio energetico si annoverano varie tecniche atte a ridurre i consumi dell'energia necessaria allo svolgimento delle diverse attività umane. Il risparmio può essere ottenuto sia modificando i processi energetici in modo che ci siano meno sprechi, sia utilizzando tecnologie in grado di trasformare l'energia da una forma all'altra in modo più efficiente.

Sabato 31 marzo si è celebrata «l'ora della Terra» con l'invito a spegnere tutte le luci per un'ora al fine di sensibilizzare l'opinione pubblica sul tema del risparmio energetico.

L'iniziativa è lodevole ma allo stesso tempo bisognerebbe essere attenti al risparmio energetico quotidianamente e non solo un'ora l'anno. Nelle grandi aziende, il risparmio energetico non è tenuto in grande considerazione e gli uffici sono surriscaldati d'inverno ed eccessivamente raffreddati d'estate.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, può la Commissione rispondere a quanto segue:

1. Quali sono le azioni adottate dall'Unione europea per sensibilizzare i cittadini europei sull'importanza dell'efficienza energetica e sugli obiettivi del «Pacchetto clima al 2020»?

2. Non ritiene che si possano prevedere degli incentivi per chi fa un uso razionale dell'energia, incentivi non necessariamente economici?

Risposta data da Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

In materia di efficienza energetica è stato adottato, a livello sia europeo che nazionale, un vasto complesso di politiche e misure di sostegno tese a promuovere un uso più razionale dell'energia in tutta una serie di settori, dall'edilizia agli elettrodomestici, dagli impianti industriali ai trasporti, dall'industria alla produzione energetica. Tra queste si annoverano anche azioni volte a sensibilizzare i cittadini circa i loro consumi energetici e il modo di renderli più efficienti. Gli atti delegati adottati in applicazione della direttiva 2010/30/CE sull'etichettatura energetica prescrivono che molti prodotti che consumano energia rechino, nel punto di vendita, informazioni sulla loro efficienza energetica. Ai sensi della direttiva 2010/31/CE sulla prestazione energetica nell'edilizia, i beni immobili offerti in vendita o in locazione devono disporre di un attestato di prestazione energetica indicante il consumo energetico dell'immobile. Oltre a queste misure volte a informare direttamente i consumatori, il programma «Energia intelligente — Europa» sostiene iniziative di sensibilizzazione dei consumatori in materia energetica.

Per imprimere nuovo slancio alla tematica dell'efficienza energetica, la Commissione ha proposto una nuova direttiva sull'efficienza energetica. La proposta contiene diverse misure atte a consentire al consumatore di compiere una scelta informata in base al consumo energetico, prevedendo tra l'altro che gli utenti usufruiscano di contatori individuali che misurano con precisione e indicano il consumo energetico reale e ricevano bollette concepite in modo tale da orientare le loro scelte in materia di consumo energetico.

La proposta è attualmente oggetto di negoziato tra il Consiglio e il Parlamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003828/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Energy saving

The term 'energy saving' covers various techniques used to reduce consumption of the energy required to perform different human activities. Savings can be achieved both by modifying energy processes, so that there is less waste, and by using technologies capable of converting energy from one form to another more efficiently.

On Saturday, 31 March, 'Earth Hour' was celebrated and people were urged to switch all lights off for one hour in order to raise public awareness of the issue of energy saving.

The initiative is laudable, but attention also needs to be paid to energy saving on an everyday basis, not just for an hour a year. In large companies, energy saving is not taken into great consideration and offices are overheated in winter and excessively cooled in summer.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following question:

1. What are the actions taken by the European Union to raise the awareness of European citizens regarding the importance of energy efficiency and the targets of the '2020 Climate Package'?

2. Does it not consider that incentives — not necessarily financial — might be provided for those who make a rational use of energy?

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

A comprehensive mix of energy efficiency policies and supporting measures has been implemented at European and national level promoting more efficient use of energy in buildings, household appliances and industrial equipment, transport, industry and energy generation. These include measures aimed at raising citizens' awareness of their energy consumption and ways of making it more efficient. Delegated acts adopted under the Energy Labelling Directive 2010/30/EC require many energy-using products to carry at the point of sale information on their energy efficiency. Under the Buildings Directive 2010/31/EC, properties offered for sale or rent have to carry an energy performance certificate specifying the energy consumption of the property. In addition to these measures directly providing consumers with information, the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme supports initiatives aimed at raising the awareness of consumers on these matters.

To provide a further impetus for energy efficiency the Commission has proposed a new Energy Efficiency Directive. The proposal includes several measures which would allow consumers to make informed choices linked to their energy consumption. It would ensure that consumers are provided with individual meters that accurately measure and inform them about their actual energy consumption and that they receive energy bills in a way that allows them to make informed choices.

The proposal is currently the subject of negotiations between the Council and the Parliament.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003829/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Scontri in Sudan

L'aviazione del Sudan è entrata in azione questa mattina bombardando alcune zone di Bentiu, capitale dello Stato sud-sudanese di Unity situata non lontano dal confine. La notizia è pervenuta ad alcune fonti internazionali di stampa grazie a funzionari del governo sud-sudanese che hanno altresì indicato come presunto obiettivo delle bombe un ponte che collega la città con il nord del paese, dove è allestito un *compound* delle Nazioni Unite. La tensione tra Khartum e Giuba è tornata a salire negli ultimi due giorni dopo che l'esercito sud-sudanese ha occupato la città di Heglig, sede dei principali impianti petroliferi del Sudan riconosciuta a livello internazionale come territorio sudanese.

Già due settimane fa Sudan e Sudan del Sud erano stati protagonisti di alcuni scontri con sconfinamenti dei rispettivi eserciti e raid aerei alla frontiera.

Sia l'Unione Africana (UA) che le Nazioni Unite nelle ultime ore hanno espresso preoccupazione per la possibilità che le tensioni possano portare a un conflitto aperto tra i due Sudan e hanno invitato le parti alla calma chiedendo altresì al Sudan del Sud di ritirare le sue truppe da Heglig. Hanno inoltre rivolto un appello alla comunità internazionale affinché tenti una mediazione.

Alla luce delle considerazioni sopraesposte l'interrogante chiede al Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante se è a conoscenza di quanto avvenuto e quali misure intende adottare la delegazione europea in Sudan per ripristinare l'ordine nonché per proteggere la società civile dagli scontri e assicurare missioni umanitarie e di soccorso.

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha seguito con attenzione il recente deterioramento delle relazioni tra il Sudan e il Sud Sudan e l'11 aprile 2012 ha espresso la sua preoccupazione per l'acuirsi del conflitto armato tra i due paesi nella regione di confine invitando entrambe le parti a cessare le ostilità, a ritirare l'esercito e a rispettare l'integrità territoriale di ciascuno. Il 26 aprile 2012 l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha accolto con favore l'adozione, da parte del Consiglio per la pace e la sicurezza dell'Unione africana, di una tabella di marcia che intende porre fine alle tensioni tra il Sudan e il Sud Sudan e che riapre i negoziati. Già il 23 aprile i ministri degli Esteri dell'UE avevano appoggiato tali misure in occasione del Consiglio Affari esteri. Infine, il 3 maggio 2012, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha accolto con favore la risoluzione del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU (basata sulla precedente decisione adottata dal Consiglio per la pace e la sicurezza dell'Unione africana) che ha definito una tabella di marcia per il Sudan e il Sud Sudan.

Secondo una recente stima dell'ONU, gli ultimi scontri nelle zone di confine hanno causato lo spostamento di 20 000 sfollati nel Sud Sudan. Le agenzie umanitarie che operano nelle zone colpite dal conflitto, molte delle quali beneficiano di finanziamenti dell'UE, hanno fornito assistenza agli sfollati (ripari, generi alimentari, acqua e strutture igienico-sanitarie), nonché cure mediche ai feriti civili.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003829/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Clashes in Sudan

The Sudan air force recently went into action, bombing parts of Bentiu, the capital of the South Sudanese state of Unity, located close to the border. Several international media outlets were alerted by South Sudanese Government officials, who also indicated that the alleged target was a bridge that connects the city with the north of the country, where a United Nations compound has been set up. Tensions between Khartoum and Juba increased further after the South Sudanese army occupied the town of Heglig, the site of Sudan's main oil installations and recognised internationally as Sudanese territory.

Sudan and South Sudan have been involved in clashes, with border violations by their respective armies and air raids along the border.

Both the African Union and the United Nations have expressed their concern over the possibility that tensions may lead to open conflict between Sudan and South Sudan and have called on both sides to remain calm; they have also called on South Sudan to withdraw its troops from Heglig. In addition, they have appealed to the international community to attempt mediation efforts.

In view of the above points, can the Vice-President/High Representative say whether she is aware of what has happened and what action the European Union Delegation to Sudan intends to take to restore order and protect civilians from the clashes and to ensure humanitarian and rescue missions?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) has been following closely the recent deterioration of the relations between Sudan and South Sudan. On 11 April 2012, she expressed her concern about the escalation of the armed conflict between the two countries in their border region and called on both parties to cease hostilities, withdraw forces and respect each other's territorial integrity. On 26 April 2012, she welcomed the adoption by the African Union Peace and Security Council of a Roadmap aimed at putting an end to tensions between Sudan and South Sudan and bringing them back to negotiations. Already on 23 April, EU Foreign Ministers had expressed support for such steps at the Foreign Affairs Council. Finally, on 3 May 2012, the HR/VP welcomed the UN Security Council resolution (based on the previous decision taken by the AU Political and Security Council) setting out a roadmap for Sudan and South Sudan.

According to a recent UN estimate, the recent clashes in the border areas have resulted in the displacement of 20,000 people in South Sudan. Humanitarian agencies operating in areas affected by the fighting, many of which receive funding from the EU, have been providing assistance (shelter, food, water and sanitation) to the displaced, as well as medical assistance to wounded civilians.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003830/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Coltivazione del tabacco

La coltivazione e la lavorazione del tabacco rappresentano un settore trainante per l'economia di interi Stati europei con un indotto che garantisce lavoro a migliaia di addetti.

Posti di lavoro e imprese sono tuttavia sempre più a rischio e il comparto attraversa una fase molto critica, con difficoltà a smaltire stock di prodotto di altissima qualità, problematiche legate ai prezzi non competitivi sul mercato mondiale e una consistente diminuzione della superficie agricola coltivata.

La filiera del tabacco va tutelata e rilanciata in chiave imprenditoriale al fine di evitare la crisi irreversibile di un settore che da anni assicura un introito fiscale rilevante e nel quale la spesa sostenuta dalle aziende per la riduzione del rischio associato all'assunzione di tabacco è in continuo aumento, a dimostrazione dello sforzo in atto per assicurare ai consumatori una qualità e una sicurezza sempre maggiori.

Sulla base delle considerazioni sopraesposte l'interrogante chiede alla Commissione:

— Quali sono le politiche messe in atto per garantire la sostenibilità della produzione di tabacco e provare a restituire certezza e stabilità alle migliaia di imprese agricole e ai lavoratori della filiera?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(8 giugno 2012)

In merito alle politiche relative al settore del tabacco, la produzione di tabacco greggio è pienamente integrata nell'insieme degli strumenti della politica agricola comune, segnatamente il regime di pagamento unico e il regime di pagamento per superficie, due regimi fondamentali di sostegno al reddito che prevedono, a determinate condizioni, la concessione di aiuti agli agricoltori indipendentemente dalle derrate prodotte. La produzione di tabacco è dunque trattata in modo neutro. Esiste tuttavia anche una politica ben consolidata di sviluppo rurale che, in caso di difficoltà o di particolari necessità, può fornire assistenza alle regioni produttrici di tabacco.

La Commissione è attualmente impegnata nella revisione della cosiddetta direttiva sui prodotti del tabacco e dovrebbe presentare una proposta legislativa entro fine 2012. La revisione si basa sull'articolo 114 del TFUE (mercato interno), che tra l'altro prescrive alla Commissione di garantire un livello elevato di protezione della salute pubblica nelle sue proposte legislative. Nel corso dell'iter legislativo verrà tenuto debito conto delle ripercussioni della proposta sui coltivatori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003830/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Tobacco cultivation

Tobacco cultivation and processing is a driver for the economy of entire European States with satellite industries that guarantee employment for thousands of workers.

Jobs and businesses are, however, increasingly at risk and the sector is going through a critical period. There is difficulty in disposing of high quality stocks, there are issues involving uncompetitive prices on the world market and there has been a significant fall in the surface area being cultivated.

The tobacco sector must be protected and relaunched in a business sense, so as to avoid an irreversible crisis in a sector which for many years has guaranteed significant tax revenues. At the same time, the expenditure incurred by companies to reduce the risk associated with tobacco consumption is constantly increasing, which demonstrates continuing efforts to guarantee consumers higher quality and better safety.

Based on the above considerations, may I ask the Commission:

— What policies have been put in place to guarantee the sustainability of tobacco production and to try and restore a sense of certainty and stability to the thousands of agricultural companies and workers in the sector?

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

Regarding the policies in relation to the tobacco sector, the production of raw tobacco is fully integrated into the general agricultural policy instruments. These are the single payment scheme or the Single Area Payment, basic income support schemes that, under certain conditions, provide payments independently from which kind of commodities farmers actually produce. Thus, tobacco production is treated in a neutral way. However, there also exists a well developed policy for rural development which in case of difficulties or special needs can provide assistance to tobacco growing regions.

The Commission is currently working on the revision of the so called Tobacco Products Directive. A legislative proposal is expected for the end of 2012. The revision is based on Article 114 (internal market), which also obliges the Commission to ensure a high level of public health in its legislative proposals. The impact on farmers will be duly considered in this legislative process.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003831/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Stampante ecologica

Una stampante che sia in grado di usare lo stesso foglio più volte: è questo l'obiettivo raggiunto da alcuni ricercatori dell'Università di Cambridge, che hanno realizzato la prima stampante laser in grado di cancellare oltre che scrivere. Mentre una normale stampante laser fornisce una carica positiva a ogni singolo pixel su carta, a cui poi aderiranno singole particelle del toner, una stampante che cancella funziona in maniera del tutto diversa. In questo caso, infatti, si usano brevissime pulsazioni laser dell'ordine di picosecondi (un millesimo di secondo è composto da un miliardo di picosecondi) per vaporizzare il toner presente sul foglio senza danneggiare la carta, in quanto il particolare tipo di luce viene assorbito dal toner ma passa attraverso le fibre di cellulosa di cui è composta la carta.

Questa procedura permetterebbe di effettuare passi da gigante nella riduzione della CO_2 che si produce sia per realizzare la carta che per riciclarla. I ricercatori di Cambridge stimano che, nel migliore dei casi, un foglio potrebbe essere riscritto e cancellato per venti volte prima di non essere più impiegabile e, nel peggiore dei casi, una volta sola: un procedimento che taglierebbe del 50 % le emissioni di anidride carbonica rispetto al riciclo della carta.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione se è a conoscenza della recente scoperta dell'Università di Cambridge della stampante in grado di riscrivere più volte lo stesso foglio, e se non si intenda avviare un programma sperimentale per valutare l'opportunità di impiegare questa nuova scoperta con lo scopo primario della riduzione della CO_2.

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(19 giugno 2012)

L'idea di cancellare l'inchiostro da stampa attraverso pulsazioni di luce laser è stata divulgata recentemente e sembra molto interessante. Esistono due possibilità per ottenere un eventuale cofinanziamento di tale progetto da parte della Commissione.

Se il progetto richiede un'ulteriore fase di ricerca scientifica incluso lo sviluppo di un prototipo, l'équipe di ricerca può chiedere un finanziamento della Commissione nel settore delle ecotecnologie innovative in occasione del prossimo bando del programma specifico «Cooperazione» del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico, area tematica «Ambiente», la cui pubblicazione è prevista per luglio 2012 ([1]).

I consorzi costituiti da partner provenienti da almeno tre paesi dell'UE possono presentare domanda di finanziamento, la cui attribuzione avviene sulla base di un processo di valutazione inter pares altamente competitivo.

Per soluzioni più vicine al mercato, ad esempio quelle più orientate verso i prodotti innovativi o verso la loro applicazione commerciale, l'équipe di ricerca può optare, piuttosto, per altri programmi finanziati dall'UE come il *programma LIFE+* o il *programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP)*, seguendo le procedure di candidatura previste da ogni singolo programma e bando. Di norma i consorzi minori possiedono i criteri di idoneità stabiliti da questi due programmi ([2]).

([1]) Per ulteriori informazioni sulla data di pubblicazione del bando (l'ultimo del 7° PQ), le priorità di ricerca specifiche richieste e i vari meccanismi di finanziamento visitare il sito: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm;.http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_it.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003831/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Ecological printer

A printer that can use the same sheet of paper several times: that is the goal achieved by researchers at the University of Cambridge, who have produced the first laser printer that can delete as well as print. Whereas a normal laser printer gives a positive charge to every single pixel on the paper, to which individual particles of toner stick, a printer that can delete works in a completely different way. In this case, extremely brief laser pulses in the order of picoseconds (one thousandth of a second consists of a billion picoseconds) to vaporise the toner present on the page without damaging the paper, since the particular type of light is absorbed by the toner but passes through the cellulose fibres that make up the paper.

This process would make it possible to make great progress in reducing the CO_2 produced both by producing paper and recycling it. The Cambridge researchers estimate that, at best, one sheet of paper could be reprinted and deleted 20 times before becoming unusable and, at worst, once. This process would cut carbon dioxide emissions by half in comparison with paper recycling.

In view of the above, is the Commission aware of the recent discovery at the University of Cambridge of a printer that can reprint the same sheet of paper several times, and does it intend to launch an experimental programme to assess the appropriateness of using this new discovery with the main aim of reducing CO_2?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2012)

The idea of print ink removal with laser light pulses has been published recently and seems interesting. Two opportunities exist for possible co-funding of such a project from the Commission's budget.

If a further scientific research including prototype development is needed for this project, the research team may consider applying for the Commission's funding within topics related to innovative eco-technologies within the nearest call of the Environment Theme of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development's specific programme 'Cooperation'. This call is expected to be published in July 2012 ([1]).

Consortia of partners from at least three different EU countries may apply for these funding, granted on the basis of a peer review evaluation process, which is highly competitive.

For closer-to-the-market solutions, e.g. those oriented more towards innovative products or their market replication, the research group may rather consider other EU funded programmes like the LIFE+ Programme, or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), following the usual application procedures specific to a given programme and call. Normally, lesser consortia are eligible in these calls ([2]).

([1]) For more information about the date of the publication, the specific research priorities to be solicited in this call (the last call of FP7) and the various funding schemes: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm; http://ec.europa.eu/cip.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003832/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Raccolta differenziata dei metalli

Il 72,4 % dell'alluminio in circolazione in Italia proviene dal riciclo di imballaggi. Lattine, barattoli, tubetti, scatole, sottili fogli per confezionare il cibo, dopo la raccolta, un'accurata selezione, la fusione e la liquefazione, sono trasformati in lingotti e poi venduti. Il riciclo è un percorso industriale e manifatturiero sia a valle, quando pensiamo alla raccolta, alla selezione e al lavoro fatto nelle fonderie, dov'è prodotto il nuovo materiale, sia a monte visto che il fatturato del settore degli imballaggi in alluminio, industrie specializzate in laminati con i quali si fanno, ad esempio, le lattine, è pari a 12 miliardi di euro.

L'andamento produttivo di alluminio riciclato pone l'Italia al primo posto in Europa con oltre 806 mila tonnellate di rottami (non solo da imballaggi, ma anche da edilizia, arredo urbano, trasporto) trattati nelle fonderie nel 2010. Edilizia, elettrotecnica, trasporti, arredamento, impiantistica: le applicazioni di questo versatile metallo sono pressoché infinite. Per fare una bicicletta occorrono 800 lattine. Per una caffettiera moka da tre tazze 37. Per un cerchione di auto ne servono 600, mentre per un paio di occhiali ne bastano tre. L'entità del lavoro che sta dietro alla raccolta differenziata è nelle cifre.

Alla luce di quanto precede,

1. può la Commissione tracciare un quadro generale dei dati sulla raccolta differenziata dei metalli, e in particolare dell'alluminio, nei vari Stati membri?

2. Intende la Commissione avviare iniziative volte a favorire la raccolta differenziata dell'alluminio e sensibilizzare i cittadini in proposito, visti i molteplici vantaggi che derivano dal suo riutilizzo?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2012)

L'iniziativa faro della Commissione «Un'Europa efficiente nell'impiego delle risorse ([1])» mette l'uso efficiente delle risorse al centro della strategia Europa 2020, compresa la gestione e il riciclaggio dei materiali sostenibili. La Tabella di marcia verso un'Europa efficiente nell'impiego ([2]) delle risorse stabilisce ciò che è necessario fare per scindere la crescita dall'uso delle risorse e l'impatto che deriverà da tale scissione. Ciò è particolarmente importante per materiali quali l'alluminio, che richiede una quantità di energia molto più elevata per la sua estrazione e lavorazione come materiale vergine rispetto alla quantità di energia necessaria per riciclarlo. Per quanto riguarda le domande specifiche sollevate dall'onorevole parlamentare:

1. Tutte le statistiche disponibili rispetto al grado di efficienza degli Stati membri in materia di produzione e gestione dei rifiuti sono disponibili sul sito web della DG ESTAT (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/waste/introduction/).
   Ulteriori dati e informazioni sui contenuti materiali per flusso di rifiuti sono disponibili nella relazione concernente la strategia tematica sulla prevenzione e il riciclaggio dei rifiuti COM(2011)13 e il documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione che la accompagna - http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/strategy.htm.

2. L'alluminio è presente in diversi flussi di rifiuti, la maggior parte dei quali rientra negli obiettivi europei di riciclaggio (imballaggi, rifiuti elettrici ed elettronici, rifiuti dell'attività di costruzione e demolizione, veicoli fuori uso). La Commissione si pone come priorità di garantire il pieno raggiungimento degli attuali obiettivi di raccolta e riciclaggio in modo che l'alluminio, e i metalli in generale, siano riciclati a tassi elevati e in buone condizioni.

([1]) COM(2011)21 definitivo.
([2]) COM(2011)571 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003832/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Sorted collection of metals

72.4% of the aluminium in circulation in Italy comes from recycled packaging. After being collected, carefully sorted, melted and liquefied, cans, tins, tubes and foil for food-wrapping are transformed into bars and then sold. Recycling is an industrial and manufacturing process occurring both downstream, with collection, sorting and manufacturing taking place in foundries where the new material is produced, and upstream, given that the turnover of the aluminium packaging industry, with companies specialising in laminates with which, for example, cans are made, is EUR 12 billion.

The figures for the manufacturing of recycled aluminium put Italy in first place in Europe with over 806 thousand tons of scrap (not only from packaging, but also from construction, street furniture and transport) processed in foundries in 2010. The applications of this versatile metal are almost endless and include construction, electrical goods, transport, furnishings and technical installations. Making a bicycle requires 800 cans. A 3-cup espresso coffee maker requires 37. A tyre rim requires 600 and just 3 are enough for a pair of glasses. The scale of the work behind this sorted waste sector is revealed in the figures.

In view of the above,

1. Can the Commission provide a general overview of the data on the sorted collection of metals, and in particular of aluminium, in the various Member States?

2. Does the Commission intend to launch initiatives aimed at encouraging the sorted collection of aluminium and raising public awareness in this regard, given the numerous advantages deriving from the metal's reuse?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

The Commission's Flagship on a Resource Efficient Europe ([1]) puts efficient resource use, including sustainable materials management and recycling, at the centre of the Europe 2020 strategy. The Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe ([2]) sets out what needs to be done to decouple our growth from resource use and its impact. This is particularly important for materials such as aluminium which require a far larger amount of energy to extract and process as virgin material than to recycle. In response to the specific questions raised by the Honourable Member:

1. All available statistics on Member States performances in terms of waste generation and management are accessible from the DG ESTAT website (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/waste/introduction/). Additional data and information on the material contents per waste stream are available in the report on the waste thematic strategy COM(2011) 13 and the accompanying staff working document — http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/strategy.htm

2. Aluminium is present in several waste streams most of them covered by European recycling targets (packaging, electric and electronic equipment, construction and demolition waste, end-of-life vehicles). The priority of the Commission is to ensure the full implementation of existing collection and recycling targets so that aluminium and metals in general are recycled at high rates and in good conditions.

([1]) COM(2011) 21 of 26.1.2011.
([2]) COM(2011) 571 of 20.9.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003833/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Cellule clandestine dell'Iran

Tre nomi: Qassem Soleimani, capo dell'Armata Qods, l'apparato iraniano per le azioni clandestine, Hassan Boromand, ufficiale che coordina le attività segrete nelle principali capitali europee e infine Majid Alavi, sospettato di aver avuto un ruolo nel fallito attentato anti-israeliano in Thailandia. Questi tre nomi compaiono in un dossier redatto dall'intelligence saudita sulle possibili minacce di Teheran.

Informazioni su scenari poi condivise con paesi amici nel corso di tre riunioni: le prime si sono svolte alla fine del 2011, l'ultima a marzo. I sauditi hanno studiato attentamente le mosse dei rivali storici. Sono divisi dalla religione (sciiti contro sunniti) come dalla volontà di esercitare la propria influenza in Medio Oriente.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può l'Alto Rappresentante far sapere se si sta provvedendo all'adozione di contromisure atte a monitorare l'attività delle cellule terroristiche iraniane all'interno dell'Unione europea?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

L'Unione europea non dispone né delle competenze né delle capacità organizzative per monitorare le attività di gruppi specifici (ad es. le cellule terroristiche o i «lupi solitari») presenti sul suo territorio. Tali attività di monitoraggio sono di competenza esclusiva dei servizi di intelligence degli Stati membri e/o delle loro forze dell'ordine.

Bisogna tuttavia notare che, in base alla strategia antiterrorismo del 2005 e alla strategia di sicurezza interna del 2010, l'UE sostiene gli Stati membri nell'ambito della lotta al terrorismo attraverso iniziative a livello legislativo e non legislativo che mirano a facilitare la condivisione di informazioni tra le forze dell'ordine, anche accrescendo le loro capacità di utilizzare strumenti di informazione open source.

Sia il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna, sia la Commissione Europea possono contare su capacità di conoscenza della situazione, basate principalmente sul monitoraggio di informazioni open source. Tuttavia, tali capacità non costituiscono una competenza o una capacità operative per il monitoraggio di obiettivi specifici.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003833/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Iranian covert cells

Three names — Qassem Suleimani, head of the Quds Force, the Iranian group for covert operations, Hassan Boromand, an official who coordinates covert activities in major European capitals, and Majid Alavi, suspected of having played a role in the failed anti-Israeli attack in Thailand — appear in a dossier compiled by the Saudi intelligence services on possible threats from Tehran.

This information was shared with friendly countries during three meetings, the first two of which took place in late 2011 and the last in March 2012. The Saudis have carefully studied the movements of their historic rivals, from whom they are divided by religion (Shiites against Sunnis) and by a desire to assert their own influence in the Middle East.

In view of the above, can the High Representative say whether steps are being taken to monitor the activities of Iranian terrorist cells within the European Union?

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

The European Union has neither the competence nor the operational capacities to monitor the activities of specific targets (e.g. terrorist cells or 'lone wolves') on its territory. Such monitoring activities fall under the exclusive competence of Member States' intelligence services and/or law enforcement authorities.

It is however worth noting that, in accordance with the 2005 Counter Terrorism Strategy and the 2010 Internal Security Strategy, the EU supports Member States in the field of counter-terrorism through legislative and non-legislative initiatives aiming at facilitating the sharing of information between law enforcement authorities, including by enhancing their capacities to use open sources information tools.

Both the European External Action Service and the European Commission can rely on situational awareness capacities, mainly based on the monitoring of open sources information. However, these capacities do not constitute a competence or operational capacity to monitor specific targets.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003834/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Dispositivo che dimezza i consumi dell'auto

Un meccanico di Saltrio, in provincia di Varese, ha inventato un dispositivo che, se montato su auto con cambio manuale, promette di abbattere i consumi di carburante del 50 % e le emissioni dannose di oltre il 60 %.

Il meccanismo si chiama Kds (Kinectic Drive System) ed è ispirato al principio della curva cicloide, un principio della fisica che risale a Galileo Galilei. L'inventore varesino l'ha inseguita per anni e, dopo averla perfezionata, ha brevettato il sistema in Italia e Svizzera. Il prototipo è stato approvato anche dalla sezione Circolazione del Canton Ticino. Per avviare la marcia basta una lieve accelerata di 4 secondi. Successivamente, grazie al sistema Kds, l'auto procede alla velocità desiderata per un minuto senza che sia necessario mantenere schiacciato l'acceleratore e, quindi, al regime minimo di giri (da qui deriva il risparmio). Finita la propulsione, con altri 4 secondi di acceleratore si assicura un altro minuto di marcia. E così via, senza strappi.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione comunicare se è a conoscenza di questo dispositivo capace di ridurre i consumi ma soprattutto le emissioni dannose del carburante per auto? Intende avviare un programma sperimentale al fine di promuovere tale brevetto in tutti gli Stati membri?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del recente dispositivo meccanico per ridurre il consumo di carburante e le emissioni nocive delle autovetture cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare.

Per ridurre le emissioni prodotte dai mezzi di trasporto, l'Unione europea ha adottato nuovi regolamenti e sostiene ininterrottamente la ricerca e l'innovazione per lo sviluppo di nuove tecnologie e soluzioni. Nella misura in cui si tratta di soluzioni tecniche esistenti, la Commissione non promuove brevetti di prodotti già presenti sul mercato.

La Commissione ha fissato un forte quadro politico per la misurazione e la riduzione del consumo di combustibile e delle emissioni di CO_2 delle autovetture. Questo comprende il regolamento (CE) n. 443/2009 ([1]) che definisce i livelli di prestazione in materia di emissioni delle autovetture nuove e la direttiva 2007/46/CE ([2]) che istituisce un quadro per l'omologazione dei veicoli a motore. La promozione e l'adozione da parte del mercato di veicoli adibiti al trasporto su strada puliti e a basso consumo energetico è confermato dalla direttiva 2009/33/CE, secondo la quale tutti gli acquisti di veicoli per il trasporto pubblico devono considerare il consumo di carburante, le emissioni di CO_2 e le emissioni inquinanti dei veicoli sull'intero arco di vita. Inoltre sono state adottate numerose legislazioni nazionali di attuazione, anche in favore delle ecoinnovazioni. Queste normative creano efficacemente un importante incentivo per la diffusione di tecnologie per il risparmio di carburante e la riduzione della CO_2, sulla base di oggettivi criteri di prestazione.

([1]) GU L 140 del 5.6.2009.
([2]) GU L 263 del 9.10.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003834/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Device that halves fuel consumption by cars

A mechanic from Saltrio, in the province of Varese, has invented a device that, if fitted to a car with a manual gearbox, promises to reduce fuel consumption by half and harmful emissions by over 60%.

The mechanism, known as the kinetic drive system (KDS), is inspired by the cycloid curve principle, a principle of physics dating back to Galileo Galilei. The inventor from Varese worked on the system for years and, after perfecting it, patented it in Italy and Switzerland. The prototype has also been approved by the traffic department of the Ticino canton. All that is required to start moving is a slight acceleration for four seconds. After that, thanks to the KDS system, the car carries on at the desired speed for a minute with no need to keep the accelerator pressed down and, therefore, at the minimum engine speed (where the saving is made). Once propulsion is finished, another four seconds of acceleration provide another minute of driving. This ensures a smooth drive.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether it is aware of this device, which can reduce fuel consumption and, above all, harmful fuel emissions for cars? Does it intend to launch an experimental programme to promote this patent in all Member States?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

The Commission is aware of the new mechanical device to reduce fuel consumption and harmful emission from passenger cars mentioned by the Honourable Member.

To mitigate emissions from transport, the European Union has adopted new regulations and continuously supports research and innovation for the development of new technologies and solutions. As far as existing technical solutions are concerned, the Commission does not promote patents of products that already exist on the market.

The Commission has established a robust policy framework for the measurement and the reduction of fuel consumption and CO_2 emissions of passenger cars. This includes Regulation (EC) 443/2009 ([1]) setting emission performance standards for new cars and Directive 2007/46/EC ([2]) establishing a framework for the approval of motor vehicles. The promotion and market up-take of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles is supported by Directive 2009/33/EC, which requires that all purchases of vehicles for public transport take into account fuel consumption, CO_2 emissions and pollutant emissions over the entire lifetime of vehicles. Furthermore, numerous implementing legislations have been adopted, also covering eco-innovations. These regulations effectively create an important incentive for the deployment of CO_2 and fuel saving technologies, based on objective performance criteria.

([1]) OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.
([2]) OJ L 263, 9.10.2007.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003835/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Energia dai maiali

La Duke University di Durham ha realizzato un impianto pilota che sfrutta gli escrementi degli animali per ricavarne metano, da bruciare per mettere in movimento un generatore di energia elettrica. Così, con i rifiuti prodotti da 9 000 maiali di un'azienda, ora si ottiene energia sufficiente al fabbisogno di 35 famiglie per tutto l'anno. È una nuova forma di energia rinnovabile alla quale in realtà molti pensano da tempo, e che potrebbe dare un grosso contributo alla riduzione di gas serra e alla produzione energetica. Solo questo impianto pilota, infatti, dovrebbe essere in grado di evitare l'immissione nell'atmosfera di 5 000 tonnellate di anidride carbonica all'anno, il che equivale — spiegano i ricercatori — a togliere 900 auto dalla circolazione.

Il vantaggio nel riutilizzo degli escrementi degli animali in realtà è doppio, perché questi rifiuti rilasciano grandi quantità di inquinanti nell'ambiente, soprattutto metano, che è assai più nocivo della CO_2. Intrappolare il metano prodotto per metterlo sul mercato onde alimentare, per esempio, le auto sarebbe estremamente difficile, ecco perché è meglio utilizzarlo sul posto. Le ricerche per valutare l'effettivo impatto sull'ambiente sono appena cominciate, così come il lavoro per trovare soluzioni che rendano il sistema ancora più efficiente ed economicamente conveniente.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione se è a conoscenza del progetto pilota dell'Università di Duke, il quale trasforma in energia rinnovabile i rifiuti degli animali, e se non si intenda avviare un programma sperimentale per valutare l'opportunità di impiegare questo nuovo progetto, sia per la produzione energetica che per la riduzione di gas serra.

Risposta data da Maire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(25 maggio 2012)

La Commissione è al corrente del progetto pilota della Duke University di Durham cui allude l'onorevole parlamentare.

La ricerca e lo sviluppo sui rifiuti agricoli sono stati portati avanti nell'ambito dei programmi-quadro di ricerca promossi dall'UE fin dall'inizio. Il biogas viene prodotto in impianti commerciali con l'ausilio di numerose fonti quali i fanghi di depurazione, i rifiuti agricoli, i concimi, i rifiuti biologici e le discariche municipali. Nel 2011, il 3,5 % ([1]) del consumo lordo finale di elettricità nell'UE è stato prodotto da biomassa, il 20 % del quale deriva da biogas. Oggi come oggi, sono oltre 7 000 gli impianti di biogas attivi a livello commerciale in tutt'Europa. La produzione di biogas può in effetti contribuire a ridurre le emissioni di gas ad effetto serra. Ciò dipenderà dalla misura in cui il biogas sostituirà l'utilizzo dei combustibili fossili nella prospettiva di un ciclo di vita e dalla possibilità di evitare le emissioni di metano nell'atmosfera.

La ricerca e lo sviluppo nel settore proseguono onde poter produrre gas di migliore qualità, accrescere l'efficienza e la sicurezza operativa e contribuire all'elaborazione di una normativa più adeguata in grado di apportare innovazioni sul mercato.

Il ricorso alla biomassa per la produzione di bioenergia è disciplinato dalla direttiva sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili (2009/28/CE). Se si producono biocarburanti, gli Stati membri debbono garantire che essi siano rispondenti ai criteri di sostenibilità contenuti nella direttiva di cui trattasi. Per quanto riguarda la biomassa solida e gassosa destinata agli impianti di riscaldamento e di raffreddamento, la Commissione ha pubblicato una relazione su un regime di sostenibilità per la biomassa non biocarburante nel 2010 ed ha raccomandato agli Stati membri di attenersi alle condizioni imposte dalla direttiva sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili. Attualmente la Commissione sta valutando se tali criteri volontari siano sufficienti oppure se non sia necessario introdurre criteri vincolanti.

([1]) Renewable Energy Snapshot 2011, Pubblicazione del CCR, EUR 24954 EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003835/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Energy from pigs

Duke University in Durham has constructed a pilot plant that processes animal dung to recover methane from it, which is burned to power an electricity generator. In this way, the waste produced by 9 000 pigs on a farm now yields enough energy to meet 35 families' needs for an entire year. It is a new form of renewable energy that many, in fact, have thought about for some time, and which could make a large contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gases and to energy production. This pilot plant alone should be able to prevent the emission into the atmosphere of 5 000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year, which is equivalent, say the researchers, to taking 900 cars off the road.

The benefit of reusing animal dung is two-fold, because this waste releases large amounts of pollutants into the environment, particularly methane, which is much more harmful than CO_2. Capturing the methane produced to put it on the market to fuel cars, for example, would be extremely difficult, which is why it is better to use it *in situ*. Research to assess the actual environmental impact has just begun, as has work to find solutions for making the system even more efficient and economically viable.

In view of the above, is the Commission aware of Duke University's pilot project, which transforms animal waste into renewable energy, and does it intend to launch an experimental programme to assess the appropriateness of making use of this new project, both for energy production and for reducing greenhouse gases?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(25 May 2012)

The Commission is aware of the Duke University's pilot project mentioned by the Honourable Member.

Research and development on agricultural waste has been pursued under EU Research framework programmes from the beginning. Biogas is been produced at commercial installations using a large number of sources including sewage sludge, farm wastes, manures, municipal organic waste and landfills. In 2011, 3.5% ([1]) of the gross final electricity consumption in the EU was produced from biomass, of which 20% was from biogas. Across Europe, more than 7000 biogas plants are operating commercially today. Biogas production may indeed help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This will depend on the extent to which biogas will substitute the use of fossil fuels in a life cycle perspective, and on whether methane emissions to the atmosphere can be avoided.

Research and development is continuing in this area to produce better gas quality, to improve operational efficiency and safety and to help developing better regulation to bring the innovation to the market.

The use of biomass feedstock for bioenergy production is regulated by the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC). If biofuels are produced, Member States should ensure that it meets the sustainability criteria contained in that same directive. Regarding solid and gaseous biomass for heating and cooling, the Commission published a report on a sustainability scheme for non-biofuel biomass in 2010 and recommended to Member States to use the Renewable Energy Directive requirements. The Commission is currently assessing if these voluntary criteria are sufficient, or if binding criteria would be needed.

([1]) Renewable Energy Snapshot 2011, JRC Publication, EUR 24954 EN.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003836/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Escudo antimisiles de EE.UU. en Rota (España) sin consulta de la ciudadanía. Graves consecuencias medioambientales y retroceso en el necesario desarme mundial

En el pasado mes de octubre de 2011, el Gobierno de España anunció unilateralmente la participación española en el sistema de defensa antimisiles de Estados Unidos en Europa, aprobado por el Gobierno Obama en 2009, con la instalación del componente naval del mismo en la base que EE.UU. tiene en Rota (España). Este escudo para Europa se integrará dentro del sistema global estadounidense de defensa de misiles, constituido no solo por radares sino también por misiles interceptores albergados por buques del ejército estadounidenses. Cuatro de estos buques serán alojados en Rota y, además de la función de escudo antimisiles, participarán en misiones marítimas y «de apoyo de respuesta rápida» a los comandos estadounidenses «Africom y Cetcom».

Para la instalación del componente naval del escudo antimisiles en Rota, España y EE.UU. firmaron un Convenio de Defensa por el cual el Gobierno español tendrá que autorizar las escalas de todos los buques del ejército estadounidenses sin poder solicitar información sobre el tipo de armas que transporta incluyendo las nucleares. Además de las graves consecuencias que puede conllevar para la seguridad europea y la paz mundial, la implementación del escudo antimisiles de EE.UU. en Rota, con el incremento del tránsito de buques que supondrá y el aumento de las probabilidades de un desastre natural por el material altamente contaminante que estos llevan a bordo, conllevará serios impactos sobre el medio ambiente convirtiéndose en un foco de riesgo de graves accidentes con nefastas consecuencias medioambientales.

Teniendo en cuenta el Convenio de Aarhus y que esta decisión fue tomada por el anterior Gobierno de España sin abrir ningún proceso de consulta pública, sin participación de la sociedad civil y escuchar el rechazo mayoritario a la instalación del escudo antimisiles estadounidense en Rota,

— ¿Considera la Comisión que España ha violado la legislación europea conforme a lo establecido en el Convenio de Aarhus sobre la participación del público en materia de medioambiente?

— ¿Piensa la Comisión solicitar a España que implemente medidas de salvaguardia para evitar desastres medioambientales originados por la carga altamente contaminante de los buques del ejercito estadounidense?

— ¿No considera la Comisión necesario tener información permanente sobre la carga de estos buques de manera que se pueda evaluar efectivamente los riesgos medioambientales e implementar planes para la mitigación de estos?

— ¿Piensa la Comisión dirigirse al actual Gobierno español para recabar información sobre el asunto expuesto?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de junio de 2012)

Su Señoría se refiere a la instalación de misiles de los Estados Unidos y la OTAN en Rota (España).

La Comisión desea informar a Su Señoría de que el establecimiento de un sistema de defensa antimisiles, así como las medidas relacionadas, es indudablemente una actividad al servicio de la defensa nacional y, como tal, queda fuera del ámbito de aplicación del Convenio de Aarhus.

Por consiguiente, la Comisión no tiene la intención de adoptar nuevas medidas en este asunto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003836/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: US anti-missile shield in Rota (Spain) without public consultation — serious environmental consequences and a setback to necessary global disarmament

In October *2011, the Spanish Government unilaterally announced Spain's participation in the United States' anti-missile defence system in Europe, approved by the Obama Administration in 2009, involving deployment of one of the system's naval components at the US base at Rota (Spain). This shield for Europe will be integrated into the US global anti-missile defence system, comprising not only radars but also interceptor missiles on US naval vessels. Four of those vessels will be based at Rota and, in addition to their anti-missile shield role, will take part in maritime missions and missions providing 'rapid response support' for the US AFRICOMand CENTCOMcommands.*

For the anti-missile shield's naval component to be deployed at Rota, Spain and the US signed a defence agreement requiring the Spanish Government to authorise stops by any US naval vessels without being able to request information about the type of weapons, including nuclear weapons, that they are carrying.

In addition to *the serious consequences it may have for European security and world peace, deployment of the US anti-missile shield at Rota, with the resulting increase in ship movements and the greater likelihood of a natural disaster because of the highly pollutant material that these ships carry, will have a serious impact on the environment, with the area becoming a point of risk of serious accidents with damaging ecological consequences.*

Taking into account the Aarhus Convention and *the fact that this decision was taken by the previous Spanish Government with no public consultation process or civil society involvement, ignoring the majority's rejection of deployment of the US anti-missile shield at Rota:*

— *Does the Commission believe that Spain has infringed European law in the light of the provisions of the Aarhus Convention on public participation in environmental matters?*

— *Does the Commission intend to call on Spain to provide safeguards to prevent environmental disasters resulting from the highly pollutant payload of the US naval vessels?*

— *Does the Commission not consider it necessary that information should be provided at all times on the payload of those ships so that environmental risks can be assessed effectively and plans can be put into effect to mitigate those risks?*

— *Does the Commission intend to seek information from the Spanish Government regarding these issues?*

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2012)

The Honourable Member refers to the US-NATO missile facility in Rota, Spain.

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the establishment of a defence shield as well as related measures is undoubtedly an activity serving national defence purposes and as such outside the scope of the Aarhus Convention.

The Commission does not therefore intend to take any further action in this matter.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003837/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Instalación del componente naval del Escudo antimisiles de EE.UU. en Rota (España): impulso a la carrera armamentística e incremento del riesgo de sufrir ataques militares

En el pasado mes de octubre de 2011, el Gobierno de España anunció unilateralmente la participación española en el sistema de defensa antimisiles de Estados Unidos en Europa, aprobado por el Gobierno Obama en *2009, con la instalación del componente naval del mismo en la base que EE.UU. tiene en Rota (España). Este escudo para Europa se integrará dentro del sistema global estadounidense de defensa de misiles, constituido no solo por radares sino también por misiles interceptores albergados por buques militares estadounidenses.*

Cuatro de estos buques serán alojados en Rota y, además de la función de escudo antimisiles, participarán en misiones marítimas y *«de apoyo de respuesta rápida» a los comandos estadounidenses «Africom y Cetcom». Para la instalación del componente naval del escudo antimisiles en Rota, España y EE.UU. firmaron un Convenio de Defensa por el cual el Gobierno español tendrá que autorizar las escalas de todos los buques militares estadounidenses sin poder solicitar información sobre el tipo de armas que transporta, incluyendo las nucleares.*

Además de violar diversas cláusulas de la Constitución española, la implementación del escudo antimisiles de EE.UU. en España conlleva una serie de consecuencias graves para la seguridad europea y supone un duro revés al necesario desarme mundial. Así, conllevará avances en la carrera armamentística, ya que los presuntos enemigos de EE.UU. intentarán mejorar su tecnología militar para eludir el escudo, fomentará el incremento del gasto militar mundial en plena crisis económica y financiera, puede suponer retrocesos en el desarme nuclear mundial, Rusia ya ha alertado que se reserva el derecho de rechazar posteriores medidas de desarme y de abandonar el tratado Start de limitación de armas nucleares, y convertirá a España, y por tanto a Europa, en objetivo militar de primer orden para los potenciales enemigos de Estados Unidos suponiendo una mayor posibilidad de recibir un ataque.

Teniendo en cuenta las consecuencias y modificaciones que tiene esta decisión del anterior Gobierno español en la seguridad de la UE:

— ¿Considera *oportuno la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que España haya decidido unilateralmente formar parte del Escudo antimisiles de EEUU incrementando el riesgo de la UE de ser objetivo prioritario de un ataque militar?*

— ¿Se ha dirigido o pien*sa dirigirse la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante al Gobierno español para recabar información detallada sobre el Convenio de seguridad firmado con EE.UU.?*

— ¿Cree la Vicepresidenta/*Alta Representante que la instalación del componente naval facilitará avances en el desarme mundial y fomenta la carrera armamentística?*

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2012)

La UE no tiene una posición en esta cuestión, que pertenece al ámbito de la responsabilidad soberana de los Estados miembros. De acuerdo con el artículo 42, apartado 2, del TUE: *«La política de la Unión […] no afectará al carácter específico de la política de seguridad y de defensa de determinados Estados miembros, respetará las obligaciones derivadas del Tratado del Atlántico Norte para determinados Estados miembros que consideran que su defensa común se realiza dentro de la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte (OTAN) y será compatible con la política común de seguridad y de defensa establecida en dicho marco».* Asimismo, el artículo 42, apartado 7, párrafo segundo, especifica: *«Los compromisos y la cooperación en este ámbito seguirán ajustándose a los compromisos adquiridos en el marco de la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte, que seguirá siendo, para los Estados miembros que forman parte de la misma, el fundamento de su defensa colectiva y el organismo de ejecución de ésta».*

A la luz de estas disposiciones, la AR/VP no se ha dirigido al Gobierno español.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003837/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Deployment of the naval component of the US anti-missile shield in Rota (Spain): impetus to the arms race and increased risk of military attack

In October *2011, the Spanish Government unilaterally announced Spain's participation in the United States' anti-missile defence system in Europe, approved by the Obama Administration in 2009, involving deployment of one of the system's naval components at the US base at Rota (Spain). This shield for Europe will be integrated into the US global missile defence system, comprising not only radars but also interceptor missiles on US naval vessels.*

Four of *those vessels will be based at Rota and, in addition to their anti-missile shield role, will take part in maritime missions and missions providing 'rapid response support' for the US AFRICOM and CENTCOM commands. For the anti-missile shield's naval component to be deployed at Rota, Spain and the US signed a defence agreement requiring the Spanish Government to authorise stops by any US naval vessels without being able to request information about the type of weapons, including nuclear weapons, that they are carrying.*

In addition to violating various *provisions of the Spanish Constitution, deployment of the US anti-missile shield in Spain has a number of serious consequences for European security and represents a severe setback to necessary global disarmament. Accordingly, it will lead to an increase in the arms race, as the alleged enemies of the US will attempt to improve their military technology in order to bypass the shield; it will encourage increase in global military expenditure in the midst of an economic and financial crisis; it may mean setbacks for global nuclear disarmament: Russia has already warned that it reserves the right to reject further disarmament measures and to withdraw from the START Treaty on limiting nuclear weapons; and Spain, and thus Europe, will be turned into a prime military target for potential enemies of the United States, implying a greater likelihood of being attacked.*

Taking into account the consequences *for, and changes to, EU security which this decision by the previous Spanish Government involves:*

— *Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider it appropriate that Spain has unilaterally decided to form part of the US anti-missile shield, putting the EU more at risk being a priority target for military attack?*

— *Has the Vice-President/High Representative contacted the Spanish Government, or does she plan to do so, in order to obtain detailed information on the security agreement signed with the US?*

— *Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that deploying the naval component will facilitate progress in global disarmament or encourage the arms race?*

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

The EU does not have a position on this issue, which is the sovereign responsibility of Member States. As stated in Article 42.2 TEU, 'the policy of the Union […] shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States and shall respect the obligations of certain Member States, which see their common defence realised in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework'. Moreover, Article 42. 7, second subparagraph specifies: 'Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States who are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation'.

In the light of these provisions, the HR/VP has not contacted the Spanish Government.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003838/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE)
(13. April 2012)

Betrifft: Auslegung der EU-Dienstleistungsrichtlinie

Die Richtlinie 2006/123/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 12. Dezember 2006 über Dienstleistungen im Binnenmarkt zielt auf den Abbau von bürokratischen und zwischenstaatlichen Hemmnissen sowie auf die Förderung von grenzüberschreitender Erbringung von Dienstleistungen ab. Damit soll die Richtlinie, die Ende 2011 auch in Deutschland umgesetzt wurde, einen Rechtsrahmen zur Erleichterung der Niederlassungs- und Dienstleistungsfreiheit innerhalb der Europäischen Union schaffen.

Die Richtlinie gilt für alle Dienstleistungen, die gegen Entgelt erbracht werden, allerdings mit Ausnahme einiger Bereiche wie beispielsweise Finanz- oder Gesundheitsdienstleistungen. Der Bereich Bildung wurde nicht explizit aus dem Anwendungsbereich der Richtlinie ausgenommen. Damit könnte die Richtlinie für private Bildung, die gegen Entgelt erfolgt, gelten.

In Artikel 10 Absatz 4 und Artikel 11 Absatz 1 der Richtlinie 2006/123/EG ist geregelt, dass sich eine Genehmigung für eine Dienstleistungstätigkeit auf das gesamte Hoheitsgebiet eines Mitgliedstaates erstreckt und dass diese Genehmigung grundsätzlich nicht befristet werden darf.

1. Inwiefern kann die Richtlinie 2006/123/EG auf den Bereich Bildung angewandt werden?

2. Gilt die Richtlinie 2006/123/EG auch für private Hochschulen, deren „private Bildung“ nur gegen Entgelt zu erhalten ist?

3. Verstößt eine lediglich befristete Genehmigung privater Hochschulen damit gegen EU-Recht?

Antwort von Michel Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(21. Juni 2012)

1. Die Dienstleistungsrichtlinie gilt in der Tat auch für Dienstleistungen im Bildungsbereich, sofern die betroffene Bildungseinrichtung nicht im Wesentlichen durch öffentliche Mittel finanziert wird.

2. Die Tätigkeiten privat finanzierter Hochschulen fallen daher in den Geltungsbereich der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie.

3. Gemäß Artikel 10 Absatz 4 der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie muss die Genehmigung dem Dienstleistungserbringer die Ausübung seiner Tätigkeit im gesamten Hoheitsgebiet ermöglichen. In einem Mitgliedstaat mit föderaler Struktur sollte daher die von einem Bundesland gewährte Genehmigung für eine private Bildungsrichtung grundsätzlich auch von den anderen Bundesländern anerkannt werden. Ausnahmen sind möglich, wenn sie durch zwingende Gründe des Allgemeininteresses gerechtfertigt sind.

Gemäß Artikel 11 der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie wird eine Genehmigung in der Regel unbefristet erteilt. Ausnahmen von dieser allgemeinen Regel sind unter anderem dann möglich, wenn die Genehmigungen automatisch verlängert werden oder mit der Auflage verbunden sind, bestimmte Anforderungen zu erfüllen. Dies könnte zum Beispiel bei privat finanzierten Hochschulen der Fall sein, bei denen die Qualität der erbrachten Bildungsdienstleistungen regelmäßig überprüft werden sollte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003838/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Mayer (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Interpretation of the EU Services Directive

Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market aims to dismantle bureaucratic and international barriers and to encourage the cross-border provision of services. The directive, which was also transposed in Germany at the end of 2011, should create a legal framework for facilitating freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services within the European Union.

The directive applies to all services provided for remuneration, albeit with the exception of a number of sectors such as financial or healthcare services. The educational sector was not expressly excluded from the scope of the directive. Therefore, the directive could be applied to fee-based private education.

Article 10(4) and Article 11(1) of Directive 2006/123/EC stipulate that an authorisation for a service activity applies throughout the national territory of a Member State and cannot normally be for a limited period.

1. To what extent can Directive 2006/123/EC be applied to the educational sector?

2. Does Directive 2006/123/EC also apply to private higher-education establishments providing 'private education' for remuneration only?

3. Does authorisation of private higher-education establishments for a limited period only therefore contravene EC law?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

1. The Services Directive applies indeed to education services as long as the educational institution concerned is not essentially financed by public funds.

2. The activites of privately financed universities are therefore covered by Services Directive.

3. Article 10 (4) of the Services Directive requires that an authorisation enables the provider to exercise his activity throughout the national territory. In a federal Member State, an authorisation of a private educational institution granted by one state (Land) should therefore be recognised, in principle, in the other states. Exceptions are possible where justified by a public interest objective.

Article 11 of the Services Directive generally provides that an authorisation is to be granted for an unlimited period of time. Exceptions to this general rule of unlimited duration of authorisations are, *inter alia*, permitted when the authorisations are automatically renewed or are subject only to a condition that they continue to fulfil certain requirements. This could apply, for example, in the case of privately funded universities where a regular check is needed as regards the quality of the education being provided by a private university.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003840/12
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Electronic identification (EID) — Scottish Government

Can the Commission specify the number of occasions on which it has received a documented submission from the Scottish Government proposing modifications to Council Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 ([1]) establishing a system for the identification and registration of ovine and caprine animals?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(15 June 2012)

The Member of the Commission responsible for Health and Consumers received on 31 January 2012 a letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment of the Scottish Government reporting the latest advances in relation to the implementation of the legal provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 of 17 December 2003 establishing a system for the identification and registration of ovine and caprine animals and amending Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003 and Directives 92/102/EEC and 64/432/EEC ([2]).

In this letter, the Cabinet Secretary mentioned *inter alia* that any re-evaluation of Council Regulation EC No 21/2004 should be evidence based.

The Member of the Commission responsible for Health and Consumers replied to this letter on 1 March 2012 and noted *inter alia* the progress that is being made in Scotland in relation to the implementation of the sheep EID and the fact that the Commission was confident that the ongoing work in Scotland will ensure that the new system for sheep EID will be fully functioning soon.

([1]) OJ L 5, 9.1.2004, p. 8.
([2]) OJ L 5, 9.1.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003841/12
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Lombarda Petroli incident

On 23 February 2010, a large quantity of petroleum products are understood to have leaked from storage tanks at the former Lombarda Petroli refinery in Lombardy (Italy).

To what extent is the Commission aware of this incident, and how has it been involved in any subsequent investigation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(15 June 2012)

Council Directive 96/82/EC on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances (Seveso II) ([1]) applies to establishments where dangerous substances are present in quantities equal to or in excess of the quantities listed in its Annex I. Member States have to inform the Commission of major accidents meeting the criteria in Annex VI.

From the information in the possession of the Commission, the former Lombarda Petroli refinery, from which the leakage has occurred, had been declassified by the competent Italian authorities as a Seveso establishment in February 2009. Hence, when the accident occurred in February 2010, the establishment was no longer registered as a 'Seveso' site.

The Commission also refers the Honourable Member to its answers provided to petition 322/2010 and to Written Questions E-1807/2010 by Mr Berlato and E-1358/2010 by Mr Borghezio ([2]) concerning the same incident.

([1]) Codified version of the directive OJ L 10, 14.1.1997.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003842/12
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Single-use plastic carrier bags: policy options

In its final report prepared for the Commission, BIO Intelligence Service (BIOIS) presented an assessment of different policy options aimed at reducing the use of single-use plastic carrier bags.

BIOIS distinguishes clearly between single- and multiple-use plastic carrier bags. The single-use variety is defined as having a 'wall thickness of around 15 microns', and the thickness of 15 microns consequently serves as a borderline between single- and multiple-use plastic carrier bags throughout the report.

The study concludes that single-use plastic carrier bags, mostly given away for free by retailers, are particularly harmful to the environment as they are not degradable and are discarded more frequently. However, when examining policy options with a view to addressing the associated environmental problems, the study does not distinguish between single- and multiple-use carrier bags. Instead, it recommends the introduction of a waste prevention target at the EU level combined with pricing measures at national level for *all* plastic carrier bags.

1. Does the Commission recognise the inconsistencies present throughout the report, particularly in terms of the legal measures recommended by BIOIS?

2. Does the Commission recognise that the conclusion reached by BIOIS is that only single-use plastic carrier bags are an environmental problem, and that a legislative measure covering all plastic carrier bags may consequently violate the EU principle of proportionality, i.e. necessity?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2012)

BIO Intelligence Service (BIOIS) study assesses options to reduce the use of single-use plastic carrier bags. The views expressed in the study are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect possible future actions of the Commission.

The assessment of various options to reduce the environmental impact of plastic carrier bags is still ongoing. The BIOIS study is part of this assessment but it is not the only source of information, indeed a public consultation on this issue generated a high level of interest and responses, which will also be taken into consideration [1]. A decision on the most appropriate instrument and its scope will be taken upon completion of the evaluation process.

[1] Contributions are publicly available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/plasticbags_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003844/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Effetto delle sanzioni comminate alla Siria sulle popolazioni locali

In base alle testimonianze di alcuni cittadini italiani residenti in Siria, riportate dal quotidiano «Avvenire», la situazione nel paese sarebbe profondamente difforme rispetto a quanto pubblicato dagli organi di stampa europei; in particolare, sono segnalati effetti profondamente negativi causati dalle sanzioni comminate al governo siriano.

Nello specifico, si pone in rilievo che i cittadini in questione raccontano di un numero crescente di segnalazioni circa la presenza di personale militare inglese e francese a fianco degli insorti per organizzare azioni di guerriglia. Il sostegno alla liberazione della Siria si sarebbe in realtà tradotto in un contributo alla manipolazione dell'informazione e in una fomentazione dell'instabilità civile, destinata a protrarsi per i prossimi anni.

Nei prossimi giorni scadrà l'ultimatum per il ritiro dell'esercito, nonostante la forte reticenza di molti abitanti dei villaggi periferici, i quali percepiscono la presenza dei militari come fattore di garanzia per la loro sicurezza; gli abusi perpetrati dai ribelli, secondo quanto riportato, sarebbero all'ordine del giorno.

1. Considerando quanto riportato dalle fonti citate dal quotidiano «Avvenire», ritiene il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante di fornire la versione in proprio possesso circa la situazione attualmente vigente in Siria?

2. Considerando che le esportazioni di prodotti locali, come bestiame e uova, sono in una situazione di stallo; considerando la penuria di gasolio e che la Siria non può più esportare greggio in cambio di petrolio raffinato; considerando che i prezzi di alcuni beni primari, ad esempio il latte, sono raddoppiati, ritiene il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante possibile una revisione del regime sanzionatorio attualmente in vigore?

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

L'Unione europea ritiene che le brutali aggressioni e le diffuse violazioni dei diritti umani inflitte alla popolazione dalle forze di sicurezza del regime hanno fomentato la violenza in Siria. Tuttavia, l'UE ha continuamente sollecitato l'opposizione siriana a seguire un percorso non violento verso un cambiamento democratico ed inclusivo. L'UE sostiene pienamente l'inviato speciale delle Nazioni Unite e della Lega araba, Kofi Annan, e il suo piano in sei punti per una composizione politica della crisi. L'UE accoglie con favore le risoluzioni 2042 e 2043 del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU, che autorizzano l'invio di osservatori ONU al fine di sorvegliare in modo imparziale la piena cessazione della violenza e l'attuazione degli altri aspetti contenuti nel piano dell'inviato speciale. Su richiesta, l'UE è pronta a fornire il necessario sostegno alla missione ed esorta tutte le parti coinvolte nel conflitto a cooperare pienamente con gli osservatori ONU.

Per quanto concerne le sanzioni UE contro la Siria, tali misure sono dirette il più possibile al regime siriano (per esempio congelamento dei beni e divieto di viaggio applicati ai membri del regime) e alle fonti di reddito che il regime potrebbe utilizzare per finanziare la repressione (per esempio le entrate derivanti dalle esportazioni di petrolio). Tali misure sono concepite in modo da minimizzare gli effetti negativi sulla popolazione e vengono sottoposte a costanti revisioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003844/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Effect on the local population of sanctions imposed on Syria

According to the witness accounts of a number of Italian citizens resident in Syria, reported in the newspaper *Avvenire*, the situation in the country is vastly different from that reported by European media. In particular, the sanctions imposed on the Syrian Government have had a very negative impact.

It is highlighted in particular that, according to these citizens, there are a growing number of British and French military personnel working alongside the rebels to organise guerrilla activity. Support for the liberation of Syria apparently now consists of contributing to the manipulation of information and fomenting civil unrest, which is destined to last for several years.

In the coming days, the ultimatum for the withdrawal of the army will expire, despite the serious reservations of many inhabitants of outlying villages who see the military presence as a kind of guarantee of their safety as, according to reports, ambushes perpetrated by the rebels are rife.

1. Considering the reports from the sources quoted by the newspaper *Avvenire*, does the Vice-President/High Representative believe it is appropriate to state her understanding of what is currently happening in Syria?

2. Considering that exports of local products, such as cattle and eggs, are currently blocked, that there is a shortage of diesel, that Syria can no longer export crude oil in exchange for refined petroleum and that the prices of some primary goods, for example milk, have doubled, does the Vice-President/High Representative believe it possible to review the sanction regime that is currently in force?

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

The EU considers that violence in Syria has been instigated by the brutal attacks and widespread human rights violations inflicted by the regime's security forces on the population. Nonetheless, it has consistently called on the Syrian opposition to pursue a non-violent path towards democratic and inclusive change. The EU fully supports the UN/Arab League Special Envoy Kofi Annan and his six point plan for a political settlement to the crisis. It welcomes the UN Security Council's Resolutions 2042 and 2043 authorising the deployment of UN observers, which will provide impartial reporting on the implementation of a full cessation of violence as well as the other aspects of the Special Envoy's plan. The EU is ready to provide necessary assistance to the mission upon request and urges all parties to the conflict to fully cooperate with UN observers.

As regards the EU sanctions against Syria, these measures target as much as possible the Syrian regime, e.g. by imposing an asset freeze and travel ban on members of the regime, and sources of revenues the regime could use to finance the repression, e.g. by targeting revenues from oil exports. The measures are designed to minimise any negative effects on the population. The sanctions are kept under constant review.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003845/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Zeolite, la pietra che riscalda

Un'azienda ha messo a punto un'innovativa pompa di calore a gas zeolite che, se impiegata su larga scala, permetterebbe enormi risparmi sia economici che ambientali. La nuova fonte di calore è stata riprodotta in maniera sintetica per poterla utilizzare negli impianti di riscaldamento. La cosiddetta «pietra che bolle» è molto igroscopica, attrae le molecole d'acqua e le immagazzina nei suoi pori presenti sulla superficie. L'energia cinetica delle molecole che si trovano rallentate viene trasformata in calore.

La pompa è alimentata da collettori solari termici integrati in essa e che permettono di mettere in moto il processo di assorbimento della zeolite. Ciò che risulta essere molto interessante è che la zeolite ha una durata di circa 300 anni ed è priva di sostanze inquinanti. La nuova pompa, quindi, permetterebbe un risparmio del costo della bolletta fino al 60 %.

Considerato che ad oggi è fondamentale studiare soluzioni innovative e non inquinanti che permettano comunque di soddisfare i bisogni dell'uomo e che la zeolite potrebbe essere una risorsa importante, chiedo alla Commissione se intenda approfondire la ricerca sul minerale in oggetto e sugli usi a larga scala che essa potrebbe avere.

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(21 giugno 2012)

Le zeoliti sono materiali estremamente porosi che hanno trovato vasta applicazione in molti settori industriali.

La Commissione ha sostenuto la ricerca in quest'ambito attraverso i programmi quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico ed altri programmi. Attualmente sono in corso 12 progetti afferenti a diversi programmi (Consiglio europeo della ricerca, Persone, PMI) e a diverse aree tematiche (nanotecnologie, materiali e nuove tecnologie di produzione (NMP), ambiente, energia) ([1]) del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013). I temi presi in considerazione riguardano numerosi aspetti delle zeoliti, dalla loro sintesi alle applicazioni innovative.

La Commissione sostiene anche la ricerca nel settore delle pompe di calore, in cui rientra sia la produzione di pompe di calore innovative sia la loro integrazione in sistemi ibridi più ampi. Si prevede che questo importante settore sia inserito nell'ultimo bando del 7° PQ ([2]) e, forse, anche in «Orizzonte 2020».

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_IT&QZ_WEBSRCH=cancer+therapies&USR_SORT=E N _QVD+CHAR+DESC.
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003845/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Zeolite, the heating stone

A company has developed an innovative zeolite gas heat pump, which, if used on a large scale, would have enormous advantages in terms of both saving money and protecting the environment. The new heat source was produced synthetically in order to be used in heating systems. The 'stone that boils' is highly hygroscopic, attracts water molecules and stores them in pores located on its surface. The molecules are slowed down and give off kinetic energy, which is transformed into heat.

The pump is powered by built-in solar panels which trigger the adsorption process in the zeolite. What is particularly interesting is that zeolite lasts for approximately 300 years and does not contain any pollutants. This new pump could therefore make it possible to reduce heating bills by up to 60%.

In view of the fact that nowadays it is essential to look into innovative, environmentally friendly solutions which still meet individuals' needs, and that zeolite could be an important resource, does the Commission intend to carry out more in-depth research into the mineral in question and the large-scale uses it could have?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

Zeolites are highly porous materials that have found widespread applications throughout many industrial sectors.

The Commission has supported research into these materials through its Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development and other Programmes. Currently there are 12 ongoing projects under several programmes (European Research Council, People, SMEs) and themes of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) (Nanotechnologies, Materials and New Production Technologies (NMP), Environment, Energy) ([1]). The topics cover all aspects from zeolite synthesis to innovative applications.

The Commission also supports research on heat pumps where both, innovative heat pumps and heat pump integration into larger hybrid systems are considered. It is expected that this important area will be included in the last call of FP7 ([2]) and possibly under Horizon 2020.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_EN&QZ_WEBSRCH=zeolite&QM_PJA=&USR_SORT=EN_QVD+CHAR+DESC.
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003846/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Cauzione per smaltire adeguatamente i cellulari

In Germania è stata avanzata una proposta per incentivare i consumatori a un utilizzo più responsabile dei prodotti tecnologici. Si tratta di una cauzione di 10 euro sull'acquisto di telefoni cellulari e smartphone che verrebbe poi restituita al consumatore una volta che ha destinato l'apparecchio a un centro di smaltimento adeguato.

Una stima rivela che vi sarebbero circa 83 milioni di vecchi cellulari nelle case dei tedeschi. Il riciclo di apparecchi elettronici, come si sa, è fondamentale per preservare l'ambiente.

La cauzione sui cellulari rappresenterebbe un primo progetto pilota. Se dovesse funzionare, infatti, si potrebbe estendere ad altri prodotti tecnologici come i computer, i tablet, le console per i videogiochi e apparecchi simili.

La restituzione di una somma di denaro ai consumatori potrebbe indurre gli stessi a porre maggiore attenzione al rispetto dell'ambiente e, quindi, a destinare i prodotti tecnologici a centri di riciclo adeguati.

La proposta appena descritta ha suscitato non poche polemiche da parte delle associazioni dei produttori di oggetti elettronici. I timori della categoria, infatti, derivano dall'aumento della mole di burocrazia che scaturirebbe da tale cauzione e dall'annullamento degli attuali sistemi di restituzione già in vigore.

Considerato che la cauzione, da una parte, potrebbe contribuire a una maggiore efficienza della gestione dei rifiuti elettronici e, dall'altra, rappresenterebbe invece un aumento del costo dei prodotti al momento dell'acquisto, può la Commissione far spere qual è la sua opinione in merito e se ritiene opportuna e/o auspicabile l'introduzione di tale cauzione sugli apparecchi tecnologici venduti all'interno dell'Unione europea?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2012)

I sistemi di deposito cauzionale possono contribuire al raggiungimento di obiettivi di raccolta più elevati, ma hanno anche dimostrato di poter creare oneri amministrativi e possibili ostacoli al mercato. La loro applicazione nel campo dei rifiuti di apparecchiature elettriche ed elettroniche (RAEE) non è esclusa dalla nuova direttiva adottata dal Parlamento europeo nel gennaio 2012 ([1]).

Attualmente la Commissione non intende considerare la possibilità di imporre un sistema di cauzione per telefoni cellulari o RAEE venduti nell'UE. La complessità di un sistema di cauzione sembra aumentare notevolmente con il numero di produttori/distributori coinvolti, con il numero di diversi tipi di prodotti e con la durata di vita dei prodotti interessati.

([1]) Cfr http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0009+0+DOC+XML+V0//IT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003846/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Deposit for the suitable disposal of mobile telephones

In Germany a proposal has been put forward to encourage more responsible use of technological products among consumers. It consists of a EUR 10 deposit when mobile telephones and smartphones are purchased, which would then be returned to consumers once the handset had been sent to a suitable disposal centre.

Estimates reveal that there are approximately 83 million old mobile telephones in German homes. As we know, the recycling of electronic appliances is fundamental for protecting the environment.

The deposit on mobile telephones would be a first pilot scheme. If it were to work, it could be extended to other technological products such as computers, tablets, video games consoles and similar appliances.

The return of a sum of money to consumers could prompt them to pay greater attention to respecting the environment and, as a result, to send technological products to suitable recycling centres.

The proposal described has aroused fierce debate by the associations of electronic goods manufacturers. The industry's misgivings stem from the increase in the red tape that would arise from such a deposit and from the cancellation of the return systems already in place.

Considering that, on the one hand, the deposit could improve efficiency in electronic waste management, while, on the other, it would increase the cost of the product at the time of purchase, can the Commission state its opinion on the matter and whether it considers the introduction of this deposit on technological appliances sold within the European Union appropriate and/or desirable?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

Deposit systems can make a contribution to the achievement of higher collection targets, but have also shown to have the potential to create administrative burdens and possible market barriers. Their application in the area of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) is not excluded by the new directive adopted by the European Parliament in January 2012 ([1]).

The Commission does not currently intend to consider imposing a deposit system for mobile phones or other WEEE sold in the EU. The complexity of a deposit system appears to increase significantly with the number of producers/retailers involved, the number of different product types covered, and with the life time of the products concerned.

([1]) See http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0009+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003847/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Commissioni bancarie applicate alle PMI — Il peso delle banche sui finanziamenti in Italia

La pressione esercitata dalle banche sulle imprese e sulle famiglie è in continua crescita. In particolare sul fronte delle PMI, la recente indagine sull'accesso ai finanziamenti condotta dalla Commissione europea consente di rilevare che in Italia le condizioni applicate dalle banche registrano un netto peggioramento rispetto agli altri paesi dell'UE. Dall'indagine emerge che, negli ultimi sei mesi, ben il 75 per cento delle PMI italiane ha registrato un incremento dei tassi d'interesse, mentre quasi il 65 per cento ha dichiarato di aver visto aumentare le commissioni bancarie applicate sui finanziamenti. Tra i principali paesi dell'area euro, Francia e Germania mostrano uno scenario ben diverso da quello italiano.

Riguardo ai tassi d'interesse, la conferma di quanto dichiarato dalle PMI censite dalla Commissione è fornita dai dati di confronto internazionale elaborati dalle singole banche centrali e resi disponibili dalla BCE. Per i nuovi finanziamenti erogati alle imprese non finanziarie, si può rilevare come le condizioni economiche in Italia siano nettamente peggiorate negli ultimi due anni. Nel 2010 i tassi d'interesse pagati dalle imprese italiane, se paragonati a quelli degli altri principali paesi dell'area euro, erano i più bassi. Nel periodo più recente, invece, la spesa per interessi bancari delle imprese italiane è superiore a quella delle altre aziende concorrenti operanti in Europa. A gennaio 2012 il tasso medio alle imprese è stato, infatti, pari al 4,1 per cento in Italia, contro il 3,5 per cento della Spagna, il 3,3 per cento della Francia e il 2,9 per cento della Germania. Analogo discorso per il credito al consumo: le commissioni bancarie, in percentuale dei finanziamenti, a gennaio 2012 sono state pari all'1,43 per cento in Italia, contro circa il mezzo punto percentuale di Spagna, Francia e Germania.

Le PMI dipendono in larga misura dal finanziamento bancario e, pertanto, si dovrebbero evitare penalizzazioni di costo per le stesse all'interno dei singoli Stati membri. Inoltre, il quadro di Basilea è concepito per le banche attive a livello internazionale e le direttive UE sui requisiti patrimoniali sono applicabili a tutti gli enti creditizi dell'UE e, pertanto, l'obiettivo deve essere quello della massima armonizzazione, attraverso un corpus unico di norme.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione riferire se le condizioni applicate dalle banche in Italia presentino profili d'incompatibilità con tale obiettivo e se potrebbero tradursi in un trasferimento dei rischi e delle esposizioni sottostanti per le PMI, costituendo una misura restrittiva della concorrenza tra le stesse?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(19 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è pienamente consapevole dell'importanza delle PMI nell'UE per l'economia reale e per il rilancio della crescita.

Le condizioni applicate dalle banche per la concessione di crediti sono determinate da molti fattori diversi. Ciò potrebbe spiegare perché le banche italiane applicano condizioni più restrittive rispetto alle banche di altri paesi. Sia dall'ultimo studio BCE sull'accesso ai finanziamenti per le PMI nella zona euro (Survey on the Access to Finance of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Euro Area), che tiene contro del punto di vista delle PMI, sia dallo studio BCE sull'attività creditizia delle banche (Bank Lending Survey), che tiene conto del punto di vista delle banche, emerge che è stato in primo luogo il peggioramento delle prospettive economiche generali e delle prospettive specifiche dei singoli settori che ha portato le banche a rivedere e rendere più rigorose le condizioni per la concessione di crediti. In questo senso l'irrigidimento di tali condizioni può essere legittimo, in quanto le banche devono stabilire il prezzo dei crediti sulla base del livello di rischio del debitore.

Altri fattori che hanno avuto un forte impatto sull'irrigidimento delle condizioni di concessione dei prestiti bancari nel secondo semestre del 2011 sono la situazione di liquidità delle banche, il loro accesso ai finanziamenti sul mercato e il costo di tali finanziamenti. Tuttavia, soprattutto grazie all'impatto positivo delle aste triennali LTRO (Long Term Refinancing Operations) lanciate dalla BCE alla fine del 2011, dal Bank Lending Survey ([1]) emerge che nel primo trimestre del 2012 le condizioni di prestito per le PMI si sono irrigidite soltanto in maniera marginale.

([1]) Aprile 2012.

Per quanto riguarda l'applicazione di norme bancarie prudenziali alla concessione di crediti alle PMI, la Commissione non dispone di prove che indichino che in Italia esse siano applicate in maniera diversa rispetto al resto dell'UE. Data l'importanza della questione, la Commissione ha chiesto all'Autorità bancaria europea di verificare l'attuale ponderazione del rischio dei prestiti concessi alle PMI nel quadro normativo per le banche ([2]). La questione è in discussione anche nei negoziati in corso tra i colegislatori in merito all'ultimo riesame del regolamento bancario ([3]).

([2]) Cosiddetta normativa CRD.
([3]) CRD IV.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003847/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Cost of bank loans for SMEs in Italy

Banks are exerting ever greater pressure on businesses and households alike. With reference to SMEs, a recent survey on access to funding conducted by the Commission clearly shows that the terms applied to bank loans in Italy have worsened in comparison with other EU countries. The survey shows that, over the past six months, fully 75% of Italian SMEs have experienced an increase in interest rates, while nearly 65% have seen an increase in bank charges on loans. The figures for the major eurozone countries show that the situation in France and Germany is very different from that in Italy.

With regard to interest rates, the assertions made by the SMEs polled by the Commission are borne out by comparative data compiled by the central banks and released by the ECB. The figures for new loans granted to non-financial companies show that economic conditions in Italy have severely deteriorated over the last two years. In 2010, the interest rates paid by Italian companies in 2010 were lower than those in the other major eurozone countries. In more recent times, however, expenditure on bank interest by Italian companies has been higher than that by their competitors elsewhere in Europe. In January 2012, the average business interest rate was 4.1% in Italy, as opposed to 3.5% in Spain, 3.3% in France and 2.9% in Germany. The same applies to consumer credit: in January 2012 bank charges, as a percentage of loans, stood at 1.43% in Italy, compared with around 0.5% in Spain, France and Germany.

SMEs rely heavily on bank loans, and costs which penalise such companies should therefore be avoided in individual Member States. Furthermore, the Basel framework is intended for banks which operate at an international level and the EU directives on capital requirements apply to all EU credit institutions. The aim should therefore be to maximise harmonisation, through a single corpus of rules.

In view of the above, can the Commission say whether the terms applied by banks in Italy are incompatible with this objective and whether they could result in risks and underlying exposure being transferred to SMEs, thus constituting a measure that restricts competition between them?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2012)

The Commission fully recognises the importance of the EU SME sector for the real economy and relaunch of growth in the EU.

Many different factors impact on banks' lending standards. This may explain why Italian banks have tightened their standards to a greater extent than their peers in other countries. The results of both the latest Survey on the Access to Finance of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Euro Area (which reflects views of SMEs) and the Bank Lending Survey (which reflects views of banks) show that it is mainly the worsening of the general economic outlook and industry/firm-specific outlook that have led banks to review and strengthen their lending standards. In this respect, tightening of lending standards may be legitimate given that banks are expected to price loans according to the perceived riskiness of the borrower.

Banks' liquidity position and their access to and cost of market financing are other drivers that have had a strong effect on the tightening of bank lending standards in the 2nd half of 2011. However, mainly thanks to the positive impact of the three-year Long Term Refinancing Operations launched by the ECB at the end of 2011, the Bank Lending Survey ([1]) shows that lending standards for loans to SMEs in the first quarter of 2012 tightened only marginally.

([1]) April 2012.

As regards the application of prudential banking rules on lending to SMEs, the Commission does not have any evidence that would indicate that in Italy they are applied differently from elsewhere in the EU. Given the importance of the matter, the Commission has asked the European Banking Authority to look into the current risk-weighting of loans to SMEs within the regulatory framework for banks ([2]). The issue is also being discussed in the ongoing negotiations between the co-legislators regarding the latest revision of the banking regulation ([3]).

([2]) the so-called CRD-legislation.
([3]) CRD 4.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003848/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Confisca beni criminalità organizzata — tracciabilità flussi finanziari e fondi UE

La gestione degli immobili confiscati ai mafiosi richiede un sistema di trasparenza e di adeguate forme di controllo volte ad assicurare che gli stessi abbiano la funzione e la fruizione sociale che la legge impone e prevede.

Sulle orme della legge n. 109/96, il Parlamento ha approvato la risoluzione del Programma di Stoccolma del 25 ottobre 2011 in materia di criminalità organizzata «transnazionale», destinando a finalità sociali i beni confiscati alla criminalità organizzata e alle mafie anche a livello europeo.

Considerato che:

— la possibilità di assegnare a finalità collettive i beni confiscati ai boss mafiosi e ad altri esponenti della criminalità organizzata ha assunto un valore simbolico irrinunciabile nella lotta alla mafia ed è uno strumento strategico che consente di condurre una sfida alla mafia anche di tipo mediatico;

— l'impegno delle istituzioni europee deve essere quello di creare le condizioni affinché i beni confiscati possano divenire sempre più una risorsa capace di sostenere efficacemente l'auspicato sviluppo economico e sociale di un territorio da sempre soffocato dalla tentacolare presenza della criminalità organizzata.

All'interno delle recenti normative che il legislatore europeo ha adottato per il contrasto all'inserimento della criminalità organizzata nelle imprese e nell'economia, significativa importanza dovrebbero avere le disposizioni in materia di tracciabilità dei flussi finanziari riguardanti l'esecuzione e la fornitura di lavori e di servizi pubblici.

Considerato, inoltre, che le norme sulla tracciabilità si applicano anche a contratti stipulati dalle imprese pubbliche nell'ambito dei cosiddetti «settori speciali» di cui alla direttive 2004/17/CE e 2004/18/CE e successivo regolamento (CE) n. 1177/2009.

In particolare tali disposizioni hanno lo scopo di prevenire le infiltrazioni criminali nel settore degli appalti, dei contratti, delle forniture e dei finanziamenti pubblici, creando le condizioni per la tracciabilità di tutte le risorse finanziarie investite, grazie soprattutto alla previsione dell'utilizzo di conti correnti bancari o postali appositamente dedicati, anche se non in via esclusiva.

Alla luce di ciò, può la Commissione far sapere se sono stati pubblicati bandi europei per consentire la partecipazione pubblica di potenziali aventi diritto all'ottenimento dell'assegnazione di immobili confiscati alla mafia e di indicare le normative europee che garantiscano la tracciabilità dei flussi finanziari dei fondi UE a tutti i livelli?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(19 giugno 2012)

La Commissione desidera sottolineare che la vendita di attivi pubblici (come la vendita dei beni confiscati alla mafia dagli Stati membri, a cui si fa riferimento nell'interrogazione) esula dall'ambito della normativa UE in materia di appalti ([1]). Tali direttive sono applicabili solo all'acquisto di forniture, di servizi e di lavori da parte degli Stati membri e di altre amministrazioni aggiudicatrici. Inoltre la Commissione non dispone di informazioni specifiche da parte degli Stati membri in merito a eventuali gare organizzate dagli Stati membri per la valorizzazione dei beni confiscati alla mafia.

Non vi sono disposizioni specifiche a livello UE che impongano alle persone che concludono un contratto con autorità pubbliche l'utilizzo di conti bancari dedicati per le relative operazioni finanziarie al fine di garantire la tracciabilità dei flussi dei fondi UE.

([1]) Direttive 2004/17/CE e 2004/18/CE.

I beni confiscati normalmente sono venduti in aste pubbliche e i proventi ricavati sono trasferiti al bilancio nazionale. In Italia e in pochi altri Stati membri, i beni confiscati possono diventare proprietà pubblica e possono essere riutilizzati per scopi pubblici o sociali. Nel marzo 2012, la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di direttiva relativa al congelamento e alla confisca dei proventi di reato nell'ambito dell'Unione europea ([2]). Questa proposta, che intende agevolare la gestione di un patrimonio immobiliare congelato in vista della successiva confisca, impone agli Stati membri di introdurre misure che garantiscano una gestione appropriata di tali beni, in particolare conferendo poteri per liquidarli, quanto meno qualora ci sia il rischio che si svalutino o che la loro conservazione diventi troppo onerosa. Tuttavia, la proposta non riguarda lo smaltimento dei beni confiscati, che viene lasciato alla legislazione nazionale ([3]).

([2]) COM(2012)85 definitivo.
([3]) Come la legge n. 109 del 1996 in Italia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003848/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Confiscating assets from organised crime-traceability of financial flows and EU funds

The management of properties confiscated from the mafia requires transparency and suitable forms of monitoring to ensure that they are given a social function and are used as required and established by law.

Taking its cue from Law No 109/96 and with reference to the Stockholm Programme, the European Parliament adopted the resolution of 25 October 2011 on 'transnational' organised crime, calling for assets confiscated from organised crime and mafia groups, including at European level, to be used for social purposes.

The possibility of allocating the assets confiscated from mafia bosses and other representatives of organised crime to publicly beneficial purposes has assumed essential symbolic value in the fight against the mafia and is a strategic tool that also makes it possible to challenge the mafia in the media.

The commitment of the European institutions must be to create conditions which ensure that the confiscated assets can increasingly become a resource able to effectively support the intended economic and social development of a territory that has long been suffocated by the sprawling presence of organised crime.

Within the framework of recent European legislation adopted to fight the interference of organised crime in businesses and the economy, particular importance attaches to provisions on the traceability of financial flows regarding the implementation and supply of public works and services.

Furthermore, the traceability rules also apply to agreements drawn up by state enterprises in the context of the so-called 'special sectors' as referred to in Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC and the subsequent Regulation (EC) No 1177/2009.

In particular, these provisions aim to prevent criminal infiltration in the area of public tenders, contracts, supplies and funding, creating the conditions for the traceability of all financial resources invested, mainly thanks to the provisions regarding the use of dedicated bank or post office accounts, even if they are not exclusively used for such purposes.

In view of this, can the Commission state whether European calls for tenders have been published to allow public involvement by the potential beneficiaries of properties confiscated from the mafia, and indicate the European legislation that guarantees the traceability of the flows of EU funds at all levels?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2012)

The Commission would like to point out that the sale of public assets (such as the sale of assets confiscated by Member States from the mafia, referred to in the question) is out of the scope of the EU public procurement ([1]). These directives are applicable only to purchases of supplies, services and works, made by Member States and other contracting authorities. In addition, the Commission has no specific information from Member States regarding possible tenders organised by Member States for the valorisation of the assets confiscated by Member States from the mafia.

There are no specific provisions at EU level requiring the persons contracting with public authorities to use dedicated bank accounts for the related financial transactions with a view to ensuring the traceability of the flows of EU funds.

([1]) Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC.

Confiscated assets are normally sold in public auctions and the resulting proceeds are transferred to the national treasury. In Italy and a few other Member States, confiscated assets may become public property and can be reused for public or social purposes. In March 2012, the Commission adopted a proposal for Directive on the freezing and confiscation of proceeds of crime in the European Union ([2]). This proposal, which intends to facilitate the management of property frozen in view of later confiscation, requires Member States to introduce measures aimed at ensuring an adequate management of such property, notably by granting powers to realise frozen property, at least where it is liable to decline in value or become uneconomical to maintain. However, the proposal does not cover the disposal of confiscated assets, which is left to national legislation ([3]).

([2]) COM(2012) 85 final.
([3]) Such as Law 109/96 in Italy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003849/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Junk Food: il cibo spazzatura verso un'armonizzazione fiscale europea

Anche in Italia è stato predisposto uno studio per l'introduzione di una tassa sul junk-food, il cd. cibo-spazzatura, allo scopo di ridurre il rischio di sovrappeso e obesità. Interventi simili sono stati adottati in Francia (la taxe soda sulle bevande gassate zuccherate, circa due centesimi di euro per lattina) ed in Danimarca (la tassa sul cibo ricco di grassi saturi, come snack e merendine, di circa 2 euro per chilo). Negli Usa, molti Stati applicano da tempo una tassa sulle bevande zuccherate dell'ordine del 3-5 per cento del prezzo. La finalità di tali interventi è quella di ridurre il consumo dei prodotti tassati, oltre che garantire un'ottimizzazione delle risorse ricavate, destinandole al sostegno dei cibi genuini del territorio.

Gli studi trasversali condotti sulla popolazione statunitense mostrano una chiara relazione positiva fra consumo di bevande zuccherate e peso corporeo, soprattutto fra i giovani (la relazione è messa in dubbio solo dagli studi sponsorizzati dall'industria delle bevande gassate: fonte — The Public Health and Economic Benefit of Taxing Sugar-Sweetened Beverages, NEJM, 2009). Fra gli adulti il tasso di obesità è del 10,3 per cento, un valore ancora inferiore alla media dell'area Oecd, del 16,9 per cento, secondo l'International Association for the Study of Obesity. Ma il dato più allarmante riguarda l'obesità infantile: un bambino obeso ha, infatti, un rischio maggiore di sviluppare malattie croniche in età adulta. L'obesità rappresenta, a tutti gli effetti, un problema di salute pubblica, infatti oltre a ridurre la qualità della vita e la capacità lavorativa, rappresenta un fattore di rischio per molte malattie croniche, come ipertensione, diabete di tipo 2 e malattie cardiovascolari, il cui trattamento richiede un notevole impiego di risorse: di fatto le malattie collegate direttamente all'obesità sono responsabili di ben il 7 per cento dei costi sanitari dell'Unione europea, secondo i dati comunicati dalla Commissione europea.

Intende la Commissione aprire uno studio specifico su questa problematica, in modo da pervenire ad una chiara normativa europea, tenendo conto delle best practices fiscali e delle misure già adottate dagli Stati membri, vista la necessità di correggere le esternalità e le carenze informative presenti nel mercato degli alimenti? Tali programmi potrebbero essere realizzati destinando una parte del gettito del tributo per la promozione della salute delle categorie più a rischio, sia nelle scuole con il coinvolgimento dei genitori, sia all'interno delle strutture sanitarie mediante una campagna di promozione di una sana alimentazione, attraverso il miglioramento della ristorazione ospedaliera e la limitazione all'accesso a prodotti ipercalorici nei distributori e nei bar degli ospedali.

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che alcuni Stati membri dell'UE hanno introdotto tasse sugli alimenti come strumento di sanità pubblica. Gli Stati membri sono liberi di introdurre proprie imposte nazionali non armonizzate, purché tali imposte siano compatibili con le pertinenti disposizioni di diritto comunitario. Secondo le informazioni a disposizione della Commissione nel 2012 la Danimarca ha aumentato l'imposta su cioccolato e dolciumi (la cui introduzione risale al 1922). Nel settembre del 2011 è stata introdotta in Ungheria una legislazione fiscale sui prodotti avente finalità di tutela della salute pubblica. Tale legislazione si applica ai prodotti confezionati ad alto tenore di zuccheri, sale o caffeina. In Francia è in vigore dal gennaio 2012 una tassa sulle bevande gassate con zuccheri aggiunti, il cui ammontare è fissato a 7,16 euro per ettolitro per tutte le bibite contenenti zuccheri aggiunti o dolcificanti artificiali.

L'esperienza con questo tipo di imposte negli Stati membri è limitata, e limitate sono parimenti le conoscenze delle ripercussioni di tali iniziative sulla tendenza al sovrappeso e all'obesità. Al momento la Commissione non ha intenzione di occuparsi di normative europee sulla tassazione di determinati tipi di alimenti o di additivi alimentari.
Nel quadro dell'attuazione della «Strategia europea sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità» ([1]), la Commissione segue tuttavia tali iniziative nazionali nell'ambito del Gruppo ad alto livello sulla nutrizione e l'attività fisica ([2]). Per un resoconto dell'ultima riunione sulla questione, l'onorevole parlamentare può consultarne la relazione al seguente indirizzo:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/ev_20120202_flash_it.pdf.

([1]) COM(2007)279 definitivo del 30.5.2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003849/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Junk food: towards European tax harmonisation

A study project has been set up in Italy to introduce a tax on junk food. Its purpose is to reduce the risk of excess weight and obesity. Similar measures have been adopted in France (the 'soda' tax on soft drinks of around two cents per can) and in Denmark (the tax on fat-rich food, such as snacks and treats, of around EUR 2 per kilo). In the US, many states have for some time had a tax on soft drinks of around 3-5% of the price. The purpose of these measures is to reduce consumption of the taxed products, as well as to guarantee the best possible use of the resources earned by using them to support the local area's natural produce.

Studies conducted on the American population show a clear positive relationship between the consumption of soft drinks and body weight, above all among young people (the relationship is only doubted by the studies sponsored by the soft drink industry. *Source:* The Public Health and Economic Benefit of Taxing Sugar-Sweetened Beverages, NEJM, 2009). Among adults, the obesity rate is 10.3%, a rate which is still below the average of the OECD area of 16.9%, according to the International Association for the Study of Obesity. However, the most alarming statistics are those regarding child obesity. An obese child has a greater risk of developing chronic illnesses as an adult. Obesity is, to all intents and purposes, a public health problem since, besides reducing the quality of life and work capacity, it is a risk factor for numerous chronic illnesses, such as hypertension, type-2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, the treatment of which requires considerable resources. In fact, illnesses directly connected to obesity are responsible for fully 7% of the healthcare costs of the European Union, according to data communicated by the European Commission.

Does the Commission intend to start a specific study on this issue, so as to arrive at a clear European law, taking account of fiscal best practices and the measures already adopted by Member States, given the need to correct externalities and information gaps in the food and drink market? These programmes could be realised by allocating part of the tax revenue to health promotion for the categories most at risk both in schools, with the involvement of parents, and in healthcare structures through a promotional campaign for healthy eating, through improvements to the food supplied in hospitals and through limits on access to hyper-calorific products from automatic dispensing machines and hospital bars.

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2012)

The Commission is aware that some EU Member States have introduced food taxes as a public health instrument. Member States are free to introduce their own non-harmonised national taxes provided that these are compatible with the relevant provisions of EC law. According to the information available to the Commission Denmark increased the tax on chocolate and confectionery in 2012 (it was introduced in 1922). In Hungary, a Public Health Product Tax Law was introduced in September 2011. It applies to packaged products with high sugar, salt or caffeine levels. In France, a tax on sodas with added sugars is in place since January 2012. It is levied at a rate of EUR 7.16 per hectolitre on all beverages with added sugar or with artificial sweeteners.

There is limited experience with these type of taxes in Member States and limited knowledge of the impact of such initiatives on overweight and obesity trends. The Commission is not considering at the moment to work on EU-wide rules on taxation of specific types of food or food additives.

However, in the context of the implementation of the 'Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related health issues' ([1]) the Commission follows up on these national initiatives in the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity ([2]). For a record of the most recent meeting on the issue the Honourable Member can consult the report at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/ev_20120202_flash_en.pdf

([1]) COM(2007) 279 final, 30.5.2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003850/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Nuova plastica che si autoripara

Un nuovo materiale in grado di autoripararsi quando viene danneggiato è stato ideato da un team della University of Southern Mississippi.

La plastica innovativa imita la capacità della pelle umana di rimarginare le ferite. La plastica segnala quando subisce danni diventando di colore rosso. Poi, se esposta alla luce solare o artificiale, che provoca cambiamenti di temperatura e di pH, è in grado di ripararsi da sola.

Il meccanismo di autoriparazione è costituito da lunghe catene di polimeri attraversate da piccoli legami molecolari detti anche ponti. Quando vi è un danneggiamento o una lesione della plastica, i ponti si rompono e modificano la loro forma. Tale cambiamento provoca la tipica colorazione rossa. Pertanto, quando vi è un danno nella plastica sarà possibile rendersene conto facilmente attraverso la macchia rossa che si forma attorno alla lesione.

Quando il ponte rotto entra in contatto con la luce del sole, la catena di polimeri si ripara «ricostruendo» il ponte e cancellando il segno rosso.

La nuova plastica rappresenta una novità e un'evoluzione rispetto alle altre plastiche che hanno la caratteristica di autoripararsi una sola volta. Il prodotto messo a punto negli Stati Uniti funziona proprio come la pelle umana, può ripararsi sempre.

Considerato che il nuovo materiale potrebbe avere grandi potenzialità e moltissime applicazioni, è la Commissione al corrente dell'innovazione e ritiene ci sarebbero rischi ambientali o per la salute umana nel caso venisse utilizzato in Europa?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza dell'innovazione specifica cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato e non dispone di dati sui possibili rischi per l'ambiente o la salute umana.

All'occorrenza la Commissione consulterà però i propri organismi di valutazione del rischio e i propri comitati scientifici qualora l'uso di tali materiali desse adito a preoccupazioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003850/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: New plastic which self-repairs

A new material which can self-repair when it is damaged has been designed by a team from the University of Southern Mississippi.

The innovative plastic imitates the ability of human skin to heal over. The plastic reveals when it has been damaged by turning red. Then, if exposed to sunlight or artificial light, which causes changes in its temperature and pH, it can repair itself.

The self-repair mechanism consists of long polymer chains that are crossed by small molecular links known as bridges. When the plastic is damaged or cracked, the bridges break and modify their shape. This change causes the typical red colouring. Therefore, when the plastic becomes damaged, it will be possible to see this easily through the red mark that forms around the lesion.

When the broken bridge comes into contact with sunlight, the polymer chain repairs itself by 'rebuilding' the bridge and eliminating the red mark.

The new plastic is a sign of innovation and progress compared to other plastics which can only self-repair once. The product developed in the United States works just like human skin and can self-repair forever.

Considering that this new material could have great potential and numerous applications, is the Commission aware of the innovation and does it consider that there would be environmental or human health risks should it be used in Europe?

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

The Commission is not aware of the specific innovation referred to by the Honourable Member and has no data on possible environmental or human health risks.

However, if appropriate, the Commission will consult its risk assessment bodies and Scientific Committees if the use of these materials would give rise to any concern.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003851/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Una regolamentazione per il crowdfunding

Come nuovo strumento per la raccolta di capitali, il cosiddetto *crowdfunding* sta avendo un impatto in tutta Europa. Il *crowdfunding* è stato utilizzato come modello per il finanziamento delle più svariate attività in start-up su piattaforme quali growvc.com, c-crowd.ch o seedmatch.com. Tuttavia, per questo tipo di piattaforme non risulta ancora chiaro se possa applicarsi la normativa europea in materia di tutela degli investitori e di rendicontazione finanziaria o se si debba far riferimento alle normative nazionali in materia di fundraising e strumenti finanziari.

In particolare, nel settore dell'«industria creativa», dove spesso i fondi vengono raccolti per iniziative senza scopo di lucro o per finalità sociali e culturali, piuttosto che per la costituzione di vere e proprie persone giuridiche, il *crowdfunding* trova una base giuridica di applicazione e di regolamentazione totalmente differente da paese a paese.

In considerazione di ciò, si rende opportuna l'adozione di una chiara regolamentazione che sia coerente con la natura transfrontaliera del *crowfunding*, ma che soprattutto consenta di inquadrare giuridicamente tale fenomeno, di fondamentale rilevanza per la promozione di tutte le iniziative culturali e sociali all'interno dell'UE.

Può la Commissione pertanto indicare quali sono le norme applicabili con riguardo allo status giuridico delle piattaforme e degli investitori di *crowdfunding* e alle modalità di accesso ai finanziamento mediante *crowdfunding*, specificando inoltre quale normativa in materia di strumenti dei mercati finanziari si intende riferita al *crowdfunding*?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2012)

La Commissione segue la comparsa dei cosiddetti modelli «crowd-funding» (finanziamento collettivo per supportare la realizzazione di progetti) osservata con interesse dall'onorevole parlamentare. Gli sviluppi dell'«industria creativa» e di altri settori evidenziano il potenziale di tali modelli nell'offerta di assistenza finanziaria alle iniziative culturali e sociali in tutta l'UE.

Il crowd-funding potrebbe rappresentare un mezzo economicamente efficace per aggregare tanti piccoli contributi, individuare potenziali finanziatori e integrare le fonti tradizionali di finanziamento.

In pratica, il finanziamento fornito può assumere svariate forme complementari, dal più tradizionale finanziamento del rischio fino a diversi tipi di donazione o forme di pagamento anticipato per servizi. Data la varietà dei meccanismi di finanziamento disponibili e la forma ancora nascente dei modelli, l'interazione di tali modelli con gli obblighi regolamentari previsti per i servizi finanziari può variare. Considerata questa varietà, un primo passo per garantire che le norme applicate siano appropriate è ottenere una maggiore chiarezza sulle varie forme di crowd-financing nonché sulla portata e la natura dei servizi forniti.

Il crowd-funding potrebbe diventare una fonte vitale di finanziamento potenziale per la crescita socioculturale e per l'innovazione in tutta Europa. La Commissione seguirà gli sviluppi da vicino, per quanto attiene sia il quadro regolamentare che quello politico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003851/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Rules for crowdfunding

A new tool for raising capital, so-called crowdfunding, is having an impact throughout Europe. Crowdfunding has been used as a model for funding the most diverse start-up ventures on platforms such as growvc.com, c-crowd.ch and seedmatch.com. However, it is still not clear whether European legislation on the protection of investors and financial reporting can be applied to this kind of platform or whether national legislation on fund-raising and financial instruments should apply.

In particular, in the 'creative industry' sector, where funds are often collected for non-profit initiatives or for social and cultural purposes, rather than for setting up true legal entities, the legal basis for implementing and regulating crowdfunding is completely different from one country to another.

In view of this, clear legislation should be adopted that is in keeping with the cross-border nature of crowdfunding, but which, above all, makes it possible to provide a legal framework for this phenomenon, which is vitally important for the promotion of all cultural and social initiatives in the EU.

Can the Commission therefore say what rules are applicable with regard to the legal status of crowdfunding platforms and investors and to the ways of accessing funding through crowdfunding, also stipulating what legislation on financial market instruments should cover crowdfunding?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

The Commission has been following the emergence of the so-called 'crowd-funding' models noted by the Honourable Member with interest. Developments in the 'creative industry' and other sectors highlight the potential of such models in offering financial assistance to cultural and social initiatives across the EU.

Crowd-funding could offer a cost effective means for aggregating together many small contributions and locating potential backers, supplement traditional funding sources.

In practice, the funding provided can take a wide variety of complementary forms — from more traditional risk financing through to types of donation or forms of pre-payment for services. Given the variety in funding mechanisms on offer and nascent form of the models, the interaction of these models with regulatory requirements across the financial services will vary. Given this variety, a first step in order to ensure that the appropriate regulation is in place is to obtain greater clarity on the different forms of crowd-financing and the scope and nature of the services being provided.

Crowd-funding could become a vital source of potential funding for growth, social and cultural innovation across Europe. The Commission will follow developments closely, from a regulatory perspective as well as a policy perspective.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003852/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Dependência de Portugal de pescado importado — Relatório da News Economic Foudation e da OCEAN2012

De acordo com um estudo da News Economic Foudation e da OCEAN2012, divulgado no final de Março, Portugal é um dos países da União Europeia mais dependente de pescado importado, sendo que a situação se agrava de ano para ano. O relatório elaborado por estas duas organizações afirma que, se os portugueses só comessem pescado capturado pela sua frota em águas comunitárias, as suas capturas seriam suficientes apenas para três meses de consumo. No ano passado, este prazo era de quatro meses. Tendo em conta que:

— A frota portuguesa se encontra hoje fragilizada e envelhecida, em virtude da evolução francamente negativa sofrida ao longo das últimas duas décadas;

— Em comparação com frotas de outros Estados-Membros, a frota portuguesa sofreu um declínio mais acentuado (só ao longo da década de 90, por exemplo, Portugal reduziu a frota em perto de 40 %, enquanto outros países aumentaram a frota e a produção);

— A Comissão Europeia insiste numa definição genérica de sobrecapacidade, não a caracterizando, nem a associando a países, frotas e pescarias concretas — como se o nível de adequação das frotas aos recursos disponíveis fosse idêntico em toda a UE;

— Portugal apresenta uma ampla Zona Económica Exclusiva (ZEE) — a maior de toda a UE — com os correspondentes recursos pesqueiros;

— Os portugueses têm um consumo de pescado *per capita* superior à média europeia, o que beneficia diretamente as poderosas indústrias pesqueiras de outros países comunitários e acentua o défice da balança comercial de Portugal;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que medidas tenciona adotar, no âmbito da futura Política Comum da Pesca (PCP), para atenuar este problema?

2. De que forma terá em conta as especificidades de cada país (a redução de frota realizada nas últimas duas décadas, a dimensão da respetiva ZEE e dos recursos disponíveis, o consumo de peixe *per capita*, entre outras) na próxima PCP? (As propostas de reforma conhecidas, até agora, não o fazem.)

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(20 de junho de 2012)

A dependência da importação de pescado aumentou durante as últimas décadas e atingiu um nível em que se importam atualmente dois terços do pescado consumido. Este é o rácio médio para a União Europeia. Para a reforma da Política Comum das Pescas (PCP), a Comissão propõe uma gestão dos nossos recursos de forma a maximizar a exploração de forma sustentável. O resultado será o aumento das unidades populacionais, com um maior potencial de capturas e, consequentemente, rendimentos mais elevados. Pescando a níveis que assegurem o rendimento máximo sustentável, os pescadores europeus fornecerão aos consumidores peixe em maior número e variedade proveniente de unidades populacionais saudáveis da UE.

A futura PCP deve ter em consideração, tanto quanto possível, as especificidades regionais e nacionais. Por exemplo, a Comissão propôs que a gestão das pescas seja regionalizada e que os Estados-Membros e os intervenientes na região tomem a iniciativa de definir medidas destinadas a aplicar as políticas e a satisfazer os objetivos e metas fixados. As características nacionais podem refletir-se melhor nesta abordagem regional da gestão, com alguns objetivos gerais e estratégias de gestão, a fim de garantir a igualdade de tratamento e condições equitativas para o setor das pescas em toda a União.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003852/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Portugal's dependence on imported fish — Report by the New Economics Foundation and OCEAN2012

According to a study published at the end of March by the New Economics Foundation and OCEAN2012, Portugal is one of the EU countries most dependent on imported fish, and the situation becoming worse every year. The report compiled by these two organisations asserts that, if the only fish that the Portuguese ate were those caught by their fleet in European waters, the catches would be barely enough for three months' consumption. Last year, the period in question was four months. Given that:

— The Portuguese fleet has been weakened and rendered obsolete by the adverse developments of the last two decades;

— Compared to the fleets of other Member States, the Portuguese fleet has suffered a more marked decline (in the 1990s alone, for example, Portugal reduced its fleet by almost 40%, while other countries increased their fleets and production);

— The Commission insists on a general definition of overcapacity, which is neither characterised nor linked to specific countries, fleets, or fisheries — as if fleets and available resources matched to the same degree throughout the EU;

— Portugal has a large Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) — the largest in the EU — with fishery resources in proportion;

— Portuguese per capita fish consumption is above the European average, a fact which directly benefits the powerful fishing industries of other EU countries and worsens Portugal's trade deficit,

1. What action will the Commission take under the future common fisheries policy (CFP), to mitigate this problem?

2. How will the individual profiles of each country (including fleet reduction over the past two decades, size of the EEZ and quantity of available resources, and fish consumption per capita) be taken into account in the next CFP? (The reform proposals announced so far do not do so.)

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

Dependence on imported fish has increased over the last decades and now reaches levels where two third of fish consumed comes from imported sources. This is the average ratio for the European Union. For the reform of the common fisheries policy (CFP) the Commission proposes management of our resources in such a way that the exploitation is maximised in a sustainable way. This will lead to larger stocks, with higher catch potential and thus higher yields than currently are harvested. Fishing at maximum sustainable yield levels means the European fishermen will provide consumers with more fish and with a wider choice of fish from healthy EU stocks.

The future CFP should take into account regional and national specificities as much as possible. For example, the Commission has proposed that fisheries management is regionalized, with Member States and stakeholders in the region taking the lead in defining the measures to implement the policies and to meet the policy objectives and targets. National characteristics may be reflected better in this regional approach to management, with a number of general objectives and management strategies, to ensure equal conditions and level playing field for the fishing industry throughout the Union.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003853/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Regime de ajudas de Estado no âmbito do objetivo da cooperação territorial

Considerando que:

— No âmbito da política de coesão, o objetivo da cooperação territorial é incentivar a cooperação transfronteiras, seja entre Estados, seja entre regiões, através do financiamento de projetos como a gestão partilhada dos recursos naturais, a proteção contra os riscos, a melhoria das redes de transportes, a criação de redes de universidades e de institutos de investigação, tendo sido alocada para o corrente período de 2007 a 2013 uma dotação orçamental na ordem dos 8,7 biliões de euros a este objetivo;

— Nas suas propostas financeira e legislativa relativas ao objetivo da cooperação territorial no próximo período plurianual de 2014 a 2020, a Comissão Europeia decidiu aumentar em mais de 30 % a dotação orçamental destinada a este objetivo, que passará agora a contar com um financiamento na ordem dos 11,7 biliões de euros, dando assim um maior relevo a esta dimensão da política de coesão nas suas várias vertentes transfronteiriça, transnacional e interregional e afirmando a sua importância no desenvolvimento das regiões;

— O artigo 107, 4 do TFUE prevê um enquadramento específico para a possibilidade de concessão das ajudas de Estado que forem consideradas compatíveis com o mercado interno, sendo possível determinar, de acordo com o artigo 107, 4 e) determinar outras categorias de auxílios de Estados por decisão do Conselho, sob proposta da Comissão;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Considera que deve existir um regime próprio de ajudas de Estado no âmbito da cooperação territorial? Ou que devem ser aplicadas as mesmas regras uma vez que se trata de mais um objetivo no âmbito da política de coesão?

2. Tenciona adotar novas orientações para as ajudas de Estado tendo em conta a especificidade do objetivo da cooperação territorial?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(14 de junho de 2012)

As regras em vigor em matéria de auxílios estatais permitem financiar projetos de cooperação transfronteiras. No entanto, a natureza transfronteiras/transnacional/inter-regional destes projetos pode levantar problemas específicos; alguns pelo facto de participarem nos projetos parceiros de Estados-Membros diferentes, outros pelo tipo de projetos apoiados.

A atual iniciativa da Comissão, que visa atualizar a legislação em matéria de auxílios estatais, nomeadamente a revisão das orientações relativas aos auxílios estatais a aplicar no próximo período 2014/2020, permite um amplo debate destas questões, como é o caso dos projetos de cooperação territorial europeia. Neste contexto, a Comissão acolhe favoravelmente todas as propostas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003853/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: State aid regime in the context of the territorial cooperation objective

In cohesion policy, the aim of territorial cooperation is to encourage cross-border cooperation, whether between countries or regions, by funding projects such as shared management of natural resources, risk mitigation, improvement of the transport network, and the establishment of university networks and research institutions. A budget of approximately EUR 8.7 billion has been allocated to this objective for the current period, 2007 to 2013.

In its financial and legislative proposals relating to the territorial cooperation objective in the next multi-annual period, 2014 to 2020, the Commission has decided to increase the amount allocated by more than 30% to about EUR 11.7 billion, thus giving greater prominence to this aspect of cohesion policy in its various cross-border, transnational and interregional dimensions and affirming its importance in regional development.

Article 107(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides for a specific framework whereby state aid may be granted if it is considered compatible with the internal market, and Article 107(3)(e) allows such other categories of state aid as might be specified by decision of the Council on a proposal from the Commission.

1. Does the Commission believe that there should be a specific state aid regime within the territorial cooperation objective? Or does it believe that the same rules should be applied when more than one cohesion policy objective is being addressed?

2. Will it adopt new guidelines for state aid, taking into account the specific nature of the territorial cooperation objective?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

The current state aid rules allow for the financing of cross-border cooperation projects. Nonetheless, the cross-border/transnational/interregional nature of these projects can create specific challenges. Some are due to the participation of partners from different Member States in each project, others to the type of projects supported.

The current initiative of the Commission to modernise state aid legislation including the revision of the state aid Guidelines to be applied in the next period 2014-2020 allows for a broad discussion on such issues, including the projects on European Territorial Cooperation. In this context, the Commission welcomes all proposals.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003854/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Cooperação territorial e instrumentos de financiamento dos processos de pré-adesão, da política de vizinhança e da política de cooperação e ajuda ao desenvolvimento da UE

Considerando que:

— No âmbito da política de coesão, o objetivo da cooperação territorial apresenta um valor acrescentado e um elevado potencial em matéria de competitividade, nomeadamente através da criação de emprego, e na promoção do crescimento económico e que a proposta da Comissão Europeia relativa ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual de 2014 a 2020 prevê um aumento, em mais de 30 %, do orçamento destinado a este objetivo, passando de 8,7 bilhões de euros para 11,7 bilhões de euros;

— A Comissão Europeia apresentou, a 6 de outubro de 2011, uma proposta de regulamento separado para o domínio da cooperação territorial para o próximo período, mantendo a arquitetura existente nas suas várias dimensões transfronteiriça, transnacional e interregional, sendo agora necessária uma programação mais estratégica dos fundos e uma melhor coordenação entre eles e entre as várias políticas europeias, internas e externas;

— No que respeita ao objetivo da cooperação territorial, é absolutamente necessária uma abordagem territorial com particular enfoque nas especificidades regionais e não só de um ponto de vista setorial, mas também e sobretudo numa perspetiva estratégica e de conjunto no que respeita à área geográfica onde se inserem, exigindo, por isso, uma real e efetiva coordenação do seu financiamento com os instrumentos da Política Europeia de Vizinhança, dos instrumentos de Pré-adesão e com os instrumentos de Cooperação e Ajuda ao Desenvolvimento;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como melhorar a programação estratégica e a coordenação do financiamento no âmbito da cooperação territorial com o do Instrumento Europeu de Vizinhança?

2. Quais as possibilidades de melhorar a criação de sinergias entre a cooperação territorial e o Instrumento de Pré-adesão?

3. Que medidas concretas propõe para uma efetiva articulação entre a implementação dos programas de cooperação territorial, nas suas várias vertentes, e o Instrumento de Financiamento da Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento e o Fundo Europeu para o Desenvolvimento?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(14 de junho de 2012)

1. A proposta da Comissão prevê uma continuação do apoio do FEDER para a cooperação transfronteiras (CTF) e os programas relativos às bacias marítimas no âmbito do Instrumento Europeu de Vizinhança para o período de 2014/2020. A Comissão continuará a desenvolver uma estreita coordenação entre os instrumentos internos e externos, no quadro do Regulamento Financeiro.

2. Em 2014/2020, os programas de cooperação transfronteiriça entre os Estados-Membros e os países do alargamento continuarão a ser executados no âmbito do Instrumento de Assistência de Pré-Adesão (IPA), com fundos provenientes do FEDER e do IPA. Além disso, os fundos do IPA continuarão a financiar a participação dos países do alargamento, se for caso disso, em programas de cooperação transnacional e inter-regional no âmbito do objetivo de cooperação territorial europeia (CTE) da política de coesão. No período de 2007/2013, os programas comuns ao IPA e à CTF são, em geral, executados em gestão partilhada com os Estados-Membros participantes, de acordo com as regras que já se aproximam das da CTE. Esta tendência goza igualmente do apoio da proposta da Comissão relativa ao IPA para o período de 2014/2020.

3. Em conformidade com as propostas legislativas para a ação externa em 2014/2020 ([1]), os recursos podem ser afetados para a cooperação regional em determinadas circunstâncias. O Instrumento de Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento e o Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento podem financiar ações em países fora do seu âmbito geográfico relativas a projetos ou programas de natureza regional ou transfronteiriça. O aspeto da integração regional das regiões ultraperiféricas pode igualmente ser incluído. Além disso, a integração regional das regiões ultraperiféricas é reforçada através de um aumento dos fundos atribuídos para a cooperação e de uma participação do FEDER acrescida, que podem ambos ser utilizados em países terceiros.

([1]) COM(2011) de 7.12.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003854/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Territorial cooperation and financing instruments for pre-accession processes, neighbourhood policy, and EU cooperation and development aid policy

Within cohesion policy, the territorial cooperation objective provides added value and has great potential in terms of competitiveness, particularly through job creation, and promoting economic growth. The Commission proposal on the 2014-2020 multi-annual financial framework increases the amount to be allocated to it by more than 30%, from EUR 8.7 billion to EUR 11.7 billion.

On 6 October 2011, the Commission submitted a proposal whereby territorial cooperation is to be regulated separately in the coming period, but without altering the cross-border, transnational and interregional dimensions of the existing organisational structure. This implies a need for more strategic fund programming and for better coordination in terms both of funds and of European internal and external policies.

With regard to the territorial cooperation objective, the priority has to be a territorial approach focusing in particular on specific regional characteristics, not only from a sectoral point of view, but also, and above all, from a strategic perspective encompassing the whole of the geographical area involved. This requires genuine and effective coordination of the financing for this objective with the instruments used for the European neighbourhood policy, pre-accession, and cooperation and development aid.

1. How can the Commission improve strategic programming and coordinate territorial cooperation financing more effectively with the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument?

2. In what ways could synergies be fostered between territorial cooperation and the pre-accession instrument?

3. What specific measures does the Commission propose to enable the implementation of territorial cooperation programmes, in their various aspects, to be linked effectively with the financing instrument for development cooperation and the European Development Fund?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

1. The Commission proposal foresees a continuation of support from ERDF to cross-border cooperation (CBC) and sea-basin programmes under the European Neighbourhood Instrument for 2014-20. The Commission will continue close coordination between external and internal instruments, within the framework of the Financial Regulation.

2. In 2014-2020, CBC programmes between Member States and enlargement countries will continue to be implemented under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) with funds coming from both ERDF and IPA. In addition, IPA funds will continue to finance the participation of enlargement countries, where appropriate, in the transnational and interregional cooperation programmes under the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) goal of cohesion policy. In 2007-2013, the joint IPA CBC programmes are, in general, implemented under shared management with the participating Member States, under rules which are already close to ETC. This trend is further supported in the Commission's proposal for IPA for 2014-2020.

3. In accordance with the legislative proposals for external action 2014-2020 ([1]), resources may be allocated for regional cooperation under certain circumstances. The Instrument for Development Cooperation and the European Development Fund may finance actions in countries outside their geographic scope for projects or programmes of a regional or cross-border nature. This may include regional integration of outermost regions. Moreover, the regional integration of the outermost regions is strengthened through an increase of their cooperation allocation and through an increased percentage of ERDF that can be used in third countries.

([1]) COM(2011) of 7.12.2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003855/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Regiões Ultraperiféricas e sua relação com a UE enquanto ator mundial

As Regiões Ultraperiféricas são territórios da União Europeia localizadas em diversos pontos do globo, no Oceano Atlântico, no Oceano Índico, nas Caraíbas, sendo, por isso, verdadeiras fronteiras ativas da União Europeia com um potencial a ser desenvolvido por esta no que respeita à sua ação externa, sobretudo após a entrada em vigor do Tratado de Lisboa em que, com a criação de um Serviço Europeu de Ação Externa, a União Europeia assumiu a necessidade de reforçar o seu papel como ator mundial.

«Estes postos avançados da Europa devem ser chamados a participar plenamente no papel que a União Europeia aspira desempenhar no plano mundial», tal como assinala Pedro Solbes no seu documento sobre «As Regiões Ultraperiféricas Europeias no mercado único: A projeção da UE no mundo», estando em ligação direta com os novos desafios tais a globalização, as alterações climáticas, as alterações demográficas e os fluxos migratórios, podendo tornar-se elementos fulcrais das estratégias europeias nestas matérias.

Para além disso, as Regiões Ultraperiféricas podem contribuir para o reforço das relações com países terceiros vizinhos, nomeadamente os da «Grande Vizinhança» e para o desenvolvimento de relações comerciais e de projetos estratégicos que contribuirão não só para a visibilidade destas regiões como também para uma projeção da União Europeia no mundo.

Assim sendo, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Pretende avançar com medidas concretas no sentido de promover as RUP enquanto «portas de entrada da Europa» nos respetivos espaços geográficos, tal como proposto por Pedro Solbes no referido relatório, e reforçar o seu protagonismo no que respeita a ações de política externa? No caso afirmativo, com quais medidas?

2. É a favor de potencializar o papel das Regiões Ultraperiféricas no âmbito da Política Europeia de Vizinhança renovada? Como prevê fazê-lo?

3. Planeia divulgar alguma proposta concreta no sentido de aproveitar a abertura regional das Regiões Ultraperiféricas e o desenvolvimento do comércio, nomeadamente no quadro específico de auxílios ao transporte entre estas regiões e os territórios vizinhos?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(15 de junho de 2012)

A Comissão considera que as regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP) devem servir como importantes postos avançados da UE nas suas respetivas áreas regionais.O objetivo é conseguir mais valor acrescentado tanto para as respetivas RUP como para a UE no seu conjunto, nas suas relações com os países terceiros e com os territórios situados nessas áreas geográficas. A Comissão tenciona refletir este ponto de vista na sua próxima comunicação estabelecendo a base para uma estratégia renovada da UE em relação às RUP, no quadro da estratégia Europa 2020, a adotar em junho de 2012. Tendo em conta a posição geográfica das RUP, as políticas da UE com uma dimensão externa são essenciais para concretizar essa estratégia. Com vista a desenvolver o seu potencial próprio e conseguir realizar plenamente o seu valor acrescentado para a UE, as RUP necessitam de se integrar na sua vizinhança regional.

Para o efeito, a Comissão tenciona utilizar a estratégia atualizada para abordar as questões levantadas pelo Senhor Deputado. Tal inclui a consideração dos interesses das RUP aquando da negociação de acordos comerciais com os seus vizinhos, sempre que os acordos comerciais abranjam produtos produzidos nessas regiões, bem como a melhoria dos transportes entre essas regiões e os territórios vizinhos. A Comissão também pretende continuar a desenvolver a coordenação e as sinergias entre os programas de cooperação apoiados pelo FEDER e outros instrumentos (o Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento, o Instrumento de Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento ou o Instrumento de Parceria).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003855/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Outermost regions and their relationship to the EU as a global player

The outermost regions are parts of the EU scattered throughout the globe: in the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean. They are thus active EU borders in the true sense and have a potential into which the EU could tap in order to pursue its external action. This has been particularly the case since the Treaty of Lisbon came into force and the EU, recognising the need to strengthen its role as a global player, established the European External Action Service.

'[These] outposts of Europe […] must participate fully in the role that the EU aspires to play at world level', as Pedro Solbes notes in his report on 'Europe's outermost regions and the single market: The EU's influence in the world'. Because they are directly linked to new challenges such as globalisation, climate change, demographic change and migration, they have the potential to become key elements in European strategies to tackle them.

Furthermore, the outermost regions can help to strengthen relations with neighbouring non-member countries, particularly those belonging to the 'wider neighbourhood', and to develop trading relations and strategic projects that will serve not only to raise their profile, but also to enhance the EU's influence throughout the world.

1. Will the Commission move forward with practical measures to promote the outermost regions as 'gateways to Europe' in their geographical areas, as proposed by Pedro Solbes in the above report, and strengthen its own role as regards external policy actions? If so, with what measures?

2. Is it in favour of strengthening the role of the outermost regions within the renewed European Neighbourhood Policy? How does it propose to do this?

3. Will it publish any specific proposal aimed at taking advantage of the regional liberalisation of the outermost regions and trade development, particularly as regards improving transport between these regions and neighbouring territories?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(15 June 2012)

The Commission considers that the outermost regions (ORs) should serve as key outposts of the EU in their respective regional areas. The aim is to bring more value added both to the respective OR and to the EU as a whole in its relations with the third countries and territories in these geographic zones. The Commission intends to reflect this view in its upcoming communication setting out the basis for a renewed EU strategy for the ORs in the framework of the Europe 2020 to be adopted in June 2012. In view of the ORs' geographical position, EU policies with an external dimension are key to delivering this strategy. To develop their own potential, and to bring their full added value to the EU, the ORs need to integrate in their own regional neighbourhood.

To this end, the Commission intends to use the updated strategy to address the issues raised by the Honourable Member. This includes taking account of the interests of the ORs when negotiating trade agreements with their neighbours, when trade agreements cover products produced in these regions or and in regard to the improvement of transport between these regions and neighbouring territories. The Commission also intends to continue developing better coordination and synergy between the cooperation programmes supported by the ERDF and other instruments (the European Development Fund, the Development Cooperation Instrument, or the Partnership Instrument).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003856/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Taxas de co-financiamento na cooperação territorial

Considerando que:

— No âmbito da política de coesão, o objetivo da cooperação territorial é incentivar a cooperação transfronteiras, seja entre Estados, seja entre regiões, através do financiamento de projetos como a gestão partilhada dos recursos naturais, a proteção contra os riscos, a melhoria das redes de transportes, a criação de redes de universidades e de institutos de investigação, tendo sido alocada para o corrente período de 2007 a 2013 uma dotação orçamental na ordem dos 8,7 biliões de euros a este objetivo;

— Nas suas propostas financeira e legislativa relativas ao objetivo da cooperação territorial no próximo período plurianual de 2014 a 2020, a Comissão Europeia decidiu aumentar em mais de 30 % a dotação orçamental destinada a este objetivo, que passará agora a contar com um financiamento na ordem dos 11,7 biliões de euros, dando assim um maior relevo a esta dimensão da política de coesão nas suas várias vertentes transfronteiriça, transnacional e interregional e afirmando a sua importância no desenvolvimento das regiões;

— No que respeita ao objetivo de investimento para o crescimento e emprego, a proposta da Comissão Europeia prevê uma taxa de cofinanciamento máxima de 85 %, de acordo com o artigo 110, 3 da proposta de Quadro Estratégico Comum para os fundos estruturais e que a taxa de cofinanciamento proposta no âmbito dos programas operacionais no âmbito da cooperação territorial não poderá ser superior a 75 %;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual a justificação para uma diferença entre as taxas máximas de cofinanciamento nos dois objetivos da política de coesão: crescimento e empregos e cooperação territorial, especialmente tendo em conta o facto de que, dado o aumento da dotação orçamental para os projetos deste último objetivo, o número dos programas nesta área tenderá a aumentar?

2. Porque não existe também no que respeita ao objetivo de cooperação territorial uma proposta no sentido de diferenciar as várias taxas de cofinanciamento de acordo com as categorias, nível de desenvolvimento ou especificidades das regiões?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2012)

1. A proposta da Comissão prevê aplicar uma taxa máxima de cofinanciamento de 75 % a todos os programas da Cooperação Territorial Europeia (CTE). Será possível assim salvaguardar a massa crítica necessária à execução dos projetos da CTE visto que, mesmo com uma taxa máxima de cofinanciamento relativamente menor, o montante global dos fundos disponíveis, incluindo o cofinanciamento de origem nacional, regional ou outro, é acrescido. A Comissão não espera que o aumento do financiamento proposto conduza a um maior número de programas de CTE. Antes espera que esse número se mantenha e que os programas possam beneficiar dos recursos financeiros assim acrescidos. Tendo em conta que o âmbito e o objetivo dos programas de cooperação são diferentes dos que caracterizam os programas nacionais ou regionais, não deverá verificar-se uma concorrência direta com base nas taxas de cofinanciamento.

2. A proposta da Comissão prevê uma taxa máxima uniforme de cofinanciamento para todos os programas da CTE. O intuito é simplificar a sua execução, visto que as múltiplas taxas máximas de cofinanciamento existentes complicavam o tratamento dos programas e dos projetos. A simplificação é de especial importância para os programas da CTE, já suficientemente complexos devido aos desafios decorrentes do contexto multinacional em que se inserem.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003856/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Co-financing rates in territorial cooperation

Under cohesion policy, the aim of territorial cooperation is to encourage cross-border cooperation, whether between Member States or regions, by funding projects such as shared management of natural resources, risk protection, improvement of transport networks, and the establishment of university and research institute networks; a budget of EUR 8.7 billion has been allocated to this end for the current period, 2007 to 2013.

In its legislative and financial proposals on the territorial cooperation objective in the next multiannual period, 2014 to 2020, the Commission has decided to increase the amount allocated by over 30% to approximately EUR 11.7 billion, thus giving greater importance to this dimension of cohesion policy in its various cross-border, transnational and interregional forms and emphasising its importance in regional development.

With regard to the 'Investment for growth and jobs' goal, the maximum co-financing rate laid down in the Commission proposal is 85%, in accordance with Article 110.3 of the draft common strategic framework for the Structural Funds, whereas the co-financing rate proposed for territorial cooperation operational programmes cannot exceed 75%.

1. What is the justification for the difference between the maximum co-financing rates for the two cohesion policy objectives of growth and jobs and territorial cooperation, especially bearing in mind that the increased budget allocation for the latter is likely to translate into a higher number of programmes in that area?

2. Regarding the territorial cooperation objective, why is there no proposal to differentiate between the various co-financing rates according to category, level of development and regional specifics?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2012)

1. The Commission proposal foresees a maximum co-financing rate of 75% for all European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes. This contributes to ensuring a critical mass for the implementation of ETC projects given that with a relatively 'lower' maximum co-financing rate, the overall amount of funding available, including the co-financing resources from national/regional level or from other sources, increases. The Commission does not expect that the increased funding proposed would lead to a higher number of ETC programmes. It would rather expect roughly the same number of programmes, benefitting from increased financial resources. Taking into account that the scope and purpose of cooperation programmes is different than those of national or regional programmes, there should not be a direct competition on the basis of the co-financing rates.

2. The Commission proposal foresees a uniform maximum co-financing rate for all ETC programmes. This is with a view to simplifying implementation, where handling different maximum co-financing rates can add a layer of complexity in programmes and projects. Simplification is of particular importance for ETC programmes given the implementation challenges deriving from the multi-country context.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003857/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Transporte Ferroviário de Alta Velocidade em Portugal

No passado mês de março, um comunicado do Ministério da Economia de Portugal veio anunciar que o chamado «projeto do TGV» tinha sido «definitivamente abandonado». No mesmo documento, refere-se que em «matéria de redes ferroviárias transeuropeias» a prioridade do Governo português «está relacionada com as ligações de transporte de mercadorias em bitola europeia, a partir de Sines e de Aveiro».

No dia 22 de março, a Comissão Europeia, através do Comissário dos Transportes, após uma reunião dos ministros dos transportes da UE, afirmou que se havia encontrado um «entendimento com Portugal» para a construção, no futuro, de uma linha mais lenta, de 200 a 250 km/h. Na referida reunião foi aprovado o projeto europeu de redes transeuropeias, onde se inclui o «corredor Sul» ligando Portugal a Espanha.

Tendo em conta a resposta à pergunta E-004688/2011, solicito á Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Quais as características da linha acima mencionada, na base da qual se encontrou o «entendimento com Portugal»?

2. Serão os cerca de 605 milhões de euros atribuídos a Portugal para projetos de TGV (troços transfronteiras das linhas Porto-Vigo e Lisboa-Madrid e a terceira travessia do Tejo), no âmbito da rubrica orçamental RTE-T, utilizados nesta linha? Que parte deste montante será perdida por Portugal, atendendo ao cancelamento do «projeto do TGV»?

3. A que projetos foram, até à data, reafetados os cerca de 950 milhões de euros para o financiamento dos projetos de TGV português oriundos do Fundo de Coesão?

4. Quais as características do «corredor Sul» do projeto europeu de redes transeuropeias?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(23 de maio de 2012)

1. O projeto original apresentado à Comissão por Portugal consiste numa linha de alta velocidade de via dupla, adaptada para os 350 km/h, e numa nova linha convencional, as quais partilham a mesma plataforma — incluía ainda a terceira travessia do Tejo, um serviço de vaivém de alta velocidade até ao potencial novo aeroporto de Lisboa e ligações ao porto de Sines. Todos estes lotes deviam ser executados numa única fase, até 2015.

A Comissão solicitou que lhe fosse apresentado um projeto revisto mas, até à data, ainda não o recebeu. A revisão pode abranger os parâmetros técnicos das linhas, o seu número e características, as fases do projeto ou uma combinação destes fatores.

2. e 3. A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta parlamentar E-3186/2012 ([1]). No que respeita ao Fundo de Coesão, ainda não foram atribuídos quaisquer fundos para financiamento deste projeto. A Comissão aguarda que lhe seja apresentado um projeto revisto, assim como as decisões das autoridades portuguesas nesta matéria.

4. O Corredor Atlântico é um dos corredores da rede principal RTE-T propostos no âmbito do planeamento da futura RTE-T. Trata-se, por conseguinte, de uma referência estratégica, tanto a nível de planeamento como de financiamento. Liga Portugal a Espanha e a França, Lisboa a Madrid e ao Porto e o Porto a Espanha, via Aveiro-Salamanca — estes dois troços estabelecem a ligação a França (Bordéus-Paris-Estrasburgo), via o País Basco.

Na proposta da Comissão, o corredor terá de satisfazer alguns requisitos mínimos em termos de capacidade e de desempenho das suas linhas, nomeadamente a bitola UIC e o sistema de sinalização e controlo ERTMS/ETCS, adaptados às composições longas, podendo consistir em linhas de alta velocidade.

([1]) Disponível no seguinte sítio Web: (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003857/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: High-speed rail transport in Portugal

In March 2012, the Portuguese Ministry for Economic Affairs issued a statement announcing that the TGV project had been permanently abandoned. The document also states that as regards trans-European railway networks, the Portuguese Government's priority is a European-standard freight infrastructure operating from Sines and Aveiro.

On 22 March 2012, after a meeting of the EU Transport Ministers, the Transport Commissioner, speaking on behalf of the Commission, said that an 'understanding' had been reached with Portugal regarding the future construction of a slower (200-250 km/h) line. In addition, the trans-European transport network project was approved at that meeting, including the 'south corridor' linking Portugal with Spain.

Further to the answer to Question E-004688/2011:

1. What are the characteristics of the above-mentioned line, which formed the basis of the understanding with Portugal?

2. Will Portugal's allocation, approximately EUR 605 million, from the TEN-T budget intended for TGV projects (cross-border works on the Porto to Vigo and Lisbon to Madrid lines and the third Tagus crossing) be used for this line? How much of this total will Portugal lose because of the cancellation of the TGV project?

3. Which projects to date have benefited from the approximately EUR 950 million provided under the Cohesion Fund to finance the Portuguese TGV projects?

4. What are the characteristics of the 'south corridor' of the European trans-European transport network?

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

1. The original project submitted to the Commission by Portugal consists of a double-track high-speed line suitable for 350 km/h and an additional conventional line sharing the same platform — it included also the third Tagus crossing, a high-speed shuttle to the potential new airport of Lisbon and connections to the Port of Sines. All these lots were supposed to be implemented in single phasing before 2015.

The Commission has asked for the submission of a revised project, but it hasn't so far received it. The revision can concern technical parameters of the lines, number and characteristics of the lines, the phasing of the project or a combination of these factors.

2 and 3. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable member to the reply provided to parliamentary Question E-3186/2012 ([1]). As regards the Cohesion Fund no funds were yet attributed to the financing of this project. The Commission is waiting for the submission of a revised project and for decisions of the Portuguese authorities in this respect.

4. The Atlantic Corridor is a proposed TEN-T Core Network Corridor for the future TEN-T planning, and therefore acts as a strategic reference both for planning and financing. It connects Portugal with Spain and France, linking Lisboa with Madrid and Porto, and Porto with Spain through Aveiro-Salamanca — both branches then reach France (Bordeaux-Paris-Strasbourg) through the Basque country.

The corridor, in the proposal by the Commission, will have some minimum requirements on the capacity and performance of its lines, such as UIC gauge, ERTMS/ETCS signalling and control system, suitable for long trains, and may consist of high-speed lines.

([1]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003858/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR —Situação dos prisioneiros palestinos nas prisões israelitas

Cerca de 4 500 palestinos, entre os quais centenas de crianças, estão detidos em prisões israelitas, muitos deles sem julgamento ou culpa formada. De acordo com organizações não-governamentais e com movimentos de solidariedade com o povo palestino, desde o início da ocupação, em 1967, mais de 800 000 palestinos foram vítimas de detenção. Israel ignora os direitos dos prisioneiros consignados nas Convenções de Genebra e recorre frequentemente a diversas formas de tortura. Mais de 80 % dos presos palestinos que são libertados sofrem de desordem pós-traumática e mais de 40 % sofrem de depressão, sendo a sua reabilitação mais um dos desafios que a sociedade palestina tem que enfrentar.

A questão dos presos palestinos não tem feito parte da agenda política das negociações de paz.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente da Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que avaliação faz desta situação?

2. Tem a situação dos presos palestinos sido discutida nas conversações entre a UE e Israel?

3. Que formas de pressão tem a UE vindo a desenvolver, tendo em vista o respeito por Israel dos direitos dos prisioneiros consignados nas Convenções de Genebra?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(21 de junho de 2012)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente saúda o acordo alcançado em 14 de maio de 2012 para pôr termo à greve da fome dos detidos e reclusos palestinianos em prisões israelitas. Catherine Ashton apela a todas as partes para que deem cumprimento ao acordo, de boa fé e com celeridade, e elogia o Egito pelo papel crucial que desempenhou na obtenção do acordo. Continua, além disso, a acompanhar de perto esta questão, mantendo-se empenhada, nomeadamente através da Delegação da UE, nos esforços em curso para se encontrar uma solução. Esta questão foi igualmente discutida no Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros, de 14 de maio de 2012; os Chefes de Missão da UE em Jerusalém emitiram também uma declaração sobre este assunto, em 8 de maio de 2012, que define a posição da UE.

A Alta Representante estava especialmente preocupada com o estado de saúde debilitado dos palestinianos em regime de prisão administrativa em Israel, que se encontravam em greve da fome há mais de dois meses e que corriam o risco de perder a vida. A UE aborda regularmente a situação dos prisioneiros palestinianos no quadro do diálogo político UE-Israel, bem como noutras instâncias bilaterais pertinentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003858/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — The situation of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons

Around 4 500 Palestinians, including hundreds of children, are being detained in Israeli prisons, many of them without trial or charge. According to non-governmental organisations and Palestinian solidarity movements, more than 800 000 Palestinians have been detained since the occupation began in 1967. Israel ignores prisoners' rights under the Geneva Conventions and frequently resorts to various forms of torture. More than 80% of Palestinian prisoners suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder after they are released and more than 40% suffer from depression, their rehabilitation being yet another challenge Palestine has to face.

The issue of Palestinian prisoners has not been made part of the political agenda of the peace negotiations.

In view of this, can the Vice-President/High Representative say:

1. what her assessment is of this situation?

2. whether the situation of Palestinian prisoners been discussed in the talks between the EU and Israel?

3. what pressure the EU has been applying with regard to Israel's respect for the rights of prisoners under the Geneva Conventions?

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

The High Representative/**Vice-President welcomes the agreement reached on 14 May 2012 to end the hunger strike by Palestinian detainees and prisoners in Israeli custody. She urges all concerned to implement the agreement swiftly and in good faith. She commends Egypt for its key role in brokering the agreement. She continues to follow this closely and remains** engaged, including through the EU Delegation, in the ongoing efforts to find a solution. This issue was also discussed by the Foreign Affairs Council on 14 May 2012 and EU Heads of Missions in Jerusalem also issued a statement on this issue on 8 May 2012 setting out the EU position.

In particular the High Representative was very concerned about the critical health condition of the Palestinians held in Israeli administrative detention who had been on hunger strike for more than two months and the possibility that this might lead to a loss of life.

The EU regularly raises the situation of Palestinian prisoners in the framework of the EU-Israel political dialogue and in other relevant bilateral forums.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003859/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Situação de emigrantes portugueses em vários países europeus

Sob a vigência do programa FMI-UE, o desemprego em Portugal atinge hoje níveis históricos. Ademais, centenas de milhar de desempregados perderam direito à proteção social no desemprego que lhes era devida e para as qual descontaram enquanto tiveram emprego. Uma das consequências deste cenário é a subida muito acentuada da emigração.

Nas últimas semanas, têm-se sucedido notícias que dão conta da situação dramática enfrentada por muitos cidadãos portugueses que não encontraram outra solução que não abandonar o seu país. Sucedem-se os casos de portugueses a dormir nas ruas, em carros, nas estações de comboios e até em casas de banho públicas, no Reino Unido, no Luxemburgo ou na Suíça, a par de outras notícias que falam dos problemas com trabalhadores na Bélgica e na Holanda. Algumas instituições de solidariedade, incluindo as missões católicas, às quais é solicitada ajuda alimentar para estas pessoas, estão desesperadas e apelam a que se faça uma campanha séria para desmobilizar as pessoas de emigrarem sem contactos e sem contrato de trabalho.

Em face do exposto e na sequência de pergunta anterior sobre este mesmo tema (E-010509/2011), solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento das situações descritas?

2. Que medidas concretas foram já tomadas para as impedir?

3. Que ajuda concreta foi ou vai ser disponibilizada às pessoas que se encontram nesta situação e às instituições que lhes fornecem apoio?

4. Que medidas irá tomar para resolver este problema dramático, no qual a Comissão Europeia tem manifestas responsabilidades?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(7 de junho de 2012)

1. O impacto da crise fez-se gravemente sentir, mormente nos setores económicos de baixa produtividade, e originou elevados níveis de desemprego. A Comissão está consciente de que são cada vez mais os cidadãos que saem do seu país para estabelecer residência noutros Estados-Membros e que carecem de assistência social. No entanto, a Comissão não dispõe de números precisos, nomeadamente no que diz respeito a Portugal.

2. e 3. O Fundo Social Europeu contribui para melhorar a situação social e as condições de vida dos cidadãos da União Europeia, graças ao financiamento de uma grande variedade de ações, como a promoção da participação no mercado de trabalho, a inclusão social ou as medidas de combate à discriminação.

4. Em 2010, a Comissão aprovou a Plataforma Europeia contra a Pobreza e a Exclusão Social com o intuito de reduzir a pobreza, através da criação de uma moldura política para o desenvolvimento das estratégias nacionais e sua articulação entre os Estados-Membros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003859/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Situation of Portuguese emigrants in European countries

Under the EU-IMF programme, unemployment in Portugal has risen to an all-time high. Moreover, countless thousands of unemployed people have lost their entitlement to the unemployment welfare benefits for which they contributed when in work. One of the consequences of this scenario has been a very sharp rise in emigration.

Over the past weeks, there have been numerous reports on the plight of many Portuguese citizens who have had no option but to leave their country. There are repeated cases of Portuguese citizens sleeping on the streets, in cars, at train stations and even in public toilets, in the United Kingdom, Luxembourg and Switzerland, and there is also news of problems with workers in Belgium and the Netherlands. The charitable institutions, including Catholic missions, which have been asked to help feed these people are in despair and are calling for a concerted campaign to dissuade people from emigrating if they do not have contacts abroad and an employment contract.

In view of the above, and following on from the previous question on the same subject (E-010509/2011):

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation described?

2. What practical measures have been taken to avert such cases?

3. What help has been, or will be, made available to people who find themselves in this situation and to the institutions that offer them support?

4. What measures will be taken to deal with this calamity, for which the Commission manifestly bears a share of the blame?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

1. The crisis has had a severe impact, especially on low-productivity economic sectors and has resulted in high unemployment. The Commission is aware that there is an increasing number of citizens taking up residence in other Member States, who are in need of social assistance. However, the Commission does not have precise figures, namely in what concerns Portugal.

2 and 3. The European Social Fund contributes to improving the social situation and the living conditions of the Union citizens by financing a variety of actions ranging from promoting labour market participation to social inclusion and anti-discrimination measures.

4. In 2010 the Commission approved the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion aiming at reducing poverty by providing a framework for national strategy development, as well as for coordinating policies between EU countries on these issues.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003860/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Salário mínimo, rendimento mínimo e limiar de pobreza

A Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses — Intersindical Nacional (CGTP-IN) defendeu, há poucos dias, o aumento urgente do salário mínimo nacional para 515 euros. A CGTP-IN lembra que o salário mínimo atual (485 euros), após descontos, fica reduzido a 432 euros, um valor que se situa abaixo do limiar de pobreza.

O Parlamento Europeu aprovou em 2010 uma resolução na qual é defendida a instauração, a nível europeu, de um rendimento mínimo que ajude a combater a pobreza, uma vez falhadas outras medidas sociais de prevenção da pobreza (como o acesso aos serviços públicos de saúde e educação, à formação profissional, à habitação, ao emprego com salários justos e às reformas dignas). Esta resolução defende a cobertura universal de um rendimento mínimo adequado na União Europeia, apoiado por fundos comunitários, como medida de prevenção contra a pobreza e para garantir a justiça social e a igualdade de oportunidades para todos, sem pôr em causa as especificidades de cada Estado-Membro. Esta resolução ganha uma importância acrescida num contexto de alastramento da pobreza na UE e muito especialmente nos países alvo dos programas FMI-UE, como é o caso de Portugal.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Quais os países da UE em que o salário mínimo se situa abaixo do respetivo limiar de pobreza?

2. Que medidas tomou a Comissão no seguimento da aprovação pelo Parlamento Europeu da resolução acima referida?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(7 de junho de 2012)

O salário mínimo refere-se ao rendimento individual dos trabalhadores, ao passo que o limiar de pobreza se refere aos rendimentos familiares, que incluem outras fontes além do trabalho. A adequação do salário mínimo poderia ser mais bem ilustrada por uma estimativa do rendimento disponível líquido, incluindo benefícios e impostos. De acordo com este cálculo, um trabalhador solteiro típico a tempo inteiro que aufira o salário mínimo corre risco de pobreza em oito países: República Checa, Bulgária, Estónia, Eslovénia, Letónia, Lituânia, Hungria e Luxemburgo.

Em 9 de fevereiro de 2011, no seguimento da Resolução do Parlamento Europeu, de 20 de outubro de 2010, sobre o papel do rendimento mínimo no combate à pobreza e na promoção de uma sociedade inclusiva na Europa ([1]), a Comissão respondeu que não pensa emanar uma diretiva-quadro sobre o rendimento mínimo, por carecer de apoio para tal por parte dos Estados-Membros.

No entanto, no pacote legislativo relativo ao emprego recentemente adotado ([2]), a Comissão sublinha a necessidade de se criarem as condições de salários dignos e sustentáveis que evitem as armadilhas dos baixos salários. A fixação de salários mínimos a níveis adequados contribui para a prevenção do aumento da pobreza e das desigualdades no trabalho. O impacto do salário mínimo na procura e na oferta pode variar consideravelmente nos Estados-Membros. Assim, os limites salariais mínimos devem poder ser suficientemente ajustáveis, em concertação com os parceiros sociais, para refletir a evolução económica global.

A Comissão está a explorar mais profundamente diversas abordagens com base em dados factuais, incluindo o apoio a um modelo de micro-simulação de benefícios fiscais e à experimentação social. Além disso, a Comissão administra um projeto piloto do Parlamento Europeu (solidariedade social para a integração social) destinado a aumentar a sensibilização para a adequação e o papel dos regimes de rendimento mínimo no combate à pobreza e à exclusão social.

([1]) P7_TA(2010)0375 em http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/file.jsp?id=5845352 — referência SP(2011)609).
([2]) (http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/andor/headlines/news/2012/04/20120418_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003860/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: The minimum wage, minimum income and the poverty threshold

A few days ago the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers-National Inter Union (CGTP-IN) advocated an urgent increase of the national minimum wage to EUR 515. The CGTP-IN recalled that the current minimum wage (EUR 485) is reduced by deductions to EUR 432, a value that is below the poverty threshold.

The European Parliament adopted a resolution in 2010 in which it advocated establishing a minimum income at European level to help to combat poverty when other social poverty prevention methods (such as access to public health and education services, professional training, housing, employment at a fair wage and decent pensions) have failed. The resolution advocates a minimum income appropriate to the European Union on a universal basis, supported by Community funds, as a poverty prevention measure and to ensure social justice and equality of opportunity for all, without undermining the specific characteristics of each Member State. The importance of this resolution grows as poverty spreads in the EU, especially in the countries that are the target of IMF-EU programmes, such as Portugal.

I ask the Commission:

1. Which EU countries have a minimum wage that is below their poverty threshold?

2. What measures has the Commission taken following the European Parliament's adoption of the above resolution?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

The Minimum wage concerns individual earnings of workers, while the poverty threshold derives from household income, including from sources other than work. The adequacy of minimum wages would be better illustrated by an estimate of net disposable income, including benefits and taxes. According to this calculation, a typical single full-time worker earning the minimum wage is at risk of poverty in eight countries: the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Estonia, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary and Luxembourg.

In its follow-up of 9 February 2011 to the Parliament's resolution of 20 October 2010 on the role of minimum income ([1]), the Commission replied that it is not considering introducing a framework directive on minimum income due to the lack of Member State support for such a directive.

However, in the recently adopted Employment Package ([2]) the Commission is underlying the need of decent and sustainable wages and avoiding low-wage traps. Setting minimum wages at appropriate levels helps preventing growing in-work poverty and inequalities. The impact of the minimum wage on both demand and supply can differ markedly across Member States. Therefore, wage floors need to be sufficiently adjustable, with the involvement of the social partners to reflect overall economic developments.

The Commission is further exploring several evidence based approaches including support for a tax-benefit micro-simulation model and social experimentation. In addition, the commission administrates a European Parliament pilot project (Social solidarity for social integration) intended to raise awareness of the adequacy and the role of minimum income schemes in fighting poverty and social exclusion.

([1]) P7_TA(2010)0375 at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/file.jsp?id=5845352 — reference SP(2011)609).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/andor/headlines/news/2012/04/20120418_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003861/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Ameaça de despedimentos na Airbus

A multinacional Airbus afirmou recentemente que dois mil postos de trabalho estão em risco devido à suspensão por parte de companhias aéreas chinesas de encomendas de 55 aviões, avaliados em 14 mil milhões de dólares (10,5 mil milhões euros). Esta decisão de suspensão das encomendas, de acordo o presidente da aeronáutica, Tom Enders, constitui uma represália contra a taxa europeia de emissões de CO_2, introduzida pela União Europeia, aplicável a todas as companhias de aviação que usam o espaço aéreo europeu. A Airbus salienta que, caso o cancelamento das encomendas se confirme, mil empregos diretos serão afetados e outros mil ficarão em causa na cadeia de fornecimento do fabricante.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre que avaliação faz desta situação e sobre que medidas foram ou serão adotadas para evitar os despedimentos

Resposta dada por Connie Hedegaard em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2012)

A Comissão continua a colaborar com as autoridades chinesas para encontrar soluções em relação a quaisquer preocupações legítimas sobre a inclusão da aviação no sistema de comércio de licenças de emissão da UE. Além disso, a Comissão gostaria de remeter o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-001849/2012 feita pelo Senhor Deputado Nuno Teixeira ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003861/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Threat of redundancies at Airbus

The multinational Airbus recently confirmed that 2 000 jobs are at risk due to Chinese airlines suspending orders for 55 aircraft, valued at USD 14 billion (EUR 10.5 billion). This decision to suspend orders, according to chief executive Tom Enders, is retaliation against the European carbon emissions tax, introduced by the European Union and applicable to all airlines using European airspace. Airbus notes that, if the order cancellation is confirmed, 1 000 jobs will be directly affected and another 1 000 in the manufacturing supply chain will be jeopardised.

In view of the above, can the Commission state what its view of the situation is and what actions have been or will be taken to avoid redundancies?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2012)

The Commission continues to engage with the Chinese authorities to address any legitimate concerns about the inclusion of aviation in the EU ETS. The Commission would further refer the

Honourable Member to the answer given to Written Question E-001849/2012 by Mr Teixeira ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003862/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Incidência, prevenção e tratamento da tuberculose

De acordo com dados divulgados, no passado mês de março, pela Organização Mundial de Saúde, pelo menos 200 crianças morrem diariamente vítimas de tuberculose. Ainda segundo a OMS, a falta de acesso a serviços de saúde por parte de milhões de seres humanos e a pobreza associada à desnutrição estão na base da prevalência dramática da doença, sabendo-se que a sua prevenção e tratamento não custam mais do que 30 cêntimos por dia.

Em 2010, foram detetados 9,5 milhões de novos casos de tuberculose, tendo morrido, nesse mesmo ano, 1,7 milhões de seres humanos.

O aumento da mobilidade global associada às causas acima referidas faz com que a tuberculose, que se julgava praticamente erradicada nos chamados países do terceiro mundo, tenha voltado a manifestar-se significativamente nas nações ditas desenvolvidas.

Em aditamento à pergunta anteriormente feita (E-010190/2011) sobre o Fundo Mundial de Luta contra a Sida, a Tuberculose e o Paludismo (GFATM) e à resposta dada pela Comissão, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Dispõe de informação relativa à incidência da tuberculose nos 27 Estados-Membros e à mortalidade associada?

2. Que apoios têm sido dirigidos à prevenção e ao tratamento da tuberculose, na UE e nos países em desenvolvimento (para além das verbas destinadas ao GFATM)?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2012)

Em 2010, os Estados-Membros da União Europeia, a Islândia e a Noruega comunicaram 73 996 novos casos de tuberculose. Em comparação com 2009, o número de casos diminuiu 7 % em 2010, uma redução que é maior do que em qualquer um dos três anos anteriores. Em geral, em 2010, as taxas de notificação de tuberculose na UE continuaram a diminuir, com taxas específicas por país diminuindo mais rapidamente nos países com o número mais elevado de casos de tuberculose. Mais pormenores sobre a incidência e as taxas de mortalidade podem ser consultados num relatório do Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças (CEPCD) ([1]).

• UE tomou uma série de iniciativas para combater a tuberculose, incluindo formas da doença resistentes aos medicamentos. Através do seu Programa-Quadro de Investigação, foram afetados cerca de 125 milhões de euros ao longo dos últimos dez anos, a fim de apoiar o desenvolvimento de novas vacinas, medicamentos e instrumentos de diagnóstico. Um montante adicional de 62 milhões de euros foi afetado a ensaios clínicos sobre a tuberculose, através da Parceria entre a Europa e os Países em Desenvolvimento para a Realização de Ensaios Clínicos. Durante a última década, a vigilância da tuberculose foi alargada, de forma a cobrir toda a região europeia da Organização Mundial de Saúde. Além disso, a pedido da Comissão, o CEPCD preparou um plano de ação para lutar contra a tuberculose na UE e vigiar os pontos fortes e fracos do controlo da tuberculose, que pode, em última análise, contribuir para eliminar a doença.

• or outro lado, em 2011, a Comissão apresentou um plano de ação para lutar contra a crescente ameaça da resistência antimicrobiana, que inclui a prevenção e o controlo de infeções como a tuberculose resistente a medicamentos ([2]).

([1]) (http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1203-Annual-TB-Report.pdf).
([2]) Comunicação da Comissão ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho — Plano de ação contra a ameaça crescente da resistência antimicrobiana, COM(2011)748: (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/communication_amr_2011_748_pt.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003862/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Incidence, prevention and treatment of tuberculosis

According to data revealed in March by the World Health Organisation (WHO), at least 200 children die every day from tuberculosis. Although prevention and treatment for this disease costs no more than 30 cents per day, the WHO has also confirmed that a dramatic rise in tuberculosis cases has been attributed to the lack of access to healthcare affecting millions of people, and to the nutrition-related poverty from which many still suffer.

In 2010, 9.5 million new cases of tuberculosis were reported and, in that same year, 1.7 million died from the disease.

The rise in global mobility associated with the aforementioned causes has led to the significant resurgence of tuberculosis in developed nations-a disease that was believed to have been practically eradicated in third-world countries.

Further to the previous question (E-010190/2011) on the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) and the answer from the Commission, I would ask the Commission:

1. Does it have any information on the incidence of tuberculosis in the 27 Member States and the death rate associated with it?

2. What kind of support has been dedicated to preventing and treating tuberculosis in the EU and developing countries (besides funding for the GFATM)?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2012)

In 2010, the European Union Member States, Iceland and Norway reported 73 996 new cases of tuberculosis. Compared with 2009, the number of cases fell by 7% in 2010, which is greater a reduction than in any of the previous three years. Overall, in 2010, tuberculosis notification rates in the EU continued to decline, with country-specific rates falling fastest in those countries with the highest number of tuberculosis cases. Further details of incidence and death rates can be found in a report by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) ([1]).

• he EU has taken a series of initiatives to tackle tuberculosis, including drug-resistant forms of the disease. Through its Research Framework Programme, approximately EUR 125 million has been allocated over the past 10 years to support the development of new vaccines, drugs and diagnostic tools. Another EUR 62 million has been allocated to clinical trials on tuberculosis through the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership. Surveillance of tuberculosis has expanded over the past decade to cover the entire European Region of the World Health Organisation. Furthermore, at the Commission's request, the ECDC has prepared an Action Plan to fight tuberculosis in the EU and monitors strengths and weaknesses in tuberculosis control which may ultimately contribute to eliminating the disease.

• n addition, in 2011 the Commission presented an 'Action plan against the rising threats from antimicrobial resistance' which includes the prevention and control of infections such as drug resistant tuberculosis ([2]).

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1203-Annual-TB-Report.pdf
([2]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council — Action Plan against the rising threats from AMR, COM(2011)748: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/communication_amr_2011_748_en.pdf.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003863/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Despedimentos na Bosch — Braga, Portugal

No final de fevereiro, a multinacional Bosch, instalada em Braga, procedeu a um despedimento coletivo de 120 trabalhadores com vínculos precários, contratados no ano passado, a termo, para desempenhar funções de trabalho permanentes.

A contratação a prazo de trabalhadores precários, para assegurar necessidades permanentes das empresas, foi já, por diversas vezes, denunciada à Comissão Europeia, e nomeadamente nesta empresa, concretamente na pergunta E-6144/2010. Mais uma vez se comprova que estamos perante um expediente — a contratação de trabalhadores temporários para satisfazer necessidades permanentes — que apenas visa facilitar o despedimento dos trabalhadores. Um expediente que é permitido pela legislação comunitária.

Este despedimento sucede num momento em que em Portugal, sob a vigência do programa FMI-UE, os níveis de desemprego atingem níveis históricos, sendo o distrito de Braga um dos mais duramente atingidos por esta realidade, geradora de situações dramáticas do ponto de vista social.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento de qual o montante de fundos comunitários recebidos até à data pela multinacional Bosch, em especial por esta unidade de Braga?

2. Desde a denúncia feita, em 2010, na pergunta supracitada até à data, tomou a Comissão alguma medida ou teve alguma iniciativa para evitar os abusos então denunciados e, particularmente, a utilização de trabalhadores temporários para assegurar necessidades permanentes das empresas (trabalhadores assim, comprovadamente, mais expostos à ameaça de desemprego em qualquer momento)?

3. Considera a possibilidade de efetuar alguma alteração ao quadro legal vigente (por exemplo, à Diretiva 2008/104/CE), de forma a evitar este comportamento por parte de empresas como a Bosch?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(7 de junho de 2012)

1. De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a empresa BOSCH-Portugal beneficiou de apoio financeiro no valor de 3 463 930,24 euros do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) durante o atual e o anterior períodos de programação. Além disso, a BOSCH Portugal, localizada em Braga, recebeu financiamento do FSE no montante de 2 057 803,07 euros, durante os períodos de programação acima mencionados. Não houve financiamento do FEDER para este projeto.

2. A Diretiva 1999/70/CE ([1]) relativa a contratos de trabalho a termo e a Diretiva 2008/104/CE ([2]) relativa ao trabalho temporário não proíbem as empresas de empregar trabalhadores com contratos a prazo nem de recorrer a trabalhadores temporários para satisfazer as suas necessidades permanentes. Cabe aos Estados-Membros determinar em que medida essas necessidades podem ser abrangidas pelo recurso a trabalhadores com contrato a termo ou trabalhadores temporários e definir o conceito de abuso de contratos de trabalho a termo. As restrições ou proibições do recurso a empresas de trabalho temporário só podem ser justificadas por razões de interesse geral.

([1]) Diretiva 1999/70/CE do Conselho, de 28 de junho de 1999, respeitante ao acordo-quadro CES, UNICE e CEEP relativo a contratos de trabalho a termo, JO L 175 de 10.7.1999, p. 43.

([2]) Diretiva 2008/104/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 19 de novembro de 2008, relativa ao trabalho temporário, JO L 327 de 5.12.2008, p. 9.

3. A Comissão não tenciona, nesta fase, propor alterações à legislação da UE em vigor relativa ao trabalho temporário ou a contratos de trabalho a termo. A Diretiva 2008/104/CE deveria ter sido transposta pelos Estados-Membros para o direito nacional até 5 de dezembro de 2011 e a Comissão está atualmente a acompanhar a sua transposição, nomeadamente no que diz respeito ao princípio da igualdade de tratamento dos trabalhadores temporários. A Diretiva 1999/70/CE baseia-se num acordo entre os parceiros sociais pelo que seria a estes que caberia a iniciativa. No entanto, a Comissão lançou um estudo para avaliar o seu impacto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003863/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Redundancies in Bosch-Braga, Portugal

At the end of February 2012, the multinational firm Bosch laid off 120 temporary workers at its site in Braga, who had been hired the year before to perform the same duties as permanent workers.

This practice of temporary workers being hired on short-term contracts to meet the permanent needs of companies has already been reported to the Commission several times, particularly in connection with this company, specifically in Question E-6144/2010. Once again, it is being proved that the sole aim of this practice — hiring temporary workers to meet the permanent needs of companies — is to make it easier to pay off workers. This is a practice that is allowed under EC law.

These redundancies have taken place at a time when Portugal, currently receiving financial support under the EU-IMF programme, is witnessing historically high levels of unemployment. The district of Braga has been one of the hardest hit by unemployment, which has led to significant social problems in the area.

I would therefore ask the Commission:

1. Is it aware of how much funding the multinational firm Bosch has received from the EU to date, particularly for its Braga site?

2. Has the Commission taken any measures or initiatives to date to prevent the repetition of these abuses and, in particular, the hiring of temporary workers to meet the permanent needs of companies (genuine workers who could face redundancy at any given moment) since the complaint that was lodged in 2010 in Question E-6144/2010?

3. Has the Commission considered amending the existing legal framework (for example, Directive 2008/104/EC), in order to prevent this practice from occurring in companies like Bosch?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

1. According to the information received from the Portuguese authorities the enterprise 'BOSCH-Portugal' has received financial support amounting to EUR 3 463 930,24 from the European Social Fund (ESF) during the current and previous programming periods. Furthermore, BOSCH Portugal, located in Braga, has received ESF funding amounting EUR 2 057 803,07 during the abovementioned programme periods. There was no financing from the ERDF for this project.

2. Directive 1999/70/EC ([1]) on fixed-term work and Directive 2008/104/EC ([2]) on temporary agency work do not prohibit companies from hiring workers on short-term contracts or resorting to agency workers to meet their permanent needs. It is a matter for the Member States to determine to what extent those needs can be covered by the recourse to fixed-term or temporary agency workers and to define the notion of abuse of fixed-term employment. Restrictions or prohibitions on the use of temporary agency work may be justified only on grounds of general interest.

3. The Commission does not envisage at this stage proposing changes to the existing EU legislation on temporary agency work or fixed-term work. Directive 2008/104/EC had to be transposed by Member States into national law by 5 December 2011 and the Commission is currently focusing on the monitoring of its transposition, notably as regards the principle of equal treatment of temporary agency workers. Directive 1999/70/EC is based on an agreement between the social partners and the initiative is primarily with them. However, the Commission has launched a study to assess its impact.

([1]) Council Directive 1999/70/EC of 28 June 1999 concerning the framework agreement on fixed-term work concluded by ETUC, UNICE and CEEP, OJ L 175, 10.7.1999, p. 43.
([2]) Directive 2008/104/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on temporary agency work, OJ L 327, 5.12.2008, p. 9.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003864/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Apoio da UE à iniciativa «Yasuní-ITT» no Equador

O Governo do Equador lançou a iniciativa «Yasuní-ITT», um projeto ambiental inovador com um alcance e uma importância política e pedagógica de relevo. A iniciativa consiste em manter intactas reservas petrolíferas situadas na floresta de Yasuní (a maior do Equador), uma das zonas do planeta com maiores índices de biodiversidade (assim preservada), a troco de uma compensação financeira internacional do país. O Equador propõe que a compensação seja equivalente a cerca de metade das receitas que o país obteria caso explorasse o petróleo de Yasuní.

Não obstante já ter expresso o seu apoio político a esta iniciativa inovadora, a Comissão Europeia não mobilizou ainda os recursos necessários para apoiar financeiramente o projeto. A falta de apoio financeiro da União Europeia é contraditória ao discurso que reiteradamente vem fazendo nos fóruns internacionais, de apoio vigoroso à luta contra as alterações climáticas.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que recursos financeiros foram até à data mobilizados para apoiar a iniciativa «Yasuní-ITT»?

2. Que instrumentos financeiros — existentes ou a criar no futuro Quadro Financeiro Plurianual — seja no quadro da política de cooperação para o desenvolvimento, seja de outro âmbito, poderão ser utilizados para apoiar esta iniciativa?

3. Que montantes prevê vir a disponibilizar no futuro para apoiar a iniciativa «Yasuní-ITT»?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(8 de junho de 2012)

1. A UE tem não afetou recursos financeiros ao Fundo Yasuní-ITT.

2. O Instrumento de Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento (ICD) é o principal instrumento da UE para o financiamento de ações externas no Equador e na região da Comunidade Andina, designadamente no domínio do ambiente.

3. A UE apoia o desenvolvimento de estratégias e de incentivos positivos para a redução das emissões resultantes da desflorestação e da degradação florestal (REDD+), incluindo a conservação das reservas de carbono florestal. Por conseguinte, o apoio à REDD+ e/ou a áreas protegidas, no âmbito dos programas geográficos ou temáticos da UE, poderia contribuir para a conservação da floresta tropical de Yasuní e de outras zonas florestais do Equador. Este tipo de ajuda não pode, porém, ser utilizado para compensar a não exploração de reservas petrolíferas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003864/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: European Union support for the Yasuní-ITT initiative in Ecuador

The Government of Ecuador has launched the Yasuní–ITT initiative, an innovative and far-reaching environmental project with great political and educational significance. The initiative aims to leave oil reserves untouched in the Yasuní forest (the largest in Ecuador), which currently has one of the highest indices of biodiversity on the planet, in exchange for international financial aid to the country. Ecuador proposes that it should receive compensation equivalent to around half the amount of income it would gain from oil exploration in the Yasuní.

Although it has already expressed political support for this innovative initiative, the European Commission has yet to mobilise the resources necessary to provide financial support for the project. In the absence of financial aid, the European Union's position is contradictory given that in international forums it has reiterated its strong support for the fight against climate change.

In view of this, can the Commission state:

1. What financial resources have so far been mobilised to support the Yasuní–ITT initiative?

2. What financial instruments that currently exist or are to be created in the Multiannual Financial Framework, either as part of the development cooperation policy or under another heading, are available to support this initiative?

3. What amounts does it intend to make available to support the Yasuní–ITT initiative?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(8 June 2012)

1. The EU has not allocated financial resources to the Yasuni-ITT fund.

2. The EU's Development and Cooperation Instrument (DCI) is the main EU instrument available for funding external actions in Ecuador and in the CAN (Andean Community) region, including on environment-related matters.

3. The EU supports the development of policy approaches and positive incentives for the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+), including the conservation of forest carbon stocks. Therefore, funding opportunities for REDD+ and/or for protected areas could potentially contribute to the conservation of the Yasuni rain forest, as well as for other environmentally important forest areas in Ecuador, under existing EU geographic or thematic programmes, though such funding could not be used to compensate for avoided oil extraction.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003865/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Cooperação com o Equador nas áreas da educação, ciência e tecnologia

Nos últimos cinco anos, o Equador tem vindo a sofrer profundas transformações políticas, económicas e sociais. Na sequência da rejeição dos programas de ajustamento do FMI e do corte radical com as políticas desta instituição, o país tem hoje o terceiro maior crescimento económico da América Latina (cerca de 8 %), a dívida externa do país reduziu-se significativamente, o mesmo acontecendo com as desigualdades sociais, em virtude de uma mais justa redistribuição do rendimento nacional, da elevação dos salários (em especial dos mais baixos) e da garantia de um amplo leque de direitos sociais à generalidade da população. O país subiu vários lugares no Índice de Desenvolvimento Humano da ONU. Todavia, persistem, como não poderia deixar de ser, carências e fatores de atraso que não podem ser ignorados. Desde logo, os níveis de pobreza, apesar da evolução francamente positiva também aqui verificada, são ainda elevados. Este cenário coloca novas exigências e desafios à política de cooperação para o desenvolvimento da UE e à sua relação com o Equador.

As autoridades equatorianas têm vindo a defender uma reorientação das políticas de cooperação para o desenvolvimento, sublinhando nomeadamente a importância da cooperação nos domínios do ensino, da ciência e da tecnologia, em detrimento de uma visão mais assistencialista.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. De que forma estão as profundas transformações em curso no Equador a ser tidas em conta na relação da UE com este país e, especialmente, na política de cooperação para o desenvolvimento?

2. Que projetos de cooperação com o Equador estão atualmente em curso nas áreas da educação, da ciência e da tecnologia?

3. Como poderá ser incrementada no futuro a cooperação com o Equador nestas três áreas?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(15 de junho de 2012)

As alterações no Equador tiveram, de facto, efeito nas relações entre o Equador e a UE, e refletiram-se na revisão intercalar do Documento de Estratégia relativo a este país em 2010. Esta análise foi realizada em estreita cooperação com as autoridades equatorianas (e os Estados-Membros) e a educação e o desenvolvimento económico mantiveram-se como prioridades da cooperação da UE.

Desde 2008, a UE tem vindo a implementar o programa de apoio orçamental «Apoio ao Plano Decenal de Educação 2006/2015», no montante de 75,2 milhões de euros (mais de metade do montante total afetado ao Equador para o período 2007/2013). Os resultados foram tangíveis: a cobertura do ensino básico geral aumentou de 93,1 % em 2008 para 95 % em 2011, e o Equador espera ser possível atingir os 100 % em 2015, em consonância com o Objetivo de Desenvolvimento do Milénio 2. Tem-se verificado um aumento progressivo do investimento do Estado na educação, permitindo a melhoria das infraestruturas e dos equipamentos, sendo também introduzidas outras medidas como os sistemas de avaliação de desempenho para os estudantes, professores e diretores de escolas. O Equador foi particularmente bem-sucedido na eliminação de barreiras (a abolição de propinas em escolas públicas, por exemplo), aumentando assim o acesso a todos os níveis de ensino.

A UE tem também promovido ativamente a participação de universidades e centros de investigação equatorianos em bolsas de estudo e em programas de investigação e desenvolvimento (I&D) da União Europeia. Para o futuro, a UE está a examinar com o Governo do Equador formas de melhorar a participação equatoriana em bolsas de estudo e em programas como o *Erasmus Mundus* e o Marie Curie. O Equador é já um participante ativo no ALFA III, que promove projetos interinstitucionais a nível do ensino superior. Estão também a ser envidados esforços para o seu envolvimento no 7.° Programa-Quadro da UE de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003865/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Cooperation with Ecuador in the areas of education, science and technology

During the last five years, Ecuador has experienced profound political, economic and social change. Following the rejection of the IMF's adjustment programmes and the radical break with the policies of that institution, today the country has the third-highest economic growth in Latin America (around 8%) and the external debt of the country has been significantly reduced, along with social inequalities, due to national income being more fairly redistributed, increased wages (especially at the lowest levels) and the guarantee of a wide range of social rights for the population as a whole. The country has climbed several places in the UN Human Development Index. However, it is inevitable that failings and underdevelopment continue, which cannot be ignored. To begin with, the levels of poverty are still high, despite the clearly positive progress that has been confirmed here. This situation places new demands and challenges on EU development cooperation policy and its relationship with Ecuador.

The Ecuadorian authorities have been advocating a redirection of cooperation policies towards development, underlining in particular the importance of cooperation in the areas of education, science and technology, and away from a welfare vision.

In view of this, can the Commission provide the following information:

1. How are the profound changes taking place in Ecuador being used in the EU's relationship with this country and, in particular, in development cooperation policy?

2. What cooperation projects are currently in progress with Ecuador in the areas of education, science and technology?

3. How can cooperation with Ecuador in these three areas be increased in future?

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

The changes in Ecuador have indeed had an effect on the relations between Ecuador and the EU, and were reflected in the mid-term review of the Country Strategy Paper in 2010. This review was carried out in close cooperation with the Ecuadorian authorities (and Member States) and maintained education and economic development as the EU's cooperation priorities.

Since 2008, the EU has implemented the budget support programme 'Support for the ten-year education plan 2006-2015', for an amount of EUR 75.2 million (over half of the total amount allocated for Ecuador for 2007-2013). Tangible results have been achieved. General basic education coverage has increased from 93.1% in 2008 to 95% in 2011. Ecuador expects to be able to reach 100% by 2015, in line with the Millennium Development Goal 2. A progressive increase in state investment in education is allowing for infrastructure and equipment improvements, together with the introduction of measures such as performance evaluation systems for students, teaching staff and school rectors. Ecuador has been particularly successful in eliminating barriers (abolishing fees in state schools etc), thus considerably increasing access to education at all levels.

The EU has also actively promoted the participation of Ecuadorian universities and research centres in the EU's scholarships and Research and Development (R & D) programmes. For the future, the EU is examining with the Ecuadorian Government ways of improving Ecuadorian participation in scholarship and fellowship programmes such as Erasmus Mundus and Marie Curie. Ecuador is already an active participant in ALFA III which promotes Higher Education interinstitutional projects. Efforts are also being made to increase its involvement in the EU's Research, Technology and Development (RTD) 7th Framework Programme.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003866/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Negociação de acordo comercial com o Equador

O Equador decidiu não assinar o acordo comercial que a União Europeia celebrou com o Peru e a Colômbia. Na base desta decisão do governo equatoriano está a necessidade de acautelar especificidades próprias da economia equatoriana, para além de visões distintas quanto ao papel do comércio internacional. Com efeito, o governo equatoriano defende um acordo comercial orientado para a complementaridade das produções, norteado por objetivos de apoio ao desenvolvimento e que não ponha em causa setores mais débeis da economia equatoriana (produtivos e de serviços), nem tampouco a soberania do país sobre setores-chave da sua economia.

Tendo em conta que se reiniciaram recentemente as negociações com o Equador tendo em vista a celebração de um acordo comercial, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Está disposta a garantir a flexibilidade necessária para que sejam tidas em devida conta as especificidades próprias da economia equatoriana (como por exemplo a ausência de uma moeda nacional e, consequentemente, de política monetária própria)?

2. Está disposta a negociar um acordo orientado para uma lógica de complementaridade e não de competição, que ameaçaria os setores produtivos e de serviços mais débeis?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(16 de maio de 2012)

A Comissão assinala que, apesar de os contactos desenvolvidos com as autoridades do Equador terem continuado com bastante frequência desde a conclusão das negociações comerciais com a Colômbia e o Peru, não foram reabertas quaisquer negociações formais com o Equador após a decisão tomada por estas últimas de suspender a sua participação no acordo comercial multilateral, em 2009.

Contudo, a Comissão tem mantido continuamente uma política de abertura, uma vez que não só se prevê a participação do Equador — assim como da Bolívia, aliás — no texto do Acordo Comercial com a Colômbia e o Peru, através de uma cláusula de adesão, como a Comissão se tem regido por uma inteira transparência no que respeita às perspetivas dessa participação, tendo em conta os requisitos da ambiciosa política comercial da UE.

Como em todas as negociações comerciais, a Comissão estaria, portanto, preparada para ter em conta as especificidades da economia equatoriana, com vista a acordar um pacote adequado sem, contudo, reduzir o nível de ambição global que caracteriza os acordos comerciais da UE. Neste contexto, a Comissão considera que as parcerias económicas como as já concluídas pela UE com os países da América Latina permitem precisamente beneficiar das nossas complementaridades, criando novas oportunidades para os operadores económicos nacionais de todos os quadrantes num mercado alargado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003866/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Negotiation of a trade agreement with Ecuador

Ecuador has decided not to sign the trade agreement between the European Union, Peru and Colombia. Given the Ecuadorian Government's decision, we need to safeguard the specific needs of the Ecuadorian economy, notwithstanding the differences we have regarding the role of international trade. In fact, the Ecuadorian Government supports a trade agreement aimed at complementary production, focusing on aid for development and not posing a threat to the weaker (productive and service) sectors of the Ecuadorian economy, nor to its sovereignty over key sectors of its economy.

Given that negotiations with Ecuador have recently been reopened with a view to signing a trade agreement, may I ask the Commission:

1. Is it prepared to guarantee the necessary flexibility so that the specific features of Ecuador's economy can be taken into account (for example the fact that it lacks a national currency and hence any monetary policy of its own)?

2. Is it prepared to negotiate an agreement based on a logic of complementarity rather than competition, which would pose a threat to its weakest productive and service sectors?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2012)

The Commission notes that although contacts between itself and the Ecuadorian authorities have continued to be rather frequent since the conclusion of trade negotiations with Colombia and Peru, no formal negotiations have been reopened with Ecuador since the latter's decision to suspend their participation in the multiparty trade agreement back in 2009.

Nonetheless, the Commission has consistently maintained an open door policy not only insofar as the participation of Ecuador — and Bolivia for that matter — in the Trade Agreement with Colombia and Peru are warranted in its text via an accession clause, but also by being fully transparent with regard to the prospects of such participation taking into account the requirements of the EU's ambitious trade policy.

As in all trade negotiations, the Commission would therefore be prepared to take into account the specificities of the Ecuadorian economy with a view to agreeing on an appropriate package without, however, reducing the overall level of ambition that characterises EU trade agreements. In this context, the view of the Commission is that trade partnerships such as those already concluded by the EU with Latin American countries allow precisely to take advantage of our complementarities by offering new opportunities to domestic economic operators of all sides on the broader market.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003867/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13. apríla 2012)

Vec: Projekt plynovodu ITGI

Azerbajdžan eliminoval jedného zo záujemcov o plyn z náleziska Shah Deniz II, a to projekt ITGI. Jedným z partnerov v projekte je Grécko. Dôvodom eliminácie sú obavy, že grécka plynárenská spoločnosť DEPA nebude schopná v projekte pokračovať. Azerbajdžan pochybuje o tom, že DEPA by bola schopná splniť svoje záväzky v projekte. Grécka vláda plánuje spoločnosť DEPA zahrnúť do svojho plánu privatizácie, ktorý by sa mal spustiť v priebehu tohto roka. V prípade dodávok plynu cez Turecko do Talianska by podľa vyhlásení hovorcu firmy Bp Azerbajdžan uprednostnil projekt Transjadranského plynovodu TAP. Partnermi v projekte TAP sú nórsky Statoil, švajčiarska firma EGL a nemecký E.ON Ruhrgas. O trase medzi Gréckom, Albánskom a Talianskom však neexistuje žiadna medzivládna dohoda.

— Ako takýto vývoj situácie hodnotí Komisia z hľadiska záujmov Európskej únie?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(8. júna 2012)

Výber jednotlivých plynovodov na prepravu zemného plynu z náleziska Šach Deniz II v Azerbajdžane v rámci Európskej únii je obchodné rozhodnutie, ktoré prijalo konzorcium Šach Deniz II na základe osobitných kritérií. Aj keď Komisia nepozná dôvody uvedené v otázke súvisiace s rozhodnutiami prijatými vo výberovom procese, zostáva v tejto otázke neutrálna, keďže všetky navrhované plynovody majú potenciál dodávať nový objem zemného plynu v rámci EÚ, a tak zlepšiť zabezpečenie dodávok zemného plynu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003867/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Interconnector Turkey-Greece-Italy (ITGI) gas pipeline project

Azerbaijan has eliminated one of the competitors bidding to transport gas from the Shah Deniz II field: the ITGI project. Greece is one of the partners participating in this project, and the elimination has come about owing to concerns that Greek gas company DEPA will not be able to continue carrying out the project. Azerbaijan doubts that DEPA will be able to comply with its obligations towards the project. The Greek Government plans to include DEPA in its privatisation plans, which are to be implemented this year. According to an announcement by BP spokesmen, Azerbaijan would prefer the supply of gas to Italy via Turkey to be carried out via the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline, whose partners are Norway's Statoil, the Swiss company EGL and Germany's E.ON Ruhrgas. However, there is no intergovernmental agreement on a line interconnecting Greece, Italy and Albania.

How does the Commission evaluate this development from the perspective of the interests of the EU?

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

The selection of pipelines to transport gas from the Shah Deniz II gas field in Azerbaijan within the European Union is a commercial decision, which is taken by the Shah Deniz 2 consortium on the basis of specific criteria. While the Commission is unaware of the reasons cited in the question regarding the decisions taken in the selection process so far, it remains neutral on this as all proposed pipelines have the potential to supply new volumes of gas within the EU and to improve thereby the security of gas supply.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003868/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13. apríla 2012)

Vec: Liberalizačné opatrenia na podporu celoeurópskeho rastu

Dvanásť hláv členských štátov Európskej únie adresovalo predsedovi Európskej komisie a predsedovi Európskej rady list, v ktorom ich vyzývajú na uskutočnenie liberalizačných krokov na podporu celoeurópskeho rastu. List podpísali najvyšší politickí predstavitelia Slovenskej republiky, Veľkej Británie, Holandska, Talianska, Estónska, Lotyšska, Fínska, Írska, Českej republiky, Španielska a Poľska. Signatári apelujú na liberálne opatrenia a odstránenie protekcionizmu.

V liste sa zároveň uvádza, že tento rok by EÚ mala uzavrieť niekoľko obchodných dohôd, a to s Indiou, Kanadou, krajinami Východného partnerstva a s niektorými krajinami medzivládnej organizácie ASEAN. Ministri v liste zároveň vyzývajú k intenzívnejším rokovaniam s Japonskom a latinskoamerickým blokom Mercosur.

— Aká bude reakcia Komisie na tieto výzvy?

Odpoveď pána De Guchta v mene Komisie
(16. mája 2012)

Komisia berie výzvy k tomu, aby zabezpečila otvorené svetové trhy a posilnila príspevok vonkajšieho obchodu k rastu a zamestnanosti v Európe, veľmi vážne. Oživenie obchodu je jedným z najdôležitejších prostriedkov, ktoré má EÚ v súčasnosti k dispozícii na podporu hospodárskeho rastu. Masívny vonkajší dopyt je momentálne jediným spoľahlivým zdrojom rastu, pričom zásadný význam bude pravdepodobne mať aj v budúcnosti, keďže v nasledujúcich piatich rokoch by sa 90 % hospodárskeho rastu malo vytvoriť mimo Európy.

Komisia aktívne rokuje s Indiou, Kanadou, Singapurom, Malajziou a Mercosurom. Práve sa začali bilaterálne rokovania s Gruzínskom a Moldavskom a čoskoro sa začnú rokovania s Arménskom. EÚ tiež pripravuje otvorenie rokovaní s Tuniskom, Marokom, Jordánskom a Egyptom. Okrem toho prebiehajú konzultácie s členskými štátmi týkajúce sa otvorenia rokovaní s Vietnamom.

Komisia sa spoločne s Japonskom aktívne podieľa na analýze s cieľom zistiť, či obe strany majú rovnaký záujem o uzatvorenie prípadnej dohody o voľnom obchode a či existuje ochota odstrániť skutočné prekážky obchodu. Okrem toho, pracovná skupina EÚ a USA na vysokej úrovni pre zamestnanosť a rast poskytne v roku 2012 odporúčania týkajúce sa možností prehĺbenia transatlantickej integrácie.

V záveroch z jarného zasadnutia Európskej rady sa stanovuje, že Európska rada „zhodnotí dosiahnutý pokrok a prerokuje spôsoby, ktorými môže Únia prehĺbiť svoje obchodné a investičné vzťahy s kľúčovými partnermi“. Komisia v tejto súvislosti vypracuje správu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003868/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Liberalisation measures to encourage pan-European growth

In a letter to the President of the Commission and the President of the European Council, the heads of 12 EU Member States have called for the implementation of liberalisation measures to encourage pan-European growth. The letter has been signed by the highest political representatives of the Slovak Republic, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy, Estonia, Latvia, Finland, Ireland, the Czech Republic, Spain and Poland. The signatories call for liberalisation measures and the removal of protectionism.

The letter also states that this year the EU should conclude several trade agreements with India, Canada, Eastern Partnership countries and a number of countries which are members of the ASEAN intergovernmental organisation. The prime ministers further call for more intensive negotiations with Japan and the Latin American Common Market, Mercosur.

How will the Commission respond to these calls?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2012)

The Commission takes the calls to deliver open global markets and strengthen the contribution of external trade to growth and jobs in Europe very seriously. Boosting trade is one of the most important means the EU currently has to bolster economic growth. Robust external demand is the only reliable source of growth for the moment and is likely to remain essential in the future with 90% of economic growth to be generated outside of Europe in the next 5 years.

The Commission is actively negotiating with India, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia and Mercosur. Bilateral negotiations have just been launched with Georgia and Moldova and about to be launched with Armenia. The EU is also preparing the launch of negotiations with Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Egypt. Consultations are ongoing with Member States to launch negotiations with Vietnam.

The Commission is actively engaged in a 'scoping' exercise with Japan to establish if there is a common level of ambition for a potential Free Trade Area agreement and whether there is readiness to remove real barriers to trade. The High Level Working Group on Growth and Jobs set up with the US will also provide recommendations in 2012 on how to deepen transatlantic integration.

The conclusions of the Spring European Council specify that the European Council would 'review progress and discuss how the Union can deepen its trade and investment relationships with key partners'. The Commission will prepare a report to this end.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003869/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13. apríla 2012)

Vec: Členstvo Bosny a Hercegoviny v EÚ

Bosne a Hercegovine sa úspešne podarilo prekonať politický pat, ktorý brzdil reformy, a tým priblíženie krajiny k európskym štandardom. Výsledkom bolo totiž sformovanie centrálnej vlády a dohoda o nových zákonoch, ktoré sú kľúčové pre plnenie podmienok Európskej únie. Nový predseda centrálnej vlády nedávno vyhlásil, že očakáva splnenie podmienok pre podanie prihlášky na členstvo v Európskej únii do 30. júna 2012. Niektorí analytici však predpovedajú ďalšie politické obštrukcie. Bosna a Hercegovina zaostáva za ostatnými balkánskymi susedmi v snahe o priblíženie sa k EÚ.

— Kedy bude Komisia rozhodovať o pripravenosti Bosny a Hercegoviny na vstup do Európskej únie a ako bude pri tomto procese postupovať?

Odpoveď pána Füleho v mene Komisie
(5. júna 2012)

Komisia víta súčasný pokrok v Bosne a Hercegovine, ako je uvedené v otázke pani poslankyne. Táto krajina skutočne zaostáva a na to, aby Rada mohla považovať prípadnú žiadosť o členstvo v EÚ za vierohodnú je potrebné urýchliť politické reformy na všetkých úrovniach.

V záveroch Rady z marca 2011 sa uvádzajú kroky, ktoré musí Bosna a Hercegovina podniknúť, aby mohla podať vierohodnú žiadosť o členstvo: „aby táto krajina v prvom rade zosúladila svoju ústavu s Európskym dohovorom o ľudských právach (EDĽP). Vierohodné úsilie vyvinuté v tomto ohľade je kľúčovým predpokladom k splneniu záväzkov tejto krajiny, ktoré vyplývajú z dočasnej dohody a dohody o stabilizácii a pridružení.“ V záveroch Rady sa okrem toho uvádza: „Pokrok pri riešení týchto otázok by bol dôkazom záväzku príslušných orgánov a politických strán k tomuto procesu. Kľúčovým prvkom vierohodnej žiadosti o členstvo, ktorú má EÚ posúdiť, by boli uspokojivé výsledky, pokiaľ ide o plnenie záväzkov podľa dohody o stabilizácii a pridružení a podľa dočasnej dohody.“

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003869/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Bosnia and Herzegovina's membership of the EU

Bosnia and Herzegovina has successfully overcome a political impasse that has slowed down reforms and hence the country's progress towards compliance with EU standards. The outcome of this was the formation of a new central government and an agreement on new legislation which is vital for compliance with the EU conditions. The new prime minister has recently announced that he is expecting full compliance with the conditions for applying for EU membership to be achieved by 30 June 2012. However, some analysts are predicting further political obstructions. Bosnia and Herzegovina is lagging behind its Balkan neighbours in its efforts to join the EU.

When will the Commission be deciding on the preparedness of Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the EU and what steps will it take during this process?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

The Commission welcomes the recent progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina as outlined in the question of the Honourable Member. The country is indeed lagging behind and needs to expedite political reforms at all levels, before an eventual EU membership application could be considered credible by the Council.

The immediate steps which need to be undertaken by Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to submit a credible membership application have been outlined in the Council conclusions of March 2011 which state: 'that as a matter of priority, the country needs to bring the Constitution into compliance with the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). A credible effort in this regard is key to fulfilling the country's obligations under the Interim/Stabilisation and Association Agreement.' The Council conclusions state further: 'Progress in addressing these issues would demonstrate the commitment of the authorities and the political parties to the EU integration process. A satisfactory track record in implementing obligations under the SAA/IA would be a key element for a credible membership application to be considered by the EU.'

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003870/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13. apríla 2012)

Vec: Suspendácia regionálnych fondov v Maďarsku

Európska komisia nedávno navrhla suspendovať jednu tretinu z regionálnych fondov v Maďarsku s platnosťou od začiatku budúceho roka. Ide o bezprecedentný krok a použitie nových posilnených sankcií na udržiavanie rozpočtovej disciplíny. Krajina na budúci rok očakáva deficit na úrovni 3,25 %. Toto číslo však prekračuje povolenú hranicu. Ak sa Maďarsku do konca roka nepodarí deficit upraviť, Komisia mu zmrazí približne 495 miliónov EUR. Varovania Komisie adresované Maďarskej republike podporila aj Rada Európskej únie, a to ešte v januári 2012. Takéto rozhodnutie je však viac ako kontroverzné.

Maďarský rozpočet za rok 2011 a 2012 je v súlade s európskymi pravidlami. Maďarská vláda označila toto rozhodnutie za nepodložené a neférové. Dôležitá je aj skutočnosť, že maďarský deficit je v súčasnosti jeden z najnižších. Vláda v Maďarsku tvrdí, že po odporúčaniach Komisie prijala oparenia, ktoré majú potenciál priviesť deficit pod 3 % HDP v roku 2013. Aj bez týchto korekcií odhaduje Komisia deficit len s miernym prekročením 3 %.

— Skutočne si Komisia myslí, že sankcionovať Maďarsko zmrazením jednej tretiny z jeho regionálnych fondov je nevyhnutné a účelné?

Odpoveď pána Hahna v mene Komisie
(20. júna 2012)

Rozhodnutie Rady pozastaviť záväzky z Kohézneho fondu vo výške 495 miliónov EUR voči Maďarsku na rok 2013 bolo prijaté po rozhodnutí Rady z 24. januára 2012, ktoré obsahuje záver, že Maďarsko do roku 2011 nenapravilo svoj nadmerný deficit dôveryhodným a trvalo udržateľným spôsobom. Konkrétne, v roku 2011 sa prahová hodnota 3 % HDP dodržala len vďaka jednorazovému príjmu pochádzajúcemu z odstránenia povinného súkromného dôchodkového piliera. Navyše rozpočet na rok 2012 stále obsahuje dočasné príjmy z neobvyklých sektorálnych odvodov.

Komisia náležite posúdila plány konsolidácie, ktoré jej maďarská vláda oznámila 21. februára. Tieto konsolidačné opatrenia však v posúdení nemohli byť zohľadnené, pretože do momentu návrhu Komisie z 22. februára pozastaviť záväzky z Kohézneho fondu neboli dostatočne podložené konkrétnymi krokmi.

Pozastavenie záväzkov z Kohézneho fondu ponecháva Maďarsku možnosť pokračovať v investíciách prostredníctvom Kohézneho fondu a spustiť nové projekty, keďže platby vyplývajúce z predošlých záväzkov v rámci Kohézneho fondu môžu pokračovať. Ihneď ako Rada rozhodne, že Maďarsko prijalo v reakcii na toto odporúčanie účinné opatrenia, pozastavenie bude zrušené. Rada sa dohodla, že 22. júna 2012 situáciu opäť posúdi.

Komisia dospela v svojom oznámení z 30. mája 2012 k záveru, že Maďarsko prijalo potrebné nápravné opatrenia, čím preukázalo dostatočný pokrok smerom k náprave nadmerného deficitu. Podľa odhadu útvarov Komisie dosiahne deficit rozpočtu v roku 2012 úroveň 2,5 % HDP a v roku 2013 úroveň 2,7 %. Z tohto dôvodu sa navrhuje, aby sa čiastočné pozastavenie záväzkov z Kohézneho fondu pre Maďarsko zrušilo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003870/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Suspension of regional fund allocations for Hungary

The Commission recently proposed suspending one third of the regional fund allocations for Hungary with effect from the start of 2013. This is an unprecedented step, making use of the newly enhanced sanctions for maintaining budgetary discipline. The country is expecting a deficit of 3.25% next year. This, however, exceeds the permitted limit. If Hungary fails to adjust the deficit by the end of the year, the Commission will freeze almost EUR 495 million. The Commission's warning to Hungary was also backed by the EU Council as early as January 2012. Such a decision is, however, more than controversial.

The Hungarian budget for 2011 and 2012 complies with European rules. The Hungarian Government has described the decision as unfounded and unfair. The fact that the Hungarian deficit is currently among the lowest is also important. The Hungarian Government claims that, following the Commission's recommendations, it has adopted measures that can potentially reduce the deficit to less than 3% of GDP in 2013. Even without these corrections, the Commission puts the deficit at just over 3%.

Does the Commission really think it necessary and expedient to punish Hungary by freezing one third of its regional fund allocations?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

The decision of the Council to suspend EUR 495 million of Cohesion Fund commitments for Hungary for 2013 follows the Council decision of 24 January 2012 establishing that Hungary has not corrected its excessive deficit in a credible and sustainable manner by 2011. In particular, in 2011, the deficit threshold of 3% of GDP was respected only due to one-off revenue stemming from the elimination of the mandatory private pension pillar. Moreover, the 2012 budget still incorporates temporary revenues from extraordinary sectoral levies.

The Commission duly considered the consolidation plans announced by the Hungarian Government on 21 February. However, these consolidation measures could not be taken into account in the assessment since they had not been sufficiently substantiated through concrete steps by the time of the Commission's proposal on the suspension of the Cohesion Fund commitments on 22 February.

The Cohesion Fund suspension leaves the possibility for Hungary to continue investments through the Cohesion Fund and launch new projects, as payments resulting from previous commitments under the Cohesion Fund can continue. Once the Council has established that Hungary has taken effective action in response to this recommendation, the suspension will be lifted. The Council has agreed to re-assess the situation on 22 June 2012.

The Commission concluded in a communication of 30 May 2012 that Hungary has taken the necessary corrective measures, demonstrating adequate progress towards the correction of the excessive deficit. The budget deficit is foreseen by the Commission services to reach 2.5% of GDP in 2012 and 2.7% in 2013. Therefore, the partial suspension of the commitments from the Cohesion Fund for Hungary is proposed to be lifted.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003871/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13. apríla 2012)

Vec: Aliancia za istú energiu

Osem veľkých európskych energetických firiem sa spojilo v neformálnej aliancii za istú energiu. Aliancia sa charakterizuje ako voľne založená koalícia progresívnych energetických spoločností, ktoré zdieľajú rovnaké názory na urýchlenú transformáciu energetického systému. Firmy Európsku úniu vyzývajú, aby pre rok 2030 stanovila právne vynútiteľné ciele pre znižovanie emisií, obnoviteľné zdroje a energetickú účinnosť.

Aliancia adresovala Európskej komisii otvorený list, v ktorom uviedla, že nedostatok záväzných cieľov po roku 2020, ETS neschopné stimulovať investovanie do obnoviteľných zdrojov a zastaraná energetická infraštruktúra vážne hrozia stroskotaním potrebnej modernizácie dekarbonizácie európskeho energetického sektora. Komisiu a predsedníctvo Rady vyzvali, aby rozhodli o právnych mandátoch pre záväzné ciele do roku 2030 pre obnoviteľné zdroje, CO_2 a energetickú efektívnosť.

— Aký je názor Komisie na túto alianciu a aké budú jej ďalšie kroky v súvislosti s týmito konkrétnymi výzvami?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(25. mája 2012)

Rada v súčasnosti rokuje s členskými štátmi, so zainteresovanými stranami a s európskymi inštitúciami, najmä s Európskym parlamentom, o Pláne postupu v energetike do roku 2050. Komisia predloží v roku 2012 ďalšie iniciatívy, napríklad oznámenia o energii z obnoviteľných zdrojov a o vnútornom trhu s energiou. Komisia predpokladá predovšetkým zavedenie opakujúceho sa procesu medzi členskými štátmi a EÚ, vďaka ktorému sa včas prijmú opatrenia na dosiahnutie transformácie energetického systému a vytvorenie politického rámca na obdobie po roku 2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003871/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Alliance for secure energy

Eight large European energy companies have come together in an informal alliance for secure energy. The alliance is described as a loosely based coalition of progressive energy companies sharing similar views on the rapid transformation of the energy system. EU firms are calling for legally enforceable targets to be set for 2030 in relation to emission cuts, renewables and energy efficiency.

The alliance has sent an open letter to the Commission stating that there is a serious risk of the necessary modernisation and decarbonisation of Europe's energy sector being derailed due to a lack of binding targets after 2020, obsolete energy infrastructure and an emissions trading scheme that is incapable of stimulating investment in renewables. The alliance has called on the Commission and the Council Presidency to decide on legal mandates in respect of binding targets for renewables, CO_2 and energy efficiency up to 2030.

What is the opinion of the Commission on this alliance and what will the Commission's next steps be in relation to these specific challenges?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(25 May 2012)

The Energy Roadmap 2050 is currently being discussed in the Council with Member States, with stakeholders and with European institutions, in particular the European Parliament. The Commission will present further initiatives in 2012, for example communications on renewable energy and the internal energy market. Overall, the Commission envisages an iterative process between Member States and the EU, resulting in timely action to achieve an energy system transformation and a policy framework for post-2020.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003872/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13. apríla 2012)

Vec: Energetická politika Európskej únie

Členské štáty Európskej únie sa zaviazali, že do roku 2020 sa zvýši spoločný podiel obnoviteľných zdrojov na konečnej spotrebe energie na úroveň 20 %. Na dosiahnutie tohto cieľa je potrebné, aby sa energia vyrobená vo veterných parkoch a solárnych elektrárňach priviedla k spotrebiteľom, čo si vyžaduje integrovanejšiu, silnejšiu a inteligentnejšiu sieť, ako je tá, ktorá existuje v súčasnosti. Podľa odhadov Európskej komisie bude do konca desaťročia potrebné investovať do vysokonapäťových elektrických prenosových systémov a aplikácií v oblasti uchovávania energie a inteligentných sietí asi 140 miliárd EUR. V porovnaní s obdobím rokov 2000 – 2010 by to znamenalo 100 % zvýšenie investícií v sektore elektrickej energie. Ďalšie investície sú nevyhnutné v oblasti zdrojov výroby zelenej energie, ktoré by podľa Komisie mali dosiahnuť úroveň 70 miliárd EUR ročne.

Podľa nedávno zverejnenej správy spoločnosti Frost & Sullivan narastie celková výrobná kapacita do konca dekády na 179 gigawattov. Postarať by sa o to mali predovšetkým veterné a solárne zariadenia, ale tiež záložné plynové jednotky. Podľa odhadov analýzy môžeme predpokladať, že kapacita solárnych elektrární sa zvýši trojnásobne a elektrina z vetra sa bude každoročne zvyšovať v priemere o 2 gigawatty. Štúdia však zároveň upozorňuje na skutočnosť, že napriek zvýšeniu kapacity produkcie elektriny, dôjde k zníženiu celkovej výroby, a to v roku 2020 na 590 terawatthodín v porovnaní so 625 terawatthodinami v roku 2010. Dôvodom má byť prijatie rôznych opatrení na zvýšenie energetickej účinnosti.

— Aká bude reakcia Komisie na závery, odhady a upozornenia správy spoločnosti Frost & Sullivan?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(30. mája 2012)

Komisia nie je oboznámená s príslušnou správou, ktorú Vážená pani poslankyňa cituje. Existuje množstvo rozličných štúdií o energetickom mixe v budúcnosti vypracovaných rozličnými skupinami na celom svete; Komisia uskutočňuje vlastnú analýzu a vypracovala rozličné správy, štúdie a oznámenia o budúcej skladbe energií v EÚ, napríklad Plán postupu v energetike do roku 2050.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003872/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: European Union energy policy

EU Member States have committed to increasing the common share of renewables in final energy consumption to 20% by 2020. To achieve this target, it is necessary for the energy produced by wind farms and solar plants to be transmitted to consumers, which requires a more integrated, powerful and intelligent network than currently exists. According to Commission estimates, by the end of the decade it will be necessary to invest about EUR 140 billion in high-voltage electrical transmission systems and applications for energy storage and intelligent networks. That would mean a 100% increase in energy sector investments compared to the 2000-2010 period. According to the Commission, further annual investments amounting to EUR 70 billion are essential in the area of green energy sources.

According to a recently published report by consultancy firm Frost & Sullivan, overall production capacity will rise to 179 gigawatts by the end of the decade. This should come mainly from wind and solar plants, but also from backup gas units. The study estimates that the capacity of solar plants can be expected to increase threefold, with wind power expected to increase annually by an average of 2 gigawatts. However, the study also points out that, despite the increased electricity production capacity, overall output will fall to 590 terawatt hours by 2020, compared to 625 terawatt hours in 2010. That will be the result of adopting various measures for increasing energy efficiency.

What is the Commission's response to the findings, estimates and warnings in the Frost & Sullivan report?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2012)

The Commission is not familiar with the particular report cited by the Honourable Member. There is a wide range of different 'future energy mix' studies produced by different groups around the world; the Commission undertakes its own analysis and has produced various reports, studies and Communications regarding the future EU energy mix, not least the Energy Roadmap 2050 report.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003873/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13. apríla 2012)

Vec: Výpredaje majetku zadlžených členských štátov

Zadlžené členské štáty Európskej únie začali rozpredávať štátny majetok, strategické podniky, ako aj národné symboly menšej hodnoty. V Grécku sa napríklad celková hodnota štátneho majetku určeného na predaj odhaduje na sumu 50 miliárd EUR. Štát predáva okrem športovísk z olympiády, pôdy na ostrovoch, telekomunikačnej spoločnosti, kasína, štátneho železničného operátora, baní, letísk aj jazdeckú organizáciu a štátnu lotériu. Popri tom ponúka aj zvyšné podiely v strategických, infraštruktúrnych či energetických podnikoch. O infraštruktúru majú záujem najmä čínski investori. Masívny privatizačný program spustilo aj Portugalsko. Okrem Číny tam záujem o nákup prejavila aj Brazília a Angola, z európskych krajín Veľká Británia a Nemecko. Kompletný zoznam majetku, ktorý je určený na odpredaj, nedávno zverejnilo aj Írsko. Jeho celková hodnota sa má pohybovať okolo 3 miliárd EUR.

Na zozname sa ocitol aj najhodnotnejší strategický podnik, výrobca elektriny Electricity Supply Board. Nielen strategických podnikov, ale aj menej hodnotných národných symbolov sa zbavuje napríklad Írsko, Španielsko či Veľká Británia. Európsky think-tank s názvom European Council for Foreign Relations vo svojom výročnom hodnotení zahraničnej politiky Európskej únie upozornil na skutočnosť, že EÚ by nemala zabúdať na dlhodobejšiu stratégiu pre usmerňovanie ekonomickej prítomnosti Číny. Dnes Únia nevie ani to, aký objem európskeho dlhu Čína drží.

— Považuje Komisia takýto vývoj situácie v členských štátoch za žiaduci?

— Sú podľa názoru Komisie takéto výpredaje štátneho majetku členských štátov v súlade s celkovou zahraničnou a bezpečnostnou politikou Európskej únie?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(10. júla 2012)

Predmetná záležitosť– privatizácia štátneho majetku – je rozhodnutím hospodárskej politiky, ktoré patrí do výlučnej právomoci členských štátov a nespadá do oblasti pôsobnosti Komisie. Ak sa však členský štát rozhodne privatizovať podnik (v strategicky citlivých odvetviach alebo v každom inom odvetví) musí tak urobiť v súlade s právnymi predpismi EÚ, a čo je najdôležitejšie, musí tak urobiť aj vtedy, keď vlády členských štátov cítia potrebu ponechať si v dotknutom podniku osobitné práva.

Príjmy z privatizácie štátnych podnikov môžu predstavovať dôležité jednorazové prínosy k významnej fiškálnej konsolidácii, ktoré sú potrebné v krajinách, v ktorých sa realizuje program makroekonomických úprav. V rozsahu, v akom podniky vo vlastníctve štátu v minulosti zaznamenali straty a/alebo vzhľadom na prísľuby, že vďaka privatizácii sa v budúcnosti dosiahne zvýšenie efektívnosti, ako aj prostredníctvom sprievodných krokov na zlepšenie konkurenčného a podnikateľského prostredia, sa tým môže zlepšiť fiškálna pozícia krajiny a súčasne môže dôjsť k posilneniu jej celkových hospodárskych vyhliadok.

Zahraničná a bezpečnostná politika EÚ nezahŕňa otázky týkajúce sa privatizácie štátneho majetku v členských štátoch.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003873/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Sale of assets by indebted Member States

Indebted EU Member States have begun selling state assets, including strategic enterprises and national symbols of lesser value. In Greece, for example, the total value of state assets earmarked for sale is put at EUR 50 billion. In addition to Olympic stadiums, the state is selling land on its islands, a telecoms enterprise, a casino, the national railway operator, mines, airports, an equestrian organisation and the state lottery. It is also offering the remaining shares in strategic, infrastructure and energy enterprises. Chinese investors are particularly interested in infrastructure. Portugal has also launched a massive privatisation programme. In addition to China, interest has also been shown by Brazil and Angola, and from Europe by the UK and Germany. Ireland also recently published a full list of assets earmarked for sale. The total value of these assets is about EUR 3 billion.

The list includes a very valuable strategic company: the electricity producer Electricity Supply Board. As well as strategic enterprises, less valuable national symbols are also being sold off by, for example, Ireland, Spain and the UK. In its annual assessment of EU foreign policy, the European Council for Foreign Relations think-tank drew attention to the fact that the EU should not forget a more long-term strategy aimed at regulating the economic presence of China. The EU does not even know how much European debt China holds at the moment.

— Does the Commission consider these developments in Member States to be desirable?

— In the Commission's view, is such a sell-off of state assets of Member States in line with the EU's overall foreign and security policy?

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

The matter in question — to privatise state assets — is an economic policy choice which, in itself, falls within the exclusive competence of Member States. It is not within the Commission's remit. However, to the extent a Member State decides to privatise an enterprise (in strategically sensitive sectors or in any other sector) it must do so in conformity with EC law, also and most importantly in the context where the Member States' governments feel the need to retain special rights in this enterprise.

Proceeds from the privatisation of state-owned enterprises can provide important one-off contributions to the substantial fiscal consolidation necessary in countries under a macroeconomic adjustment programme. To the extent that state-owned enterprises have in the past incurred losses and/or their privatisation promises to bring about improvements in efficiency in the future, including through concomitant steps to enhance competition and the business environment, this can improve a country's fiscal position and at the same time strengthen its overall economic prospects.

EU foreign and security policy does not cover issues related to privatisation of state assets in Member States.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003874/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13. apríla 2012)

Vec: Grécko-macedónsky konflikt

Najväčšou prekážkou vstupu Macedónska do Európskej únie je jeho spor s Gréckom o názov krajiny. Z pohľadu Grécka je Macedónsko gréckym výrazom pre starogrécky štát z čias vlády Alexandra Veľkého v 4. storočí pred n. l., ktorý sa rozprestieral prevažne na území dnešného Grécka. Podľa gréckej vlády si tak macedónska republika privlastňuje históriu. Z tohto dôvodu Grécko blokuje účasť Macedónska v Európskej únii, ako aj v iných medzinárodných organizáciách. Oba štáty sa sporia o názov Macedónska už od vzniku tejto krajiny v roku 1991, teda od osamostatnenia Macedónska od bývalej Juhoslávie.

V decembri 2011 Medzinárodný súdny dvor v Haagu rozhodol, že Grécko blokovaním pozvania Macedónska do NATO v roku 2008 porušilo bilaterálnu dohodu z roku 1995. Grécko sa vtedy zaviazalo, že Macedónsku nebude brániť vo vstupe do medzinárodných organizácii, pokiaľ bude vystupovať pod názvom Bývala juhoslovanská republika Macedónsko. Na základe rozhodnutia súdu je prijatie Macedónska do NATO reálnou záležitosťou.

— Aké diplomatické aktivity na urovnanie sporu plánuje Európska komisia v najbližšom čase?

— Existuje nejaký kompromis, ktorý by vedela navrhnúť?

Odpoveď pána Füleho v mene Komisie
(20. júna 2012)

Komisia vzala v plnej miere na vedomie rozsudok Medzinárodného súdneho dvora z roku 2011, ktorý poskytuje obom stranám príležitosť na opätovné otvorenie rozhovorov s cieľom nájsť vzájomne prijateľné riešenie. Obe strany túto príležitosť využili a začali viesť rozhovory pod záštitou Organizácie Spojených národov, ako aj bilaterálne rozhovory na najvyššej úrovni.

Komisia plne podporuje tieto rozhovory, ktoré sa zameriavajú na vyriešenie sporu o názov krajiny, a povzbudzuje strany, aby sa do nich aj naďalej plne zapájali s cieľom nájsť riešenie. Rozvíjanie dialógu a dobrých susedských vzťahov je v záujme oboch strán. Komisia v súvislosti s predvstupovým procesom pozorne sleduje pokrok dosiahnutý v tejto oblasti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003874/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Greco-Macedonian conflict

The main obstacle to Macedonia's joining the EU is its dispute with Greece over the name of the country. From the Greek point of view, Macedonia is the Greek name for the ancient Greek state dating from the reign of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC, and which predominantly covered the territory of present-day Greece. According to the Greek Government, the Republic of Macedonia is thus appropriating history. For this reason, Greece is blocking the participation of Macedonia in the EU and in other international organisations. Both countries have been contending the name of Macedonia ever since the republic came into existence in 1991, i.e. since Macedonia separated from the former Yugoslavia.

In December 2011, the International Court of Justice in The Hague ruled that, by blocking the invitation to Macedonia to join NATO in 2008, Greece had violated the bilateral treaty from 1995. At that time, Greece had agreed that it would not block Macedonia from becoming an EU member and from participating in other international organisations on condition that it would operate under the name of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As a result of this ruling, the admission of Macedonia into NATO has now become a real possibility.

— What diplomatic action is the Commission planning in order to settle the dispute as soon as possible?

— Is there a compromise that the Commission could suggest?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

The Commission has taken good note of the 2011 judgment of the International Court of Justice which has created an opportunity for both parties to re-engage in talks to find a mutually acceptable solution. Both parties have taken advantage of this opportunity, conducting talks both under the auspices of the United Nations, and also bilaterally, at the highest level.

The Commission fully supports the talks on the name issue and encourages the parties to remain fully engaged in order to find a solution. It is in the interest of both parties to nurture dialogue and good neighbourly relations. The Commission closely monitors progress in this area in the context of the pre-accession process.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003876/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Sector financiero en el Reino de España

Según publica la prensa, el Banco Financiero y de Ahorros, BFA, Bankia, sería uno de los candidatos en la compra de la entidad financiera CatalunyaCaixa, tercera entidad por volumen de activos con sede en Cataluña. A 6 de marzo de 2012 y según la información de la prensa ([1]), el banco Bankia había sido avalado por el Reino de España por valor de 15 000 000 euros, muy por encima de la segunda entidad en la lista, la ya intervenida y vendida CAM, por 2 800 000 de euros ([2]).

A la vista de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta la Directiva 2006/49/EC y el artículo 107 del TFUE:

1. ¿Ve la Comisión con buenos ojos que un banco como Bankia, el cual se encuentra fuera de mercado ya que necesita avales del Reino de España para emitir deuda privada y con el riesgo de que las posibles pérdidas en que pueda incurrir corran a cuenta del sector público, pueda comprar una entidad como CatalunyaCaixa?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que una posible compra por parte de Bankia a dicha entidad reduciría sus riesgos y mejoraría su ratios y daría crédito a la economía productiva de manera más eficiente?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de junio de 2012)

La Comisión está al tanto de la actual situación de CaixaCatalunya y está siguiendo este caso muy de cerca. La Comisión también está supervisando la situación de viabilidad de Bankia/BFA, que en 2010 recibió ayuda estatal procedente del FROB. En cuanto a Bankia/BFA, la Comisión ha sido informada de la conversión de acciones preferentes en acciones ordinarias, por un total de 4 465 millones EUR. Además, la Comisión está a la espera de conocer los detalles de las medidas que adoptará la nueva dirección de Bankia/BFA para cumplir los nuevos planes del Gobierno. No obstante, como los casos a los que Su Señoría hace referencia están en curso, la Comisión no puede entrar en detalles debido a restricciones en materia de confidencialidad.

En general, la Comisión siempre ha establecido tres requisitos para los bancos en fase de reestructuración en toda Europa: el primero de ellos, contar con un plan creíble para volver a la viabilidad, el segundo, reducir los costes para el Estado al mínimo necesario y garantizar un adecuado reparto de las cargas, y finalmente limitar el impacto negativo sobre la competencia.

Dentro de la evaluación del primer punto, la Comisión exige que el Estado miembro y los bancos concernidos presenten un plan prudente y creíble para recuperar la viabilidad, sin necesidad de ninguna otra ayuda estatal. La Comisión presta especial atención a las medidas adoptadas para subsanar las deficiencias que provocaron las dificultades del banco y para evitar que tales deficiencias se reproduzcan en el futuro. Este enfoque es necesario para garantizar la viabilidad a largo plazo de la posible entidad fusionada.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/economia/2012/03/07/la-banca-zombi-prolonga-su-agonia-tras-batir-un-nuevo-record-de-avales-del-estado-93866/.
([2]) http://www.expansion.com/2012/02/27/empresas/banca/1330347313.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003876/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Financial sector in the Kingdom of Spain

According to press reports, the Banco Financiero y de Ahorros, BFA, Bankia, is one of the candidates for the purchase of the financial institution CatalunyaCaixa, which is the third-largest Catalonia-based bank in terms of volume of assets. On 6 March 2012, according to press reports ([1]), Bankia had been guaranteed by the Kingdom of Spain for a value of EUR 15 000 000, well above the second bank on the list, CAM, which has already been taken over and sold, which was guaranteed for EUR 2 800 000 ([2]).

In view of the above and with due regard to Directive 2006/49/EC and Article 107 of the TFEU:

1. Does the Commission look positively upon the fact that a bank such as Bankia, which is outside the market in that it needs guarantees from the Kingdom of Spain in order to issue private debt, with the risk of potential losses that it could incur at the expense of the public sector, could purchase a bank such as CatalunyaCaixa?

2. Does the Commission believe that a possible purchase of this bank by Bankia would reduce risks, improve its ratios and provide credit to the productive economy in a more efficient manner?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(1 June 2012)

The Commission is aware of the current situation of CaixaCatalunya and is following the case very closely. The Commission is also monitoring the viability situation of Bankia/BFA, which received State support from the FROB in 2010. As regards Bankia/BFA, the Commission has been informed about the conversion of preference shares, amounting to EUR 4465 million, into ordinary shares. Furthermore, the Commission awaits details of the measures to be adopted by the new management of Bankia/BFA to comply with the new Government plans. However, as the cases to which the Honourable Member refers are ongoing cases, the Commission is not in a position to enter into details due to confidentiality restrictions.

In general, the Commission has consistently required three elements for banks under restructuring across Europe: first to have a credible plan for returning to viability, second to reduce the cost to the State to the minimum necessary and ensure appropriate burden-sharing, and finally to limit the negative impact on competition.

Within the assessment of the first point, the Commission requires the Member State and the banks concerned to present a prudent and credible plan for the return to viability without the need for any further state aid. The Commission pays particular attention to the measures taken to address the weaknesses that brought the bank into difficulties, and to avoid such weaknesses occurring again in the future. That approach is necessary to ensure long-term viability of the possible combined entity.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/economia/2012/03/07/la-banca-zombi-prolonga-su-agonia-tras-batir-un-nuevo-record-de-avales-del-estado-93866/.
([2]) http://www.expansion.com/2012/02/27/empresas/banca/1330347313.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003878/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Sector financiero en el Reino de España

Bankia fue una de las entidades europeas que más dinero pidieron al BCE en la última subasta de febrero de 2012, aún no estando entre las 10 entidades más importantes por volumen de activos en la eurozona. En breve, todas las entidades europeas deberán aplicar la regulación de Basilea III y, a la vez, la banca española deberá someterse a las provisiones que el Gobierno del Reino de España exigió para este junio de 2012. Además, como arguyó el Presidente del Banco de España, Miguel Ángel Fernández Ordóñez, se necesitará más capital en caso que la economía vaya peor de lo proyectado. No obstante, Bankia se encuentra activa en la compra de entidades como CaixaCatalunya, tercera entidad por volumen de activos con sede en Cataluña ([1]).

A la vista de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta la Directiva 2006/49/EC y el art. 107 del TFUE,

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que esta operación sería prudente y adecuada a los riesgos de capital y de mercado exigidos?

2. ¿No cree la Comisión que, en aras de una buena gestión de los recursos privados y el equilibrio de las finanzas públicas, dicha entidad debería financiarse sin el recurso del Estado y, en última instancia, de los ciudadanos del Estado español, y aún menos para comprar una entidad financiera?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de junio de 2012)

1. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a la pregunta E-003876/2012 ([2]).

2. La Comisión no puede realizar declaraciones sobre casos en curso, como se ha mencionado anteriormente. Sin embargo, dentro de la minimización del desembolso de dinero público, la Comisión pide a los bancos que gestionen su posición de capital con extrema prudencia y que eviten utilizar las ayudas estatales en beneficio de los inversores que invirtieron en instrumentos financieros de riesgo. Esto es necesario para garantizar que los costes de reestructuración de una institución financiera beneficiaria no solo sean pagados por el contribuyente, sino también por las partes interesadas de la institución en cuestión y, en particular, por los titulares de acciones e instrumentos subordinados.

([1]) http://www.expansion.com/2012/04/10/empresas/banca/1334045294.html?cid=GNEWS600103.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=ES.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003878/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Financial sector in the Kingdom of Spain

Bankia was one of the European banks to ask for most money in the last ECB auction in February 2012, despite not being among the 10 most important financial institutions by volume of assets in the euro area. In short, all European banks must implement the Basel III regulation and, at the same time, Spanish banks will have to comply with the provisions that the Spanish Government has demanded for June 2012. Moreover, as argued by the president of the Bank of Spain, Miguel Ángel Fernández Ordóñez, more capital will be required in case the economy performs worse than forecast. Nevertheless, Bankia is active in the purchase of entities like CaixaCatalunya, the third-largest Catalonia-based bank in terms of volume of assets ([1]).

In view of the above and with due regard to Directive 2006/49/EC and Article 107 of the TFEU,

1. Does the Commission believe that this transaction would be prudent and would meet market risk capital requirements?

2. Does the Commission not believe that, in the interests of sound management of private resources and the balancing of public finances, this entity should finance itself without recourse to the State and, ultimately, to Spanish citizens, and especially not in order to buy a financial institution?

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

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-003876/2012 ([2]).

2. The Commission cannot comment on ongoing cases as mentioned above. However, within the minimisation of the public money disbursement, the Commission asks banks to manage their capital position in a very prudent way, and to avoid using state aid for the benefit of investors who invested in risky financial instruments. This is necessary to ensure that the restructuring costs of an aided financial institution do not only burden the tax payer but also the stakeholders of the institution concerned, and in particular with equity and subordinated capital holders.

([1]) http://www.expansion.com/2012/04/10/empresas/banca/1334045294.html?cid=GNEWS600103.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003880/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. April 2012)

Betrifft: Kindersterben durch Halal-Fleisch

Jährlich sterben in Frankreich hunderte Kinder an bakteriellen Infektionen, die durch verseuchtes Fleisch (Vergiftung durch Hackfleisch/Faschiertem) verursacht werden. Nun steht die Frage im Raum, inwieweit der Anstieg an Kontaminationen von Hackfleisch/Faschiertem durch Escherichia coli mit dem zunehmenden Konsum von Halal- bzw. koscherem Fleisch (durch deren rituelle Schlachtmethode sich ja gesundheitliche Risiken ergeben) zusammenhängt.

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-000029/2012 „Gesundheitsgefährdung durch Halal-Fleisch" antwortete die Kommission, dass im Rahmen einer künftigen Strategie der Union für den Tierschutz und das Wohlergehen der Tiere in einer Studie die Möglichkeit geprüft werden soll, die Verbraucher über die Betäubung der Tiere zu informieren. Die Kommission plant eine solche Studie für 2013.

1. Ist in anderen EU-Staaten in den letzten Jahren ebenfalls ein Anstieg an Kindersterben an bakteriellen Infektionen, die durch verseuchtes Fleisch verursacht werden, zu verzeichnen?

2. Werden solche Fälle auf EU-Ebene überhaupt verglichen?

3. Falls nicht, ist eine diesbezügliche Beobachtung für die Zukunft geplant?

4. Soll in der erwähnten Studie auch der Frage nachgegangen werden, inwieweit ein Anstieg an Kontaminationen von Hackfleisch/Faschiertem durch Escherichia coli mit dem zunehmenden Konsum von Halal- bzw. koscherem Fleisch zusammenhängt?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(20. Juni 2012)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-003280/2012 ([1]).

Insbesondere möchte die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten nochmals darauf hinweisen, dass sich aus den jährlichen zusammenfassenden EU-Berichten über Zoonose-Infektionen und lebensmittelbedingte Ausbrüche zur Überwachung der Entwicklung der Lage in Europa ([2]), die auf der Grundlage von Daten der Mitgliedstaaten von der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit zusammengestellt werden, keinerlei Hinweise darauf ergeben, dass Halal-Fleisch eine nennenswerte Rolle bei Ausbrüchen solcher Krankheiten spielt.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=DE.
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/de/zoonoses/zoonosesscdocs.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003880/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Child deaths caused by halal meat

Every year, hundreds of children die in France of bacterial infections caused by contaminated meat (poisoning from minced or ground meat). The question arises as to what extent the increase in E. coli contamination of minced or ground meat is linked with increasing consumption of halal or kosher meat (the ritual slaughtering methods for which pose health risks).

In its answer to Question E-000029/2012 on a danger to health posed by halal meat, the Commission said that a study should be carried out into the possibility of informing consumers about the stunning of animals as part of a future Union strategy for animal protection and welfare. The Commission is planning such a study for 2013.

1. Has an increase in child deaths because of bacterial infections caused by contaminated meat also been recorded in other EU Member States in recent years?

2. Are such cases compared at all at EU level?

3. If not, is such a comparison planned for the future?

4. Will the above study also examine to what extent an increase in E. coli contamination of minced or ground meat is linked with the increasing consumption of halal or kosher meat?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-003280/2012 ([1]).

In particular, the Commission reminds the Honourable Member that from the annual European Union Summary Reports on zoonotic infections and food-borne outbreaks monitoring the evolving situation in Europe ([2]) prepared by the European Food Safety Authority, which are based on data collected by the EU Member States, no indication is found to assume that halal meat has a significant role on food-borne outbreaks.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/zoonoses/zoonosesscdocs.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003881/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. April 2012)

Betrifft: Firmensperren bei öffentlichen Aufträgen

Die Kommission will den EU-Staaten freistellen, ausländische Unternehmen künftig von öffentlichen Aufträgen auszuschließen, wenn diese aus einem Drittland stammen, welches seinen Markt für öffentliche Aufträge für europäische Unternehmen abschottet.

Diese Maßnahme zielt ja vor allem auf den chinesischen Markt mit seinem geschätzten Handelsvolumen von 830 Milliarden EUR ab, von denen nur ein kleiner Teil für ausländische Firmen zugänglich ist. Problematisch ist auch, dass Investitionen und Ausschreibungen in China oft mit dem Zwang zu Technologietransfer verknüpft sind.

1. Welche Drittstaaten wären nach derzeitigem Stand betroffen, da sie ihren Markt für öffentliche Aufträge für Unternehmen aus den EU-Staaten abschotten?

2. Welche Möglichkeiten gibt es, Firmen von öffentlichen Aufträgen auszuschließen, die sich nicht an sozialrechtliche Vorschriften (z. B. Arbeitszeitbeschränkungen) halten?

3. Was wurde auf EU-Ebene hinsichtlich Zwang zu Technologietransfer unternommen und wie weit wird diesbezüglich mit anderen Staaten zusammen gearbeitet?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2012)

1. Die vorgeschlagene Verordnung über die internationale Auftragsvergabe zielt nicht auf bestimmte Länder ab. Waren und Dienstleistungen, die Gegenstand internationaler Vereinbarungen der Europäischen Union mit Drittländern sind, in denen diesen Ländern Marktzugang gewährt wurde, sollen nach diesem Vorschlag wie Waren und Dienstleistungen aus den Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union behandelt werden. Auf Waren und Dienstleistungen, für die keine Verpflichtungen hinsichtlich des Marktzugangs gelten, können dagegen auf Antrag der Kommission oder eines einzelnen öffentlichen Auftraggebers restriktive Maßnahmen angewendet werden. Dies bedeutet, dass die vorgeschlagene Verordnung im Prinzip auf Waren und/oder Dienstleistungen aus jedem Drittland, gegenüber dem keine internationalen Verpflichtungen bestehen, Anwendung finden könnte. In dem Vorschlag ist jedoch vorgesehen, dass auf Waren und Dienstleistungen aus den am wenigsten entwickelten Ländern keine restriktiven Maßnahmen angewendet werden können.

2. In ihrem Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über die öffentliche Auftragsvergabe ([1]) hat die Kommission geänderte Regeln für ungewöhnlich niedrige Angebote vorgesehen. Nach Artikel 69 der vorgeschlagenen Richtlinie lehnen die öffentlichen Auftraggeber ein Angebot ab, wenn sie festgestellt haben, dass es ungewöhnlich niedrig liegt, weil es den sozial- oder arbeitsrechtlichen Vorschriften des EU-Rechts oder bestimmten internationalen Sozialvorschriften nicht genügt.

Die öffentlichen Auftraggeber können die Bieter darüber hinaus auffordern, bestimmten Vertragserfüllungsklauseln zu entsprechen, unter anderem der Einhaltung der Sozialvorschriften ([2]).

3. Die vorgeschlagene Verordnung trägt allen diskriminierenden Praktiken gegen EU-Unternehmen im Rahmen der öffentlichen Auftragsvergabe Rechnung, einschließlich des Zwangs zu Technologietransfer. Aufgrund dessen könnten auf Waren und Dienstleistungen aus Ländern, die solche Praktiken erzwingen, restriktive Maßnahmen angewendet werden. Darüber hinaus wird die Kommission prüfen, ob die Frage eines Verbots des Zwangs zu Technologietransfer in ihre Verhandlungen mit Drittländern aufgenommen werden kann.

([1]) KOM(2011)896 endg.
([2]) Artikel 26 der Richtlinie über das öffentliche Beschaffungswesen 2004/18/EG — ABl. L 134 vom 30.4.2004, S. 114.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003881/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Excluding firms from public procurement contracts

The Commission intends allowing EU Member States to exclude foreign firms from public procurement contracts in future if they come from a third country that has closed its public procurement market to European firms.

This measure targets the Chinese market in particular, with its estimated trading volume of EUR 830 billion, of which only a small part is accessible to foreign firms. The fact that investment and calls for tender in China often involve mandatory technology transfer is also problematic.

1. Which third countries would currently be affected because they have closed their public procurement markets to firms from EU Member States?

2. What options are available for excluding firms from public procurement contracts which do not comply with social legislation (e.g. working time restrictions)?

3. What action has been taken at EU level regarding mandatory technology transfers, and to what extent is there cooperation with other states in this connection?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2012)

1. The proposed International Procurement Regulation is not targeting specific countries. It clarifies that goods and services with respect to which the Union has entered into international agreements with third countries granting them market access should be treated like EU goods and services. On the other hand, goods and services not covered by EU market access commitments can be subject to restrictive measures at the initiative of either the Commission or of individual contracting authorities. This means that, in principle, goods and/or services from any third country with respect to which no international commitments exist could be concerned by the proposed regulation. However, the proposal provides that goods and services originating in least-developed countries cannot be subject to restrictive measures.

2. In its proposal for a directive on public procurement ([1]), the Commission has put forward revised rules on abnormally low tenders. Article 69 of the proposal stipulates that contracting authorities shall reject such a tender, where they establish that it is so low because it does not comply with obligations established by EU legislation in the field of social/labour law or by certain international social law provisions.

Contracting authorities may also ask tenderers to comply with certain contract performance clauses, including compliance with social legislation ([2]).

3. The proposed regulation takes into account all discriminatory practices against EU suppliers in public procurement, including mandatory technology transfers. As a result, goods and services originating in countries imposing such practices might be subject to restrictive measures. Moreover, the Commission will explore the inclusion of prohibition of mandatory technology transfer in its negotiations with third countries.

([1]) COM(2011)896 final.
([2]) Article 26 of public procurement Directive 2004/18/EC — OJ 2004 L 134, 30.4.2004, p. 114.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003882/12
aan de Commissie
Emine Bozkurt (S&D)
(13 april 2012)

Betreft: De exporteerbaarheid van socialezekerheidsuitkeringen naar Turkije voor Turkse werknemers die in een van de lidstaten werken of hebben gewerkt

Het Hof van Justitie van de EU heeft in zaak C-485/07 bepaald dat artikel 6, lid 1, van besluit 3/80 van de Associatieraad EU-Turkije betreffende de toepassing van de socialezekerheidsregelingen van de lidstaten op Turkse werknemers en hun gezinsleden rechtstreeks van toepassing is. Dat betekent dat uitkeringen bij invaliditeit, ouderdom of de uitkeringen aan nagelaten betrekkingen, de renten bij arbeidsongevallen of beroepsziekten en de uitkeringen bij overlijden, verkregen op grond van een wettelijke regeling van een of meer lidstaten, op generlei wijze worden verminderd, gewijzigd, geschorst, ingetrokken of verbeurd verklaard op grond van het feit dat de rechthebbende op het grondgebied van een andere lidstaat woont dan die, op het grondgebied waarvan zich het orgaan bevindt dat deze uitkering verschuldigd is.

Het Hof besliste ook dat de regeling die momenteel van kracht is krachtens Verordening nr. 1408/71, waarin de in Bijlage IIa genoemde niet op premie- of bijdragebetaling berustende uitkeringen voorwerp mogen zijn van vermindering, zou neerkomen op een wijziging van besluit nr. 3/80, terwijl een dergelijke bevoegdheid, conform de artikelen 8 en 22 van de associatieovereenkomst, slechts is voorbehouden aan de Associatieraad.

De praktijk weerspiegelt deze uitspraak niet. Volgens het arrest van het Hof zijn de in Bijlage IIa genoemde uitzonderingen niet van toepassing op Turkse burgers.

— Wat is de Commissie voornemens te doen om zeker te stellen dat alle lidstaten van de EU de bepalingen van besluit nr. 3/80, die integraal onderdeel uitmaken van het acquis van de Unie, respecteren zoals door het Hof van Justitie bepaald in zaak C-485/07?

— Is het de bedoeling van de Commissie om middels paragraaf 2.4 van haar mededeling (COM(2012)0153 van 30 maart 2012 het arrest in zaak C-485/07 te ontduiken en Turkse werknemers op die manier hun verworven rechten te ontnemen?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(31 mei 2012)

Op 30 maart 2012 heeft de Commissie een voorstel goedgekeurd voor een besluit van de Raad betreffende het standpunt met betrekking tot de bepalingen voor de coördinatie van socialezekerheidsstelsels dat de Europese Unie zal innemen in de Associatieraad die is opgericht bij de overeenkomst waarbij een associatie tot stand wordt gebracht tussen de Europese Economische Gemeenschap en Turkije ([1]). Op het ogenblik bestaat er geen regeling voor de coördinatie van de sociale zekerheid omdat geen wetgeving is vastgesteld die uitvoering geeft aan Besluit nr. 3/80 van de Associatieraad EEG-Turkije.

Het voorstel van de Commissie eerbiedigt ten volle het recht van Turkse werknemers om op het gebied van de sociale zekerheid op gelijke wijze als EU-burgers behandeld te worden en om bepaalde categorieën pensioenen zonder mindering in Turkije uitbetaald te krijgen. Het is op dit punt in overeenstemming met de arresten van het Hof van Justitie in de zaken C-262/96 en C-485/07. Volgens het arrest van het Hof in zaak C-485/07 moeten bijzondere, niet op premie- of bijdragebetaling berustende prestaties (uitkeringen die het inkomen tot een minimumniveau aanvullen) echter slechts in een paar zeer specifieke gevallen in Turkije worden uitbetaald. De Commissie stelt voor dat deze uitkeringen, die sinds 1992 niet meer voor EU-burgers van de ene naar de andere EU-lidstaat kunnen worden overgedragen, niet in Turkije worden uitbetaald. Voorts moeten de op de EU en Turkije toepasselijke regels op één lijn worden gebracht met de regels die uit hoofde van negen andere associatieovereenkomsten van toepassing zijn.

Het is niet de bedoeling van de Commissie het arrest van het Hof in zaak C-485/07 te ontduiken, maar zij wil wel de rechtszekerheid ten aanzien van de coördinatie van de sociale zekerheid tussen de EU en Turkije vergroten. In het voorstel is een overgangsbepaling opgenomen ter bescherming van de rechten van Turkse werknemers die bij de inwerkingtreding van het voorgestelde besluit van de Associatieraad bijzondere, niet op premie- of bijdragebetaling berustende prestaties ontvangen.

([1]) COM(2012) 152 final van 30 maart 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003882/12
to the Commission
Emine Bozkurt (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Exportability of social security benefits to Turkey for Turkish workers working, or having worked, in one or more Member States

The European Court of Justice has ruled, in Case C-485/07, that Article 6(1) of Decision No 3/80 of the EU-Turkey Association Council on the application of the social security schemes of the Member States to Turkish workers and members of their families has direct effect. This means that invalidity, old age or survivors' cash benefits, pensions for accidents at work or occupational diseases and death grants acquired under the legislation of one or more Member States shall not be subject to any reduction, modification, suspension, withdrawal or confiscation by reason of the fact that the recipient resides in the territory of a Member State other than that in which the institution responsible for payment is situated.

The Court has also decided that the system currently in force under Regulation No 1408/71, which allows special non-contributory cash benefits mentioned in Annex IIa to be subject to reduction, would amount to amending Decision No 3/80, whereas such power is reserved to the Association Council, in accordance with Articles 8 and 22 of the Association Agreement.

The practice does not reflect this judgment. According to the Court ruling the exceptions listed in Annex IIa do not apply to Turkish citizens.

— What will the Commission do in order to ensure that all EU Member States respect the provisions of Decision No 3/80, which are an integral part of the EU *acquis*, as ruled by the ECJ in Judgment C-485/07?

— Is the Commission intending, by paragraph 2.4 of its communication COM(2012) 0153 final, dated 30 March 2012, to circumvent Judgment C-485/07 and thereby strip Turkish workers of their acquired rights?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2012)

On 30 March 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal ([1]) for a Council decision on the position to be taken by the European Union within the Association Council set up by the Agreement establishing an association between the European Economic Community and Turkey with regard to the provisions on the coordination of social security systems. No such coordination system is currently in place, as no legislation implementing Decision 3/80 of the EEC-Turkey Association Council has ever been adopted.

The Commission proposal fully respects the right of Turkish workers to equal treatment with EU citizens in matters of social security and to payment of certain categories of pensions in Turkey without reduction in line with the judgments of the Court of Justice in Cases C-262/96 and C-485/07. The Court's judgment in Case C-485/07 recognises that benefits falling within the category of special non-contributory cash benefits (benefits that top up income to a minimum level) should be paid in Turkey in very restricted circumstances. The Commission proposes that such benefits, which have not been exportable from one EU Member State to another for EU citizens since 1992, should not be payable in Turkey either. Furthermore, the rules applicable to the EU and Turkey should be brought into line with those applicable under nine other Association Agreements.

The Commission's aim is not to circumvent the Court's judgment in Case-485/07, but to enhance the legal certainty of the rules governing social security coordination between the EU and Turkey. The proposal contains a transitional provision to protect the rights of persons in Turkey to whom special non-contributory cash benefits are provided at the date of entry into force of the proposed Association Council decision.

([1]) COM(2012) 152 final of 30 March 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003883/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Macro-financial assistance to third countries: criteria

Could the Commission provide details of the criteria that a third country must fulfil in order to apply for macro-financial assistance from the EU?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2012)

The Macro-financial assistance (MFA) instrument is governed by the 'Genval principles' (exceptional character, political pre-condition, complementarity, conditionality, financial discipline and geographical delimitation). They refer to the informal Ecofin Council conclusions first agreed on 9 October 1993, as revised on 20 March 1995 and as finally adjusted and adopted on 8 October 2002 as formal Ecofin Council conclusions, accompanied by a letter from the President of the Council to the President of the Commission, concerning notably the MFA's geographical delimitation ([1]).

While legally non-binding, the 'Genval principles' provide an overall 'political' framework for MFA and have been as such the basis for the Commission's MFA proposals. These criteria are summarised in the Explanatory Memorandum of the Commission proposal for a Framework Regulation on MFA (COM(2011)396 final).

([1]) Council conclusions doc. 12771/02 Ecofin 317.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003884/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Turkey, immigration and border security

Could the Commission clarify whether any funds have been granted to Turkey/Turkish organisations for the purpose of border security?

If so, could the Commission provide the source for the amounts?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2012)

In the field of border security Turkey receives EU support under the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) Assistance Component I. EUR 440 million is earmarked (17% of the total) for the period 2011-2013 for justice, home affairs and fundamental rights. Part of this amount is for projects aiming at supporting the establishment of an integrated border management system, at enhancing the capacity to prevent illegal migration and at further improving the conditions for asylum-seekers in Turkey. Projects are for example being implemented to align Turkey's National Action Plan on Border Management and overall integrated border management (IBM) strategy with EU standards, to transform the current border management into an integrated border management system. The Commission also financed a project for a training programme for Border Police. All IPA National Programmes for which Financing Agreements have been concluded between the Commission and Turkey as well as the Project Fiches which fall under these annual funding programmes are available online at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/turkey/financial-assistance/index_en.htm?id=keydoc#library

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003885/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Funding for Marie Stopes International and the International Planned Parenthood Federation

How much funding has the Commission given to Marie Stopes International and the International Planned Parenthood Federation in each of the last five years?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

Data on EU funding granted to successful applicants in a particular field can be consulted in the Financial Transparency System (FTS) ([1]). The FTS includes information on budgetary commitments relating to EU funds managed directly by the Commission and its executive agencies.

At this time, only data for 2007-2010 financial years is available in the FTS. Data for 2011 will be published at the end of the first semester of 2012.

The Commission would like to draw the attention to of the Honourable Member to the fact that the name of an organisation introduced in the FTS database is its full official name, that does not always match the name commonly used in the public domain.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003886/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Mancato rispetto dell'articolo 6 della direttiva 92/43/CEE «Habitat» in zona SIC IT3240028 «Fiume Sile dalle sorgenti a Treviso Ovest»

L'aeroporto Antonio Canova di Treviso confina con il SIC IT3240028 «Fiume Sile dalle sorgenti a Treviso Ovest», istituito ai sensi della direttiva 92/43/CEE «Habitat». Il SIC IT3240028 presenta habitat naturali prioritari. Il SIC in questione è compreso all'interno dell'Ente Parco Naturale Regionale del Fiume Sile che ne è anche il gestore.

Nel periodo intercorso tra giugno e novembre del 2011 l'aeroporto è stato interessato da «interventi di potenziamento e sviluppo delle infrastrutture di volo». Per realizzare tali lavori, la commissione tecnica ministeriale di verifica dell'impatto ambientale — VIA e VAS, il 15 aprile 2011 ha espresso parere favorevole all'esclusione della procedura di VIA, sia pure con prescrizioni, dal momento che la valutazione di impatto ambientale relativa al SIC IT 3240028, sviluppata al primo livello, aveva stabilito che non sussistevano incidenze sul sito. Contro tale parere di esclusione però, il «Comitato per la riduzione dell'impatto ambientale dell'aeroporto di Treviso», associazione di 530 residenti nei pressi dell'aeroporto, ha presentato un ricorso tutt'ora pendente, su cui deve ancora pronunciarsi il TAR (il tribunale amministrativo regionale) del Veneto.

In concomitanza con i lavori di potenziamento e sviluppo delle infrastrutture di volo, il 9 novembre 2011 AERTRE Aeroporto di Treviso S.p.A. ha chiesto all'Ente Parco Sile l'autorizzazione per il taglio/capitozzatura degli alberi, in gran parte localizzati all'interno del SIC IT3240028, interferenti con le aree sensibili dell'Aeroporto di Treviso. Tale intervento non è però stato inserito nella VIA — Relazione di screening per il progetto di rifacimento della pista dell'aeroporto. Nonostante l'istruttoria del tecnico del Parco abbia stabilito che detto intervento non fosse conforme al piano ambientale vigente e che la valutazione di impatto ambientale fosse necessaria, il 23 novembre 2011 il direttore del Parco ha comunque autorizzato l'intervento in deroga alle norme del piano ambientale senza alcun riferimento alla necessaria procedura di valutazione dell'impatto ambientale.

Alla luce di quanto sopra:

— non ritiene la Commissione che sia stato violato l'articolo 6 della direttiva 92/43/CEE «Habitat»?

— Quali azioni intende intraprendere in caso di non corretta applicazione della citata direttiva?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

La direttiva «Habitat» 92/43/CEE ([1]) la direttiva «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE ([2]) non vietano «interventi di potenziamento e sviluppo delle infrastrutture di volo» all'interno o in prossimità di siti Natura 2000. La compatibilità di un progetto del genere con la tutela dei siti interessati deve essere stabilita caso per caso. Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti valutare se un progetto del genere possa provocare gravi effetti negativi sulle specie e gli habitat interessati, nonché sull'integrità del sito Natura 2000 in questione. In particolare, conformemente all'articolo 6, paragrafo 3, della direttiva «Habitat», qualsiasi piano o progetto che possa avere incidenze significative su un sito Natura 2000 è oggetto di un'opportuna valutazione e le autorità competenti possono dare il loro consenso a tale piano o progetto soltanto dopo aver avuto la certezza che esso non pregiudicherà l'integrità del sito.

In base alle informazioni in suo possesso, alla Commissione non risulta alcuna violazione delle disposizioni summenzionate da parte delle autorità italiane. Non sono pertanto previste ulteriori misure.

([1]) GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([2]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003886/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Failure to comply with Article 6 of Council Directive 92/43/EEC in SCI area IT3240028 ('River Sile from its sources to Treviso West')

Treviso Antonio Canova airport borders site of Community importance (SCI) IT3240028 ('River Sile from its sources to Treviso West'), established pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive). The SCI contains a number of priority natural habitats and forms part of the land managed by the River Sile Regional Nature Park authority, which also manages the site itself.

Between June and November 2011, 'flight infrastructure upgrading and development work' was carried out at the airport. Prior to the commencement of this work, on 15 April 2011 the ministerial technical committee responsible for environmental impact assessments (EIA and SEA) delivered a favourable opinion on ruling out an EIA procedure, albeit subject to certain conditions, since the initial environmental impact assessment for SCI IT3240028 area had determined that there was no impact on the site. The Committee to Reduce the Environmental Impact of Treviso Airport, an association made up of 530 residents living near the airport, filed an appeal against this opinion with the Veneto Regional Administrative Court (TAR), which has yet to rule on the matter.

In connection with the flight infrastructure upgrading and development work, on 9 November 2011 AERTRE Aeroporto di Treviso S.p.A. asked the Sile Park authority for permission to cut down or pollard trees, many of them located within SCI IT3240028, that were obstructing sensitive areas of Treviso Airport. This work was not, however, covered by the EIA Screening Report for the runway rebuild project. In spite of the fact that investigations carried out by the park engineer determined that the work did not comply with the provisions of the relevant environmental plan and that an environmental impact assessment was required, the Park Director gave the green light for the work to go ahead on 23 November 2011, disregarding the need for an environmental impact assessment.

In view of the above:

— Would the Commission not agree that Article 6 of Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC has been infringed in this instance?

— What steps will it take if it is found that that directive has not been correctly applied?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2012)

The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) and the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC ([2]) do not forbid 'flight infrastructure upgrading and development work' in or near Natura 2000 sites. The compatibility of such a development with the protection of the concerned sites needs to be determined on a case by case basis. It is up to the competent national authorities to assess whether such a project could cause significant negative effects on the relevant species and habitats and on the integrity of the concerned Natura 2000 site. In particular, in accordance with Article 6 paragraph 3 of the Habitats Directive, any plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect upon a Natura 2000 site has to be subject to an appropriate assessment and the competent authorities may agree to this plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

The information available to the Commission does not indicate a breach of the abovementioned provisions by the Italian authorities. No further steps are, therefore, foreseen.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003887/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(13 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Europei di calcio e randagi uccisi in Ucraina

Sarebbero 20 000 tra cani e gatti i randagi uccisi in Ucraina in vista degli Europei di calcio che si disputeranno nell'ex repubblica sovietica e in Polonia durante la prossima estate. Per rendere più presentabili le città si è ricorsi a qualunque pratica pur di sopprimere i quadrupedi: fucilazioni, avvelenamenti, bastonate. Si parla addirittura di forni crematori «ambulanti» nei quali verrebbero bruciati i cadaveri e gli animali agonizzanti.

Da tempo le associazioni di volontariato locali si sono rivolte alle autorità ucraine chiedendo che venissero applicati metodi di sterilizzazione e costruiti dei canili; la stessa UEFA, che organizza l'evento calcistico, aveva fatto sapere di aver donato dei soldi per rispondere alle richieste. Ma non è cambiato nulla, anzi i volontari affermano di non aver ricevuto soldi (anche se si parla di frequenti ruberie) denunciando piuttosto una drastica e improvvisa diminuzione di cani. Recenti reportage, che raccontavano l'orrore, hanno indotto molti fruitori del web a protestare contro questo scempio invitando gli sportivi a boicottare gli Europei.

Può far sapere la Commissione, che sicuramente è al corrente della situazione:

1. In che modo sta intervenendo per aiutare i volontari?

2. È vero che l'Unione europea finanzia l'UEFA? Quali sono eventualmente le finalità del finanziamento?

3. In caso affermativo, a quanto ammonta il finanziamento dell'UE?

4. Non crede che, in un'Europa ormai a 28 paesi, sia fondamentale rendere obbligatoria la sterilizzazione dei randagi e omologarne i criteri collaborando con associazioni, legalmente riconosciute, in grado di fornire i dati del randagismo in ogni Stato membro?

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

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle proprie risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-001678/2012 ([1]) ed E-009337/2011 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-001678&language=IT.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-009337&language=IT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003887/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: European Football Championship and strays killed in the Ukraine

Around 20 000 stray cats and dogs are said to have been killed in the Ukraine in anticipation of the European Football Championship to be held in the former Soviet republic and Poland next summer. To make the cities more presentable, they have been destroyed by any means available, be it by shooting, poisoning or beating them to death. There is even talk of 'mobile' crematoria being used to cremate both dead and dying animals.

Local voluntary associations have been calling for the Ukrainian authorities to enact neutering measures and build shelters for some time; the tournament organiser itself, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), stated that money had been donated in response to these requests. Not only has nothing changed, but volunteers say they have not received any money (though thefts are said to be rampant) while denouncing a sudden and drastic decrease in the dog population. Recent reports of this horror caused many Internet users to denounce this massacre and invite sports fans to boycott the European Championship in protest.

Could the Commission, which is surely aware of the situation, state:

1. how it is helping the volunteers;

2. whether it is true that UEFA is funded by the European Union and what the purpose of the funding is;

3. if it receives EU funding, how much this amounts to;

4. whether it agrees that in a Europe that now encompasses 28 countries, it is fundamental to make neutering of strays mandatory and to standardise the relevant criteria in collaboration with legally recognised organisations that are capable of providing data on the stray population in each Member State?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-001678/2012 ([1]) and 00E-9337/2011 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-001678&language=FR.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-009337&language=FR.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003888/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(13 aprilie 2012)

Subiect: Cooperarea transfrontalieră între laboratoarele de analize

Medicii din întreaga Europă preferă prevenirea unor maladii și mai puțin tratarea acestora la momentul depistării tardive. O asemenea măsură permite reducerea costurilor de îngrijire, a medicației adecvate și, mai ales, a costurilor unor eventuale spitalizări.

Pentru acțiuni de prevenire adecvate, o atenție deosebită trebuie acordată efectuării de analize medicale periodice, etapă esențială în depistarea precoce a oricărei anomalii.

Evoluția rapidă a metodelor de analiză nu permite întotdeauna unor laboratoare să achiziționeze și să aplice ultimele noutăți în domeniu.

Pentru aceasta ar fi benefică dezvoltarea unor laboratoare regionale de analize care să poată acoperi o gamă largă de analize, în funcție de cerințele medicilor și de interesul cetățenilor europeni.

Ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru sprijinirea dezvoltării unor laboratoare de analize medicale regionale, inclusiv prin proiecte de cooperare transfrontalieră, pentru un acces cât mai adecvat al cetățenilor în vederea prevenirii maladiilor și a reducerii costurilor de asistență medicală ulterioare?

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(20 iunie 2012)

În conformitate cu dispozițiile Tratatului privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene (articolul 168), Comisia încurajează cooperarea între statele membre în vederea îmbunătățirii, printre altele, a complementarității serviciilor lor de sănătate, respectându-se, în același timp, principiul subsidiarității în domeniul sănătății publice și al sistemelor de asistență medicală.

Directiva privind aplicarea drepturilor pacienților în cadrul asistenței medicale transfrontaliere ([1]) reprezintă un alt temei juridic pentru activitățile referitoare la cooperarea transfrontalieră. În conformitate cu articolul 10 din directiva menționată anterior, statele membre acordă asistență reciprocă și cooperează, iar Comisia trebuie să încurajeze statele membre să coopereze, în special în ceea ce privește furnizarea de asistență medicală transfrontalieră în zonele de frontieră. Comisia va discuta cu statele membre despre cele mai bune modalități de a îndeplini acest mandat.

Articolul 12 din directivă conferă, de asemenea, Comisiei competențe pentru sprijinirea dezvoltării rețelelor europene de referință în statele membre în vederea îmbunătățirii accesului la diagnosticare și la o asistență medicală de înaltă calitate pentru pacienții cu afecțiuni care necesită o anumită concentrare de resurse sau expertiză. Rețelele se vor baza pe participarea voluntară a membrilor acestora, iar Comisia elaborează în prezent o listă de criterii și condiții pe care trebuie să le îndeplinească aceste rețele și furnizorii de asistență medicală implicați. În momentul înființării acestor rețele, de îndată ce vor fi adoptate actele juridice privind criteriile și condițiile, unul dintre domeniile care pot fi luate în considerare în acest context este reprezentat de laboratoarele medicale.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:088:0045:0065:RO:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003888/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Cross-border cooperation between testing laboratories

Doctors from across Europe prefer to prevent diseases rather than treat them following a late diagnosis. Such a measure reduces the cost of healthcare, the necessary medication and, especially, the costs of any potential hospitalisation.

Special attention should be given to the carrying out of periodic medical tests for adequate preventive measures, this being an essential step in the early detection of any anomalies.

The rapid development of test procedures does not always allow some laboratories to acquire and apply the latest innovations in the field.

Therefore, it would be beneficial to develop regional testing laboratories which could cover a wide range of tests, according to the needs of doctors and the interests of European citizens.

What measures does the Commission envisage to support the development of regional medical testing laboratories, including cross-border cooperation projects, to provide citizens with the most adequate healthcare access possible in order to prevent diseases and reduce the costs of further medical assistance?

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

According to the provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Art. 168), the Commission encourages cooperation between Member States to improve, *inter alia*, the complementarity of their health services while respecting the principle of subsidiarity in the field of public health and healthcare systems.

The directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare ([1]) provides a further legal basis to work on cross-border cooperation. Under Article 10 of this directive, Member States shall render mutual assistance and cooperate and the Commission is to encourage Member States to cooperate, particularly in cross-border healthcare provision in border regions. The Commission will discuss with Member States how best to fulfil this mandate.

Article 12 of the directive further confers powers to the Commission to support the development of European Reference Networks in the Member States to improve access to diagnosis and high-quality healthcare to patients with conditions requiring a specific concentration of resources or expertise. The networks will be based on the voluntary participation of their members and the Commission is currently developing a list of criteria and conditions that such networks and involved healthcare providers need to fulfil. Medical laboratories are one of the areas which can be considered in this context when establishing such Networks once the legal acts on the criteria and conditions are adopted.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:088:0045:0065:EN:PDF.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003889/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(13 aprilie 2012)

Subiect: Parteneriate pentru mobilitatea persoanelor în vârstă

Statele membre încearcă, în ultima perioadă, să găsească soluții pentru a îmbunătăți măsurile privind sprijinul persoanelor în vârstă cu mobilitate redusă și o mai bună coordonare a măsurilor sociale și medico — sociale de sprijinire a acestora.

Se încearcă totodată aplicarea de măsuri care vizează reducerea numărului de zile de spitalizare a acestor persoane, pentru a evita un impact negativ asupra sănătății lor fizice și mentale, concomitent cu atragerea și implicarea în acțiuni la nivel local în comunitățile de reședință și schimburi de experiență între generații.

Cum intenționează să sprijine Comisia lansarea unor proiecte pilot privind identificarea unor noi măsuri aplicabile în viitor pentru sprijinirea persoanelor în vârstă cu mobilitate redusă și dezvoltarea ulterioară a acestor proiecte la nivel european, pe baza schimbului de bune practici.

Răspuns dat de dl. Dalli în numele Comisiei
(19 iunie 2012)

2012 a fost declarat „Anul european al îmbătrânirii active și al solidarității între generații". Inițiativa vizează să încurajeze factorii de decizie politică și părțile interesate să ia măsuri în scopul de a promova îmbătrânirea activă și de a consolida solidaritatea între generații, oferind lucrătorilor mai în vârstă șanse mai mari pe piața muncii, asigurând o mai bună recunoaștere a contribuției aduse societății de persoanele în vârstă și oferindu-le acestora condiții mai bune și posibilitatea de a lua decizii, pe măsură ce îmbătrânesc, pentru a deține controlul asupra propriilor vieți cât mai mult timp posibil.

Mai mult, în 2010, Comisia a lansat Parteneriatul european pentru inovare privind îmbătrânirea activă și în condiții bune de sănătate. Au fost stabilite șase domenii prioritare de acțiune, unul dintre acestea fiind dezvoltarea, în cadrul parteneriatului european pentru inovare, a unor soluții TIC pentru a ajuta persoanele în vârstă să rămână independente, mai active și mobile pentru mai mult timp. Un alt domeniu se referă la promovarea inovării pentru crearea unor clădiri, orașe și medii accesibile și adaptate persoanelor în vârstă. Până la 31 mai 2012, părțile interesate au prezentat un număr ridicat de angajamente în aceste domenii, care vor fi continuate pentru a obține primele rezultate până la sfârșitul anului 2013.

În sfârșit, se oferă, de asemenea, sprijin persoanelor cu mobilitate redusă, inclusiv persoanelor în vârstă, în cadrul Strategiei europene pentru persoanele cu handicap pentru perioada 2010-2020, în special sub forma unui „Act european privind accesibilitatea". Acest document sprijină dezvoltarea unei piețe funcționale pentru bunuri și servicii accesibile, definitivarea cadrului juridic privind drepturile persoanelor cu mobilitate redusă cu privire la toate modurile de transport relevante și abordează accesibilitatea mediului construit. Acțiunile au drept scop, de asemenea, să amelioreze participarea persoanelor cu mobilitate redusă în societate și să promoveze incluziunea socială.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003889/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Mobility partnerships for the elderly

The Member States have recently been trying to find solutions to improve measures for assisting elderly people with reduced mobility and to better coordinate social and medico-social measures for this purpose.

Efforts are also being made to apply measures to reduce the number of days for which these people are hospitalised, in order to avoid a negative impact on their physical and mental health, while encouraging them to participate in the local activities of residential communities and promoting the sharing of experiences between generations.

How does the Commission intend to encourage the launching of pilot projects to identify new initiatives which could be taken in future to help elderly people with reduced mobility and the subsequent development of these projects at a European level, on the basis of an exchange of best practice?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2012)

2012 has been declared as European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. It seeks to encourage policymakers and stakeholders to take action with the aim of creating better opportunities for active ageing and strengthening solidarity between generations by giving older workers better chances in the labour market, ensuring greater recognition of what older people bring to society and create better conditions for them, and empowering people as they age so that they can remain in charge of their own lives as long as possible.

Furthermore, in 2010 the Commission has launched the European Innovation Partnership (ICT) on Active and Healthy Ageing. Six priority action areas have been agreed, one of which are actions developing ICT solutions to help older people stay independent, more active and mobile for longer. Another area concerns the promotion of innovation for age-friendly and accessible buildings, cities and environments. By 31 May 2012, stakeholders have submitted a high number of commitments in these areas which now will be taken forward in order to achieve first results by end of 2013.

Finally, support for persons with reduced mobility, including older people, is also provided in the context of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 in particular in the form of a 'European Accessibility Act'. This act supports the development of a well-functioning market in accessible goods and services, the completion of the legal framework addressing rights of persons with reduced mobility in all relevant modes of transport, and addresses accessibility in the built environment. Actions aim also to improve the participation of persons with reduced mobility in society and to promote social inclusion.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-003890/12
Komisijai
Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE)
(2012 m. balandžio 13 d.)

Tema: Ignalinos atominė elektrinė Lietuvoje. Papildomas finansavimas eksploatavimui nutraukti

Lietuva šiuo metu nutraukia Ignalinos atominės elektrinės eksploatavimą pagal Stojimo sutarties 4 protokolą. Reaktorius buvo sustabdytas laikantis nustatytų terminų; vis dėlto eksploatavimo nutraukimo darbai turi būti atlikti per 2014-2020 m. ir yra daugiausia susiję su radioaktyviųjų atliekų tvarkymu ir saugojimu. Lietuvos Vyriausybė kreipėsi į Komisiją dėl papildomo finansavimo, kurio reikia, kad būtų visiškai nutrauktas Ignalinos atominės elektrinės eksploatavimas, problemos. Tačiau dabartiniame Komisijos pasiūlyme dėl 2014-2020 m. daugiametės finansinės programos aptariama tik gana ribota likusios finansinės naštos, atsirandančios dėl Ignalinos atominės elektrinės eksploatavimo nutraukimo, apimtis. Todėl prašyčiau Komisijos man pranešti:

1. Kokiais argumentais remdamasi Komisija pasiūlė apriboti finansinę paramą Ignalinos programai tiek kiekio (210 mln. EUR arba beveik 15 proc. nustatyto trūkstamo finansavimo), tiek trukmės (12 metų prieš planuotą galutinę eksploatavimo nutraukimo datą) atžvilgiu?

– Ar galėtų Komisija pateikti makroekonominę analizę, kuria remiantis buvo nuspręsta dėl Lietuvos pajėgumo užbaigti Ignalinos atominės elektrinės eksploatavimo nutraukimą naudojant nuosavus išteklius?

– Prašau pateikti man išsamią metodiką, taikytą apskaičiuoti pasiūlytai 210 mln. EUR sumai eksploatavimo nutraukimui pagal Ignalinos programą finansuoti.

2. Kalbant apie Komisijos reglamento projektą, kaip pakeisti bendri Ignalinos programos tikslai (žr. 2 straipsnio 1 dalį) ir mažesnė numatytos veiklos apimtis atitinka eksploatavimo nutraukimo apibrėžtį, kurią Komisija pateikė 2006 m. spalio 24 d. rekomendacijoje 2006/851/Euratomas dėl branduolinių įrenginių eksploatavimui nutraukti, panaudotam kurui ir radioaktyviosioms atliekoms tvarkyti skirtų finansinių išteklių valdymo ([1])?

3. Oficialus įsipareigojimas teikti pakankamą papildomą finansinę paramą Ignalinos atominės elektrinės eksploatavimui nutraukti pagal išsamias 4 protokolo nuostatas buvo politinis sprendimas, kurį priėmė valstybės narės, kaip Stojimo sutarties aukštosios susitariančiosios šalys. Todėl norėčiau žinoti, kada, kokiame forume ir kaip valstybės narės šį sprendimą pakeitė.

– Kokiu teisiniu pagrindu grindžiamas Komisijos pasiūlymas sumažinti Ignalinos programos remtinos veiklos apimtį?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. gegužės 21 d.)

1. Komisija norėtų atkreipti gerbiamojo Parlamento nario dėmesį į savo atsakymą į rašytinį M. Beňová pateiktą klausimą E-011988/2011.

Daugiau informacijos apie išsamią motyvaciją galima rasti Poveikio vertinime, pridedamame prie Komisijos pasiūlymo dėl Tarybos reglamento dėl Sąjungos paramos Bulgarijos, Lietuvos ir Slovakijos branduolinių reaktorių eksploatavimo nutraukimo pagalbos programoms ([2]).

2. Pagal Tarybos direktyvas 2009/71/Euratomas ([3]) ir 2011/70/Euratomas ([4]) valstybės narės yra atsakingos už branduolinę saugą ir saugų panaudoto kuro bei radioaktyviųjų atliekų tvarkymą, taip pat už eksploatavimo nutraukimą. Pirmiau minėtame siūlomame reglamente apibrėžti bendrieji ir konkretūs ES paramos tikslai siekiant paremti valstybės narės pastangas nutraukti Ignalinos atominės elektrinės veiklą.

3. Siūlomas reglamentas visiškai atitinka Stojimo sutarties nuostatas.

([1]) OL L 330, 2006 11 28, p. 31.
([2]) SEC(2011) 1387 galutinis; http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/decommissioning/doc/sec_2011_1387.pdf
([3]) OL L 172.
([4]) OL L 199.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003890/12
to the Commission
Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant in Lithuania — additional financing for decommissioning

Lithuania is in the process of decommissioning the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) in line with Protocol 4 of the Accession Treaty. The reactor was closed down in accordance with the deadlines set; however, decommissioning works are to be carried out over the 2014-2020 period and relate mainly to the management and storage of radioactive waste. The problem of the additional financing required in order to complete the full decommissioning of the Ignalina NPP has been referred by the Lithuanian Government to the Commission. However, the current Commission proposal for the MFF 2014-2020 addresses only to a rather limited extent the remaining financial burden arising from the decommissioning of the Ignalina NPP. In relation to the above, could the Commission please let me know,

1. What considerations led to the Commission's proposal to limit the level of financial support for the Ignalina Programme in terms of both amount (EUR 210 million or approximately 15% of the estimated gap in funding) and duration (12 years before the planned end date for the decommissioning)?

— Could the Commission provide me with the macroeconomic analysis on the basis of which the conclusion was drawn as to Lithuania's ability to complete the decommissioning of the Ignalina NPP using its own resources?

— Please provide me with the detailed methodology used to calculate the proposed sum of EUR 210 million in funding for the decommissioning under the Ignalina Programme.

2. With reference to the Commission's draft regulation, how do the changed overall objectives of the Ignalina Programme (see Article 2(1)) and the reduced scope of the activities foreseen comply with the definition of decommissioning provided by the Commission in its own Recommendation 2006/851/Euratom of 24 October 2006 on the management of financial resources for the decommissioning of nuclear installations, spent fuel and radioactive waste ([1])?

3. The solemn commitment to provide adequate additional financial assistance for the decommissioning of the Ignalina NPP, in accordance with the detailed provisions of Protocol 4, was a political decision made by the Member States as the High Contracting Parties to the Accession Treaty. Therefore, I would like to know when, in which forum, and how, this decision was changed by the Member States.

— What is the legal basis for the Commission's proposed reduction in the scope of eligible activities under the Ignalina Programme?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2012)

1. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to the Written Question E-011988/2011 by Ms Beňová.

More information about the detailed reasoning can be found in the impact assessment accompanying the Commission's Proposal for a Council Regulation on Union support for the nuclear decommissioning assistance programmes in Bulgaria, Lithuania and Slovakia ([2]).

2. In accordance with Council Directives 2009/71/Euratom ([3]) and 2011/70/Euratom ([4]), Member States are ultimately responsible for nuclear safety as well as for the safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste, including decommissioning. The aforementioned proposed Regulation defines the overall and specific objectives for the EU assistance as support to the Member State's efforts for the decommissioning of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant (INPP).

3. The proposed Regulation is in full accordance with the provisions of the Accession Treaty.

([1]) OJ L 330, 28.11.2006, p. 31.
([2]) SEC(2011)1387 final; see at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/decommissioning/doc/sec_2011_1387.pdf
([3]) OJ L 172.
([4]) OJ L 199.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003891/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(13. april 2012)

Om: Lønloftet i forbindelse med EU's program for livslang læring

I Kommissionens årlige rapport om tilskud i henhold til programmet for livslang læring har man valgt at reducere det individuelle loft for lønninger i visse lande betragteligt. I Kommissionens løntabel for perioden 2008-2012 er Danmarks lønloftniveau eksempelvis faldet drastisk fra 419 til 284 EUR per dag i kategorien »Uddannelse af forskere og lærere«. Til sammenligning er Frankrig vurderet til et væsentligt højere lønloft, da de kun er gået fra 359 til 351 EUR per dag.

Hvis Kommissionen vælger at fastholde disse tal og dermed de store forskelle mellem landene i forhold til lønloftet, vil det få den konsekvens, at mange danske institutioner i 2012 helt vil undlade at søge om ekstern finansiering til deres udviklingsprojekter.

— Hvad er Kommissionens bevæggrund for ændringerne i lønlofterne, særligt i forhold til de danske lønloft taget udviklingen i det generelle lønindeks i betragtning?

— Vil Kommissionen på baggrund af de ovenstående fakta i dens program for livslang læring vil Kommissionen overveje at revurdere de nationale lønlofter, så de igen kommer til at modsvare de realistiske niveauer i EU's medlemslande?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Androulla Vassiliou
(21. juni 2012)

I overensstemmelse med finansforordningen (artikel 108a i finansforordningen og artikel 181 i gennemførelsesbestemmelserne) og for at sikre en forsvarlig økonomisk forvaltning blev de maksimale støtteberettigede dagsatser for personaleomkostninger ajourført for 2012 og 2013 ved afgørelse KOM(2011)5502 af 4. august 2011 ([1]) om det årlige arbejdsprogram for livslang læring for 2012, som ændret ved afgørelse KOM(2011)9520 af 20. december 2011 ([2]) og KOM(2012)1823 af 23. marts 2012 ([3]).

De er baseret på data fra Eurostat og de nationale statistiske kontorer for at sikre pålidelighed og datakohærens. Der er blevet anvendt de samme procedurer for beregning af de daglige personaleomkostninger i alle lande, der deltager i programmet for livslang læring. Den foreslåede metode anses for at være forsvarlig og konsekvent, og beregningen anses for at være korrekt.

Sammenlignet med 2011 er visse satser blevet sænket, og en række medlemsstater har givet udtryk for betænkeligheder vedrørende dette punkt i programmets gennemførelse.

Som aftalt med udvalget for programmet for livslang læring er Kommissionen i færd med at undersøge muligheden for at ajourføre de daglige personaleomkostninger inden for rammerne af arbejdsprogrammet for 2013 under programmet for livslang læring for at tage hensyn til de betænkeligheder vedrørende nedsættelse af satserne fra 2011 til 2012, som en række medlemsstater har givet udtryk for.

([1]) KOM(2011)5502 af 4. august 2011: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/documents/calls/c_2011_5502.pdf
([2]) KOM(2011)9520 af 20. december 2011: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/documents/calls/c_2011_9520.pdf
([3]) KOM(2012)1823 af 23. marts 2012: : http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/documents/calls/c_2012_1823.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003891/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: Pay ceilings for the EU lifelong learning programme

In the Commission's annual report on subsidies for the programme for lifelong learning, it has been decided to lower the individual pay ceilings significantly for certain countries. In the Commission's pay table for the period 2008-2012, the pay ceiling for Denmark has, for example, fallen drastically from EUR 419 to EUR 284 per day in the category 'Education of researchers and teachers'. In comparison, France has been given a significantly higher pay ceiling, reduced only from EUR 359 to EUR 351 per day.

If the Commission chooses to continue with these figures, and thus with the great differences between countries with regard to the pay ceiling, the consequence will be that in 2012, many Danish institutions will not bother to seek external financing for their development projects.

— What is the Commission's motive for the changes in the pay ceilings, in particular as regards the Danish ceiling and taking into account movements in the general pay index?

— Based on the above facts concerning its lifelong learning programme, will the Commission consider re-evaluating the national pay ceilings so that they once again realistically reflect levels in Member States?

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

In conformity with the Financial Regulation (Article 108a FR and Article 181 IR) and in order to ensure sound financial management, the 'Maximum eligible daily rates for staff costs' were updated for 2012 and 2013, by decision C(2011)5502 of 04 August 2011 ([1]) on the annual Lifelong Learning Work Programme (LLP) for 2012, as amended by decisions C(2011)9520 of 20 December 2011 ([2]) and C(2012)1823 of 23 March 2012 ([3]).

They were based on data supplied by Eurostat and national statistical offices to ensure reliability and coherence of data. The same procedures for the calculation of daily staff costs have applied to all LLP participating countries. The proposed method has been found to be sound and consistent, and the calculation accurate.

Compared with 2011, some rates have decreased and some Member States have expressed their concern on this point for the implementation of the Programme.

As agreed with the LLP Committee, the Commission is currently exploring the possibility of updating the daily staff costs in the frame of the LLP Work Programme for 2013, in order to take into consideration the concerns expressed by some Member States regarding the reduction in rates from 2011 to 2012.

([1]) C(2011)5502 of 4 August 2011: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/documents/calls/c_2011_5502.pdf
([2]) C(2011)9520 of 20 December 2011: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/documents/calls/c_2011_9520.pdf
([3]) C(2012)1823 of 23 March 2012: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/documents/calls/c_2012_1823.pdf

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003892/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(13. april 2012)

Om: Strategien for vedvarende energi efter 2020

Kommissionen er fortsat i gang med at analysere svarene på den offentlige høring om strategien for vedvarende energi. Resultaterne vil indgå i den kommende meddelelse om EU's strategi for vedvarende energi for perioden efter 2020.

I den offentlige debat ligger der en forventning om, at der i meddelelsen vil blive fastsat et foreløbigt mål for vedvarende energi for medlemsstaterne for 2030.

Er Kommissionen enig i, at et obligatorisk mål for vedvarende energi må understøttes af bindende foreløbige mål og entydige definitioner af, hvad der findes af hindringer for anvendelsen af vedvarende energi, hvilket vil styrke Kommissionens muligheder for at iværksætte overtrædelsesprocedurer i tilfælde af manglende overholdelse? Mener Kommissionen i den sammenhæng, at der er behov for klarere retningslinjer for, hvad der udgør forholdsmæssige og nødvendige foranstaltninger som nævnt i artikel 13 i direktivet om vedvarende energi (2009/28/EF) ([1])?

— Hvordan vil Kommissionen sikre, at de aktuelle forsinkelser i forbindelse med medlemsstaternes projekter om vedvarende energi og den tilknyttede udbygning af infrastrukturen ikke gentager sig i perioden indtil 2030?

— Hvad er Kommissionens henstillinger til sikring af, at det nødvendige lednings- og transmisssionsnet er klar til at sikre gennemførelse af den planlagte udbygning af den vedvarende energi i 2020 som springbræt for 2030?

— Hvad er Kommissionens strategi for bekæmpelse af lovgivningsmæssig og forvaltningsmæssig usikkerhed, som påvirker tiltroen til samt finansieringen af projekter i forbindelse med vedvarende energi?

— Mener Kommissionen, at det er nødvendigt at skelne tydeligere mellem lavemissionsenergi og vedvarende energi for at sikre, at ressourcerne ledes i retning af energikilder, som medvirker til opnåelse af EU's mål omkring vedvarende energi og klimaforandringer?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Günther Oettinger
(30. maj 2012)

Den kommende meddelelse om vedvarende energi vil omhandle behovet for at sikre, at vedvarende energi i Europa integreres fuldt ud i det europæiske energimarked, og fortsætte drøftelserne om passende lovrammer for vedvarende energi efter 2020, inklusive muligheden for at opstille yderligere mål for vedvarende energi.

Artikel 16 i direktiv 2009/28/EF og Kommissionens energiinfrastrukturpakke sigter på at forbedre planlægnings- og udviklingsordningerne for energianlæg og -infrastruktur. Kommissionen vil i sin meddelelse og i opfølgningen heraf overveje, hvilke yderligere foranstaltninger der kan være nødvendige efter 2020.

([1]) EUT L 140 af 5.6.2009, s. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003892/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(13 April 2012)

Subject: The Renewable Energy Strategy post 2020

The Commission is still analysing the responses to the public consultation on the Renewable Energy Strategy, the results of which will feed into the upcoming Communication on the EU's Renewable Energy Strategy for the period post 2020.

In the public debate there is an expectation that the communication will set an interim EU renewable energy target for Member States for 2030.

Does the Commission agree that a mandatory target for renewable energy needs to be backed by binding intermediate targets and clear definitions of what constitute obstacles to the deployment of renewable energy, thus strengthening the Commission's opportunity to launch infringement procedures in cases of non-compliance? In this regard, does the Commission believe that there is a need for clearer guidelines on what constitutes proportionate and necessary measures within the meaning of Article 13 of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) ([1])?

— How will the Commission ensure that the current delays in Member States' renewable energy projects and related infrastructure build-out do not reoccur within a 2030 framework?

— What are the Commission's recommendations on how to ensure that the grid and transmission lines needed are in place to carry the planned renewable energy build-out by 2020, as a stepping stone towards 2030?

— What is the Commission's strategy to fight regulatory instability affecting business case certainty and project finance for renewable energy?

— Does the Commission believe it is necessary to develop a clearer distinction between low-carbon and renewable energy to ensure that resources are directed towards energy sources that contribute to reaching the EU's renewable energy and climate change targets?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2012)

The forthcoming Communication on renewable energy will address the need to ensure that renewable energy in Europe is fully integrated into the European energy market, and continue the discussion regarding the appropriate regulatory framework for renewable energy post-2020, including the possibility of further renewable energy targets.

Article 16 of Directive 2009/28/EC as well as the Commission's energy infrastructure package are aimed at improving the planning and development regimes for energy plant and infrastructure. The Commission will reflect on what further measures may be necessary post-2020 in the communication and in its follow-up.

([1]) OJ L 140, 5.6.2009, p. 16.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-003894/12
till kommissionen
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(16 april 2012)

Angående: Märkningsregler för färska ägg och hur man kan undvika livsmedelssvinn utan att äventyra livsmedelssäkerheten

Ägg i europeiska hushåll håller vanligtvis betydligt längre än det bäst-före-datum som måste vara stämplat på kartongen. Samtidigt måste detaljhandlare enligt förordning(EG) nr 853/2004 ta bort färska ägg från butikshyllorna minst sju dagar före bäst-före-datumet. Eftersom konsumenterna oftast helt och hållet förlitar sig på datummärkningen kastas ätbara färska ägg ofta, vilket leder till onödigt livsmedelssvinn och ekonomiska, miljörelaterade och etiska problem. Vi måste få ett slut på detta onödiga svinn, utan att äventyra livsmedelssäkerheten.

1. I förordning (EG) nr 589/2008 fastställs datum för minsta hållbarhetstid till högst 28 dagar efter värpdagen. Dessa stränga regler har instiftats på grund av risken för salmonellabakterier. Det är naturligtvis ytterst viktigt att förhindra att salmonellasmittade ägg släpps ut på EU:s marknad, men det finns redan en regel (förordning (EG) nr 2160/2003) som fastställer att alla ägg som släpps ut på EU:s marknad måste testas med avseende på salmonella. Är inte denna regel tillräcklig för att säkerställa att de ägg som säljs är säkra? Vad gör kommissionen för att se till att denna regel efterlevs och genomförs fullt ut av nationella myndigheter?

2. Situationen när det gäller salmonella varierar inom EU. Sättet att förvara ägg skiljer sig också åt beroende på de olika ländernas livsmedelstraditioner. Mot bakgrund av detta undrar jag om det inte vore rimligt att låta färska ägg omfattas av den allmänna lagstiftningen för livsmedelssäkerhet? Det skulle innebära att livsmedelsföretagarna själva, efter att ha testat äggen med avseende på salmonella, fastställer lämpligt utgångsdatum precis som för andra livsmedelsprodukter. Har kommissionen genomfört en översyn för att försäkra sig om att det, med tanke på den aktuella situationen när det gäller salmonella inom EU, fortfarande är motiverat att ha dessa stränga märkningsregler?

3. Konsumentinformation är avgörande när det gäller att minska livsmedelssvinnet. Vad gör kommissionen, via de nationella livsmedelsmyndigheterna, för att se till att konsumenterna informeras om de bästa sätten att förvara ägg (dvs. i kylskåp) och om vikten av att använda sig av sunt förnuft för att avgöra om de är ätbara? Vad gör kommissionen för att i enlighet med förordning (EG) nr 853/2004 informera livsmedelsföretagen om tillåtna metoder att använda färska ägg som inte kan säljas, till framställning av bearbetade produkter, så att de inte kastas?

4. Vad tänker kommissionen göra för att minska äggsvinnet? Bör inte kommissionen se över reglerna i fråga om handelsnormer för ägg, för att se till att de befintliga reglerna blir mer konsekventa och bidrar till att minska livsmedelssvinnet, samtidigt som livsmedelssäkerheten garanteras?

Svar från Dacian Cioloş på kommissionens vägnar
(19 juni 2012)

I förordning (EG) nr 589/2008 om tillämpningsföreskrifter för rådets förordning (EG) nr 1234/2007 när det gäller handelsnormerna för ägg ([1]) fastställs bäst-föredatumet ([2]) för ägg märkta som ”klass A/färska” till 28 dagar från värpningen: denna tidsfrist garanterar att äggen behåller sina specifika kvalitetsegenskaper. Bäst-föredatumet är kopplat till kvalitetsparametrar och inte till förekomsten av salmonella i bestånd av värphönor.

Eftersom det på EU-nivå inte finns några temperaturbestämmelser för förvaring av ägg, och i syfte att garantera livsmedelssäkerheten har tidsfristen för sista försäljningsdag fastställts till 21 dagar inom ramen för hygienförordningen ([3]). Detta innebär att ägg endast får säljas till konsumenterna inom en tidsfrist på maximalt 21 dagar efter värpningen. Ägg som överskridit sista försäljningsdatumet får emellertid överföras till äggbearbetningsindustrin för framställning av äggprodukter. Medlemsstaternas kontrollorgan kontrollerar att hygienbestämmelser och saluföringsregler efterlevs.

Eftersom det inte finns några harmoniserade bestämmelser om lagringstemperatur för ägg på EU-nivå skulle det kunna leda till ökade livsmedelssäkerhetsrisker om man lät livsmedelsföretagare bestämma sista försäljningsdag (sista dagen då produkten får säljas) för ägg i klass A/färska, inte minst med tanke på den skiftande förekomsten av salmonella i betånden av värphönor i EU.

([1]) EUT L 163, 24.6.2008, s. 6.
([2]) Artikel 2 i förordning (EG) nr 589/2008 om kvalitetsegenskaper för ägg.
([3]) Bilaga III, avsnitt X, kapitel I, punkt 3, till förordning (EG) nr 852/2004.

Kommissionen har åtagit sig att undersöka hur man bäst kan undvika slöseri med livsmedel genom hela livsmedelskedjan. Förvirring avseende datummärkning är en viktig orsak till livsmedelsslöseri, och därflör kommer kommissionen att undersöka hur man bäst informerar om skullnaden mellan ”bäst-föredatum” och ”sista försäljningsdag”.

Förordning (EG) nr 589/2008 har nyligen setts över. Ytterligare ändringar skulle behöva analyseras och skulle eventuellt inte få stöd hos medlemsstaterna och näringslivet. Kommissionen har för närvarande inga planer på att genomföra en ny översyn.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003894/12
to the Commission
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Labelling rules for fresh eggs: how to avoid food waste without compromising food safety

Eggs kept in European households usually stay fresh considerably beyond their best-before date, which must be stamped on the box. At the same time, Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 requires retailers to take fresh eggs off the shelves at least seven days prior to their best-before date. Since consumers often rely solely on the date labelling, edible fresh eggs are frequently thrown away, leading to unnecessary food waste which causes economic, environmental and ethical problems. We must find ways to stop this avoidable waste, without compromising food safety.

1. Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 fixes the date of minimum durability to no more than 28 days after laying. These stringent rules are due to the salmonella bacteria risk. While it is of course crucial to prevent eggs containing salmonella from being put on the European market, there is already a rule in existence (Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003) stipulating that all eggs placed on the EU market must be tested for salmonella. Is this rule not sufficient to ensure that eggs being sold are safe? What is the Commission doing to ensure that this rule is fully respected and implemented by national authorities?

2. The situation regarding salmonella varies throughout the EU. The way eggs are preserved also differs according to food traditions. In light of this, would it not be reasonable for fresh eggs to be covered by general food safety legislation, i.e. for food business operators to determine and decide for themselves the suitable expiry date, as is the case for other food products, after having tested the eggs for salmonella? Has the Commission conducted a review to ascertain whether the current salmonella situation in the EU still justifies these stringent labelling rules?

3. Consumer information is crucial to reducing food waste. What is the Commission doing, through the national food authorities, to ensure that consumers are properly informed about the best ways of preserving eggs (e.g. under refrigeration) and on the importance of using common sense to determine their edibility? What is the Commission doing to inform food businesses about authorised ways, in line with Regulation (EC) No 853/2004, of using fresh eggs that cannot be sold in the elaboration of processed products, so that they are not thrown away?

4. Finally, how does the Commission intend to reduce egg waste? Would it not be appropriate for the Commission to review the rules on marketing standards for eggs, in order to make the existing rules more coherent and conducive to reducing food waste, while continuing to guarantee food safety?

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

Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 on the marketing of eggs ([1]) fixes the Best-Before date ([2]) applicable to eggs marketed as class 'A/Fresh' at 28 days from laying; this period grants that an egg retains its specific quality properties. The Best-Before date is in fact linked to quality parameters and not to the Salmonella situation in flocks of laying hens.

Since there are no temperature requirements at EU level on the conservation of eggs and in order to ensure food safety, a Sell-by-date is fixed at 21 days within the Hygiene Regulation ([3]). This means that eggs can only be sold to the consumers within a maximum time limit of 21 days after laying. However, the eggs having gone beyond the Sell-By date, may be diverted to the egg processing industry for the production of egg-products. The inspection services of Member States carry out checks on compliance with the hygiene rules and marketing standards.

In absence of harmonised temperature requirements for storage of eggs at EU level, the possibility to allow the food business operator to decide on the suitable Sell-by-date (expiry date for selling) for class 'A/Fresh' eggs could lead to an increased food safety risk, considering the different Salmonella situation in flocks of laying hens in the Member States.

The Commission committed to assess how best to limit food waste throughout the entire food chain. As confusion about date labelling is an important cause of food waste, the Commission will see how to best communicate about the difference between 'best before' and 'use by' dates.

([1]) OJ L 163, 24.6.2008, p. 6.
([2]) Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 on the marketing of eggs.
([3]) Point 3 of Chapter I of Section X of Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.

Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 has been recently revised. Any further amendment would have to be assessed and might also not find the support of Member States and the industry. The Commission does not intend at this stage to undertake a further review.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003895/12
al Consejo
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Inversión ferroviaria en los presupuestos de España para 2012

En los presupuestos del Estado para el año 2012 presentados esta semana, el Gobierno español ha decidido invertir 1 217 millones de euros en la construcción de una línea de alta velocidad hacia Galicia ([1]). El modelo de alta velocidad español tiene pérdidas generalizadas (su gestor, ADIF, ha tenido pérdidas por valor de 8 745 millones de euros) y diversos estudios han puesto en cuestión la viabilidad económica de ciertas inversiones ferroviarias si no se cumplen determinados requisitos ([2]).

Por otro lado, la Comisión Europea presentó el 19 de octubre sus prioridades para la Red de Transporte Transeuropea entre las cuales se encuentra la construcción del llamado «corredor mediterráneo» para trenes de mercancías, que debe comunicar la costa mediterránea del Estado español con el resto de Europa. Este proyecto es una de las iniciativas estrella de la Comisión Europea para que el continente vuelva en los próximos años a un crecimiento sostenido profundizando en el mercado único. Esta decisión de la Comisión Europea ha sido ratificada por el Consejo Europeo en su reunión del día 22 de marzo ([3]).

A pesar de ello, el Gobierno español no ha incluido en los presupuestos para el año 2012 ninguna partida relevante para construir tal corredor ([4]).

— ¿Cree el Consejo que estos presupuestos son coherentes con las prioridades para transporte ferroviario de mercancías marcadas por la Comisión y el Consejo Europeo?

— ¿Piensa el Consejo emitir alguna recomendación al respecto en el marco del Semestre Europeo?

Respuesta
(22 de junio de 2012)

No le corresponde al Consejo hacer observaciones sobre las elecciones políticas que hacen los gobiernos de los Estados miembros. Es más, la cuestión de la coherencia de un presupuesto nacional con las prioridades incluidas en el enfoque general sobre las nuevas orientaciones para el desarrollo de la red transeuropea de transporte acordadas por el Consejo el 22 de marzo de 2012 ([5]) no entra en la esfera de competencias del Consejo.

En consecuencia, el Consejo no tiene intención de emitir una recomendación sobre la cuestión que plantea Su Señoría.

([1]) http://www.eleconomista.es/empresas-finanzas/noticias/3885260/04/12/Pastor-Blinda-el-AVE-gallego-de-cara-a-las-autonomicas.html
([2]) http://www.ub.edu/graap/bel.htm
([3]) http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/sociedad/ratifica-corredor-mediterraneo-descarta-central-1574702.
([4]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/04/03/catalunya/1333483592_656427.html
([5]) 7847/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003895/12
to the Council
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Railway investment in Spain's budget for 2012

In its 2012 national budget, which was presented this week, the Spanish Government has decided to allocate EUR 1 217 billion to the construction of a high-speed rail line to Galicia ([1]). Spain's high-speed rail system runs at an overall loss (its manager, ADIF, has suffered losses of EUR 8 745 billion) and several studies have questioned the economic viability of certain railway investments if specific requirements are not met ([2]).

On 19 October 2011 the Commission presented its priorities for the Trans-European Transport Network, which include construction of the so-called 'Mediterranean corridor' for freight trains, to connect the Spanish Mediterranean coast with the rest of Europe. This project is one of the Commission's flagship initiatives to return the continent to sustained growth in the coming years by strengthening the single market. The Commission's decision was ratified by the European Council at its meeting of 22 March 2012 ([3]).

Despite this, the Spanish Government has not included any item related to building such a corridor in its budget for 2012 ([4]).

— Does the Council believe that this national budget is consistent with the priorities for rail freight transport set out by the Commission and the European Council?

— Does the Council intend to issue a recommendation on this, within the framework of the European Semester?

Reply
(22 June 2012)

It is not for the Council to comment on the policy choices made by Member States' governments. Indeed, the question of the consistency of a national budget with the priorities included in the general approach on new guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) agreed by the Council on 22 March 2012 ([5]) does not fall within the sphere of competence of the Council.

As a result, the Council does not intend to issue a recommendation on the question raised by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://www.eleconomista.es/empresas-finanzas/noticias/3885260/04/12/Pastor-Blinda-el-AVE-gallego-de-cara-a-las-autonomicas.html
([2]) http://www.ub.edu/graap/bel.htm
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([4]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/04/03/catalunya/1333483592_656427.html
([5]) 7847/12.

(Versión española)

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(16 de abril de 2012)

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A pesar de ello, el Gobierno español no ha incluido en los presupuestos para el año 2012 ninguna partida relevante para construir tal corredor ([4]).

— ¿Cree la Comisión que estos presupuestos son coherentes con las prioridades para transporte ferroviario de mercancías marcadas por la Comisión y el Consejo Europeo?

— ¿Piensa la Comisión emitir alguna recomendación al respecto en el marco del Semestre Europeo?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de mayo de 2012)

La Comisión coincide con Su Señoría en que las prioridades fundamentales para lograr el crecimiento mediante las infraestructuras de transporte en España están vinculadas a la realización de corredores interoperables y a la interconexión de nodos y modos en estos corredores. Ello se logrará en concreto conectando la red nacional española de ferrocarril con el conjunto de la red transeuropea de transporte a lo largo de los corredores mediterráneo y atlántico.

A este respecto, debe señalarse que las autoridades españolas han iniciado recientemente las obras de tres proyectos cruciales del corredor mediterráneo, concretamente la sección Barcelona-Francia.

Así las cosas, la Comisión presta especial importancia a la ejecución del corredor ferroviario de mercancías 4 (el «corredor atlántico»), que tiene que estar establecido en noviembre de 2013.

En el marco del Semestre europeo en curso, la Comisión está realizando una cuidadosa evaluación de los avances y prioridades del tramo de la red transeuropea de transportes correspondiente a España.

Teniendo presente la actual situación de las finanzas públicas en España, es de vital importancia realizar un análisis costo-beneficio plenamente transparente de todo nuevo proyecto de infraestructuras. España debe concentrar la inversión en infraestructuras en proyectos que aporten un valor añadido considerable, como la terminación de los corredores fundamentales para que estén vinculados estrechamente y de manera más eficaz al mercado interior, o la interconexión de polos clave teniendo en cuenta el elevado coste de oportunidad de los fondos públicos.

([1]) http://www.eleconomista.es/empresas-finanzas/noticias/3885260/04/12/Pastor-Blinda-el-AVE-gallego-de-cara-a-las-autonomicas.html
([2]) http://www.ub.edu/graap/bel.htm
([3]) http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/sociedad/ratifica-corredor-mediterraneo-descarta-central-1574702.
([4]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/04/03/catalunya/1333483592_656427.html

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Despite this, the Spanish Government has not included any item related to building such a corridor in its budget for 2012 ([4]).

— Does the Commission believe that this national budget is consistent with the priorities for rail freight transport set out by the Commission and the European Council?

— Does the Commission intend to issue a recommendation on this, within the framework of the European Semester?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2012)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the key priorities to deliver growth through transport infrastructure in Spain are related to the deployment of interoperable corridors, as well as to the interconnection of nodes and modes along these corridors. This shall be realised more specifically by connecting the Spanish national rail network with the whole trans-European transport network along the Mediterranean and Atlantic Corridors.

In this respect, it has to be highlighted that the Spanish authorities recently launched the works for three crucial projects along the Mediterranean Corridor on the section Barcelona — France.

In this context the Commission attaches particular importance to the implementation of Rail Freight Corridor 4 (the 'Atlantic Corridor)' which has to be established by November 2013.

The Commission is carefully assessing progress and priorities along the trans-European transport network in Spain in the framework of the ongoing European Semester.

Given the current state of public finances in Spain, it is critically important to carry out a fully transparent cost-benefit analysis for any new infrastructure project. An issue for Spain is to concentrate infrastructure investment to projects providing a substantial added value such as the completion of the key corridors to be closely and more efficiently linked to the internal market, or the interconnection of key poles taking into account the high opportunity cost of public funds.

([1]) http://www.eleconomista.es/empresas-finanzas/noticias/3885260/04/12/Pastor-Blinda-el-AVE-gallego-de-cara-a-las-autonomicas.html
([2]) http://www.ub.edu/graap/bel.htm
([3]) http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/sociedad/ratifica-corredor-mediterraneo-descarta-central-1574702.
([4]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/04/03/catalunya/1333483592_656427.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003897/12
al Consejo
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Deuda de las empresas públicas en España

El día 10 de abril los medios de comunicación publicaron los datos relativos a la deuda de las empresas públicas españolas. Esta deuda tiene un valor de 60 000 millones de euros, aunque tan solo tres empresas públicas, RENFE, Adif y Aena, son responsables de casi el 50 % de esta cantidad ([1]).

La deuda de RENFE Operadora asciende a 5 235 millones de euros, la de Adif (Administrador de Infraestructuras Ferroviarias) a 8 745 millones de euros y la de Aena a 15 000 millones de euros.

Esta deuda total equivale al 6 % aproximado del PIB del Estado español. La deuda de las comunidades autónomas asciende a un 12 % del PIB.

— ¿Tiene el Consejo conocimiento de esta situación?

— ¿Tiene en cuenta el Consejo la deuda de las empresas públicas en sus recomendaciones? ¿Cree que el enorme volumen de la deuda de las empresas públicas está relacionado con la gestión centralizada de las infraestructuras, que no tiene en cuenta los análisis de coste-beneficio?

— ¿Piensa el Consejo proponer medidas para que se reduzca esta deuda, que representa casi el 10 % del total de la deuda pública española?

Respuesta
(16 de julio de 2012)

El Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento establece un marco para el examen de los programas de estabilidad o convergencia de todos los Estados miembros, con vistas a garantizar la sostenibilidad de las finanzas públicas. El análisis de las situaciones presupuestarias sobre la base de este Pacto y los planes está basado en datos suministrados por la Comisión Europea (Eurostat), con arreglo a las definiciones y prácticas establecidas en el Sistema Europeo de Cuentas (SEC 95).

El Reglamento (CE) n° 479/2009, de 25 de mayo de 2009, relativo a la aplicación del Protocolo sobre el procedimiento aplicable en caso de déficit excesivo, anejo al Tratado constitutivo de la Comunidad Europea (Versión codificada ([2])), incluye la siguiente definición en su artículo 1, apartado 2, con referencia a códigos SEC específicos y para aclarar qué constituye sector público cuando se abordan datos de déficit y deuda públicos:

«2. Por "público" se entenderá lo perteneciente al sector "administraciones públicas" (S.13), que comprende los subsectores "administración central" (S.1311), "Comunidades Autónomas" (S.1312), "corporaciones locales" (S.1313) y "administraciones de seguridad social" (S.1314), con exclusión de las operaciones comerciales, según se definen en el SEC 95. La exclusión de las operaciones comerciales significa que el sector "administraciones públicas" (S.13) abarca exclusivamente las unidades institucionales que producen, como función principal, servicios no mercantiles.»

La información de los Estados miembros en sus programas de estabilidad y convergencia abarca todos los gastos e ingresos del sector público, incluidas las transacciones con empresas públicas.

El Consejo recibió el último programa de estabilidad de España en abril de 2012 y lo estudiará, junto a los programas de estabilidad o convergencia de todos los demás Estados miembros, de conformidad con las disposiciones del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento y en el contexto del Semestre Europeo. Las recomendaciones del Consejo a España sobre la base de su estudio del último programa de estabilidad se esperan para julio de 2012.

([1]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/economia/1831-trenes-y-aeropuertos-se-comen-mas-de-la-mitad-de-la-deuda-de-las-empresas-publicas.
([2]) DO L 145 de 10.6.2009, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003897/12
to the Council
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Public enterprise debt in Spain

On 10 April 2012, the media published data on Spanish public enterprise debt. The total debt stands at EUR 60 billion, yet just three state enterprises, RENFE, Adif and Aena, are responsible for almost 50% of this amount ([1]).

The national railway operator, RENFE Operadora, has a debt of EUR 5 235 million, Adif, which manages railway infrastructure, has EUR 8 745 million in debt and Aena owes EUR 15 billion.

This total debt is equivalent to approximately 6% of Spain's GDP. The debt owed by the autonomous communities amounts to 12% of GDP.

— Is the Council aware of this situation?

— Does the Council take public enterprise debt into account in its recommendations? Does it believe that this enormous volume of State enterprise debt is related to the centralised management of infrastructure, which fails to take cost-benefit analyses into account?

— Does the Council intend to propose measures to reduce this debt, which represents almost 10% of Spain's total public debt?

Reply
(16 July 2012)

The Stability and Growth Pact sets out a framework for the examination of the stability or convergence programmes of all Member States, with a view to ensuring the sustainability of public finances. The analysis of budgetary positions on the basis of this Pact and plans is based on data provided by the European Commission (Eurostat), in line with the definitions and practices set out in the European system of accounts (ESA 95).

Council Regulation EC) No 479/2009 of May 2009 on the application of the Protocol on the excessive deficit procedure annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community (Codified version ([2])) includes in Article 1, paragraph 2, the following definition, with reference to specific ESA codes, to clarify what constitutes the government sector when dealing with government deficit and debt data:

'2. "Government" means the sector of "general government" (S.13), that is "central government" (S.1311), "state government" (S.1312), "local government" (S.1313) and "social security funds" (S.1314), to the exclusion of commercial operations, as defined in ESA 95. The exclusion of commercial operations means that the sector of "general government" (S.13) comprises only institutional units producing non-market services as their main activity.'

Member States' reporting in their stability and convergence programmes covers all expenditures and revenues of the government sector, including transactions with public enterprises.

The Council received the latest stability programme of Spain in April 2012 and will examine it, along with the stability or convergence programmes of all other Member States, in line with the provisions of the Stability and Growth Pact and in the context of the European Semester. Council recommendations to Spain on the basis of its examination of the latest stability programme are expected in July 2012.

([1]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/economia/1831-trenes-y-aeropuertos-se-comen-mas-de-la-mitad-de-la-deuda-de-las-empresas-publicas.
([2]) OJ L 145, 10.6.2009, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003898/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Deuda de las empresas públicas en España

El día 10 de abril los medios de comunicación publicaron los datos relativos a la deuda de las empresas públicas españolas. Esta deuda tiene un valor de 60 000 millones de euros, aunque tan solo tres empresas públicas, RENFE, Adif y Aena, son responsables de casi el 50 % de esta cantidad ([1]).

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Esta deuda total equivale al 6 % aproximado del PIB del Estado español. La deuda de las comunidades autónomas asciende a un 12 % del PIB.

— ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de esta situación?

— ¿Tiene en cuenta la Comisión la deuda de las empresas públicas en sus recomendaciones? ¿Cree que el enorme volumen de la deuda de las empresas públicas está relacionado con la gestión centralizada de las infraestructuras, que no tiene en cuenta los análisis de coste-beneficio?

— ¿Piensa la Comisión proponer medidas para que se reduzca esta deuda, que representa casi el 10 % del total de la deuda pública española?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2012)

Evidentemente, la Comisión conoce el desglose de la deuda de España. En cualquier caso, las empresas públicas aludidas en la pregunta, Renfe Operadora, Adif y Aena, se clasifican como no pertenecientes a las administraciones públicas. En lo que respecta a la deuda pública, el Consejo recomendó a España, en el marco del Semestre Europeo de 2011, «establecer medidas concretas a fin de apoyar plenamente los objetivos para 2013 y 2014 que lleven al alto ratio de deuda pública a una senda decreciente (…)». Esto supone evidentemente un esfuerzo, sobre todo desde el punto de vista de la reducción del déficit en todos los niveles de la administración, incluidas las empresas públicas y las regiones.

La Comisión no cree que el volumen de la deuda de las empresas públicas guarde relación con la gestión centralizada de la infraestructura. Los últimos datos de la deuda de las empresas públicas, correspondientes al último trimestre de 2011, indican que esta deuda no asciende al 10 %, como su Señoría declara en su tercera pregunta, sino al 5,2 % del PIB. Desglosado este 5,2 % del PIB, el 3 % corresponde a la administración central, el 1,3 % a las comunidades autónomas y el 0,9 % a las corporaciones locales. Esta deuda solo ha aumentado un 0,2 % en el último año respecto al 5,0 % del PIB en el último trimestre de 2011.

Sin embargo, la deuda de las comunidades autónomas ha alcanzado un nivel nunca visto del 13,1 % del PIB en el cuarto trimestre de 2012 y ha aumentado 1,7 puntos respecto al 11,4 % del PIB en el último trimestre de 2011, lo que inquieta a la Comisión. La Comisión ha adoptado nuevas recomendaciones el 30 de mayo de 2012, basadas en la evaluación de los programas nacionales de estabilidad y reforma, y las ha presentado al Consejo.

([1]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/economia/1831-trenes-y-aeropuertos-se-comen-mas-de-la-mitad-de-la-deuda-de-las-empresas-publicas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003898/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: State enterprise debt in Spain

On 10 April 2012, the media published data on Spanish public enterprise debt. The total debt stands at EUR 60 billion, yet just three state enterprises, RENFE, Adif and Aena, are responsible for almost 50% of this amount ([1]).

The national railway operator, RENFE Operadora, has a debt of EUR 5 235 million, Adif, which manages railway infrastructure, has EUR 8 745 million in debt and Aena owes EUR 15 billion.

This total debt is equivalent to approximately 6% of Spain's GDP. The debt owed by the autonomous communities amounts to 12% of GDP.

— Is the Commission aware of this situation?

— Does the Commission take public enterprise debt into account in its recommendations? Does it believe that this enormous volume of State enterprise debt is related to the centralised management of infrastructure, which fails to take cost-benefit analyses into account?

— Does the Commission intend to propose measures to reduce this debt, which represents almost 10% of Spain's total public debt?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2012)

The Commission is obviously aware of the debt breakdown in Spain. In any case, the public corporations mentioned in the question, Renfe Operadora, Adif and Aena are classified outside general government. As regards public debt, Spain was recommended by the Council, as part of the 2011 European Semester, to 'set out concrete measures to fully underpin the targets for 2013 and 2014 which should bring the high public debt ratio on a downward path (…)'. This would obviously imply efforts, particularly in terms of deficit reduction, from all levels of government, including public enterprises and regions.

The Commission does not believe that the volume of public enterprise debt is related to the centralised management of infrastructure. The latest data for the debt of public enterprises is from the last quarter of 2011 and shows that this debt does not amount to 10%, as the honourable member states in his third question, but to 5.2% of GDP. In terms of breakdown of this 5.2% of GDP, 3% corresponds to the central government, 1.3% of GDP to Autonomous Communities and 0.9% to Local Corporations. This debt has hardly increased 0.2 pps of GDP in the last year from the 5.0% of GDP in Q4 2011.

However, Autonomous Communities' debt amounts to a record high 13.1% of GDP in Q4 2012 and has increased by 1.7 pps of GDP (from 11.4% of GDP in Q4 2011), which is a source of concern for the Commission. The new recommendations, based on the assessment of the Stability and National Reform Programmes, were adopted by the Commission on 30 May 2012 and sent to the Council.

([1]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/economia/1831-trenes-y-aeropuertos-se-comen-mas-de-la-mitad-de-la-deuda-de-las-empresas-publicas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003901/12
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006

Following the adoption of Regulation No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods (NHCR) in January 2007, the UK Food Standards Agency published a regulatory impact assessment in June 2007. At that time the Food Standards Agency was fully aware of the majority of health claims used by foods and food supplements on the UK market, having previously conducted an audit of claims in 2003.

The Food Standards Agency's 2007 regulatory impact assessment stated that: 'Most claims are expected to be authorised under the article 13 process, the list of generally accepted claims […] The Commission and European industry representatives foresee most claims on the market as eligible for this list.'

— Does the Commission agree that this represents an accurate summary of expectations after the adoption of the regulation, or were Food Standards Agency officials incorrect?

— If the summary is accurate, why have over 95% of the article 13 health claims assessed to date for substances other than vitamins and minerals been given negative opinions by EFSA?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

In Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 ([1]) the legislators decided that scientific substantiation should be the main aspect to be taken into account for the use of nutrition and health claims, that this should be based on generally accepted scientific evidence, and that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) should have responsibility for the assessment of the scientific substantiation.

The Commission cannot comment on the UK Food Standards Agency regulatory impact assessment. However, any assessment should be seen in context. Discussions with the European industry led the Commission to expect substantially less than 1 000 health claims to be submitted for evaluation. The number of health claims finally submitted by Member States (some 44 000), and that in the consolidated list for assessment by EFSA (some 4 600) could not be foreseen.

In discharging its responsibility EFSA has found that a large number of health claims cannot be substantiated by generally accepted scientific evidence as the evidence submitted did not support a cause and effect relationship between the food and the claimed effect, or that the food was not sufficiently characterised to be assessed, or that the claimed effect was medicinal or not specific enough for an assessment, or because it did not meet the criteria for a beneficial health claim.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:EN:PDF.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003902/12
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Situazione di degrado della Pieve di Pastino

La Pieve di Pastino sorge in un punto particolarmente panoramico all'interno del Parco regionale dei Gessi bolognesi e dei Calanchi dell'Abbadessa, sulle pendici collinari a sud-est di Bologna, e rappresenta un sito di particolare rilevanza naturalistico-ambientale per la Regione Emilia-Romagna.

Della chiesa si ha notizia nei documenti sin dal 1027. Dell'antico complesso rimane oggi l'oratorio, che custodisce sotto le sue fondamenta una cripta medievale di alto valore storico-archeologico. Da qualche decennio di proprietà dell'Università di Bologna, la Pieve è stata progressivamente abbandonata negli ultimi anni. Ciò ha permesso il protrarsi di un decadimento che ora, a causa di una grave crepa strutturale lungo la facciata, sottopone la Pieve ad un imminente rischio di crollo, finora scongiurato solo grazie ai puntelli della Soprintendenza alle Belle Arti. Il Comune non ha potuto procedere all'acquisto della Pieve per mancanza di fondi: la chiesa è perciò tuttora di proprietà dell'Università di Bologna «Alma Mater», che vorrebbe procedere alla vendita a privati, sottoponendo così la Pieve al rischio di essere trasformata in struttura ricettiva o residenziale a causa della sua peculiare ubicazione.

Considerando che quanto finora approntato dagli enti preposti alla gestione del sito non ne ha arrestato il degrado;

considerato quanto precisato dal WWF in un documento appositamente elaborato nel febbraio scorso, ossia il ruolo insostituibile che i Parchi e le riserve naturali, in quanto tali e comprensivamente di tutto ciò che concorre a renderli un patrimonio della cultura paesaggistica, svolgono nella conservazione dell'ambiente e della cultura, e l'importanza dei servizi da essi offerti ad una pluralità di soggetti;

considerando la risoluzione n. 2335 approvata il 28.02.2012 dal Consiglio regionale dell'Emilia-Romagna, per promuovere una tutela trasversale, pubblica e privata, della Pieve, in quanto risorsa non solo ambientale ma anche economica e pubblica;

considerato l'articolo 3, paragrafo 3, del trattato sull'Unione europea;

si chiede alla Commissione:

— se sia a conoscenza della situazione descritta;

— se vi sia già stata una richiesta di fondi all'Unione europea da parte degli enti preposti e, in caso di risposta negativa, quali fondi e programmi sarebbero disponibili per la tutela della Pieve di Pastino.

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2012)

1. La Commissione non era a conoscenza dello stato della Pieve di Pastino.

2. Il programma per la regione Emilia-Romagna, cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, fornisce uno stanziamento complessivo di 70 milioni di euro per la promozione e la valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale e ambientale della regione. Tuttavia, in linea con il principio di gestione condivisa usato per l'amministrazione della politica di coesione, la selezione e l'attuazione dei progetti competono alle autorità nazionali. La Commissione suggerisce pertanto all'onorevole deputato di mettersi direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione responsabile per il programma Emilia-Romagna:

Autorità di Gestione POR FESR Emilia-Romagna
Regione Emilia-Romagna
Viale Aldo Moro, 44
40127 Bologna
e-mail: adgpor@regione.emilia-romagna.it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003902/12
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Pieve di Pastino parish church in a state of decay

Pieve di Pastino parish church stands on a particularly picturesque spot within the Gessi Bolognesi e Calanchi dell'Abbadessa regional park, in the hills south-east of Bologna. It is a particularly important site in natural and environmental terms for the Emilia-Romagna region. The church is mentioned in documents dating as far back as 1027. The oratory still remains from the original building, and under its foundations lies a medieval crypt of great historical and archaeological value. The parish church, which has been owned by the University of Bologna for several decades now, has been gradually abandoned over recent years. As a result, the building has been allowed to continue to deteriorate and now, because of a large structural crack in the façade, it is at risk of imminent collapse; this has been prevented from happening thus far only by props provided by the Monuments and Fine Arts Office. The local authorities have been unable to purchase the building due to a lack of funds, so the church remains the property of the University of Bologna, which would like to sell it to private owners, thus putting the church at risk of being converted into tourist or residential accommodation because of its special location.

The action taken to date by the organisations responsible for managing the site has clearly failed to halt the process of deterioration.

In a document published in February 2012, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) stated that parks and nature reserves play a unique role, both in themselves and in terms of everything that helps make them part of the cultural heritage of our landscapes, in preserving the environment and culture, and that they provide important services to many people.

Furthermore, on 28 February 2012, Emilia-Romagna Regional Council adopted Resolution No 2335 seeking to ensure the conservation of the parish church by a combination of public and private bodies, in view of not just its environmental significance, but also its economic and public importance.

Given the above and with reference to Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union, can the Commission say whether:

— it is aware of the above situation;

— the authorities responsible have already applied for EU funding and if not, which funds and programmes would be available for the protection of the Pieve di Pastino church?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

1. The Commission was not previously aware of the state of the parish church in Pieve di Pastino.

2. The programme for region Emilia-Romagna, which is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, provides a total allocation of EUR 70 million for the promotion and valorisation of the cultural and environmental heritage of the region. However, in line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. The Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority responsible for the Emilia-Romagna programme:

Autorità di Gestione POR FESR Emilia-Romagna
Regione Emilia-Romagna
Viale Aldo Moro, 44
40127 Bologna
E-mail: adgpor@regione.emilia-romagna.it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003903/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Filtri antiparticolato e rischi per la salute dei cittadini

Il dibattito scientifico attorno ai filtri antiparticolato FAP e ai DPF sui veicoli diesel è estremamente vivace e vi sono forti divisioni circa i reali benefici per l'ambiente e per la salute dei cittadini. In particolare, gli studi a favore sostengono che vi sia un reale abbattimento delle polveri PM10 prodotte durante la combustione, quelli contrari confermano tale abbattimento dei PM10 in fase di combustione, in quanto fermati dal filtro, ma di contro sostengono che durante le fasi di rigenerazione automatica dei filtri stessi vengono prodotti particolati più sottili, polveri cancerogene che si depositano più in profondità nei tessuti polmonari in quanto non bloccate dalle prime vie respiratorie né espulse.

— La Commissione è a conoscenza di questo dibattito?

— Reputa essa che la salute dei cittadini possa correre dei rischi per effetto di tali particolati di dimensioni inferiori rispetto ai PM10?

— Ravvisa la necessità di ulteriori studi in materia?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2012)

L'attuale legislazione relativa ai veicoli Euro 5/6 ([1]) veicoli leggeri) e Euro V/VI ([2]) veicoli pesanti) fissa limiti ambiziosi per le emissioni misurabili allo scappamento in relazione alla massa di particolato (PM) e al numero di particelle (PN) la cui formulazione è tecnicamente neutra ma, nella pratica, richiede l'installazione di un filtro antiparticolato diesel (DPF) con flusso a parete che limiti efficacemente non solo PM10 ma anche le diverse particelle più piccole che sono le più pericolose per la salute umana. I benefici che i DPF con flusso a parete comportano per la salute umana non sono messi in dubbio dalle ricerche scientifiche più recenti e la loro efficacia rispetto ai costi è stata dimostrata nel corso di diverse valutazioni d'impatto eseguite in forza della legislazione europea o ad altri fini.

I DPF devono essere rigenerati ossidando la fuliggine che vi si deposita. Ciò può avvenire ricorrendo a una rigenerazione attiva ad alta temperatura (ad esempio postiniezione del carburante nel processo di combustione) o mediante una rigenerazione passiva a bassa temperatura usando filtri catalizzati. È vero che studi recenti hanno rivelato nei filtri catalizzati la formazione di particelle ultrafini a valle delle pareti filtranti. La maggior parte di queste particelle sembra essere volatile, vale a dire non pericolosa per la salute umana stando alle conoscenze scientifiche attuali. Per la loro volatilità e, possibilmente, per le loro dimensioni estremamente piccole tali particelle non sono misurate dalle attuali procedure di omologazione. La Commissione continuerà a seguire le ricerche in corso su tali aspetti e può avviare studi propri per valutare la necessità di estendere, se del caso, la gamma delle particelle misurate nelle procedure di omologazione.

([1]) Regolamento 715/2007/CE, pubblicato su GUUE L171 del 29.06.2007.
([2]) Regolamento 595/2009/CE, pubblicato su GUUE LE 188 del 18.07.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003903/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Particulate filters and risks to public health

The scientific debate on particulate traps (PTs) and diesel particulate filters (DPFs) in diesel vehicles rages on with opinions strongly divided regarding the actual benefits for the environment and public health. In particular, the studies in favour argue that there is a real reduction of PM10 produced during combustion. Those against confirm this reduction, via the filters, of PM10 during the combustion phase, but they also assert that during the automatic filter regeneration phases, finer carcinogenic particles are produced, which are deposited more deeply in the lung tissue as they are not blocked by the upper respiratory tract or expelled.

— Is the Commission aware of this debate?

— Does it believe that citizens may run health risks because of these particles that are smaller than PM10?

— Does it acknowledge the need for further studies in this field?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

The current legislations on Euro 5/6 ([1]) light duty and Euro V/VI ([2]) heavy duty vehicles set ambitious tailpipe emission limits for particulate mass (PM) and particle numbers (PN), which are formulated technically neutral but practically require the installation of wall flow diesel particle filters (DPF) effectively limiting not only PM10 but also the number of smaller particles that are the most dangerous to human health. The benefit of wall flow DPFs for human health is not questioned by today's science and their cost effectiveness has been demonstrated in many impact assessments performed for European legislation and other purposes.

DPFs have to be regenerated by oxidising the soot they collect. This may happen either by active regeneration at high temperatures (e.g. fuel post-injection in the combustion process) or passive regeneration at lower temperatures using catalytically coated filters. It is true that in catalytic filters various recent studies have shown the creation of ultrafine particles downstream of the filtrating walls. Most of these particles seem to be volatile, i.e. not dangerous to human health according to today's scientific knowledge. Due to their volatility and possibly their extremely small size these particles are not measured by the current type approval procedures. The Commission will however continue to monitor the ongoing research in this respect and may launch own studies to evaluate the need for extending the scope of particles measured by type approval procedures, if necessary.

([1]) Regulation 715/2007/EC, published in OJ L 171, 29.6.2007.
([2]) Regulation 595/2009/EC published in OJ L E 188, 18.7.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003905/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Nuove celle supersottili

La corsa per rendere il fotovoltaico più efficiente e più flessibile per qualsiasi tipo di impiego non si arresta. Non passa praticamente settimana senza che giunga, da qualche laboratorio in giro per il mondo, la notizia di una nuova conquista. Le ultime novità che promettono di favorire ulteriormente la diffusione dell'energia solare in un futuro non troppo lontano arrivano, questa volta, dal Giappone e dalla Gran Bretagna.

In una Università di Tokyo è stata presentata la creazione delle celle solari più sottili al mondo, spesse come i fili di seta prodotti dai ragni e così flessibili da poter essere avvolte intorno ad un capello umano. Le celle sono costituite da elettrodi posti su un foglio di plastica e misurano solo 1,9 micrometri di spessore, un decimo delle più sottili celle solari attualmente disponibili. L'invenzione apre la strada a una serie di nuove applicazioni, tra cui la realizzazione di dispositivi elettrici portatili di ricarica o di apparecchiature elettroniche da indossare come capi di abbigliamento. Si tratta di una misura straordinaria che aumenta l'elasticità e riduce il peso, permettendo di realizzare dispositivi indossabili come vestiti che producono energia elettrica dal sole.

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

1. se è a conoscenza della nuova invenzione e se non ritiene che si possa finanziare attraverso il Settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (2007-2013) (FP7).

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

L'innovazione cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare (lo sviluppo di celle solari organiche leggere, supersottili e altamente flessibili ([1])) è stata in parte finanziata nell'ambito del progetto «Soft-Map», che ha beneficiato della sovvenzione del CER destinata a ricercatori avanzati, assegnata al Prof. Seigfried Bauer dell'Università di Linz Johannes Kepler, Austria ([2]).

Come per tutte le priorità tematiche del settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013), i progetti transnazionali di collaborazione sulla ricerca nel fotovoltaico possono essere finanziati dalla Commissione con formule di compartecipazione ai costi, in seguito ad un invito a presentare proposte e conformemente alle disposizioni stabilite nei programmi specifici («Cooperazione») e nei programmi di lavoro («Energia», «Nanoscienze, nanotecnologie, materiali e nuove tecnologie di produzione (NMP)», ecc.). Per le «ricerche di frontiera» possono essere disponibili sovvenzioni per la ricerca individuale tramite il programma «Idee» («CER») ([3]).

([1]) http://www.nature.com/ncomms/journal/v3/n4/pdf/ncomms1772.pdf
([2]) http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_2011_adg_results_pe.pdf
([3]) Le informazioni sui prossimi inviti a presentare proposte per il 7° PQ sono disponibili sul portale dei partecipanti: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003905/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: New super-thin cells

The race to make photovoltaic energy more efficient and flexible for any application is still on. Hardly a week goes by without news from some laboratory around the world of a new achievement. The latest innovations that promise to further promote the spread of solar energy in the near future this time come from Japan and Great Britain.

A university in Tokyo has revealed that it has managed to create the thinnest solar cells in the world, as thick as a spider's silk thread and flexible enough to be wrapped around a human hair. The cells consist of electrodes placed on a plastic sheet and are just 1.9 micrometres thick, one tenth the thickness of the thinnest solar cells currently available. The invention paves the way for a series of new applications, including the production of portable electric recharging devices or electronic equipment that can be worn as part of clothing. It is an extraordinary advance that increases elasticity and reduces weight, thus making it possible to make wearable devices, such as clothes that can generate electricity from the sun.

Is the Commission aware of this new invention and does it believe it can be financed through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013) (FP7)?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

The innovation to which the Honourable Member is referring (the development of ultrathin and lightweight organic solar cells with high flexibility ([1])) has been partly funded by the ERC Advanced Research Grant 'Soft-Map', granted to Prof. Siegfried Bauer at Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria ([2]).

As with all Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) thematic research priorities, transnational collaborative projects on photovoltaic research can be funded by the Commission on a shared cost basis, following a call for project proposals in accordance with the requirements laid down in the relevant specific programmes ('Cooperation') and work programmes ('Energy', 'Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials & new production technologies (NMP)', etc.). Grants for individual research may be available for 'frontier research' through the 'Ideas' programme ('ERC') ([3]).

([1]) http://www.nature.com/ncomms/journal/v3/n4/pdf/ncomms1772.pdf
([2]) http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_2011_adg_results_pe.pdf
([3]) Information on upcoming FP7 calls for proposals can be found on the participants' portal: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003906/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Nuove patenti di guida

Nell'Unione europea circa 300 milioni di persone hanno una patente di guida. L'Unione europea cerca di armonizzare i requisiti per il rilascio della patente e i modelli. È così che, dal 2013, le nuove patenti di guida europee avranno le dimensioni di una carta di credito e varranno le stesse categorie di patenti di guida in tutti i paesi europei. In questo modo la patente di guida rilasciata in un paese potrà essere facilmente riconosciuta in un altro. Inoltre una tessera di plastica è più difficile da falsificare rispetto a una cartacea.

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

1. quali sono i risultati del progetto MEDRIL, che ha come scopo proprio il confronto tra i vari tipi di visita medica per i titolari di patenti di guida utilizzati in quattro paesi membri dell'UE e che ha definito le linee guida per le migliori pratiche;

2. in quali Stati Membri l'avanzamento verso le nuove patenti di guida non è ancora stato recepito.

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2012)

L'obiettivo primario del progetto MEDRIL, cofinanziato dall'UE, consisteva nell'analizzare, nel periodo 2004-2006, le condizioni mediche dei conducenti dei veicoli di categoria B in quattro Stati membri (Spagna, Lussemburgo, Paesi Bassi, Finlandia). La relazione finale del progetto contiene un raffronto dettagliato tra vari possibili approcci per verificare la capacità di guida dei conducenti, quali ad esempio questionari, relazioni mediche, valutazioni pratiche delle capacità di guida dei conducenti, visite mediche. Essa fornisce informazioni utili alle autorità che valutano gli automobilisti e alla Commissione, in vista di ulteriori precisazioni dei requisiti relativi alle capacità fisiche e mentali necessarie per guidare veicoli a motore.

Il nuovo modello di patente di guida dell'UE, sulla base del quale dovrebbero essere rilasciate tutte le patenti di guida nazionali, è stato stabilito dalla direttiva 2011/94/UE della Commissione, del 28 novembre 2011 ([1]). Gli Stati membri hanno l'obbligo di applicare le disposizioni di tale direttiva a partire dal 19 gennaio 2013, quando la direttiva 2006/126/CE ([2]) diventerà d'applicazione. La Commissione non è pertanto ancora in grado di indicare quali siano gli Stati membri che non hanno compiuto progressi verso l'introduzione delle nuove patenti.

([1]) GU L 314 del 29.11.2011, pag. 31.
([2]) GU L 403 del 30.12.2006, pag. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003906/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: New driving licences

Around 300 million people in the European Union hold a driving licence. The European Union is striving to standardise the requirements for issuing licences and the forms that they take. Therefore, from 2013, new European driving licences will be the size of a credit card and the same categories of driving licences will apply in all European countries. This means that a driving licence issued in one country will be able to be easily recognised in another. In addition, a plastic licence is harder to forge than a paper one.

In light of the above, can the Commission say:

1. what the results of the MEDRIL project are, the aim of which is to compare the various types of medical check-up for driving licence holders in four EU Member States, and which has established best practice guidelines;

2. which Member States have still not made any progress towards introducing the new driving licences?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2012)

The primary objective of the EU co-financed MEDRIL project was to analyse during the period 2004-2006, the medical condition of drivers of vehicles of category B in four Member States (Spain, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Finland). The final report of the project contains a detailed comparison of various possible approaches to verifying drivers' fitness-to-drive, such as screening questionnaires, physician reporting, on-road fitness to drive assessments, medical examination. It provides useful information to the driver testing authorities as well as to the Commission in view of any further development of requirements concerning physical and mental fitness for driving motor vehicles.

The new EU driving licence model on the basis of which all national driving licences should be issued has been set out in Commission Directive 2011/94/EU of 28 November 2011 ([1]). Member States are bound to apply the provisions of this directive as from 19 January 2013, when Directive 2006/126/EC ([2]) on driving licences becomes applicable. The Commission is therefore not yet in a position to indicate which Member States have not made any progress towards introducing the new driving licences.

([1]) OJ L 314, 29.11.2011, p.31.
([2]) OJ L 403, 30.12.2006, p.18.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003907/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Risparmi in Europa e Asia

La coniugazione del verbo risparmiare è diventata sempre più difficile per molte persone. La domanda è semplice e diretta: quanti risparmi sono stati accumulati, ma soprattutto quanto si è capaci di mettere da parte liquidità? Risparmiare oggi è un'impresa sempre più difficile per i risparmiatori, che accusano il peso della crisi internazionale sulle proprie finanze personali in tutto il mondo, anche se con alcune differenze tra nazioni.

Nelle economie emergenti del continente asiatico (Cina, India e Thailandia ad esempio), la situazione è stata definita migliore rispetto a quanto accaduto negli anni scorsi, anche se il denaro a disposizione è calato in maniera vistosa.

Messe a confronto, Europa e Asia sembrano aver intrapreso due strade piuttosto diverse, una differenza che deriva in particolare da due fattori importanti come l'inflazione e la disoccupazione che viene percepita. Tra l'altro, anche nello stesso Vecchio Continente vi è un quadro molto variegato, con le nazioni dell'Est che dispongono della minore liquidità in assoluto, nonostante l'impatto peggiore della crisi sia quello relativo a Italia e Spagna.

1. Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere se è in grado di fornire dati percentuali inerenti ai risparmi dei cittadini europei?

2. È in possesso di dati riguardanti i risparmi nelle nuove economie emergenti?

Risposta data da Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(21 maggio 2012)

La Commissione (Eurostat) raccoglie dati sui nuclei familiari, compresi i risparmi dei nuclei familiari, per il tramite del sistema di trasmissione ESA (regolamento (CE) n. 2223/96, del 25 giugno 1996, relativo al Sistema europeo dei conti nazionali e regionali nella Comunità ([1])). Tali dati sono pubblicati sul seguente sito web di Eurostat:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/sectoraccounts.

Il tasso di risparmio lordo dei nuclei familiari varia tra paese e paese, come risulta dalla tabella allegata inviata direttamente all'onorevole parlamentare e al Segretariato del Parlamento. Tali differenze possono essere spiegate, tra l'altro, con la struttura demografica (gli anziani tendono a risparmiare di più), con le agevolazioni creditizie (l'assenza di soglia di indebitamento favorisce i consumi e comporta quindi un minore risparmio), le aspettative negative quanto alle prospettive economiche (disoccupazione elevata, previsti tagli nelle prestazioni pensionistiche) e differenze culturali.

Per quanto concerne il secondo quesito, la Commissione (Eurostat) non raccoglie dati sui risparmi dei nuclei familiari nelle economie emergenti. Tuttavia, è possibile reperire dati nel merito sui siti web dell'OCSE http://stats.oecd.org o della Divisione statistica delle Nazioni Unite http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/data.asp.

([1]) GU L 310 del 30.11.1996.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003907/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Savings in Europe and Asia

Conjugating the verb 'to save' has become increasingly difficult for many people. The question is simple and direct: how much in savings has been accumulated, but above all, how much liquidity can be set aside? Saving money is increasingly difficult these days and people across the world blame the extent of the international crisis for affecting their personal finances, albeit with a few differences between the nations.

For the emerging economies in the Asian continent (China, India and Thailand, for example), the situation is said to have improved compared to the last few years, although the amount of money available has decreased substantially.

When compared, Europe and Asia have seemingly steered two rather different paths, a difference that mainly derives from two important factors: perceived inflation and unemployment rates. Moreover, the picture in Europe itself is very varied, with the countries in the east having the least liquidity in absolute terms, despite Italy and Spain being the hardest hit by the crisis.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission supply percentage data regarding the savings of European citizens?

2. Does it have savings data for the newly emerging economies?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2012)

The Commission (Eurostat) collects data on the households sector, including household savings, through the ESA transmission programme (Council Regulation (EC) No 2223/96 of 25 June 1996, on the European system of national and regional accounts in the Community ([1]). These data are published on the following Eurostat website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/sectoraccounts.

The gross household saving rate differs across countries as shown in the annexed table sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat. These differences can be explained, among others, by the demographic structure (the elderly tend to save more), credit facilities (the absence of indebtedness thresholds favours higher consumption and lower saving), negative expectations concerning the economic outlook (high unemployment, expected cuts in pension benefits) and cultural differences.

Concerning the second question, the Commission (Eurostat) does not collect data on the household saving rate in emerging economies. However, corresponding data may be found on the websites of the OECD http://stats.oecd.org or the United Nations Statistical Division: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/data.asp.

([1]) OJ L 310, 30.11.1996.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003908/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Attacco suicida a Kunduz

Almeno cinque persone sono state uccise a causa dell'ennesimo attacco kamikaze. Un uomo si è fatto esplodere per le strade di Kunduz, nel nord dell'Afghanistan, che è la culla del movimento dei Talebani e una zona rischiosa per le truppe NATO.

Sediq Sediqqi, portavoce del ministero dell'Interno, ha riferito che tre civili e due poliziotti sono morti nell'attacco suicida, aggiungendo che altri cinque civili sono rimasti feriti nell'esplosione. Non è ancora giunta alcuna rivendicazione per questo attacco.

1. Alla luce di quanto precede, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere se è a conoscenza di quanto accaduto nella Repubblica Islamica dell'Afghanistan?

2. Intende prendere ulteriori provvedimenti e attivare nuove contromisure per evitare i continui attacchi che ogni giorno coinvolgono la società civile?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005713/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(6 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Strage a Kandahar e nuova politica in Afghanistan

Strage a Kandahar, nel sud dell'Afghanistan: un kamikaze a bordo di una moto si è fatto esplodere provocando la morte di almeno ventitre persone. Altre 50 persone sono rimaste ferite, secondo quanto comunicato da un'agenzia locale, e tra questi ci sarebbero alcuni autisti e membri del personale della NATO. Il portavoce del governo provinciale di Kandahar ha precisato che l'attentato è avvenuto in un mercato, a qualche chilometro dalla base aerea di Kandahar, utilizzata dalla Forza internazionale di assistenza alla sicurezza (ISAF, sotto comando NATO).

Anche il capo della polizia provinciale ha confermato che un kamikaze a bordo di una moto si è fatto esplodere in uno spiazzo, dove erano radunati autisti e personale addetto al trasporto con autocarri di rifornimenti per la NATO. Nella stessa giornata, l'ISAF è stata invece accusata di avere massacrato a Logar, nell'attacco con bomba contro un capo talebano, 17 civili, tra cui donne e bambini.

Alla luce di quanto precede, potrebbe il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante precisare:

1. se è al corrente della vicenda che ha interessato la base aerea di Kandahar;

2. se può fornire maggiori informazioni su quanto esposto e sulla strategia dell'UE dopo il 2014 in Afghanistan.

Risposta congiunta di Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(25 luglio 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton è al corrente dell'attuale situazione in Afghanistan e in particolare delle difficili condizioni di sicurezza, comprese quelle dovute ad attentati suicidi.

Le cause di questi e altri episodi di violenza sono complesse e possono essere affrontate nel tempo solo attraverso una combinazione di politiche e strumenti. Anche se in Afghanistan nel corso degli ultimi anni si sono registrati notevoli progressi, il paese rimane uno dei meno sviluppati del mondo. La mancanza di opportunità a livello economico e sociale è una delle principali cause dell'instabilità che offre un terreno fertile agli attentati suicidi.

L'Unione europea è uno dei principali donatori di aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo (APS) e di assistenza umanitaria all'Afghanistan. L'assistenza offerta nel quadro del bilancio dell'UE si concentra in tre settori prioritari: sviluppo rurale, governance e salute, ma è rivolta anche ai progetti che sostengono la protezione sociale e la cooperazione regionale.

L'UE, in collaborazione con altri partner internazionali quali NATO e Nazioni Unite, sostiene inoltre gli sforzi afgani per rafforzare le forze di polizia e lo Stato di diritto.

Solo attraverso un impegno internazionale a lungo termine l'Afghanistan può essere aiutato a superare decenni di conflitti violenti, a sviluppare le sue istituzioni e la governance e a potenziare un'ampia crescita economica e, in tal modo, a scoraggiare quanti ricorrono a forme estreme di violenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003908/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Suicide attack in Kunduz

At least five people have been killed in yet another suicide attack. A suicide bomber blew himself up in the streets of Kunduz in northern Afghanistan, the birthplace of the Taliban movement and a dangerous area for NATO troops.

Sediq Sediqqi, spokesman for the Afghan Ministry of the Interior, said three civilians and two policemen died in the suicide attack, and another five civilians were injured in the explosion. No one has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.

In view of this:

1. Is the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy aware of what happened in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan?

2. Does she intend to take further action and enact new countermeasures to prevent the continual daily attacks on civil society?

Question for written answer E-005713/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(6 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Massacre in Kandahar and new policy on Afghanistan

A suicide bomber on a motorcycle blew himself up, killing at least 23 people, in Kandahar, Southern Afghanistan. According to a local press release, a further 50 people were injured, including NATO drivers and staff. The Kandahar Provincial Government spokesperson stated that the attack took place in a market, a few kilometres from Kandahar airbase, used by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF, under NATO command).

The provincial police chief confirmed that a suicide bomber aboard a motorcycle detonated in an area where drivers and personnel who work with NATO supply trucks had gathered. On the same day, ISAF was accused of having massacred 17 civilians in Logar, including women and children, in a bomb attack against a Taliban leader.

In view of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify:

1. If she is aware of the incident at the Kandahar airbase.

2. If she can provide more information on the above and on EU strategy in Afghanistan after 2014.

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

The HR/VP is aware of the current situation in Afghanistan, notably with respect to the difficult security conditions including those caused by suicide attacks.

The underlying reasons for these and other violent incidents are complex and can only be addressed over time through a combination of policies and instruments. While much progress has been made in Afghanistan over the last years it remains one of the least developed nations in the world. The lack of economic and social opportunity is one of the driving factors of instability, which provides fertile ground for suicide attacks.

The EU is one of the major donors providing official development assistance (ODA) and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. Assistance under the EU budget concentrates on three focal areas: rural development, governance and health but also provides assistance to projects in support of social protection and regional cooperation.

The EU, together with international partners such as NATO and the United Nations, also supports Afghan efforts in strengthening policing and the rule of law.

Only through long-term international engagement can Afghanistan be assisted to overcome decades of violent conflict and develop its institutions and governance and encourage broad based economic growth and, thereby, reduce the incentives for those who resort to extreme forms of violence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003909/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Agenda digitale in Italia

Le imprese TIC offrono piena collaborazione affinché l'Agenda digitale diventi un grande progetto nazionale in grado di aprire il Paese a un nuovo ciclo economico.

Il completo *switch-off* verso il digitale della pubblica amministrazione può contribuire all'azione di *spending review*, riducendo la spesa pubblica annuale in modo strutturale e recuperando risorse per oltre 56 miliardi. La maggior disponibilità di servizi pubblici e privati online consentirebbe un risparmio di circa 2 000 EUR l'anno a famiglia. In dettaglio i risparmi: 43 miliardi di EUR deriverebbero dalla minore spesa pubblica, a cui si devono aggiungere 13 miliardi di EUR in maggiori entrate recuperate dall'evasione fiscale.

Se le imprese italiane raddoppiassero gli investimenti in TIC, si avrebbe una crescita della produttività tra il 5 e il 10 %, mentre se aumentassero solo dell'1 % il loro fatturato estero attraverso le vendite online, le nostre esportazioni totali aumenterebbero dell'8 %, pareggiando il saldo *import-export* di beni e servizi. Se lo sviluppo dell'*Internet economy* diventerà anche da noi il centro delle politiche per la crescita, il contributo all'aumento del PIL potrebbe essere dell'ordine del 4-5 % nei prossimi tre anni. Oggi l'economia digitale in Italia incide per il 4 % sul PIL, dato che segnala il ritardo del nostro Paese, dove l'uso di Internet è ancora limitato al 50 % della popolazione (68 % è la media nell'UE-27), la pratica dell'*e-Government* riguarda non più dell'8 % (21 % nell'UE) e quella dell'*e-commerce* il 15 % (43 % nell'UE).

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione: può la Commissione tracciare un quadro europeo sullo sviluppo o il completamento dell'Agenda digitale nei vari Stati membri?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(1º giugno 2012)

La Commissione segue da vicino l'attuazione dell'agenda digitale europea in base ad analisi comparative e in stretta cooperazione con gli Stati membri e con il Parlamento europeo.

23 delle 101 azioni previste dall'agenda digitale sono di competenza degli Stati membri. È stato da poco avviato uno studio volto a descrivere e a confrontare la realizzazione di queste 23 azioni. Per nove Stati membri, tra cui l'Italia, sarà eseguito un esame dettagliato dello stato di avanzamento dei lavori in materia digitale. Tutti gli Stati membri saranno invitati a dare informazioni sui progressi compiuti, tramite uno strumento basato su internet, in modo da ottenere una rassegna completa della situazione. Lo studio sarà ultimato alla fine del 2012.

Intanto, nel giugno 2012, sulla tabella di valutazione dell'agenda digitale sarà pubblicato un aggiornamento relativo ai progressi compiuti dagli Stati membri per conseguire gli obiettivi dell'agenda digitale. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003909/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: The digital agenda in Italy

ICT companies are cooperating fully so that the digital agenda can become a major national project that can open up the country to a new economic cycle.

The public administration's complete switch-off in favour of digital can help the spending review by reducing annual public spending in structural terms and thus recouping over EUR 56 billion. Increased availability of public and private services online would allow savings of around EUR 2 000 per annum per household. Specifically, the savings would be EUR 43 billion from lower public spending, in addition to EUR 13 billion in increased revenues recovered from tax evasion.

If Italian companies doubled their ICT investment, there would be a growth in productivity of between 5 and 10%, while if they increased their foreign turnover by just 1% through online sales, our total exports would increase by 8%, balancing the trade deficit for goods and services. If development of the Internet economy is made the focus of growth policies in Italy too, the contribution to the increase in GDP could be around 4-5% over the next three years. Currently the digital economy in Italy accounts for 4% of GDP, a figure that shows how far behind our country is, where Internet use is still limited to 50% of the population (68% is the average in the EU-27), no more than 8% of the population engage in eGovernment (21% in the EU) and 15% in eCommerce (43% in the EU).

In view of the above, can the Commission provide an overview of the development or state of completion of the digital agenda in the various EU Member States?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(1 June 2012)

The Commission is closely following the implementation of the Digital Agenda for Europe through benchmarking and close cooperation with Member States and the European Parliament.

23 of the 101 actions set out in the Digital Agenda are under the responsibility of the Member States. A study has just been launched to describe and compare the delivery of these 23 actions. A detailed study of the state of play will be carried out for nine Member States, Italy being one of the nine. All Member States will be invited to inform on progress through a web-based tool to get a full overview of the situation. The study will be completed at the end of 2012.

Meanwhile, an update on progress by the Member States towards the Digital Agenda targets will be published in June 2012 at the Digital Agenda Scoreboard.
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003910/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Prezzi di vendita dei conigli e filiera alimentare

La coniglicoltura italiana è in allarme: le quotazioni della Borsa merci di Verona — piazza di riferimento per il mercato nazionale — sono scese nuovamente al di sotto dei costi di produzione a causa del persistente meccanismo «di cartello».

Il comportamento da parte dei grossisti-importatori che utilizzano strategicamente la leva import-export per tenere artificialmente bassi i prezzi alla stalla e affamare gli allevatori, costringendoli a chiudere, è molto grave e rischia di far morire questo settore leader nell'export. Negli ultimi sei mesi sono anche aumentati i costi dei mangimi del 10 % ed altri rincari sono in arrivo nelle prossime settimane. Sono aumenti di costi che gli allevatori non possono assorbire aumentando il prezzo all'origine dei loro prodotti, mentre l'industria di macellazione, l'industria mangimistica, i grossisti e la distribuzione continuano a determinare la maggior parte della struttura del prezzo e ad accumulare profitti in una deriva monopolizzante che sta distruggendo l'economia degli allevamenti italiani.

Urgerebbe ora definire quotazioni trasparenti non solo sulla carne ma anche sulle pelli dei conigli, come già accade in Francia, al fine di riequilibrare il valore aggiunto a favore degli allevatori.

Le pelli, infatti, oggi rappresentano una fonte aggiuntiva di reddito, appannaggio esclusivo dell'industria di macellazione che, grazie ad esse, ha potuto incamerare ricchi proventi (circa 30 milioni di euro nel 2011!), senza lasciare un centesimo agli allevatori italiani.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Quali azioni sono state messe in campo a livello europeo per proteggere i produttori ed i consumatori da prezzi che non rispecchiano i costi di produzione e vengono gonfiati nel corso delle filiera alimentare, facendo trarre i profitti solo agli anelli intermedi della catena?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2012)

Le dimensioni relativamente ridotte del settore delle carni di coniglio non giustificano l'esistenza di un dispositivo di rilevamento dei prezzi a livello dell'UE e la Commissione non è quindi in grado di confermare il calo dei prezzi dei conigli o la difficile situazione di mercato presente in Italia.

Con riguardo alla situazione dei produttori rispetto agli altri operatori della filiera, come l'industria di macellazione, i grossisti e i dettaglianti, la Commissione ritiene che le organizzazioni di produttori e le loro associazioni possano svolgere un ruolo determinante grazie alla concentrazione dell'offerta e alla promozione di buone pratiche. Nella sua proposta per la creazione di un'organizzazione comune dei mercati agricoli nel quadro della riforma della politica agricola comune, la Commissione ha incluso disposizioni volte ad estendere le norme esistenti a tutti i settori al fine di potenziare l'impatto delle organizzazioni di produttori e rafforzare il potere contrattuale dei produttori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003910/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Selling prices of rabbits and the supply chain

Italian rabbit farming is in a state of alarm: prices on the Verona Commodities Exchange — a reference market for the national market — have fallen below production costs because of the persistent 'cartel' mechanism.

The behaviour on the part of wholesalers/importers, which strategically use the lever of imports and exports to keep prices artificially low on the farms and to starve farmers, forcing them to shut up shop, is very serious and threatens to kill off this leading export sector. Feed costs have also increased by 10% over the last six months and more increases are on the way in the coming weeks. Farmers cannot absorb these cost increases by raising their products' prices at source, while the slaughter industry, the feed industry, wholesalers and retailers continue to determine most of the price structure and to accumulate profits in a monopolising trend that is destroying the economic basis for Italian livestock farming.

Prices urgently need to be quoted transparently, not only for rabbit meat but also for rabbit fur, as already happens in France, in order to redress the balance of added value for the farmer.

Fur is now an additional source of income, the exclusive privilege of the slaughter industry, which has been able to reap rich rewards with it (around EUR 30 million in 2011), without leaving a penny for Italian farmers.

In view of the above, I would ask the Commission:

1. What actions have been put in place at European level to protect producers and consumers from prices that do not reflect production costs and are inflated along the supply chain, so that profits are only being made by the middlemen?

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

Given the relatively small size of the rabbit meat sector there is no price reporting mechanism at EU level and therefore the Commission cannot confirm the decrease in the prices of rabbits or the difficulties in the market situation in Italy.

As regards the situation for producers vis-à-vis other actors in the chain, such as slaughterers, wholesalers and retailers, the Commission is of the view that producer organisations and their associations can play a useful role in concentrating supply and promoting best practices. In its proposal for the establishment of a common organisation of the markets for agricultural markets in the framework of the reform of the common agricultural policy, the Commission has included provisions to extend existing rules to all sectors in order to boost the impact of producer organisations and reinforce the bargaining power of producers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003911/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Nuovi consumi alimentari

I cambiamenti intervenuti negli ultimi decenni nell'organizzazione del lavoro, dello studio e del turismo hanno determinato nuovi stili di consumo alimentare dettati dall'esigenza di mangiare fuori casa. Sono sempre più diffuse strutture di ristorazione in grado di offrire al consumatore menu, servizi e costi standardizzati e su aree geografiche estese.

Ristorazione commerciale dei self-service o dei fast food, ristorazione collettiva e catering sono oggi al centro di una notevole evoluzione in termini di diversificazione dei prodotti e di maggiore attenzione agli aspetti nutrizionali, igienici e di sostenibilità ambientale, con standard qualitativi costanti, ma adatti alle mutevoli esigenze di utenti molto diversificati.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere quali sono le normative europee che assicurano al consumatore che nei nuovi centri di ristorazione ci sia attenzione alla qualità del cibo, alla personalizzazione dei consumi, all'adeguamento dei prezzi e alla valorizzazione dei prodotti di qualità?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

La normativa alimentare dell'Unione europea intende assicurare un livello elevato di protezione della vita e della salute umane tenendo conto anche della tutela della salute e del benessere degli animali, della fitosanità e dell'ambiente. Essa definisce i diritti dei consumatori di disporre di alimenti sani e di informazioni accurate ed oneste. La normativa dell'UE stabilisce pertanto requisiti rigorosi che garantiscono gli standard di qualità di tutti i prodotti alimentari europei.

La qualità degli alimenti non è disciplinata a livello di UE, tuttavia diversi sistemi di qualità UE identificano i prodotti e gli alimenti caratterizzati da metodi di produzione particolari (ad esempio aspetti tradizionali, indicazione geografica, agricoltura biologica ([1])). Questi sistemi UE funzionano sul mercato assieme a un numero crescente di sistemi di certificazione pubblici e privati. Nel 2010 la Commissione ha emanato linee guida per sistemi volontari di certificazione relativi ai prodotti alimentari al fine di evidenziare e stimolare le pratiche ottimali in modo da assicurare la trasparenza e la chiarezza dei requisiti di tali sistemi evitando di trarre in confusione i consumatori.

Conformemente al quadro di valutazione dei mercati dei beni di consumo ([2]), i caffè, i bar e i ristoranti risultano offrire prestazioni adeguate ai consumatori in termini di scelta, comparabilità, fiducia, eventuali problematiche e soddisfazione (questo mercato è al quinto posto tra i 30 mercati di servizi inclusi nello studio). L'analisi dei prezzi relativi a tale mercato (una tazza di caffè, un bicchiere di birra o un bicchiere di vino rosso da tavola) indica che sebbene tali prezzi varino notevolmente tra i diversi paesi dell'UE, essi sono correlati al consumo individuale e, indirettamente, al reddito dei consumatori.

([1]) Crf. http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/editions/cms6_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003911/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: New food consumption

The changes in the organisation of work, study and tourism in recent decades have created new styles of diet dictated by the need to eat away from home. Restaurant services are increasingly available which can offer consumers menus, services and prices that are standardised over large geographical areas.

Commercial self-service or fast food services and catering services are now developing rapidly in terms of the diversification of products and greater attention to nutritional, hygiene and environmental sustainability aspects, with constant quality standards which are suitable for the changing needs of a wide range of consumers.

In view of the above, can the Commission provide information on the European legislation that guarantees for consumers that the new restaurant service centres are careful about the quality of the food, the customising of dishes, the adjustment of prices, and the promotion of quality produce?

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

The European Union food law aims at ensuring a high level of protection of human life and health, taking into account the protection of animal health and welfare, plant health and the environment. It establishes the rights of consumers to safe food and to accurate and honest information. Hence, the EC law lays down stringent requirements guaranteeing the safety standards of all European food products.

Food quality is not regulated at EU level, however, several EU quality schemes identify products and foodstuffs farmed and produced with additional requirements (e.g. traditional aspects, geographical indication, organic farming ([1])). These EU schemes operate in the market alongside an increasing number of public and private certification schemes. In 2010, the Commission issued guidelines for voluntary certification schemes for food products with the aim to highlight and stimulate best practices on how to avoid consumer confusion and increase the transparency and clarity of the scheme requirements.

According to the Consumer Markets Scoreboard ([2]), cafés, bars and restaurants seem to function well for consumers in terms of choice, comparability, trust, problems and satisfaction (this market ranks fifth among 30 services markets included in the study). The analysis of prices relevant for this market (a cup of coffee, a glass of beer or a glass of red house wine) shows that although these prices vary considerably between EU countries, they are correlated with the individual consumption and indirectly with the consumer income level.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/editions/cms6_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003914/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Maestri e maestre nelle scuole europee

Nelle scuole italiane, dietro le cattedre, ci sono sempre meno maestri uomini. Gli alunni delle elementari hanno circa 4,6 possibilità su 100 di avere un maestro anziché una maestra.

Per gli studenti però una figura maschile è importante quanto quella femminile, sia in relazione al metodo di insegnamento che di per sé. Secondo alcuni studiosi di pedagogia si potrebbero manifestare difficoltà a costruire modelli di genere soprattutto per i piccoli maschi e i giovani maschi, e in seguito nelle relazioni fra i due generi. La presenza di figure educative di entrambi i generi in tutti i livelli di educazione scolastica e prescolastica offrirebbe a bambini e bambine la possibilità di acquisire una maggiore complessità di visione del mondo per quanto concerne stili di vita, emotività, fisicità, comunicazione.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. È in possesso di dati, suddivisi per generi, relativi al numero di docenti che insegnano negli Stati membri in base all'aspetto della parità uomo-donna così come descritta nelle conclusioni del Consiglio del 22 settembre 1997 sulla formazione degli insegnanti per il futuro, in particolare nell'intento di non compromettere le possibilità di istruzione e formazione nonché di carriera?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

Come l'onorevole deputato saprà, conformemente all'articolo 165 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea la responsabilità quanto al contenuto e all'organizzazione dei sistemi d'istruzione e formazione compete esclusivamente agli Stati membri.

Il fatto che una proporzione maggiore d'insegnanti sia costituita da donne, soprattutto nell'istruzione di primo livello, è un fenomeno diffuso in tutt'Europa. L'ultimo rapporto Eurydice ([1]) indica che le donne rappresentano la maggioranza degli insegnanti al livello primario e secondario. Stando alle cifre relative al 2009, nei paesi europei per i quali sono disponibili dati più del 60 % degli insegnanti dell'istruzione primaria e secondaria è costituito da donne.

La Commissione, nella sua comunicazione del 2007 «Migliorare la qualità della formazione degli insegnanti» (COM(2007)392 definitivo) ha affermato: «È importante per la realizzazione degli alunni che questa professione rispecchi fedelmente la diversità della società nella quale opera (ad esempio, in termini di cultura, lingua materna e capacità/disabilità). Gli Stati membri possono adottare misure affinché la composizione del corpo docente rispecchi pienamente la diversità della società e, in particolare, eliminare gli ostacoli all'equilibrio culturale e dei generi a tutti i livelli.»

([1]) Eurydice (2012) Key Data on Education in Europe 2012 (Brussels, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency) (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/key_data_en.php).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003914/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Male and female teachers in Europe's schools

In Italian classrooms, male teachers are becoming increasingly rare. Primary school pupils have around a 4.6% chance of having a male teacher rather than a female teacher.

However, a male figure is just as important for students as a female one, both in terms of teaching methods and of itself. According to a number of educational researchers, problems could arise in building gender models, especially for young and adolescent males, and subsequently in relations between the two genders. The presence of teachers of both genders at all levels of school and pre-school education would give boys and girls the opportunity to acquire a more complex world view in terms of lifestyle, emotions, physicality and communication.

Does the Commission have any figures, broken down by gender, for the number of teachers teaching in the Member States, in the light of the need for an adequate gender impact, as referred to in the Council conclusions of 22 September 1997 on teacher training for the future, particularly in order to avoid jeopardising educational, training and career prospects?

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

The Honourable Member will be aware that, in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States.

The fact that a higher proportion of teachers are women than men, particularly at primary level education, is a Europe-wide phenomenon. The latest Eurydice report ([1]) indicates that women account for the majority of teachers at primary and secondary level. According to 2009 figures, in all European countries for which data are available, over 60% of the teachers in primary and secondary education are women.

The Commission in its communication 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education in 2007' (COM(2007)392 final) said: 'It is important for pupil attainment that the profession fully reflects the diversity of the society in which it operates (in terms, for example of culture, mother tongue, and (dis)ability). Member States could take measures to ensure that the composition of the teaching workforce fully reflects the diversity of society, and in particular remove obstacles to culture and gender balance at all levels'.

([1]) Eurydice (2012) Key Data on Education in Europe 2012 (Brussels, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency) (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/key_data_en.php).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003915/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Direttiva 2009/136/CE

La direttiva *E-Privacy* si pone l'obiettivo di cambiare il sistema vigente e di tornare al meccanismo dell'*opt-in*, un principio cardine del trattamento dei dati, presente anche in numerosi ordinamenti nazionali, ma spesso ignorato dalla prassi internazionale che ragiona secondo dinamiche differenti da quelle del legislatore europeo. Spetterà quindi all'utente, che dovrà essere informato in modo chiaro e completo in merito a finalità e modalità del trattamento dei propri dati, esprimere il proprio consenso affinché, durante la navigazione, vengano attivati i *cookies*, fatta salva la necessaria trasmissione di informazioni connesse alla prestazione di servizi richiesti dall'utente stesso. Si tratta della direttiva 2009/136/CE, la cosiddetta direttiva *E-Privacy*, che dovrebbe costituire un primo, importante tassello della regolamentazione relativa al trattamento dei dati personali in ambito Internet.

Al centro della nuova disciplina ci sono i cosiddetti *cookies*, piccoli programmi che registrano le informazioni sulla navigazione effettuata dall'utente, spesso utilizzati dai *provider* come strumenti, in parte occultamente installati sul *browser* per improntare l'offerta pubblicitaria ai gusti del singolo consumatore.

Ad oggi, l'uso di tali strumenti da parte del *provider* è basato su un sistema di *opt-out*, ove l'utente, che deve essere adeguatamente informato sulle modalità e finalità dell'utilizzo dei *cookies*, può esprimere ex post il proprio dissenso. Si tratta di un sistema, tuttavia, già al limite della legittimità, proprio perché spesso è attuato senza che venga fornita un'adeguata informativa all'utente e che vengano rispettate le norme sul consenso al trattamento dei dati previste dal Codice sulla Privacy.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, può la Commissione far sapere se la direttiva in esame è stata recepita da tutti gli Stati membri, poiché il termine ultimo per il recepimento risale allo scorso anno (maggio 2011)? In caso contrario, quali provvedimenti intende adottare l'UE per garantire che i principi della direttiva siano adottati al più presto in tutta l'UE?

Risposta data da Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2012)

L'articolo 5, paragrafo 3 della direttiva 2002/58/CE relativa al trattamento dei dati personali e alla tutela della vita privata nel settore delle comunicazioni elettroniche (ePrivacy), modificata dalla direttiva 2009/136/CE sui diritti dei cittadini, riguarda l'archiviazione e l'accesso di informazioni sui dispositivi terminali degli utilizzatori e tratta, tra altri aspetti, ma non esclusivamente, dei cosiddetti «cookies». Ai sensi di detto articolo, gli Stati membri devono assicurare che l'archiviazione di informazioni o l'accesso a informazioni già archiviate nell'apparecchiatura terminale di un abbonato o di un utilizzatore sia consentito unicamente a condizione che l'abbonato o l'utilizzatore in questione abbia espresso preliminarmente il proprio consenso, dopo essere stato informato in modo chiaro e completo, a norma della direttiva 95/46/CE, tra l'altro sugli scopi del trattamento.

La direttiva avrebbe dovuto essere recepita al più tardi entro il maggio 2011. Ritardi nel recepimento hanno condotto la Commissione ad avviare, nel luglio 2011, procedure di infrazione contro venti Stati membri. Da allora molti Stati membri hanno compiuto progressi. Dall'aprile 2012 diciotto Stati membri hanno notificato alla Commissione il pieno recepimento delle modifiche (Austria, Bulgaria, Repubblica ceca, Danimarca, Estonia, Finlandia, Francia, Grecia, Ungheria, Irlanda, Lettonia, Lituania, Lussemburgo, Malta, Slovacchia, Spagna, Svezia, Regno Unito). Sono in corso procedimenti contro i restanti Stati membri e la Commissione non esiterà a deferire alla Corte, qualora lo ritenga appropriato, gli Stati membri inadempienti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003915/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Directive 2009/136/EC

The E-Privacy Directive seeks to change the current system and return to the opt-in mechanism, a fundamental principle for data processing that is also present in numerous national legal systems but is often ignored by international practice, which is based on an approach that differs from that adopted by the European legislators. It will therefore be up to users, who will have to be informed in a clear and comprehensive manner about the purpose of and procedures for processing their data, to consent to cookies being activated while they are browsing, without prejudice to the necessary sending of information linked to the provision of services requested by the users themselves. The E-Privacy Directive (Directive 2009/136/EC) should be the first major step in regulating the processing of personal data on the Internet.

The new rules focus primarily on cookies, small programs that record information on browsing carried out by the user which are often used by providers (and installed on browsers without the users' knowledge) as a means of tailoring advertising to the tastes of individual consumers.

Until now, the use of these tools by providers has been based on an opt-out system under which users, who must be suitably informed as to how and why cookies are used, may express their opposition to their use after the event. However, this system operates on the edge of legality, because cookies are often activated without appropriate information being provided to the user or the rules on consent to the processing of personal data laid down in data protection legislation being followed.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether the directive in question has been transposed by all the Member States, as the deadline for transposition was May 2011? If not, what steps does the EU intend to take to ensure that the principles laid down in the directive are adopted as soon as possible throughout the EU?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2012)

Article 5(3) of the ePrivacy Directive 2002/58/EC, as amended by the Citizens' Rights Directive 2009/136/EC, concerns the storing and accessing of information on users' terminal devices and affects *inter alia*, but not exclusively, so-called cookies. Under this Article, Member States have to ensure that storing or gaining access to information already stored in the terminal equipment of a subscriber or user is only allowed on condition that the subscriber or user concerned has given his or her consent, having been provided with clear and comprehensive information, in accordance with Directive 95/46/EC, *inter alia* about the purposes of the processing.

Transposition was due in May 2011 at the latest. Delays have led the European Commission to open infringement proceedings against 20 Member States in July 2011. Since then many Member States have progressed. As of April 2012, 18 Member States have notified the Commission of the full transposition of the amendments (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom). Proceedings against the remaining Member States are ongoing and the Commission will not hesitate to take infringing Member States to the Court where appropriate.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003916/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Migliori prassi nell'ambito del programma Educazione all'imprenditorialità

Il programma Educazione all'imprenditorialità ha l'obiettivo di promuovere progetti transnazionali, con un elevato valore aggiunto europeo, nel campo della formazione per l'imprenditorialità, con particolare attenzione al sostegno degli insegnanti.

Le azioni saranno rivolte agli insegnanti e ai giovani nella scuola primaria e secondaria di primo e secondo grado. L'invito ha lo scopo di concorrere a stimolare lo spirito innovativo dei giovani imprenditori a partire dall'educazione scolastica secondo il primo principio dello «Small Business Act». Possono presentare proposte amministrazioni pubbliche a tutti i livelli; autorità nazionali, regionali e locali; scuole primarie e secondarie; scuole professionali; università; ONG; associazioni e fondazioni attive nel settore; enti fornitori d'istruzione e formazione (pubblici e privati); camere di commercio e industria e organismi analoghi; associazioni commerciali e reti di sostegno alle imprese.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione indicare i casi di eccellenza emersi nell'ambito dello strumento Educazione all'imprenditorialità?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

La Commissione ha pubblicato nel 2009 e nel 2012 due inviti specifici a presentare proposte sulla tematica dell'educazione all'imprenditoria. Entrambi gli inviti avevano l'obiettivo di promuovere progetti transnazionali aventi un elevato valore aggiunto europeo e imperniati specialmente sulla formazione e il sostegno degli insegnanti.

Mentre la maggior parte dei progetti di cui all'invito 2009 sono stati completati (due progetti sono ancora in corso), l'invito 2012 è stato chiuso il 16 aprile e la procedura di selezione e di valutazione delle proposte presentate è appena iniziata. Il nuovo invito evidenzia i seguenti ambiti prioritari:

— formazione degli insegnanti delle scuole e dell'istruzione superiore;

— creazione di una piattaforma online europea per gli educatori;

— sviluppo di strumenti per valutare la mentalità imprenditoriale, le capacità e le abilità acquisite dagli studenti nel corso della loro educazione all'imprenditoria.

Per quanto concerne l'invito del 2009 ecco i risultati più interessanti che emergono dai nove progetti supportati.

1. Con le «Accademie estive europee sull'educazione all'imprenditoria» (due progetti supportati, ancora in corso) più di 200 docenti dell'istruzione superiore provenienti da università di tutta Europa hanno ricevuto finora una formazione avanzata in tema di imprenditoria; l'obiettivo è raggiungere 320 docenti entro la fine del 2012. Tutti questi docenti s'impegnano a diventare gli ambasciatori dell'educazione all'imprenditoria nelle loro rispettive istituzioni. ([1])

2. È stato pubblicato un totale di 91 nuovi studi di casi che serviranno a insegnare l'imprenditoria. Questa azione risponde alla necessità di sviluppare materiali didattici innovativi e aventi una base pratica con una dimensione europea e locale, piuttosto che importarli dagli USA come avviene spesso. ([2])

([1]) Ulteriori informazioni sono reperibili sulle pagine web dei due progetti:.
http://3ep.eu/;.
http://www.efer.eu/pro/index.htm.

([2]) Ulteriori informazioni, tra cui gli stessi studi di casi, sono reperibili sulle pagine web dei tre progetti che affrontano tale questione:.
http://eecsrc.eu/;.
http://eforce-cases.blogspot.com/;.
http://www.startent.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003916/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Best practice in the Entrepreneurship Education programme

The Entrepreneurship Education programme aims to promote transnational projects, with high European added value, in the field of entrepreneurship training, focusing in particular on support for teachers.

The activities will be aimed at teachers and young people in primary and lower and upper secondary education. The object of the related call for proposals is to help foster the spirit of innovation in young entrepreneurs, starting at school, as set out in Principle 1 of the Small Business Act. Proposals may be submitted by public administrations at all levels, national, regional and local authorities, primary and secondary schools, business schools, universities, NGOs, associations and foundations active in the sector, public and private education and training providers, chambers of commerce and industry and similar bodies, or business associations and support networks.

Can the Commission specify the examples of excellence that have emerged from the Entrepreneurship Education scheme?

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

The Commission published two specific calls for proposals on the theme of entrepreneurship education, in 2009 and in 2012. Both calls had the objective of promoting transnational projects with high European added value, focusing especially on training and supporting teachers.

While most projects under the 2009 call are completed (2 projects are still ongoing), the 2012 call has been closed on 16 April, and the procedure of selection and evaluation of submitted proposal is just starting. The new call highlights the following priority areas:

— training school and higher education teachers;

— creating a European online platform for educators;

— developing tools to assess entrepreneurial mindsets, attitudes and skills acquired by students in entrepreneurship education.

Concerning the outcomes of the 2009 call, the following results are among the most interesting emerging from the 9 projects supported.

1. With the 'European Summer Academies on Entrepreneurship Education' (2 projects supported, still ongoing) more than 200 higher education teachers from universities across Europe have received so far advanced training in entrepreneurship; the target is to reach 320 teachers by the end of 2012. All these teachers committed themselves to become the ambassadors of entrepreneurial education in their respective institutions ([1]).

2. A total of 91 new case studies have been published that will be used to teach entrepreneurship. This action responds to the need of developing innovative and practice-based teaching materials with a European and a local dimension, rather than being imported from the US as it is very often the case ([2]).

([1]) More information is available on the web pages of the two projects:
http://3ep.eu/
http://www.efer.eu/pro/index.htm.

([2]) More information, including the case studies themselves, is available on the web pages of the three projects that addressed this issue:
http://eecsrc.eu/
http://eforce-cases.blogspot.com/
http://www.startent.eu/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003917/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Europei di calcio 2012

Le partite di calcio europeo attirano folle imponenti e il Campionato europeo di calcio 2012, organizzato dall'UEFA, si svolgerà nella sua fase finale in Polonia e Ucraina dall'8 giugno al 1º luglio 2012.

In occasione dell'evento sarà indispensabile la cooperazione tra forze di polizia a livello internazionale per prevenire e combattere la violenza e i disordini, con un'attenzione particolare alla valutazione dinamica dei rischi, allo sviluppo di piani di contingenza e alla gestione integrata della sicurezza. Ormai da tempo, le cronache delle partite sulla stampa sportiva non si limitano a raccontarci le prodezze agonistiche di questo o quel campione, ma ci riferiscono di aggressioni, scontri, risse, assedi, agguati, accoltellamenti, ferimenti, lanci di oggetti, di petardi, di pietre, di bombe.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se prevede una diramazione coordinata delle informazioni da fornire alle autorità ucraine e polacche riguardanti i cittadini dell'UE ritenuti responsabili di reati connessi al calcio in uno Stato membro oppure espulsi per tale motivo da uno Stato membro, in modo che le autorità possano tenere sotto controllo gli arrivi dei tifosi previsti per i Campionati europei del giugno 2012?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(1º giugno 2012)

Lo scambio di informazioni sui tifosi considerati pericolosi e le valutazioni dei rischi legati alle partite di calcio rientrano tra le funzioni dei punti nazionali di informazione sul calcio, istituiti con la decisione 2002/348/GAI del Consiglio, modificata dalla decisione 2007/412/GAI del Consiglio. Per l'EURO 2012 sarà utilizzato tale canale per lo scambio di dati.

Inoltre, la Polonia e l'Ucraina hanno concluso con i partecipanti e con gli Stati membri di transito accordi speciali di rafforzamento della cooperazione che saranno validi per tutta la durata del campionato e prevedono anche il sostegno di agenti di polizia e di osservatori sul campo.

La Commissione ha recentemente avviato uno studio sui delinquenti violenti che si spostano sul territorio, categoria alla quale appartengono anche i tifosi che disturbano la quiete pubblica. I risultati di tale studio, che sarà pubblicato nell'autunno 2012, dovrebbero contribuire ad alimentare la discussione sulle ulteriori misure che potranno essere adottate a livello UE per scambiare le informazioni e ridurre il rischio di comportamenti violenti nel quadro di eventi sportivi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003917/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: 2012 European Football Championships

European football matches attract huge crowds and the final phase of the 2012 European Football Championships, organised by UEFA, will take place in Poland and Ukraine from 8 June to 1 July 2012.

During this event, international cooperation between police forces will be essential to prevent and tackle violence and disorder; particular attention will have to be paid to dynamic risk assessment, the development of contingency plans and integrated safety and security management. For a long time now, match reports in the sports press have described not only the sporting prowess of various champions, but also the assaults, clashes, brawls, sieges, ambushes, stabbings, injuries, throwing of objects, firecrackers, stones and bombs.

Could the Commission therefore say whether it is planning a coordinated transmission of information to the Ukrainian and Polish authorities concerning EU citizens responsible for football-related offences committed in a Member State, or who have been expelled from a Member State for whatever reason, so that the authorities are able to keep all fans arriving for the European Football Championships in June 2012 under control?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(1 June 2012)

Exchange of information regarding fans considered a risk and threat assessments of the football matches is in the mandate of National Football Information Points, established by the Council Decision 2002/348/JHA, amended by 2007/412/JHA. This channel will be used for EURO 2012.

Moreover, Poland and Ukraine have concluded special agreements with the participating and transit Member States on strengthening cooperation throughout the Championship, including the support of police officers and spotters at the ground.

The Commission has recently launched a study on travelling violent offenders which includes the disorderly supporters. The findings of this study, to be published in autumn 2012, should contribute to the discussions on further EU measures to exchange information and to reduce the risk of violent conduct at sport events.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003918/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Colpo di Stato in Guinea-Bissau

I militari della Guinea-Bissau ieri sera hanno annunciato di aver preso il potere nello stato africano dopo aver arrestato il presidente della repubblica ad interim Raimundo Pereira. Lo ha riferito, si legge su alcuni media online della regione, una radio guineana con un annuncio fatto attraverso il mezzo radiofonico.

Un colpo di Stato a pochi giorni dal ballottaggio delle elezioni presidenziali. Le principali vie della capitale sono occupate dai soldati, dopo che una ventina di loro ha preso il controllo dell'edificio dove si trova la radio di Stato.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si interroga il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per sapere:

1. È a conoscenza della situazione nella Repubblica di Guinea-Bissau?

2. Ritiene che si debba intervenire per garantire la tutela dei diritti umani in uno stato che rientra nel gruppo ACP?

3. Quali sono le attività diplomatiche intraprese in precedenza, dall'Unione Europea, nello stato della Guinea-Bissau?

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

Il SEAE segue da vicino la situazione in Guinea-Bissau. L'UE contribuisce agli sforzi volti a stabilizzare il paese attraverso azioni sul fronte diplomatico, politico e della cooperazione e attraverso il sostegno agli sforzi della Comunità economica degli Stati dell'Africa occidentale (ECOWAS), dell'UA, dell'ONU e di altri partner internazionali come la CPLP, nella crisi attuale, anche tramite il mantenimento di sanzioni fino a quando non verrà ristabilito del tutto l'ordine costituzionale.

Lo scorso anno la Commissione ha sospeso parte della sua cooperazione in Guinea-Bissau a seguito agli eventi del 2010 che hanno portato alla procedura di consultazione a titolo dell'articolo 96 e alla decisione 492/2011 del Consiglio che ha istituito una serie di misure appropriate per la ripresa della cooperazione. Soltanto la cooperazione con il governo è stata congelata, mentre le attività a beneficio diretto della popolazione proseguono e sono finanziate principalmente per settori tematici e mediante il fondo per l'acqua e lo strumento per l'energia.

La ripresa di parte della nostra cooperazione dipenderà dall'evoluzione della crisi e dalla capacità del futuro governo di attuare una serie di riforme chiave, principalmente nel settore della sicurezza e della lotta al narcotraffico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003918/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau

On 12 April 2012, the military in Guinea-Bissau announced that it had taken power in the African state after arresting the interim President of the Republic, Raimundo Pereira. According to several online sources in the region, a Guinean radio station reported the news with an announcement.

The coup d'état came just a few days after voting in the presidential election. The capital's main roads were occupied by soldiers after around twenty of them took control of the building housing the state radio station.

In view of the above, could the Vice-President/High Representative say:

1. whether she is aware of the situation in the Republic of Guinea-Bissau?

2. whether she believes that intervention is necessary in order to guarantee the protection of human rights in a state that is part of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States?

3. what diplomatic activities have been carried out by the European Union in Guinea-Bissau in the past?

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

The EEAS has been closely monitoring the situation in Guinea-Bissau. The EU is helping in the efforts to stabilise the country by means of diplomatic, political and cooperation actions and by supporting the efforts of Economic Community Of West African States (Ecowas), the AU and the UN, as well as other international partners such as the CPLP, in the current crisis, including through the maintenance of sanctions until the full return to constitutional order.

Last year, the Commission had put on hold part of its cooperation in Guinea-Bissau following the 2010 events, which led to art. 96 consultations and to Council Decision 492/2011 establishing a set of appropriate measures for the restarting of the cooperation. Only cooperation with the government was frozen; activities benefitting directly the population continue; they are funded mainly by thematic lines and the 'water' and 'energy' facilities.

The unblocking of part of our cooperation will depend on the evolution of the crisis and on the capacity of the future government to implement a series of key reforms, mainly in the field of security and of the fight against illegal drugs trafficking.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003919/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Incendio e fuga di acqua radioattiva nel nord della Francia

Allarme incendio nella centrale nucleare di Penly, nel nord della Francia. L'allarme, spiega la compagnia che gestisce l'impianto, è stato attivato per la fuoriuscita di fumo in uno dei locali del reattore 2. I sistemi di sicurezza si sono attivati normalmente e il reattore si è automaticamente spento.

I due principi di incendio registrati nell'edificio che ospita il reattore sono stati spenti e non vi sono stati feriti . Le squadre e i mezzi di soccorso della centrale sono stati mobilitati e un'équipe di intervento è entrata nel locale per ispezionare l'insieme delle installazioni e constatare che non ci fossero altri fuochi. In seguito all'incendio si è verificata una fuga di «acqua radioattiva» dal reattore.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza di quanto avvenuto nel nord della Francia e se la centrale in questione era in regola con la direttiva del 2009 che fornisce un quadro comunitario sul nucleare;

2. intende prendere provvedimenti affinché si garantisca che non ci sia alcun rischio per l'ambiente?

Risposta data da Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(25 maggio 2012)

Secondo le informazioni ricevute dalle autorità francesi, un difetto nella guarnizione di tenuta di una delle pompe principali ha determinato una fuoriuscita di acqua superiore al normale. Quest'acqua è stata convogliata in appositi circuiti del sistema di pompe principali. Pertanto l'episodio non ha comportato conseguenze radiologiche per l'ambiente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003919/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Fire and radioactive water leakage in northern France

There has been a fire alert at the Penly nuclear power station in northern France. As explained by the company that runs the plant, the alarm was raised because of smoke in one of the rooms housing the No 2 reactor. The safety systems activated normally and the reactor was automatically shut down.

The two fires which had just broken out in the reactor building were put out and no one was injured. Emergency teams and equipment at the power station were mobilised and an intervention team went into the room to inspect all the installations and confirm that there were no other fires. Following the fire, 'radioactive water' leaked from the reactor.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of what happened in northern France and whether the power station in question complies with the 2009 Directive establishing a Community framework for nuclear power;

2. whether it intends to take measures to ensure that there is no risk to the environment?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(25 May 2012)

According to the information received from the French authority, a defective seal on a primary pump led to a water leak above the normal value. This water was collected by dedicated circuits of the primary pumps system. Thus, this incident did not lead to radiological consequences for the environment.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003921/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Insufficienza renale cronica

L'insufficienza renale cronica si verifica quando i reni perdono la loro capacità di depurare l'organismo e trattenere i liquidi necessari. La condizione che ne consegue è uno stato di intossicazione e di grave disidratazione.

I principali sintomi sono l'aumento di sete e orinazione, la diminuzione o assenza di appetito, vomito e/o diarrea, depressione, pelo arruffato e opaco. Nella fase iniziale si manifesta senza sintomi e per questo viene spesso trascurata fino alle fasi più avanzate. In Italia, si stima che la percentuale di soggetti colpiti oscilli tra il 6 e l'11 % della popolazione.

I soggetti particolarmente predisposti a sviluppare malattie renali sono le persone che soffrono di «pressione alta» (ipertensione) non adeguatamente trattate, i diabetici, gli obesi e, più in generale, gli adulti di età superiore ai 60 anni. Non bisogna inoltre sottovalutare la familiarità (ovvero la presenza nella propria famiglia di casi di malattie renali) e l'abuso di farmaci anti-infiammatori.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se esiste una strategia europea sulla malattia summenzionata e se vi sono nuove ricerche in campo sanitario finanziate nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ);

2. se la Commissione dispone di dati inerenti al numero di persone colpite dalla malattia in questione?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

Il settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (FP7) dell'UE investe attualmente circa 57 milioni di euro a sostegno di 21 progetti di ricerca relativi alle nefropatie croniche. Tali progetti interessano un'ampia gamma di ricerche e di applicazioni cliniche correlate alle nefropatie croniche.

Non esiste una strategia europea specificamente consacrata all'insufficienza renale cronica e la Commissione non dispone di informazioni sul numero di persone affette da tale patologia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003921/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Chronic kidney failure

Chronic kidney failure occurs when the kidneys lose their ability to purify the body and retain necessary liquids. The resulting condition is a state of intoxication and severe dehydration.

The main symptoms are increased thirst and urination, reduced or lack of appetite, vomiting and/or diarrhoea, depression, unkempt and dull hair. In the initial stage it presents without symptoms; therefore it is often overlooked until the more advanced stages. In Italy it is estimated that between 6 and 11% of the population is affected.

Those particularly predisposed to developing kidney diseases are people who suffer from inadequately managed high blood pressure (hypertension), diabetics, the obese and, more generally, adults over the age of 60. Family history (namely cases of kidney disease in the immediate family) and abuse of anti-inflammatory drugs should not be underestimated.

In view of the above, could the Commission state:

1. whether there is an EU strategy on the aforementioned disease and whether any new healthcare research is being funded as part of the Seventh Framework Programme for technological research and development (FP7);

2. whether it has any data on the number of people affected by the disease in question?

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

The EU 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) is currently investing close to EUR 57 million to support 21 research projects on chronic kidney disease. The projects cover a broad scope of research and clinical application in the area of chronic kidney disease.

There is no European strategy specifically on chronic renal failure and the Commission has no information related to the number of people affected by this condition.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003922/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Le migliori pratiche del programma Prevenire il consumo di droga ed informare il pubblico

Il programma Prevenire il consumo di droga ed informare il pubblico ha l'obiettivo di ridurre in maniera significativa il danno sociale e sanitario causato dall'utilizzo e il commercio di sostanze illecite.

Gli obiettivi generali del Programma sono: prevenire e ridurre l'utilizzo di droga e i danni legati alla tossicodipendenza; contribuire al miglioramento dell'informazione sull'uso delle droghe; sostenere l'implementazione della Strategia contro le Droghe dell'UE. Attenzione speciale deve essere prestata alla prevenzione dell'utilizzo di droghe tra i giovani, gruppo della popolazione maggiormente vulnerabile. La sfida principale è incoraggiare i giovani ad adottare uno stile di vita sano. Destinatari del programma sono tutti coloro che possono essere colpiti dalle conseguenze dell'uso delle droghe come giovani, donne in gravidanza, gruppi vulnerabili e persone che vivono in aree socialmente svantaggiate.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere quali sono stati i casi di eccellenza risultanti dallo strumento Prevenire il consumo di droga ed informare il pubblico?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

Il 5 maggio 2011 la Commissione ha adottato una relazione sulla valutazione intermedia del programma «Prevenzione e informazione in materia di droga» (DPIP) ([1]). La relazione presenta i risultati di una valutazione dell'attuazione del DPIP tra il 2007 e il 2011.

La relazione conclude che il programma è rilevante e che tanto gli obiettivi generali quanto quelli specifici sono pertinenti rispetto alle necessità e ai problemi dei gruppi destinatari. La relazione dimostra che il valore aggiunto del DPIP è significativo e afferma, in particolare, che il supporto a livello europeo rafforza la prevenzione della tossicodipendenza e altre attività di riduzione della domanda di droga promuovendo le iniziative transnazionali di scambio di conoscenze e aumentando la credibilità delle attività realizzate. Nella relazione viene anche evidenziato che, durante i primi tre anni d'attuazione, il DPIP ha già raggiunto alcuni dei suoi obiettivi e ha dimostrato di essere potenzialmente in grado di esercitare un'influenza nel campo della riduzione della domanda di droga, nonostante le sue risorse limitate (21,3 milioni di euro nel 2007-2013).

La relazione formula anche delle raccomandazioni volte al rafforzamento dell'impatto del DPIP. Queste includono: l'incremento delle sue risorse finanziarie, la promozione di progetti più vasti con un maggiore valore aggiunto europeo, l'ottimizzazione delle possibilità di finanziamento e il concentramento dei fondi su azioni pluriennali realizzate da vari partner, il rafforzamento delle sinergie tra il DPIP e gli altri programmi di finanziamento per la politica in materia di lotta alla droga (in particolare l'ISEC ([2]) il programma d'azione comunitaria in materia di salute) ([3]) e l'aumento dell'efficienza nella gestione del programma.

([1]) COM(2011)246, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0246:FIN:IT:PDF.
([2]) 125/2007/GAI.
([3]) Decisione n. 1350/2007/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 ottobre 2007, che istituisce un secondo programma d'azione comunitaria in materia di salute (2008-2013), GU L 301 del 20.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003922/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Best practices in the Drug Prevention and Information programme

The Drug Prevention and Information programme aims to significantly reduce the social and health damage caused by the use of, and trade in, illegal substances.

The programme's general objectives are: to prevent and reduce drug use and the damage connected with drug addiction, to contribute to the improvement of information on drug use and to support the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy. Special attention must be paid to the prevention of drug use among young people, the most vulnerable population group. The main challenge is to encourage young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The programme is targeted at anyone who may be affected by the consequences of drug use, such as young people, pregnant women, vulnerable groups and people who live in socially disadvantaged areas.

In view of the above, can the Commission state what positive outcomes have resulted from the Drug Prevention and Information programme?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2012)

The Commission adopted, on 5 May 2011, a Report on the interim evaluation of the 'Drug prevention and information' Programme (DPIP) ([1]). The report presents the results of an assessment of the implementation of the DPIP between 2007 and 2011.

The report concluded that the programme is relevant and that both the general and the specific objectives are pertinent to the needs and problems of the target groups. It provided evidence that the added value of the DPIP is significant. In particular, it stated that EU-level support boosts drug prevention and other drug-demand reduction activities, by promoting transnational learning and enhancing the credibility of activities implemented. It also highlighted that during the first three years of its implementation, the DPIP has already reached some of its objectives and it has shown the potential to make an impact in the field of drug-demand reduction, despite its limited resources (EUR 21.3 million in 2007-2013).

The report also makes recommendations for strengthening the impact of the DPIP. These include: to strengthen its financial resources, to favour broader projects with a higher EU added value, to streamline financing possibilities and concentrate funding on multiannual actions implemented by several partners, to strengthen the synergies between the DPIP and other programmes providing financing for drugs policy (in particular ISEC ([2]) and the Public Health Programme ([3])) and to increase the efficiency of management of the programme.

([1]) COM(2011) 246, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0246:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) 125/2007/JHA.
([3]) Decision No 1350/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 establishing a second programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-2013), OJ L 301, 20.11.2007.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003923/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Presunti brogli in Russia

In Russia Oleg Shein, deputato della Duma all'opposizione sconfitto alle ultime elezioni comunali di Astrakan, nel sud della Russia, ha iniziato uno sciopero della fame per fare chiarezza sull'esito delle ultime elezioni. La Commissione centrale per le elezioni e la Procura generale hanno deciso di esaminare le prove sui brogli, ma per ora non è stato fatto ancora nulla.

La protesta portata avanti dal deputato della Duma e candidato sconfitto a sindaco di Astrakhan ha attirato come una calamita tutta la galassia dell'opposizione. Mercoledì scorso un'altra ventina di deputati della Duma locale si è unita a Oleg Shein e ha iniziato a rifiutare il cibo. Altre trecento persone, pigiate su autobus e auto, si sono date appuntamento nel capoluogo, 700 chilometri a sud-ovest di Mosca, e hanno organizzato un corteo poi bloccato da un imponente cordone di polizia. Non ci sono stati incidenti e nessuno è stato arrestato.

1. Alla luce di quanto citato, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere se è a conoscenza delle proteste in Russia per presunti brogli avvenuti nelle ultime elezioni?

2. Quali provvedimenti e azioni intende intraprendere per garantire libere e democratiche elezioni in Russia e per vigilare sull'incolumità dei membri delle opposizioni?

3. Quali altre misure intende adottare?

4. Quali sono le attività diplomatiche intraprese tra l'Unione europea e la Russia?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza delle proteste in atto nel periodo postelettorale in Russia. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha rilasciato una serie di dichiarazioni in materia, nelle quali auspicava lo svolgimento di elezioni regolari e l'instaurazione di un dialogo con la società civile. In un'altra dichiarazione del 12 giugno 2012, in risposta alla nuova legge sulle manifestazioni e alle vessazioni nei confronti di esponenti dell'opposizione, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha espresso preoccupazione per le misure attuate di recente in Russia al fine di limitare la possibilità di tenere manifestazioni pubbliche e per i tentativi di intimidire i leader della protesta. Ha inoltre incoraggiato il governo russo e la società civile a impegnarsi in un dialogo costruttivo sulla promozione di norme democratiche e sulle riforme future.

Le questioni riguardanti la legislazione in materia di elezioni e partiti politici saranno affrontate anche nel prossimo ciclo di consultazioni sui diritti umani tra l'UE e la Russia.

In una prospettiva più ampia, le questioni dei diritti umani e dei principi democratici vengono esaminate a tutti i livelli del dialogo politico tra l'Unione europea e la Russia, dagli esperti agli alti funzionari fino al più alto livello. Tali questioni sono state discusse in occasione dell'ultimo vertice UE-Russia, svoltosi il 3 e 4 giugno 2012 a San Pietroburgo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003923/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Alleged fraud in Russia

Oleg Shein, a Russian opposition Duma deputy recently defeated in municipal elections in Astrakhan, in southern Russia, has begun a hunger strike in an attempt to focus attention on the election results. The Central Election Commission and the Public Prosecutor's Office have agreed to examine evidence of fraud, but so far have not done anything.

The protest led by the Duma deputy and defeated Astrakhan mayoral candidate has attracted the attention of all opposition parties like a magnet. A further 20 local Duma deputies have joined Oleg Shein in his hunger strike. Another 300 people, crammed into buses and cars, convened in Astrakhan, 700 kilometres south-west of Moscow, and organised a rally that was subsequently blockaded by a massive police cordon. There were no incidents and no arrests.

1. In view of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative state whether she is aware of the protests in Russia against alleged fraud in the recent elections?

2. What measures and actions does she intend to take to ensure free and democratic elections in Russia and to ensure the safety of members of the opposition?

3. What other measures does she intend to take?

4. What diplomatic activities are being conducted between the EU and Russia?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the protests that have been taking place in the post-election period in Russia. The HR/VP has issued a number of statements in this regard. The statements called for fair elections and a dialogue with the civil society. Another statement was issued on 12 June 2012, reacting to the new law on manifestations and harassment of the opposition figures. In this statement HR/VP expressed concern about the steps taken recently in Russia to limit the scope for public rallies, and about attempts to intimidate protest leaders. She also encouraged the Russian Government and civil society to engage in a constructive dialogue on promotion of democratic standards and future reforms.

The issues of election and political party legislation will also be addressed at the upcoming round of the EU-Russia human rights consultations.

In the broader perspective, questions of human rights and democratic principles are addressed on all levels of the EU-Russia political dialogue, from the expert to senior to the highest level. They were discussed at the most recent EU-Russia Summit, which took place on 3-4 June 2012 in Saint Petersburg.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003924/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Saliva per la cura del diabete

La saliva potrebbe essere il punto di partenza per nuove strategie di cura del diabete. La possibilità è legata ad un enzima noto da tempo, l'amilasi, e al suo ruolo nella regolazione del tasso di glucosio nel sangue. Alcuni ricercatori hanno scoperto la funzione fino ad oggi sconosciuta dell'enzima e il meccanismo che lo lega all'insulina.

Gli scienziati hanno studiato due gruppi di adulti in buona salute che avevano, rispettivamente, un tasso di amilasi nella saliva molto alto o basso, controllando la loro reazione all'ingestione di un amido, sostanza «digerita» grazie all'enzima salivare. Si è scoperto così che i pazienti con maggiore tasso di amilasi avevano una glicemia più stabile e più bassa degli altri nelle due ore successive all'ingestione di prodotti a base di amido. Si è osservato, in pratica, una sorta di «controllo» dell'amilasi sull'insulina — ormone che agisce nell'assorbimento del glucosio da parte delle cellule muscolari e grasse mantenendo la glicemia ad un livello tale da non danneggiare l'organismo — nelle persone con un tasso elevato di enzima (condizione determinata geneticamente).

I risultati dello studio aprono prospettive interessanti nella ricerca, anche se non possono avere un utilizzo immediato. E saranno necessari, avvertono i ricercatori, altri studi per confermare i dati. Ora, intanto, l'équipe lavorerà sull'identificazione più precisa del meccanismo che lega amilasi e insulina.

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

1. è a conoscenza della nuova ricerca e, vista l'importanza che la tutela della salute riveste nelle politiche dell'UE, ritiene che si debba finanziare tale ricerca per consentire di tradurre lo studio in applicazioni cliniche?

Risposta di Maire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei risultati della ricerca di recente pubblicazione sul ruolo dell'amilasi nella regolazione della secrezione di insulina. Come osserva l'onorevole parlamentare, i risultati preliminari devono ancora essere confermati.

Sebbene al momento non si sostenga alcuna ricerca ad hoc sul nesso tra l'amilasi e il controllo dell'insulina, la ricerca sul diabete e sull'obesità, invece, è stata e continua ad essere una priorità durante l'intero settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013). Circa 512 milioni di EUR sono stati stanziati a favore della ricerca sulle problematiche sopra citate in seguito agli inviti a presentare proposte relativi al periodo 2007-2012.

I settori presi in considerazione includono la comprensione dell'eziologia del diabete ([1]), la prevenzione delle complicazioni ([2]), lo sviluppo di strategie terapeutiche innovative ([3]) e di metodologie diagnostiche innovative ([4]) nonché appropriati interventi sullo stile di vita ([5]).

La problematica del diabete non sarà affrontata nell'ambito dell'invito a presentare proposte in materia di sanità 2013 del 7° PQ ma potrebbero esservi alcune opportunità in altri settori che rientrano nel programma di lavoro Biomedicina e sanità ([6]).

La proposta della Commissione per Orizzonte 2020 — il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) ([7]) — considera la problematica «Sanità, cambiamenti demografici e benessere» come una delle sei «sfide della società» che devono essere raccolte e che possono probabilmente offrire anche opportunità di ricerca sul diabete. È tuttavia troppo presto per stabilire quali potrebbero essere i temi specifici della ricerca.

([1]) http://betabat.ulb.ac.be.
([2]) http://www.eu-prioriy/org.
([3]) http://www.naimit.eu.
([4]) http://www.ceed3.org/.
([5]) http://www.dexlife.eu.
([6]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003924/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Saliva in the treatment of diabetes

Saliva could be the starting point for new strategies to treat diabetes. The possibility relates to an enzyme that has been known about for some time, amylase, and its role in regulating blood sugar levels. Researchers have now discovered the previously unknown function of the enzyme and the mechanism that binds it to insulin.

Scientists studied two groups of healthy adults with very high and very low levels of amylase in their saliva respectively, analysing their reaction to the ingestion of starch, a substance that is 'digested' by the salivary enzyme. It was discovered that the patients with a higher level of amylase had a more stable blood sugar level than the others during the two hours following the ingestion of starch-based products. In practice, amylase was found to exert a kind of 'control' over insulin — a hormone that plays a role in the absorption of glucose by muscle and fat cells, maintaining blood sugar at levels which are not harmful to the body — in people with high levels of the enzyme (a genetically determined condition).

The results of the study open up promising prospects for research, even if they cannot be used in the immediate future. The researchers point out that further studies will be required to confirm the data. In the meantime, the team will be working to obtain a more precise understanding of the mechanism that binds amylase and insulin.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the new research and, considering the importance given to the protection of health by EU policy, does it believe that this research should be funded to enable the study to be extended to clinical applications?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

The Commission is aware of the recently published research results concerning the role of amylase in the control of insulin secretion. As pointed out by the Honourable Member, preliminary results presented would need to be further confirmed.

Although no specific research related to the link between amylase and insulin control is currently supported, research on diabetes and obesity has been a priority throughout the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). Some EUR 512 million have been devoted to support research on these areas as a result of the calls for proposals for the 2007-2012 period.

Areas tackled include the understanding of its aetiology ([1]), the prevention of complications ([2]), the development of innovative therapeutic strategies ([3]) as well as innovative diagnostic approaches ([4]) and appropriate life style interventions ([5]).

The area of diabetes will not be addressed in the 2013 Health call of FP7. However, there might be some opportunities in this area in other sectors of the Health work programme ([6]).

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-1220) ([7]) identifies 'Health, demographic change and well-being' as one of the six societal challenges to be tackled, likely to provide also opportunities for research on diabetes. It is yet too premature to ascertain which could be the specific research issues addressed.

([1]) http://betabat.ulb.ac.be.
([2]) http://www.eu-prioriy/org.
([3]) http://www.naimit.eu.
([4]) http://www.ceed3.org/.
([5]) http://www.dexlife.eu.
([6]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003925/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Smartphone che registra i movimenti del corpo

Registra tremori negli anziani o riconosce i primi segnali di Parkinson. Un'ombra elettronica capace di captare i movimenti del corpo e misurare l'equilibrio della persona. Un oggetto che si tiene in tasca e rivela se si è in forma. L'idea è venuta a un gruppo di ricercatori dell'Università di Bologna, che hanno sviluppato un app per smartphone. Il software ha le stesse funzioni di alcune apparecchiature mediche costose, che oggi si trovano solo nei centri specializzati. Gli smartphone che usiamo tutti i giorni sono dotati di accelerometri e giroscopi. Sono due sensori in grado di misurare il movimento, sia rettilineo sia di rotazione. Sono gli stessi sensori impiegati in alcuni dei più diffusi test diagnostici sull'abilità a camminare e stare in piedi degli anziani.

A breve questo «cellulare anti caduta» verrà sperimentato su centinaia di anziani. Presto potrebbe diventare una tecnologia low-cost da utilizzare per scoprire i problemi di equilibrio nei pazienti. In Europa la popolazione invecchia sempre di più e considerando circa 100 milioni di anziani, si verificano oltre 30 milioni di cadute ogni anno con un costo che supera i 30 miliardi di euro.

Alla luce di quanto precede si chiede alla Commissione se è a conoscenza della recente applicazione software dell'Università di Bologna e se non si intenda avviare un programma sperimentale per valutare l'opportunità di impiegare questa nuova scoperta al fine di tutelare la salute dei nostri anziani.

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

La Commissione riconosce l'importanza e le potenzialità delle tecnologie di informazione e comunicazione (TIC) nella risoluzione di problemi che interessano la società odierna, anche nel settore del rilevamento e della prevenzione delle cadute. Le TIC possono essere utili per permettere alle persone di vivere più a lungo in modo attivo e indipendente, incidendo positivamente sulla loro qualità di vita. Tuttavia, persistono barriere che impediscono agli anziani di beneficiare del pieno potenziale delle TIC.

Per tale ragione, la Commissione ha preso alcune misure per migliorare l'accesso alle TIC e i benefici da esse apportati ai nostri anziani. Nell'ambito dell'iniziativa faro «L'Unione dell'innovazione» è stato lanciato il partenariato per l'innovazione europea sull'invecchiamento attivo e in buona salute, al fine di affrontare la sfida dell'invecchiamento attivo e in buona salute avvalendosi della ricerca e dell'innovazione. La prevenzione delle cadute è stata selezionata dal direttivo del partenariato per l'innovazione europea sull'invecchiamento attivo e in buona salute, composto da rappresentanti di Stati membri, industria, professionisti, associazioni di utenti, istituti di ricerca e autorità, come una delle sei azioni del partenariato, dato il significativo potenziale dimostrato dal settore in questione, nonché l'impegno assuntovi dalle parti interessate.

Negli ultimi anni, la Commissione europea ha classificato secondo un ordine di priorità le soluzioni e i servizi offerti dalle TIC per il rilevamento e la prevenzione delle cadute nei suoi programmi di ricerca e innovazione, quali ad esempio il 7° programma quadro (7° PQ), il programma dedicato alla domotica per le categorie deboli o il programma di sostegno alla politica in materia di TIC.

L'applicazione per smartphone cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento è prevista nel progetto di ricerca FARSEEING, finanziato di recente dalla Commissione nell'ambito del 7° PQ. La Commissione europea attende con interesse i risultati di questo e di altri progetti, affinché gli anziani possano beneficiare appieno delle soluzioni basate sulle TIC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003925/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Smartphone that records body movements

It records tremors in the elderly and recognises early signs of Parkinson's disease. It is an electronic companion that can detect body movements and measure a person's balance. It is something you keep in your pocket, which tells you whether you are healthy. The idea came from a group of researchers at the University of Bologna, who developed an application for smartphones. The software functions in the same way as expensive medical equipment that is today only found in some specialist centres. Everyday smartphones are equipped with accelerometers and gyroscopes, which are two sensors capable of measuring both rectilinear and rotational movement. These are the same sensors used in some of the most common tests to diagnose the ability to walk and to stand in the elderly.

This 'anti-fall smartphone' will soon be tested on hundreds of elderly people. It could soon become a low-cost technology used to detect balance problems in patients. Europe has an increasingly aging population and, for around 100 million elderly people, there are more than 30 million falls every year, costing over EUR 30 billion.

Can the Commission therefore state whether it is aware of this latest software application from the University of Bologna and whether it intends to launch an experimental programme to assess the possibility of using this new discovery to safeguard the health of our elderly citizens?

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

The Commission recognises the importance and the power of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for solving societal problems, including in the area of fall detection and prevention. ICT can help people to live actively and independently for more years, thus contributing to their quality of life. However, a number of barriers still prevent the older generation from fully embracing ICT.

That is why the European Commission has taken actions to improve access to and benefits from ICT for our ageing society. As part of the Innovation Union Flagship, the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA) has been launched to tackle the challenge of active and healthy ageing through research and innovation. Fall prevention has been selected by the EIP AHA board, composed of Member states, industry, professional, user and research organisations and authorities, as one of the six EIP AHA-actions, since it has demonstrated significant potential and engaged stakeholders.

Over the past years the European Commission has prioritised ICT-based fall prevention and detection solutions and services in its research and innovation programmes such as the 7th Framework Programme (FP7), the Ambient Assisted Living Programme or the ICT Policy Support Programme (CIP).

The smart phone tool referred to is part of the recently funded EC-FP7 funded research project FARSEEING. The European Commission looks forward to the results and outcomes of this and other projects so that older persons can reap the full benefits from ICT based solutions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003926/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Nuovo superconduttore

Un superconduttore a temperatura ambiente, in grado di trasportare l'elettricità da impianti solari nel Sahara ai quattro angoli del mondo, senza alcuna dissipazione di energia: potrebbe essere questa una delle ricadute di una scoperta italiana che ha portato alla luce uno dei meccanismi fondamentali alla base della superconduttività ad alta temperatura.

Arrivare a questo risultato è stato possibile grazie agli esperimenti condotti nei laboratori di alcune università italiane. I fisici hanno utilizzato impulsi laser ultraveloci per identificare le microscopiche interazioni che azionano la superconduttività ad alta temperatura, mostrando che negli ossidi di rame superconduttori gli elettroni sono legati in coppie non attraverso un meccanismo convenzionale, che implica una deformazione della struttura cristallina, ma attraverso delle fluttuazioni della polarizzazione magnetica.

Secondo gli esperti, se si arrivasse a ottimizzare e ingegnerizzare questo meccanismo si troverebbe forse la strada che porta alla superconduttività a temperatura ambiente, con numerose ricadute sia per la ricerca di base sia per le applicazioni tecnologiche.

Si potrebbe, per esempio, trasportare corrente elettrica con efficienze mai raggiunte, risparmiando una notevole quantità di energia, o produrre campi magnetici elevatissimi, indispensabili nel settore dei trasporti e delle tecniche diagnostiche mediche, come la risonanza magnetica nucleare.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza dello studio summenzionato e se non ritiene che possa essere finanziato attraverso il settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (2007-2013) (7° PQ)?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è al corrente delle potenzialità presentate dalla superconduttività al fine di un uso più efficiente dell'energia. La ricerca in materia è finanziata nell'ambito dei programmi quadro, in particolare per quanto riguarda il trasporto dell'energia elettrica, i magneti e i dispositivi limitatori della corrente di cortocircuito (fault current limiters) nonché il settore della ricerca fondamentale.

Nel contesto del settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (PQ7 2007-2013) finora sono finanziati almeno 110 progetti concernenti la superconduttività, con un contributo comunitario complessivo di 146,3 milioni di EUR. Nel 2011 sono stati pubblicati due inviti specifici a presentare proposte di ricerca sui temi NPM.2011.2.2-1 «Nuovi materiali superconduttori, architetture e processi per applicazioni elettrotecniche» e NMP.2011.2.2-6 «Proprietà fondamentali dei nuovi materiali superconduttori» nel contesto del 7° PQ, area tematica n. 4 «Nanoscienze, nanotecnologie, materiali e nuove tecnologie di produzione — NMP» ([1]). Il primo invito concerneva lo sviluppo, fino alla fase di dimostrazione, di cavi e nastri superconduttori che offrano migliori prestazioni per le applicazioni energetiche (come motori, generatori e trasformatori) o di magneti, che diano luogo a una significativa penetrazione commerciale. Il secondo invito, in coordinamento con il Giappone, aveva come obiettivo principale il miglioramento della comprensione di base della superconduttività in generale e dei nuovi materiali superconduttori in particolare.

Inoltre, per avere una visione più chiara dei fenomeni ultrarapidi che si verificano nei materiali, nel 2011 la Commissione ha lanciato nella stessa area tematica l'invito NMP.2011.2.1-2 concernente la «Modellazione della dinamica ultrarapida dei materiali». Questo invito ha dato luogo a progetti cui partecipano anche gli istituti che hanno condotto lo studio menzionato dall'onorevole parlamentare.

([1]) Per maggiori informazioni sui progetti dell'attuale PQ, consultare il sito CORDIS: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003926/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: New superconductor

An ambient-temperature superconductor, capable of transporting electricity from solar energy facilities in the Sahara to the four corners of the world, without any loss of energy, could be one of the effects of an Italian discovery which has revealed one of the key mechanisms forming the basis of high temperature superconductivity.

This result has been made possible thanks to experiments carried out in the laboratories of a number of Italian universities. Physicists used ultra-fast laser impulses to identify the microscopic interactions which activate high temperature superconductivity, demonstrating that in copper oxide superconductors the electron pairs are not connected by a conventional mechanism, which would imply a deformation of the crystalline structure, but through fluctuations in the magnetic polarisation.

According to the experts, if it were possible to optimise and engineer this mechanism, progress could be made towards ambient-temperature superconductivity, which would have various ancillary benefits both for the basic research itself and for its technological applications.

For example, it would be possible to transport electrical current with unprecedented efficiency, thus saving a large amount of energy, or to produce very intense magnetic fields, crucial for both the transport sector and medical diagnostic techniques, such as nuclear magnetic resonance.

In view of this, could the Commission state whether it is aware of the aforementioned study and if it believes that this study could be funded through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technical Development (2007-2013) (FP7)?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

The Commission is aware of the potential of superconductivity to improve the efficient use of energy. Research is funded within the framework Programmes, in particular in relation to electricity transport, magnets, and fault current limiters but also in fundamental research.

In the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), up to now at least 110 projects addressing superconductivity are funded with a total maximum EC contribution of EUR 146.3 million. In 2011, two dedicated calls for research proposals were launched on the topics NMP.2011.2.2-1 'Novel superconducting materials, architectures and processes for electro-technical applications' and NMP.2011.2.2-6 'Fundamental properties of novel superconducting materials' within the FP7 Cooperation Theme 4 'Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and New Production Technologies — NMP' ([1]). The first call aimed at the development, up to the demonstration level, of superconducting wires and tapes with better performance for power applications (e.g. motors, generators, transformers) or magnets, leading to a significant market penetration. The second call was a coordinated call with Japan with as a primary objective the improvement of our basic understanding of superconductivity in general and of novel superconducting materials in particular.

Moreover, to gain a better insight in ultrafast phenomena occurring in materials, the Commission has launched in 2011 a dedicated call NMP.2011.2.1-2 'Modelling of ultrafast dynamics in materials' within the same Theme. This resulted in projects in which institutions involved in the study referred to by the Honourable Member, participate.

([1]) More information about running FP projects is available from the CORDIS site: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003927/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Statistiche sulla produzione industriale

La produzione industriale a febbraio è calata dello 0,7 % rispetto a gennaio (dato destagionalizzato) e del 6,8 % su base annua (dato corretto per gli effetti di calendario). Si tratta della discesa tendenziale più forte da novembre 2009. Lo rileva l'Istat. Su base mensile, quindi, l'Istat ha registrato, dopo il forte ribasso segnato a gennaio (-2,6 %), una nuova flessione. Nella media del trimestre dicembre-febbraio l'indice risulta così diminuito dell'1,0 % rispetto al trimestre immediatamente precedente.

In termini annui, invece, si tratta del sesto calo consecutivo, con l'indice che viaggia in territorio negativo da settembre 2011 e il —6,8 % di febbraio 2012 risulta il peggior dato da novembre del 2009 quando la produzione segnò un calo del 9,3 %.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza degli ultimi dati Istat sulla produzione industriale;

2. se può fornire un quadro generale aggiornato sulla produzione industriale nei vari Stati membri;

3. come intende agire per sostenere la ripresa industriale in Europa.

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

La Commissione segue regolarmente gli ultimi sviluppi registrati nell'industria e nei suoi settori principali. Eurostat diffonde dati sulla produzione industriale sulla base di un calendario di pubblicazione prestabilito. I dati mensili sono pubblicati mediamente 43 giorni dopo la fine del mese di riferimento. Dati aggiornati sulla produzione industriale per tutti gli Stati membri, che coprono i dati Istat, possono essere inoltre reperiti nella database di Eurostat per la diffusione delle informazioni. ([1])

Inoltre, sulla base dei più recenti dati Eurostat, la Commissione pubblica una nota mensile ([2]) che analizza le tendenze relative alla produzione industriale, agli scambi, ai nuovi ordinativi e alle percezioni del settore. La nota raffronta la situazione tra i vari settori industriali nonché tra i diversi Stati membri (si allega l'ultima versione della pubblicazione).

La Commissione è preoccupata per il recente rallentamento della crescita nell'industria e si adopera per affrontare i principali ostacoli all'espansione industriale, vale a dire l'attuale contrazione del credito, l'accresciuta concorrenza nell'economia globale, gli ostacoli che rimangono nel mercato unico e i crescenti squilibri negli Stati membri. Nel contesto dell'imminente revisione della propria politica industriale e della seconda fase del Single Market Act, entrambe pianificate per il secondo semestre di quest'anno, la Commissione presenterà un nuovo gruppo di misure volte ad affrontare tali sfide.

Tuttavia, è anche il caso di notare che le prestazioni dell'industria europea sono interessate negativamente in ampia misura dalla situazione economica generale nonché da fattori esterni quali i ricorrenti problemi legati ai prezzi delle materie prime e dell'energia, al consolidamento fiscale e alle persistenti difficoltà nell'accesso al finanziamento.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/documents/index_en.htm#h2-2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003927/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Statistics on industrial production

Industrial production in February fell by 0.7% compared to January (seasonally adjusted figure) and by 6.8% year-on-year (calendar adjusted figure). This is the strongest downward trend since November 2009, as reported by Istat. Following the significant fall in January (-2.6%), Istat thus recorded a further monthly downturn. The average index over the three-month period from December to February is therefore down 1.0% compared to the immediately preceding three-month period.

In annual terms, however, this is the sixth consecutive fall, with the index moving into negative territory since September 2011. The figure of -6.8% for February 2012 is the worst figure since November 2009, when production fell by 9.3%.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of the latest Istat data on industrial production?

2. Whether it can provide an up-to-date overview of industrial production in the various Member States?

3. How it intends to support Europe's industrial recovery?

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

The Commission regularly monitors the latest developments in industry and its main sectors. Eurostat disseminates data on industrial production according to a pre-established release calendar, with monthly data being published on average 43 days after the end of the reference month. Up-to-date data on industrial production for all Member States, covering Istat data, can also be found in the Eurostat's dissemination database ([1]).

In addition, on the basis of the latest Eurostat data, the Commission publishes a monthly note ([2]) that analyses trends in industrial output, trade, new orders and sentiments. The note compares the situation across industrial sectors as well as Member States (attached the latest version of the publication).

The Commission is concerned about the recent weakening of growth in industry and tries to address the main challenges negatively affecting growth of industry, i.e. the current credit crunch, intensifying competition in the global economy, outstanding barriers in the Single Market, and growing imbalances in the Member States. The Commission will present a new set of measures addressing these challenges in the upcoming review of its industrial policy and in the second phase of the Single Market Act, both planned for the second half of this year.

However, it is also worth noting that the performance of European industry is to a large extent negatively affected by the overall economic situation, and external factors such as resurgent raw materials and energy prices, fiscal consolidation and persistent difficulties in access to finance.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/documents/index_en.htm#h2-2.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-003928/12
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Acuerdo Comercial con Mercosur

Actualmente se está negociando el acuerdo comercial con Mercosur, que podría desembocar en un aumento de las exportaciones agrícolas de esos países a la Unión Europea. La legislación relativa a los controles de calidad y protección al consumidor es muy exigente para los productores comunitarios, que hacen un esfuerzo considerable para cumplir con ella, compitiendo en desigualdad de condiciones con los productores de Mercosur.

— ¿Cuáles son los estándares de calidad y protección al consumidor exigidos por la Comisión a los productos provenientes de los países del Mercosur?

— ¿Realiza la Comisión inspecciones en esos países para asegurarse del cumplimiento de la normativa comunitaria?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de mayo de 2012)

La Comisión exige que los productos procedentes de los países del Mercosur cumplan normas que sean al menos equivalentes a las establecidas en la legislación de la UE.

El servicio de inspección de la Dirección General de Salud y Consumidores (DG SANCO) de la Comisión (la Oficina Alimentaria y Veterinaria, OAV, con sede en Grange, Irlanda) realiza inspecciones periódicas en países terceros, incluidos los países del Mercosur, para verificar el cumplimiento de la legislación de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003928/12
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Trade agreement with Mercosur

The trade agreement with Mercosur is currently being negotiated, which could lead to increased agricultural exports from these countries to the European Union. Legislation on quality control and consumer protection is very strict for EU producers, which go to great lengths to comply with it and thus compete with Mercosur producers on unequal terms.

— What quality and consumer protection standards does the Commission require of products from Mercosur countries?

— Does the Commission perform inspections in these countries to ensure compliance with EU legislation?

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

The Commission requires that products from Mercosur countries meet standards at least equivalent to those laid down in EU legislation.

The Commission's inspection service of the Health and Consumers Directorate-General, DG SANCO (FVO — Food and Veterinary Office, located in Grange — Ireland), performs regular inspections in third countries, including Mercosur countries, to verify compliance with EU legislation.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003929/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16. april 2012)

Om: Grænseoverskridende kriminalitet og Schengen-samarbejdet

Jacqueline de Quattro, som er minister (Conseiller d'Etat) i delstatsregeringen i den schweiziske kanton Vaud og ansvarlig for sikkerhed og miljø, oplyser i et interview med avisen 20 Minutter ([1]), at der i de kantoner, der deler grænse med Frankrig, er sket en 30 % stigning i antallet af indbrud og tilskriver dette den friere adgang pga. landets deltagelse i Schengen-samarbejdet, hvorfor hun ønsker grænsekontrollen genindført. Jacqueline de Quattros bekymring bestyrkes af en nylig offentliggjort kriminalstatistik, der omtales som en »eksplosion« i den grænseoverskridende kriminalitet, specielt i kantonerne Vaud og Geneve.

Der er især tale om kriminalitet i form af lomme- og tasketyverier, butikstyverier, biltyverier og indbrud begået af udlændinge uden lovlig opholdstilladelse. Politiet har identificeret tre typer af kriminelle, illegale immigranter: Bander fra Balkan, specielt Rumænien, som er ansvarlige for mange indbrud; unge romaer, som med base i Milano begår indbrudskriminalitet i et bælte over Schweiz til Paris samt personer fra Nordafrika ([2]). Dette mønster er for de to førstnævnte gruppers vedkommende også kendt fra Danmark, for romaerne især i den nordsjællandske by Helsingør, hvortil det vil være Kommissionen bekendt, at spørgeren allerede i september 2010 inviterede Kommissionens formand for med egne øjne at bese problemerne.

— Gør disse forhold indtryk på Kommissionen, og finder Kommissionen i givet fald, at de er et resultat af, eller hvert fald stærkt korreleret til Schengen-samarbejdets åbne grænser?

— Anerkender Kommissionen, at de for Schweiz beskrevne problemer også findes i EU's medlemsstater, og agter Kommissionen i givet fald at foretage sig noget for at imødegå dem, herunder give medlemsstaterne ret til at genindføre grænsekontrol i den form og i det omfang, det enkelte land finder nødvendigt? Er Kommissionen endelig med baggrund i ovenstående parat til at genoverveje sin opfattelse af, at Rumænien og Bulgarien er klar til optagelse i Schengen-samarbejdet?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Cecilia Malmström
(11. maj 2012)

Det er Kommissionens politik ikke at kommentere artikler i pressen.

Ikke desto mindre henledes det ærede medlems opmærksomhed på, at skabelsen af Schengenområdet uden indre grænsekontrol er ledsaget af en række tiltag på flere områder, herunder et effektivt politi- og retssamarbejde mellem medlemsstaterne. Desuden har medlemsstaternes kompetente myndigheder tilladelse til at udføre personkontrol, når de udøver deres politimæssige beføjelser på hele deres område, inklusive i grænseområderne, så længe udøvelsen af disse beføjelser ikke har samme effekt som grænsekontrol.

Hvad angår genindførelsen af grænsekontrol mellem staterne inden for området uden indre grænsekontrol, vil Kommissionen understrege, at dette kun er muligt under særlige omstændigheder og som et midlertidigt tiltag, hvis der er en alvorlig trussel mod den offentlige orden eller den indre sikkerhed.

Angående Rumænien og Bulgariens medlemskab af Schengenområdet, så træffes alle beslutninger om udvidelse af Schengeområdet, hvorved den indre grænsekontrol ophæves, af Rådet efter høring af Europa-Parlamentet. Det Europæiske Råd af 1. og 2. marts 2012: »anmoder Rådet om at vende tilbage til dette spørgsmål og vedtage sin afgørelse på samlingen i RIA-Rådet i september 2012«. Kommissionen har gentagne gange gjort det klart, at den fuldt ud støtter Rumænien og Bulgariens tiltrædelse af Schengen, og dette standpunkt er uændret.

([1]) http://www.thelocal.ch/2999/.
([2]) http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss_news/Call_for_tougher_penalties_to_combat_crime_rise.html?cid=32362932.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003929/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Cross-border crime and the Schengen Agreement

In an interview with the newspaper *20 Minutter* ([1]), Jacqueline de Quattro, Councillor (Conseiller d'Etat) in the Swiss canton of Vaud and responsible for safety and the environment, said that the cantons which share a border with France have had a 30% increase in the number of burglaries and she attributes this to the freer entry resulting from Swiss participation in the Schengen Agreement. She therefore wants border controls reintroduced. Jacqueline de Quattro's concerns are reinforced by recently published crime statistics that are referred to as an 'explosion' in cross-border crime, especially in the cantons of Vaud and Geneva.

In particular, the 'explosion' concerns crime in the form of pick pocketing, bag snatching, shoplifting, car theft and burglaries committed by foreigners without legal residence status. Police have identified three types of criminal illegal immigrants: gangs from the Balkans, particularly Romania, who are responsible for many burglaries; young Roma who commit burglaries in a belt through Switzerland to Paris from a base in Milan; and people from North Africa ([2]). The pattern of the first two groups is also familiar in Denmark, especially concerning Roma in the North Zealand town of Elsinore. In September 2010, as the Commission is aware, I invited the President of the Commission to come and see the problems for himself.

— Is the Commission concerned at this and, if so, does the Commission consider them to be a result of, or at least strongly correlated with, the open borders of the Schengen Agreement?

— Does the Commission recognise that the problems described in Switzerland also exist in EU Member States and, if so, does the Commission intend to do something to counter them, including granting Member States the right to reintroduce border controls in the form and to the extent that each country considers necessary? In the light of the foregoing is the Commission ultimately prepared to reconsider its view that Romania and Bulgaria are ready to join the Schengen Agreement?

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

It is Commission policy not to comment on articles appearing in the press.

However, the attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the fact that the creation of the Schengen area without internal border control is flanked by accompanying measures in various areas, amongst which effective police and judicial cooperation between Member States. Also, the competent authorities of the Member States are allowed to do checks on persons in the exercise of police powers throughout their territory, including in border areas, insofar as the exercise of those powers does not have an effect equivalent to border checks.

As regards the reintroduction of internal border controls between States within the area without internal border controls, the Commission would point out that this is only possible in exceptional circumstances, and as a temporary measure, where there is a serious threat to public policy or internal security.

As for the membership of Romania and Bulgaria in the Schengen area, any decision on the extension of the Schengen area through which internal border control is lifted is taken by the Council, after consultation of the European Parliament. The European Council of 1 and 2 March 2012 'asks the Council to revert to this issue in order to adopt its decision at the meeting of the JHA Council in September 2012'. For its part, the Commission has repeatedly made clear that it fully supports Romanian and Bulgarian accession to Schengen. Its position is unchanged.

([1]) http://www.thelocal.ch/2999/.
([2]) http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss_news/Call_for_tougher_penalties_to_combat_crime_rise.html?cid=32362932.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003930/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16. april 2012)

Om: Sharia-zoner og -domstole i EU

Der er til stadighed forlydender gennem medier og henvendelser til politikere om, at der rundt om i EU oprettes uautoriserede såkaldte sharia-zoner, hvor alene muslimer har ret til at færdes. Denne eksklusivitet håndhæves bl.a. ved voldelige overfald på ikke-muslimer. Senest er spørgeren blevet forelagt, at der skulle eksistere op imod 750 af sådanne no-go-zoner alene i Frankrig. Endvidere er det oplyst spørgeren, at der i Storbritannien alene skulle findes 85 sharia-domstole, som typisk afgør private retstvister, herunder ægteskabstvister, efter sharia i stedet for britisk lov og domstole.

— Hvilket kendskab har Kommissionen til de såkaldte no-go-zones og sharia-domstole i EU, herunder deres antal?

— Hvad er Kommissionens holdning til dette?

— Anerkender Kommissionen sharia-domstole i medlemsstaterne?

— Finder Kommissionen, at sharia under nogen form kan anvendes som retsgrundlag i EU?

— Hvad agter Kommissionen at gøre, for at sikre, at folk af alle trossamfund kan færdes frit i hele EU?

— Ser Kommissionen en sammenhæng mellem dette fænomen og den indvandringspolitik, EU fører?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(6. juni 2012)

Som Kommissionen har påpeget i sit svar på spørgsmål E-009450/2011, er »sharia« et overordnet begreb, som omfatter adskillige retslige aspekter og er genstand for forskellige fortolkninger. Da der ikke er tale om officielle domstole, indsamler Kommissionen ingen oplysninger om antallet af »shariadomstole« eller om eksistensen og antallet af de såkaldte »no-go-zoner«.

Som Kommissionen har påpeget i sit svar på spørgsmål E-001065/2012, har Kommissionen ingen traktatfæstet beføjelse til at forbyde organisationer, der minder om shariadomstole, at udøve kulturelle, sociale og andre aktiviteter. Det ærede medlem bør dog være opmærksom på, at disse organisationers »beslutninger« ikke kan betragtes som voldgiftskendelser, ikke har retlig karakter, og »beslutningerne« kan kun, hvis overhovedet, anerkendes og håndhæves på grundlag af national lovgivning.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003930/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Sharia zones and courts in the EU

There are constant rumours in the media and in communications to politicians that unauthorised so-called Sharia zones are being established all around the EU where only Muslims have the right to go about. This exclusivity is enforced by, among other things, violent attacks on non-Muslims. I was recently told that there are supposedly up to 750 of these no-go zones in France alone. Furthermore, I was informed that in Britain alone there are allegedly 85 Sharia courts which typically make rulings on private litigation, including marital disputes, according to Sharia instead of British law and courts.

— What knowledge does the Commission have of the so-called no-go zones and Sharia courts in the EU, including their numbers?

— What is the Commission's position on this?

— Does the Commission recognise Sharia courts in the Member States?

— Does the Commission believe that Sharia, in any form, can be used as legal basis in the EU?

— What does the Commission intend to do in order to ensure that people of all faiths can move freely throughout all of the EU?

— Does the Commission see a connection between this phenomenon and the immigration policies pursued by the EU?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2012)

As the Commission has pointed out in its reply to Question E-009450/2011, 'sharia' is a general concept that encompasses several legal aspects and is subject to varying interpretations. As they are not official courts, the Commission does not collect any information about the existence and number of the so called 'no-go-zones' or the number of 'sharia courts'.

As the Commission has pointed out in its reply to Question E-001065/2012 the Commission does not have the power under the Treaties to prohibit that sharia court like organisations exercise cultural, social and other activities. Nevertheless, the Honourable Member should be aware that the 'decisions' of these organisations cannot be considered as arbitration awards, do not have a judicial character and, if at all, can only be recognised and enforced on the basis of national laws.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003931/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16. april 2012)

Om: Retssikkerhed i Rumæn ien

Idet spørgeren tillader sig at antage, at Kommissionen er bekendt med den langvarige sag om rumæneren Gregorian Bivolaru, der så sent som i 2005 efter højesteretsbeslutning blev tildelt politisk asyl i Sverige, bedes Kommissionen besvare følgende spørgsmål:

— Hvad er Kommissionens holdning til, at et sådant (retligt) forløb, uanset anklagerne, overhovedet kan finde sted i EU?

— Mener Kommissionen, med Københavnskriterierne in mente, at sagen skal have konsekvenser for Rumænien?

— Hvilke overvejelser gør Kommissionen sig på denne baggrund i forhold til optagelse af Rumænien i Schengen-samarbejdet?

— Finder Kommissionen det rimeligt, at man som unionsborger kan være nødsaget til at søge asyl — og være i stand til at opnå det efter juridisk behandling på højeste retsniveau — i en andet medlemsstat?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Cecilia Malmström
(26. juni 2012)

Den sag, som det ærede medlem henviser til, fandt sted i 2005, hvor Rumænien ikke var medlem af EU. Alle tredjelandsstatsborgere, der søger international beskyttelse på en medlemsstats område, har ret til at indgive en ansøgning om asyl og til at nå frem til de nationale myndigheder, som har ansvaret for at registrere og behandle deres ansøgninger på grundlag af deres individuelle forhold.

Kommissionen kan ikke kommentere et retsligt forløb på nationalt plan.

Alle medlemsstaterne er forpligtet til at sikre beskyttelsen af de grundlæggende rettigheder, som er knæsat i den europæiske menneskerettighedskonvention og i EU's charter, og de er underlagt de europæiske domstoles jurisdiktion.

Med hensyn til Rumæniens (og Bulgariens) medlemskab af Schengenområdet træffes alle afgørelser om udvidelse af Schengenområdet, hvorved kontrollen ved de indre grænser ophæves, af Rådet efter høring af Europa-Parlamentet. Europa-Parlamentet vedtog sin lovgivningsmæssige beslutning om godkendelse af Rumæniens og Bulgariens tiltrædelse med stort flertal den 8. juni 2011. Rådet (RIA) konkluderede på sit møde den 9. juni 2011, at både Rumænien og Bulgarien opfylder de såkaldte Schengenkriterier. Man er dog endnu ikke nået til den nødvendige enstemmighed i Rådet om en afgørelse om ophævelse af kontrollen ved de indre grænser. Det Europæiske Råd anmodede på sit møde den 1. og 2. marts 2012 Rådet om at »vende tilbage til dette spørgsmål og træffe sin afgørelse på samlingen i RIA-Rådet i september 2012«. Kommissionen har for sit vedkommende gentagne gange gjort det klart, at den fuldt ud støtter Rumæniens og Bulgariens tiltrædelse af Schengen. Dens holdning er uændret.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003931/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Legal certainty in Romania

As the questioner presumes that the Commission is aware of the protracted case of Romanian Gregorian Bivolaru who, in 2005 and after a Supreme Court ruling, was granted political asylum in Sweden, will the Commission answer the following questions:

— What is the Commission's position on the fact that such a (judicial) process, regardless of the charges, can even take place in the EU?

— Does the Commission believe, with the Copenhagen criteria in mind, that the case will have consequences for Romania?

— On this basis, what are the Commission's considerations in relation to Romanian inclusion in the Schengen Agreement?

— Does the Commission find it reasonable that an EU citizen can be forced to seek asylum, and be able to obtain it through legal proceedings at the highest judicial level, in a different Member State?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2012)

The case referred to by the Honourable Member occurred in 2005, when Romania was not an EU member. Any third-country national seeking international protection on the territory of a Member State has the right to make an application for asylum and to reach the national authorities competent to register and examine their applications on the basis of their individual circumstances.

The Commission cannot comment on a judicial process at national level.

All Member States are obliged to ensure the protection of fundamental rights enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the EU Charter and they are subject to the jurisdiction of the European Courts.

As for the membership of Romania (and Bulgaria) in the Schengen area, any decision on the extension of the Schengen area through which internal border control is lifted is taken by the Council, after consultation of the European Parliament. The EP adopted its legislative resolution approving the accession of Romania and Bulgaria by a large majority on 8 June 2011. The Council (JHA) of 9 June 2011 concluded that both Romania and Bulgaria fulfil the so-called Schengen criteria. However, the necessary unanimity in Council for a decision on the lifting of internal border control has not yet been reached. The European Council of 1 and 2 March 2012 asked 'the Council to revert to this issue in order to adopt its decision at the meeting of the JHA Council in September 2012'. For its part, the Commission has repeatedly made clear that it fully supports Romanian and Bulgarian accession to Schengen. Its position is unchanged.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003932/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16. april 2012)

Om: Svindel med CO2-kvoter

Den danske avis Ekstra Bladet begyndte i december 2009 en artikelserie om klimagangstere, der tog ophold i det danske kvoteregister for CO_2 med det formål at tømme så mange statskasser for så store beløb så muligt. Den nuværende danske klimakommissær Connie Hedegaard havde ansvaret for dette kvoteregister fra januar 2005 til december 2009, men allerede i 2007 besluttede kvoteregisteret som en administrativ forenkling at droppe ethvert krav om at se pas og få bekræftede selskabsoplysninger. Dette gav fri adgang til diverse CO2-svindlere, hvilket eksemplet med en for længst afdød indisk digter som kvotehandler i Tingbjerg-bebyggelsen i København tydeligt viser.

Denne lemfældige omgang med indhentning af oplysninger på de personer, der lod sig registrere i kvoteregisteret har efterladt mange i Danmark, inkl. den danske rigsrevision, med flere spørgsmål end svar, hvorfor Kommissionen nu bedes forholde sig til sagen, og derfor også til nedenstående spørgsmål:

1. Hvad har kommissionsformanden foretaget sig i forhold til den administration af CO2-registeret, som den daværende klimaminister og nuværende klimakommissær var ansvarlig for fra 2005 og frem til 2009?

2. Hvordan forholder Kommissionen sig til de vanskeligheder offentlige myndigheder — skatte- og toldvæsen mv. — har haft med samarbejde på tværs af grænserne, og finder Kommissionen det ansvarligt at igangsætte et sådan kvotehandelssystem uden at have disse fornødenheder i orden?

3. Er det Kommissionens opfattelse, at andre EU lande vil være i stand til at søge erstatning i Danmark under hensyn til de grove fejl i kvoteregisteret?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Connie Hedegaard
(5. juni 2012)

Kommissionen har altid handlet hurtigt og beslutsomt i forbindelse med de nye trusler om og former for svig med EU's emissionshandelssystem (EU ETS), der er opstået i en række medlemsstater. Medlemsstaterne har imidlertid også et medansvar for at gennemføre EU ETS, og i mange henseender har de kompetencen til og muligheden for at indføre de nødvendige sikkerhedsforanstaltninger.

1. Som følge af den opståede svig med emissionskvoter i flere medlemsstater i 2010 og 2011 står registrenes sikkerhed højt på dagsordenen. I de senere ændringer af registerforordningen har Kommissionen skærpet registrenes sikkerhedsforanstaltninger betydeligt. I den seneste ændring, som trådte i kraft den 30. november 2011, er »kend-din-kunde«-kontrollen af kontoindehavere og disses repræsentanter blevet yderligere skærpet.

2. Det er primært de nationale retshåndhævende myndigheders og Europols ansvar at bekæmpe momssvig på det europæiske CO2-marked og skattesvig på andre markeder. Kommissionen er rede til at yde medlemsstaternes retshåndhævende myndigheder og Europol bistand til bekæmpelse af momssvig ([1]), og der blev den 16. marts 2010 vedtaget et direktiv, som gør det muligt for medlemsstaterne at anvende omvendt momsbetalingspligt i forbindelse med kvoter og andre enheder, som kan anvendes til overholdelse af bestemmelserne i EU ETS ([2]). Flere medlemsstater har gennemført dette direktiv, som har vist sig at være effektivt i bekæmpelsen af svig. Derudover er det administrative samarbejde mellem medlemsstaterne blevet fremmet gennem oprettelsen af Eurofisc, som giver mulighed for en hurtig udveksling af målrettede oplysninger om svigagtige transaktioner mellem EU-medlemsstaterne.

3. Dette spørgsmål vedrører udelukkende de berørte, nationale myndigheders kompetenceområde.

([1]) Se også svaret til forespørgsel E-010171/2010.
([2]) Rådets direktiv 2010/23/EU om ændring af direktiv 2006/112/EF om det fælles merværdiafgiftssystem for så vidt angår en fakultativ og midlertidig anvendelse af ordningen for omvendt betalingspligt ved levering af bestemte tjenesteydelser, som kan være udsat for svig, EUT L 72 af 20.3.2010 .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003932/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Fraud involving CO_2 quotas

In December 2009 the Danish newspaper *Ekstra Bladet* began a series of articles on climate gangsters accessing the Danish CO_2 quota register with the goal of emptying as many government coffers for as much money as possible. The current Danish Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard, was responsible for the quota register from January 2005 to December 2009. As an administrative simplification in 2007, the quota register decided to drop all requirements for verifying passports and company information. This gave free access to various CO_2 swindlers, clearly exemplified by a long since deceased Indian poet registered as a quota trader in the Tingbjerg housing estate in Copenhagen.

This slipshod gathering of information on persons who registered in the quota register has left many in Denmark, including the Danish National Audit Office, with more questions than answers, which is why the Commission is now asked to deal with the matter and respond to the following questions:

1. What has the President of the Commission done in regard to the administration of the CO_2 register, for which the Environmental Minister at the time and the current Commissioner for Climate Action was responsible from 2005 until 2009?

2. What is the Commission's opinion on the difficulties that public authorities such as the tax and customs authorities have had in cross-border cooperation, and does the Commission believe that it is responsible to implement such a quota trading system without having these essentials in order?

3. Does the Commission believe that other EU countries will be able to seek compensation in Denmark, in the light of the serious errors in the quota register?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

The Commission has consistently acted swiftly and decisively when new threats or types of fraud over the EU emissions trading scheme (EU ETS) emerged in a number of Member States. However, the responsibility for implementing the EU ETS is shared with Member States who also in many respects retain the competence and ability to implement the necessary safeguards.

1. The security of the registries has become a priority as a result of the fraud with emission allowances in 2010 and 2011 occurring in various Member States. In the successive amendments to the Registry Regulation, the Commission has considerably strengthened the security measures applicable to the registries. In the most recent amendment, in force since 30 November 2011, the know-your-customer checks for account holders and their representatives have been further reinforced.

2. Combating VAT fraud in the European carbon market, as well as tax fraud in other markets, is primarily a responsibility of national law enforcement authorities and of Europol. The Commission is ready to give assistance to national law enforcement authorities and to Europol in order to combat VAT fraud ([1]) and a directive adopted on 16 March 2010 enables Member States to apply reverse charging of VAT to allowances and other units that can be used for compliance under the EU ETS ([2]). Several Member States implemented this directive, which has proven to be effective in combating fraud in those Member States. Furthermore, administrative cooperation between Member States has been enhanced through the setting up of Eurofisc that enables a quick exchange of targeted information on fraudulent transactions between the EU Member States.

3. This question is a matter solely for the national authorities concerned.

([1]) See also reply to Question E-010171/2010.
([2]) Council Directive 2010/23/EC of 16 March 2010 amending Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax, as regards an optional and temporary application of the reverse charge mechanism in relation to supplies of certain services susceptible to fraud, OJ L 72, 20.3.2010.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003933/12
an die Kommission
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE)
(16. April 2012)

Betrifft: Wasserkraftwerk Ombla in vorgeschlagenem Natura-2000-Gebiet

Am 22. November 2011 hat die Europäische Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung (EBWE) für das unterirdische Wasserkraftwerk Ombla in Kroatien einen Kredit in Höhe von 123,2 Mio. EUR bewilligt. Sowohl das Projekt selbst als auch das Genehmigungsverfahren werden auf breiter Front seitens Zivilgesellschaft und Fachleuten für biologische Vielfalt kritisiert, da sich der Standort in einem vorgeschlagenen Natura-2000-Gebiet befindet. Im Jahr 2008 hat das staatliche Institut für Naturschutz Kroatiens das Projekt als „unzumutbar für die Natur" erklärt.

Die Studie zur Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung (UVP) stammt aus dem Jahr 1999, die aktuelle Gesetzgebung Kroatiens zu UVPs legt jedoch fest, dass solche Studien nur für einen Zeitraum von zwei Jahren Gültigkeit besitzen. Um diesen Mangel zu beheben, hat die EBWE ihre Kreditgenehmigung von einer Natura-2000-Untersuchung abhängig gemacht, die zurzeit durchgeführt wird.

Ich möchte die Kommission als Vertreterin der Europäischen Union bei der EBWE Folgendes fragen:

— Hält die Kommission es für annehmbar, dass die EBWE das Projekt auf Grundlage einer UVP-Studie aus dem Jahr 1999 und noch vor der Durchführung einer geeigneten Natura-2000-Untersuchung genehmigt und unterzeichnet hat?

— Wie hat der Vertreter der Kommission bei der EBWE über dieses Projekt abgestimmt?

— Was wird die Kommission nun unternehmen, um sicherzustellen, dass bei der EBWE keine weiteren Projekte genehmigt werden, bis die rechtlichen Anforderungen der EU erfüllt sind?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(14. Juni 2012)

Bezüglich des Ombla-Projektes hat die Kommission Bedenken hinsichtlich der Umweltfragen angemeldet, die in den Beratungen im Verwaltungsrat der EBWE voll zum Ausdruck kamen. Ergebnis dieser Beratungen war ein Einverständnis mit den kroatischen Behörden, dass zum Management der Umweltrisiken im Rahmen des Projektes zusätzliche Maßnahmen erforderlich sind, um festgestellte Lücken zu schließen. Bevor weitere Schritte zur Fortsetzung des Projektes unternommen wurden, wurde in Hinblick auf die Abschätzung der Umweltfolgen des Projektes unter voller Beteiligung der zuständigen kroatischen Behörden eine zusätzliche Studie zur Biodiversität in Auftrag gegeben.

Das Projekt wurde vom Verwaltungsrat der EBWE unter der Annahme genehmigt, dass die zuständigen kroatischen Behörden in vollem Umfang gemeinsam mit der EBWE an allen Aspekten der Biodiversitätsstudie arbeiten werden, um die Anforderungen der EU-Habitat-Richtlinie vollständig zu erfüllen. Die EBWE plant, keine Auszahlung für die Bauphase vorzunehmen, falls bei der Biodiversitätsstudie erhebliche Umweltrisiken identifiziert werden, die nicht gemäß der EU-Habitat-Richtlinie verhindert, gemildert oder ausgeglichen werden können.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003933/12
to the Commission
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Ombla hydropower plant in proposed Natura 2000 site

On 22 November 2011, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) approved a EUR 123.2 million loan for the Ombla underground hydropower plant in Croatia. Both the project itself and its approval process have attracted widespread criticism from civil society and biodiversity experts, as the location forms part of a proposed Natura 2000 site. In 2008 the Croatian State Institute for Nature Protection declared the project 'unacceptable for nature'.

The environmental impact assessment (EIA) study dates from 1999; however the current Croatian legislation on EIAs stipulates that such studies are valid only for a period of two years. In order to attempt to make up for this deficiency, the EBRD has made its loan approval conditional on a Natura 2000 assessment study being carried out.

I would like to ask the Commission, which represents the European Union at the EBRD, the following:

— Does the Commission consider it acceptable that the EBRD approved and signed the project on the basis of a 1999 EIA study and before an appropriate Natura 2000 assessment has been carried out?

— How did the Commission's representative at the EBRD vote on this project?

— What will the Commission now do to ensure that further projects are not approved at the EBRD before EU legal requirements are fulfilled?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

On the Ombla project, the Commission expressed concerns on the environmental issues that were fully reflected in the discussions at the EBRD Board. The outcome of this discussion was an agreement with the Croatian authorities that additional measures were needed to address identified gaps to manage environmental risks in the project. Before any further steps were taken to progress the project, an additional biodiversity study was commissioned with a view to assess the environmental impacts of the project with the full association of the Croatian competent authority.

The project was approved by the EBRD Board on the understanding that the relevant Croatian competent authority will work fully alongside the EBRD on all aspects of the biodiversity study to fully meet the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive. No disbursement for the construction phase is envisaged by the EBRD if the biodiversity study results showed significant environmental risks that could not be avoided, mitigated or compensated in accordance with the EU Habitats Directive.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003935/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' April 2012)

Suġġett: Forum dwar il-VAT u d-Dazji tas-Sisa

Ir-rapport dwar il-kooperazzjoni amministrattiva fil-qasam tad-dazji tas-sisa ġie adottat mill-Parlament fis-sessjoni parzjali ta' Marzu II 2012.

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tirraporta dwar kwalunkwe azzjoni li ttieħdet jew hija skedata li tittieħed rigward is-suġġerimenti mressqa fir-rapport dwar il-ħolqien ta' Forum dwar il-VAT u d-Dazji tas-Sisa?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šemeta f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Mejju 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni ħadet nota tal-proposta biex jinħoloq Forum dwar il-VAT u d-Dazji tas-Sisa li hemm fir-riżoluzzjoni leġiżlattiva tal-Parlament Ewropew tad-29 ta' Marzu 2012 dwar il-proposta għal regolament tal-Kunsill dwar il-Kooperazzjoni Amministrattiva fil-qasam tad-dazji tas-sisa. Madanakollu, il-Kummissjoni ma setgħetx taġixxi direttament fuq dan is-suġġeriment peress li ma jaqax fl-ambitu tar-regolament propost.

Minkejja dan, il-Kummissjoni diġà tmexxi forum, il-Grupp ta' Kuntatt tas-Sisa (Excise Contact Group), li fih rappreżentanti tal-produtturi u tad-distributuri tal-oġġetti soġġetti għas-sisa jistgħu jiddiskutu mal-Kummissjoni u mal-Istati Membri dwar kwistjonijiet legali u operazzjonali li għandhom x'jaqsmu mad-dazji tas-sisa.

Fir-rigward tal-VAT, waħda mill-pretensjonijiet prinċipali li għamlu n-negozji waqt konsultazzjoni pubblika mnedija mill-Kummissjoni wara l-pubblikazzjoni tagħha tal-Green Paper dwar il-futur tal-VAT ([1]), kienet l-involviment akbar fil-proċess ta' preparazzjoni tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-VAT tal-UE. F'dan il-kuntest, il-Kummissjoni ilha taħdem għal xi żmien fuq l-idea li toħloq pjattaforma (jew forum) biex tinkoraġġixxi djalogu fil-livell tal-UE bejn l-amministraturi tat-taxxa tal-Istati Membri u n-negozji L-iżvilupp l-aktar riċenti f'dan ir-rigward, kien is-suġġeriment li jinsab fil-Komunikazzjoni riċenti tal-Kummissjoni dwar il-futur tal-VAT ([2]) biex jinħolqu żewġ gruppi separati ta' esperti biex isegwu dawn l-inizjattivi — fuq naħa waħda forum tripartitiku u fuq l-oħra grupp ta' esperti tal-VAT. Bħalissa għaddejja l-adozzjoni tal-istrumenti legali neċessarji biex jinħolqu dawn il-korpi.

([1]) COM(2010) 695.
([2]) COM(2011) 851.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003935/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VAT and Excise Duties Forum

The report on administrative cooperation in the field of excise duties was adopted by Parliament at the March II 2012 part-session.

Can the Commission report on any action that has been or is scheduled to be taken regarding the suggestions put forward in the report on the creation of a VAT and Excise Duties Forum?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2012)

The Commission did take note of the proposal to create a VAT and Excise Duties Forum contained in the European Parliament legislative resolution of 29 March 2012 on the proposal for a Council regulation on Administrative Cooperation in the field of excise duties. However, the Commission could not act directly on this suggestion since it fell outside the scope of the proposed regulation.

Nevertheless the Commission already manages a forum, the Excise Contact Group, within which representatives of producers and distributors of excise goods can discuss legal and operational issues relating to excise duties with the Commission and with the Member States.

As regards VAT, greater involvement in the process of preparing EU VAT legislation was one of the major claims made by business during the course of a public consultation launched by the Commission following the publication of its Green Paper on the future of VAT ([1]). In this context, the Commission has been working for some time on the idea of creating a platform (or forum) to encourage an EU-level dialogue between Member States' tax administrations and business. The most recent development in this regard was the suggestion contained in the recent Commission Communication on the future of VAT ([2]) to create two separate experts groups to follow-up on these initiatives — a tripartite forum on the one hand and a VAT expert group on the other. Adoption of the necessary legal instruments to create these bodies is currently underway.

([1]) COM(2010) 695.
([2]) COM(2011) 851.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003936/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' April 2012)

Suġġett: Il-proċess ta' Bologna

Il-Kummissjoni ddikjarat li biħsiebha tkun aktar involuta fil-proċess ta' Bologna matul il-ħames snin li ġejjin. Il-Kummissjoni b'liema modi se tilħaq dan l-għan?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(11 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni ilha s-snin sieħba attiva u sħiħa fil-proċess ta' Bologna. Hija tipparteċipa fil-Konferenzi Ministerjali, u l-proċess issostnih bil-kbir ukoll fil-Grupp ta' Segwitu ta' Bologna u f'bosta mill-gruppi ta' ħidma tekniċi tiegħu. Il-Kummissjoni tipprovdi wkoll appoġġ finanzjarju lis-Segretarjat ta' Bologna u lill-esperti tan-netwerk ta' Bologna u dawk tar-Riforma fl-Edukazzjoni Għolja li jgħinu biex jimplimentaw it-tibdiliet fil-pajjiżi parteċipanti.

Il-Konferenza Ministerjali ta' Bukarest tas-26 u s-27 ta' April 2012 żeddet l-impenn kollettiv — tal-Kummissjoni, tal-gvernijiet nazzjonali, tal-istituzzjonijiet u tal-istudenti tal-edukazzjoni għolja — biex titlesta ż-Żona Ewropea ta' Edukazzjoni Għolja. Il-Komunikat adottat mill-Ministri jenfasizza b'mod partikulari l-importanza ta' edukazzjoni għolja għar-riġenerazzjoni ekonomika u għas-sostenibbiltà soċjali tal-kontinent usa' Ewropew. B'dan il-mod jirrifletti l-aġenda tal-UE stess dwar il-modernizzazzjoni fl-edukazzjoni għolja, li tpoġġi l-edukazzjoni għolja fil-qalba tal-Istrateġija 2020 tal-Unjoni Ewropea.

Il-Kummissjoni se tkun qed issostni l-prijoritajiet stabbiliti f'Bukarest fejn jidħol it-titjib tal-impjegabbilità tal-gradwati, l-appoġġ għall-mobbiltà, l-implimentazzjoni tat-trasferibbiltà sħiħa tal-għotjiet u s-self, u anki fejn tidħol l-assigurazzjoni tal-kwalità fil-pajjiżi differenti u l-lawrji konġunti. Il-Kummissjoni se tkun qiegħda ssostni wkoll sistema ta' tagħlim volontarju bejn il-pari u tirrevedi attivitajiet b'rabta mad-dimensjoni soċjali tal-edukazzjoni għolja, kif ukoll il-ħidma ta' grupp esploratorju ta' pajjiżi li jesplora modi kif jista' jkun hemm rikonoxximent akkademiku awtomatiku ta' kwalifiki akkademiċi komparabbli.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003936/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Bologna Process

The Commission has stated that it intends to be more involved in the Bologna Process over the next five years. In what ways will the Commission reach this objective?

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

The Commission has been a full and active partner in the Bologna Process for many years. It participates both in Ministerial Conferences, and by providing strong support for the process in the Bologna Follow-up Group and in many of its technical working groups. The Commission also provides financial support to the Bologna Secretariat and the network of Bologna and Higher Education Reform experts who help to implement the changes in the participating countries.

The Bucharest Ministerial Conference on April 26-27 2012 renewed the collective commitment — of the Commission, national governments, higher education institutions and students — to completing the European Higher Education Area. The Communiqué adopted by Ministers highlights in particular the importance of higher education to the economic regeneration and social sustainability of the wider continent of Europe. In doing so, it echoes the EU's own modernisation agenda for higher education, which puts higher education at the heart of the European Union's Europe 2020 strategy.

The Commission will support the priorities set in Bucharest of improving graduate employability, supporting mobility, implementing the full portability of grants and loans, and making cross-border quality assurance and joint degrees a reality. The Commission will also support a system of voluntary peer learning and review activities on the social dimension of higher education, as well as the work of a pathfinder group of countries exploring ways to achieve the automatic academic recognition of comparable academic qualifications.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003939/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' April 2012)

Suġġett: Żgħażagħ fir-riskju ta' faqar

Studju reċenti indika li wieħed minn kull erba' żgħażagħ fl-UE huma fir-riskju ta' faqar. L-istrateġija Ewropa 2020, u b'mod speċifiku l-inizjattiva ewlenija "Aġenda għall-ħiliet ġodda u l-impjiegi" li tifforma parti minn din l-istrateġija, għandhom l-għan li sal-2020 ikun hemm anqas minn 20 miljun ċittadin ta' bejn l-20 u l-64 sena fir-riskju ta' faqar u esklużjoni soċjali.

Liema elementi ta' din l-inizjattiva ewlenija huma mmirati b'mod speċifiku lejn iż-żgħażagħ, meta wieħed jikkunsidra d-dejta allarmanti li tindika li 25% taż-żgħażagħ huma fir-riskju?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(30 ta' Mejju 2012)

L-Aġenda għal ħiliet u impjiegi ġodda hija waħda minn seba' inizjattivi emblematiċi li jispjegaw l-azzjonijiet, il-proposti politiċi u r-rakkomandazzjonijiet tal-Kummissjoni biex tiġi implimentata l-istrateġija UE 2020 u jintlaħqu l-miri definiti. L-Aġenda għal ħiliet u impjiegi ġodda tiffoka sabiex sal-2020 tinkiseb rata ta' impjiegi ta' 75 % għall-Unjoni Ewropea għall-grupp tal-età bejn l-20 u l-64. L-azzjonijiet mhumiex immirati speċifikament lejn iż-żgħażagħ: għalihom hemm l-inizjattiva emblematika l-oħra Ewropa 2020, jiġifieri "Żgħażagħ Attivi" ([1]), kif ukoll l-inizjattiva aktar reċenti "Opportunitajiet għaż-Żgħażagħ" ([2]) li joffru sensiela ta' azzjonijiet.

Rigward elementi speċifiċi tal-inizjattiva Żgħażagħ Attivi, il-Kummissjoni tirreferi lill-Onorevoli Membru għat-tweġibiet tagħha għall-Mistoqsijiet bil-Miktub E-3094/2011, E-3614/2011, E-3481/2011, E-4947/2011 ([3]). Rigward l-Inizjattiva Opportunitajiet għaż-Żgħażagħ, il-Kummissjoni tirreferi lill-Onorevoli Membru għat-tweġibiet tagħha għall-Mistoqsijiet bil-Miktub E-2050/2012 u E-2053/2012 ([4]).

([1]) COM(2010) 477 tal-15.09.2010.
([2]) COM(2011) 933 tal-20.12.2011.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003939/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Youth at risk of poverty

A recent study has indicated that one in four young people in the EU are at risk of poverty. The Europe 2020 strategy, and specifically the flagship initiative 'Agenda for new skills and jobs' which forms part of the strategy, aim to have fewer than 20 million citizens aged 20 to 64 at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020.

What elements of this flagship initiative target youth specifically, given the alarming data suggesting 25% of youth are at risk?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2012)

The Agenda for New Skills and Jobs is one of the seven flagship initiatives detailing the actions, policy proposals and recommendations of the Commission to implement the EU 2020 strategy and reach the targets defined. The Agenda for New Skills and Jobs focuses on achieving a rate of employment for the European Union of 75% for the 20-64 years' age group by 2020. The actions are not specifically targeted at young people: for them, the other Europe 2020 flagship initiative 'Youth on the Move' ([1]) as well as the more recent 'Youth Opportunities Initiative' ([2]) offer a series of actions.

Regarding specific elements of Youth on the Move, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-3094/2011, E-3614/2011, E-3481/2011, E-4947/2011 ([3]). Regarding Youth Opportunities Initiative, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions as E-2050/2012 and E-2053/2012 ([4]).

([1]) COM(2010) 477 of 15.9.2010.
([2]) COM(2011) 933 of 20.12.2011.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003940/12
lill-Kummissjoni (Viċi President/Rappreżentant Għoli)
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' April 2012)

Suġġett: VP/HR — Il-proliferazzjoni tal-armi fil-Mali

Barra milli tissospendi l-għajnuna għall-iżvilupp u tesprimi kundanna, il-Viċi-President/Rappreżentant Għoli x'tippjana li tagħmel biex tindirizza l-kolp ta' stat li qed jikkawża kaos fit-Tramuntana tal-Mali?

Il-Viċi-President/Rappreżentant Għoli kif qed tindirizza l-problema aktar mifruxa tal-proliferazzjoni tal-armi li ġejjin mill-kunflitt Libjan fit-territorji ġirien?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Il-Viċi President/Rappreżentant Għoli hija konxja sew mis-sitwazzjoni attwali fil-Mali u ssegwiha b'interess qawwi. Il-pożizzjoni tal-UE hija li tappoġġja l-isforzi tal-Komunità Ekonomika tal-Istati Afrikani tal-Punent (ECOWAS) u tal-Unjoni Afrikana, biex jinstab pjan ta' direzzjoni bi qbil bejn kulħadd għar-restawr tal-istituzzjonijiet eletti demokratikament. L-UE tinsab lesta biex tipprovdi appoġġ għat-tranżizzjoni mmexxija mill-forzi ċivili fil-Mali f'kooperazzjoni mill-qrib ma' organizzazzjonijiet reġjonali u msieħba internazzjonali oħra. Fit-Tramuntana, kif għamlet sa mill-bidu, l-UE tkompli tiffavorixxi soluzzjoni paċifika permezz ta' proċess politiku.

Rigward l-appoġġ lill-iskjerament possibbli tal-forza ta' intevent fil-pront kif issuġġerit mill-Kapijiet ta' Stat tal-ECOWAS fis-summits tagħhom li saru dan l-aħħar f'Abidjan fis-26 ta' April 2012 u f'Dakar fit-3 ta' Mejju 2012, is-Servizz Ewropew għall-Azzjoni Esterna għadu f'kuntatt mill-qrib mal-ECOWAS sabiex jiġu identifikati t-talbiet tagħhom u qed jistenna kjarifika ulterjuri dwar il-ħtiġijiet u l-ippjanar strateġiku tagħhom qabel ma jiddeċiedi fuq reazzjoni.

Rigward il-proliferazzjoni tal-armi, l-UE bħalissa qiegħda tgħin lill-Awtoritajiet Libjani fil-valutazzjoni tal-ħtiġijiet tal-ġestjoni tal-fruntieri tagħhom permezz tal-użu ta' Tim ta' Evalwazzjoni tal-Ħtiġijiet għal Ġestjoni Integrata tal-Fruntieri. Aktar assistenza, inkluż il-ġlieda kontra l-proliferazzjoni tal-armi, se tiddependi fuq din l-evalwazzjoni u konsiderazzjoni tal-attivitajiet estensivi li diġà qed isiru mill-Istati Membri u msieħba internazzjonali oħra.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003940/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Casa (PPE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Arms proliferation in Mali

Aside from suspending development aid and expressing condemnation, what does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to do to address the coup d'état which is causing chaos in northern Mali?

How is the Vice-President/High Representative addressing the more widespread problem of the proliferation of arms coming from the Libyan conflict in neighbouring territories?

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

The Vice-President/High Representative is well aware of the current situation in Mali and follows it with great concern. The EU position is to support the efforts of the Economic Community Of West African States (Ecowas) and the African Union, to find an agreed road-map to restore democratically elected institutions. The EU stands ready to provide support to the civilian-led transition in Mali in close cooperation with regional organisations and other international partners. In the North, as it has done since the beginning, the EU continues to favour a peaceful solution through a political process.

Concerning the support to the possible deployment of the Stand-by force as suggested by Ecowas' Heads of State at their recent summits held in Abidjan on 26 April 2012 and Dakar on 3 May 2012, the European External Action Service remains in close contact with Ecowas to identify their demands and is awaiting further clarification on their needs and strategic planning before deciding on a response.

Concerning the proliferation of arms, the EU is currently assisting the Libyan Authorities in assessing their border management needs through the deployment of an Integrated Border Management Needs Assessment Team. Further assistance, including in combatting arms proliferation, will depend on this assessment and consideration of the extensive activities already undertaken by Member States and other international partners.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003943/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Azioni della Commissione nei confronti dei prodotti finanziari derivati

L'economista francese François Morin, docente di scienze economiche all'università di Toulouse, ritiene che non sia sufficiente regolamentare il mercato dei derivati, ma che occorra eliminarli, fatti salvi i derivati usati nella compravendita di materie prime e prodotti alimentari, poiché sono alla base della crisi economica causata dalla finanza speculativa. I derivati che speculano sui tassi di interesse e sui tassi di cambio monetario rappresentano ormai il 95 % di quelli in circolazione e costituiscono l'attività principale delle banche.

Ciò crea una distorsione a livello di economia reale: gli stessi prestiti forniti alle banche da parte della BCE non sono stati immessi nel mercato a favore delle imprese, ma sono tornati per la maggior parte alla stessa BCE sotto forma di riserve.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere quali azioni concrete sta intraprendendo per sopperire a queste distorsioni del mercato finanziario?

La Commissione non ritiene opportuno agire in maniera rapida per una soppressione dei prodotti finanziari derivati, come auspicano numerosi economisti, al fine di aiutare l'economia reale europea e non i colossi speculativi finanziari?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2012)

Gli strumenti derivati negoziati fuori borsa (OTC) hanno un forte impatto sull'economia reale, dai mutui ipotecari ai prezzi dei generi alimentari, e svolgono un ruolo importante come strumento di determinazione e di copertura dei prezzi. Tuttavia l'assenza di un quadro regolamentare al riguardo ha contribuito alla crisi finanziaria. Per questo motivo, in linea con gli impegni assunti dall'UE al G20, la Commissione ha proposto diversi strumenti legislativi per assicurare maggiore trasparenza e responsabilità ai mercati dei derivati.

Il regolamento che disciplina le operazioni sugli strumenti derivati OTC, le controparti centrali e i repertori di dati sulle negoziazioni (EMIR) prevede che tutte le informazioni sui contratti di derivati OTC siano trasmesse ai repertori di dati sulle negoziazioni e che i contratti di derivati OTC standardizzati siano compensati mediante controparti centrali (CCP). Ciò consentirà di ridurre il rischio di controparte, ossia il rischio che una parte del contratto sia inadempiente.

Le proposte di revisione della direttiva sui mercati degli strumenti finanziari (MiFID) e della direttiva sugli abusi di mercato (MAD), adottate dalla Commissione il 20 ottobre 2011, integreranno tali misure aumentando il livello di trasparenza delle negoziazioni: esse prevedono infatti che tutti i derivati standardizzati e sufficientemente liquidi siano negoziati in sedi organizzate in modo trasparente ed estendono i divieti di manipolazione del mercato agli strumenti derivati OTC.

È preciso impegno della Commissione migliorare il funzionamento e la trasparenza dei mercati dei derivati, inclusi i mercati dei derivati sulle materie prime. Per quanto riguarda questi ultimi, la revisione della MiFID prevede una serie di misure specifiche — come l'introduzione di un regime di limiti di posizione — che vanno al di là della riforma in atto dei mercati dei derivati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003943/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Commission action on financial derivative products

According to French economist François Morin, professor of economics at the University of Toulouse, regulating the derivatives market is not enough and derivatives should be done away with altogether, except for derivatives used in the trading of commodities and foodstuffs, as they are at the root of the economic crisis caused by speculative finance Derivatives that speculate on interest rates and currency exchange rates now account for 95% of all derivatives in circulation and make up the core activity of banks.

This creates a distortion in the real economy: the loans supplied to banks by the ECB have not been fed into the market to benefit companies, but most have returned to the ECB itself in the form of reserves.

In view of this, can the Commission state what concrete action it is taking to rectify these distortions in the financial market?

Does not the Commission believe it is time to act swiftly to stamp out financial derivative products, as many economists would like to see happen, in order to help Europe's real economy rather than the giants of speculative finance?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2012)

OTC derivatives have a big impact on the real economy, from mortgages to food prices, and play an important role as price discovery and hedging tools. But the absence of any regulatory framework around them contributed to the financial crisis. This is why, in line with the EU's G20 commitments, the Commission has proposed several pieces of legislation to bring more transparency and responsibility to derivatives markets.

The regulation on OTC derivatives transactions, central counterparties and trade repositories (EMIR) requires all information on OTC derivative contracts to be reported to trade repositories and standardised OTC derivative contracts be cleared through central counterparties (CCPs). This will reduce counterparty credit risk, i.e. the risk that one party to the contract defaults.

The proposals for the review of the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) and the Market Abuse Directive (MAD) adopted by the Commission on October 20th, 2011 will complement these measures by increasing trade transparency, requiring all standardised and sufficiently liquid derivatives to be traded on transparent organised trading venues and by extending the scope of the market manipulation prohibitions to OTC derivatives.

The Commission is clearly committed to improve the functioning and transparency of derivatives markets including commodity derivatives markets. With respect to the latter, the MiFID review includes a number of measures specific to the commodity derivatives markets that go beyond the ongoing reform of OTC derivatives markets, such as the introduction of a position limits regime.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003944/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(16 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Il caso dei medici specializzandi in Italia

Per le giornate del 16 e 17 aprile 2012 i medici specializzandi italiani hanno indetto uno stato di agitazione a causa dell'emendamento all'articolo 3, comma 16 ter e quater, del decreto fiscale n. 16 del 2 marzo 2012, il cosiddetto «Cresci Italia».

Questo emendamento prevede la tassazione IRPEF per le borse di studio erogate con reddito annuo superiore agli 11 500 EUR, sebbene la normativa nazionale, con la legge 476 del 13 agosto 1984 ne prevedesse l'esenzione.

Il provvedimento andrebbe a colpire in maniera significativa il compenso elargito ai borsisti e, in particolare, agli specializzandi di medicina, che già vedono una parte importante del loro compenso sottratta da tasse universitarie, previdenza sociale (ENPAM) e iscrizione obbligatoria all'ordine dei medici.

— Alla luce di tutto ciò, è la Commissione in grado di valutare se questo provvedimento non metta in pericolo il diritto alla formazione professionale degli specializzandi, i quali, oltre a non vedersi riconosciuti diritti fondamentali come l'indennità per malattia, la tredicesima mensilità e il trattamento di fine rapporto, sono anche responsabili, oltre che moralmente, anche penalmente del proprio operato?

— È la Commissione in grado di riferire quale è la media europea del compenso erogato agli studenti specializzandi di medicina e quale è, inoltre, il dato per ogni singolo paese dell'Unione?

— Non ritiene la Commissione di dover adottare provvedimenti intesi ad armonizzare a livello europeo i compensi dei borsisti per fini di studio o addestramento professionale, tra l'altro in considerazione della libera circolazione delle qualifiche professionali?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

A mo' di osservazione preliminare la Commissione desidera far presente che la questione non è più pertinente poiché il governo italiano ha ritirato la proposta di tassazione delle borse di studio. In tutti i casi si noti che, in forza della legislazione dell'Unione europea, gli Stati membri godono di ampia discrezionalità in tema di fiscalità e possono imporre la tassazione nel modo più rispondente ai loro obiettivi politici nazionali a condizione che rispettino le regole dell'UE, come ad esempio quelle in tema di non discriminazione. Considerato che l'organizzazione e il contenuto della formazione professionale competono agli Stati membri, la Commissione non è in condizione di commentare gli eventuali effetti di tale misura sull'accesso alla formazione professionale degli specializzandi.

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni che le consentano di rispondere a tale quesito per quanto concerne il compenso degli studenti specializzandi di medicina nei vari paesi europei.

Infine, la Commissione non è competente per proporre misure volte ad armonizzare i compensi dei borsisti, né in forza della politica sociale né sulla base delle disposizioni in materia d'istruzione e formazione quali contenute nel TFUE. Gli articoli 153 e 166 del TFUE escludono espressamente l'armonizzazione delle leggi e dei regolamenti degli Stati membri in tali ambiti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003944/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: The situation of trainee medical specialists in Italy

On 16 and 17 April 2012, trainee medical specialists in Italy took industrial action in protest at the adoption of an amendment to Article 3(16)(b) and (c) of Fiscal Decree No 16 of 2 March 2012, known as the 'Grow Italy' decree.

Under this amendment, study grants providing an annual income of more than EUR 11 500 will be made subject to income tax, despite the fact that under national law (Law No 476 of 13 August 1984) they are exempt from such tax.

This measure would significantly affect the incomes of grant holders, in particular trainee medical specialists, who already see a large portion of their pay eaten up by university fees, social security contributions (doctors' and dentists' welfare scheme) and registration with the medical association (which is compulsory).

— In view of the above, can the Commission say whether this measure jeopardises the right to professional training for trainee specialists, who, in addition to not being afforded basic entitlements such as sick pay, a year-end bonus and severance pay, can also be held morally responsible and criminally liable for their actions?

— Can it say what the average pay is for trainee medical specialists in Europe, and what the figure is for each individual Member State?

— Would it not agree that it should take steps to harmonise the pay of study or professional training grant holders throughout the EU, not least with a view to ensuring freedom of movement for professionals?

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

As a preliminary remark, the Commission would like to note that the question is no longer relevant as the Italian Government has withdrawn the proposal to tax study grants. In any case, it should be noted that, under European Union (EU) law, Member States have broad freedom to impose taxation in a way that best fits their domestic policy objectives, once they comply with EU rules such as on non-discrimination. Given the Member States' responsibility for the organisation and the content of vocational training, the Commission is unable to comment further on the possible effects of the said measure on the access to professional training for trainee specialists.

The Commission has no information which would allow it to answer this question regarding the average pay across Europe of trainee medical specialists.

Finally, the Commission does not have the competence to propose any measure to harmonise the pay of grant holders, either under the social policy or the education and training provisions of the TFEU. Both Articles 153 and 166 TFEU expressly exclude any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States in such matters.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003946/12
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Continuidad de los centros «Europa direct»

La información y difusión de las actividades de las instituciones europeas es una parte básica de la estrategia que siguen para acercase a los ciudadanos. En esa tarea están jugando un importante papel los centros «Europa direct» caracterizados por un enfoque descentralizado de organización. Ello favorece la participación e implicación en esta tarea de difusión de los entes locales y regionales. En los próximos meses la Comisión deberá decidir la cuantía con que respaldará desde las instituciones el funcionamiento de los 480 centros de este tipo abiertos y los que lógicamente se crearán con la incorporación de nuevos Estados miembros en ese periodo.

El incremento del esfuerzo financiero por parte de la Comisión parece imprescindible para mantener esta red, a la vista del panorama general de restricción del gasto que afecta a las entidades locales y regionales. Ellas son hasta ahora las que asumen la mayor parte de los costes de esta estrategia pese a que la comunicación es una tarea genuina de las instituciones europeas. A este respecto es especialmente claro el contenido del artículo 49, apartado 6, del Reglamento Financiero.

A la vista de la situación expuesta:

— ¿Qué valoración hace la Comisión del funcionamiento de los centros Europa direct?

— ¿Qué perspectivas de mantenimiento y desarrollo y/o crecimiento contempla para esta red de centros en el próximo trienio?

— ¿Espera la Comisión incrementar la dotación de este programa para mejorar los 12 000 euros anuales que asigna como base a cada centro y prevenir la posible creación de centros en los nuevos Estados miembros?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2012)

Los Centros de Información Europe Direct (EDIC) han contribuido significativamente a comunicar y debatir las políticas de la UE con los ciudadanos a escala regional y local. Los cuatrocientos ochenta EDIC repartidos en los veintisiete Estados miembros representan una excelente forma de comunicar cuestiones de la UE a los ciudadanos en su propia lengua y son una herramienta esencial tanto para el Parlamento Europeo como para la Comisión a fin de responder a las preguntas de los ciudadanos. En enero de 2012 finalizó una evaluación intermedia del rendimiento global de los EDIC, que puso de manifiesto que cumplen eficazmente su misión de facilitar información a los ciudadanos y comunicarse con ellos acerca de la UE.

La Comisión intentará garantizar una cobertura geográfica equilibrada en la nueva generación de EDIC (2013-2017). Con el fin de fomentar una amplia participación de las estructuras de acogida y mejorar la continuidad de la red, la Comisión simplificará la carga administrativa y financiera de dichas estructuras y alargará la vida de la próxima generación de EDIC de cuatro a cinco años.

La Comisión está estudiando las opciones para aumentar la subvención mínima por EDIC dentro de los límites de la financiación asignada, que no ha variado (partida presupuestaria 16 03 01).

Por lo que se refiere a futuros Estados miembros, en 2013 se pondrá en marcha una convocatoria de propuestas para seleccionar las estructuras de acogida de los EDIC en Croacia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003946/12
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Continuity of the Europe Direct centres

Providing and disseminating information about their activities is a basic part of the European institutions' strategy for connecting with citizens. The Europe Direct centres play an important part in this task and have a decentralised organisational approach, which encourages the participation and involvement of local and regional bodies in distributing information. In the next few months the Commission must decide on the amount of funding to be provided by the institutions for the operation of the 480 existing centres and for those likely to be set up following the accession of new Member States during this period.

It appears essential to the maintenance of this network for the Commission to increase its financial contribution, given the overall picture of spending cuts affecting local and regional bodies. To date, the latter have assumed most of the strategy's costs, although communication is actually part of the work of the European institutions. Article 49(6) of the Financial Regulation is quite clear in this respect.

In view of the situation described:

— How does the Commission view the work of the Europe Direct centres?

— What is the outlook for maintaining, developing and/or expanding this network of centres over the next three years?

— Does the Commission hope to increase funding for this programme, in order to improve on the current base amount of EUR 12 000 a year allocated to each centre and to provide for the possible creation of centres in new Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2012)

The Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs) have significantly contributed to communicate and debate EU policies with citizens at regional and local level. The 480 Information Centres spread in the 27 Member States are a good partner to communicate EU matters to citizens in their own language and an essential tool for both the European Parliament and the Commission to answer citizens' enquiries. A mid-term evaluation of the overall performance of EDICs was completed in January 2012 and showed that EDICs comply effectively with the pursuance of their mission to provide information and communicate to the citizens on EU matters.

In the new generation of EDICs (2013-2017), the Commission will try to ensure a well-balanced geographical coverage. In order to encourage a large participation of host structures and enhance the network continuity, the Commission will simplify the administrative and financial burden for the host structures and will extend the life of the next generation of EDICs from four to five years.

The Commission is considering options to increase the grant minimum amount per EDIC within the limits of the unchanged funding allocated to EDICs (budget line 16 03 01).

As regards future Member States, a call for proposals to select host structures for the EDICs in Croatia will be launched in 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003947/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Financiación del Proyecto de regadío del Canal Segarra-Garrigues

El 23 de enero de 2012 se formuló una pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión (E— 000733/2012) sobre la justificación y finalidad de la subvención otorgada para el Proyecto «Abastecimiento de agua potable desde el Canal Segarra — Garrigues».En su respuesta, de fecha 12 de marzo de 2012, se señala que el referido proyecto se ha beneficiado de una ayuda adicional de 15,5 millones de euros del Feader respecto a un coste subvencionable total de 31,3 millones de euros para el actual periodo de programación 2007-2013. Se especifica que el desglose de los costes es el siguiente: 1) construcción y edificación: 29,9 millones de euros, 2) asistencia técnica: 1,3 millones de euros, 3) publicidad: 100 000 euros.

Teniendo en cuenta, pues, que dicho proyecto ha sido subvencionado por la Unión Europea,

1. ¿En qué momento el Gobierno de Cataluña pidió incluir el proyecto de abastecimiento para la población de 48 municipios pertenecientes a las comarcas de la Segarra, Urgell y las Garrigues?

2. ¿En qué forma la ejecución de este proyecto afecta al otro proyecto denominado «Regadío del Canal Segarra-Garrigues»?

3. ¿En qué forma la ejecución de este proyecto afecta al proyecto denominado «Regadío del Canal Segarra-Garrigues» en lo que se refiere a los derechos de los regantes?

4. ¿Cuál era el volumen (en hm3/año) que se pedía derivar?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de mayo de 2012)

La Comisión quiere aclarar que el proyecto denominado «Abastecimiento de agua potable desde el Canal Segarra — Garrigues» recibió 15,5 millones EUR del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) y no del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader), como indica Su Señoría.

Las respuestas de la Comisión a las preguntas formuladas son las siguientes:

1) y 4) Como el FEDER se gestiona en responsabilidad compartida, la Comisión invita a Su Señoría a dirigirse, para cualquier información que necesite, a la autoridad responsable de la gestión:

Dirección General de Fondos Comunitarios
Ministerio de Hacienda
Paseo de la Castellana, 162
28046 MADRID
ARGarcia@sgpg.meh.es

2) Según las autoridades competentes españolas, esos dos proyectos son independientes.

3) El proyecto de regadío del Canal Segarra-Garrigues tuvo que someterse a una serie de medidas sustantivas y de procedimiento por las razones expuestas en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-3021/2010 ([1]). La ejecución del proyecto «Abastecimiento de agua potable desde el Canal Segarra-Garrigues» no afecta en sí a los derechos de los regantes.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003947/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Financing of the Segarra-Garrigues Canal irrigation project

On 23 January 2012, a parliamentary question (E-000733/2012) was tabled to the Commission, regarding the rationale and purpose of the funding granted to the project entitled 'Supply of drinking water from the Segarra-Garrigues Canal'. The reply, dated 12 March 2012, stated that this project has benefited from additional aid of EUR 15.5 million from the EAFRD, in respect of a total cost eligible for subsidy of EUR 31.3 million for the current 2007-2013 programming period. The breakdown of costs is specified as follows: 1) building and construction: EUR 29.9 million, 2) technical assistance: EUR 1.3 million, 3) publicity: EUR 100 000.

Given, then, that this project has been funded by the European Union:

1. When did the Government of Catalonia ask for inclusion of the drinking water supply project for the population of 48 municipalities in the districts of Segarra, Urgell and Garrigues?

2. How does implementation of this project affect the other project entitled 'Segarra-Garrigues Canal irrigation'?

3. How does implementation of this project affect the Segarra-Garrigues Canal irrigation project in terms of irrigators' rights?

4. What volume (hm^3/year) was requested to be diverted?

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

The Commission would like to clarify that the project entitled 'Supply of drinking water from the Segarra-Garrigues Canal' benefitted from an amount of EUR 15.5 million from the European Fund for Regional Development (ERDF), and not from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) as referred to by the Honourable Member.

Concerning the specific questions raised, the Commission provides the following answers:

1 and 4. As the ERDF is managed under shared responsibility, the Commission invites the Honourable Member to request the information to the responsible managing authority:

Dirección General de Fondos Comunitarios
Ministerio de Hacienda
Paseo de la Castellana, 162
28046 Madrid
ARGarcia@sgpg.meh.es

2. According to the competent Spanish authorities, the two projects are independent.

3. The irrigation project in the irrigable area Segarra-Garrigues had to be made subject to procedural and substantive safeguards due to the reasons referred to in the answer to Written Question E-3021/2010 ([1]). The implementation of the 'Supply of drinking water from the Segarra-Garrigues Canal' project as such does not affect the irrigator's right.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003948/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Controles sanitarios en la Importación de avellana procedente de Turquía

El 23 de enero de 2012 se formuló por escrito una pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión (E-000419/2012) sobre si se habían encontrado productos insecticidas prohibidos en Europa, en las avellanas procedentes de Turquía. En la respuesta de 28 de febrero de 2012, la Comisión afirma —apartado 2— que de las muestras analizadas en avellanas procedentes de Turquía, entre los plaguicidas buscados figuraban sustancias prohibidas en la Unión Europea como el carbaril, el metidatión y el azinfós-metilo. Asimismo, se menciona que son los Estados Miembros quienes deben establecer programas nacionales de control.

A la vista de lo anterior,

1. ¿De qué manera gestiona y fiscaliza la Comisión que todos los Estados Miembros cumplan su obligación de establecer los programas nacionales de control?

2. ¿Cómo entiende la Comisión que se debería intensificar la vigilancia a la vista de la poca representatividad del número 14 de muestras anuales analizadas?

3. ¿Dada la poca representatividad, hasta qué nivel se debería intensificar la vigilancia?

4. ¿Cuál es la actuación de la Comisión ante una inactividad de los Estados Miembros para realizar los controles necesarios sobre los productos importados?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de junio de 2012)

1. La Comisión efectúa el seguimiento correspondiente para comprobar si los Estados miembros cumplen todas las obligaciones de la UE, incluida la de establecer programas nacionales de control conforme al artículo 30 del Reglamento (CE) n° 396/2005 ([1]), y lo hace utilizando las herramientas que establece el Tratado, entre otras la posibilidad de incoar un procedimiento por incumplimiento si hay razones para creer que se ha infringido la legislación de la UE. En este ámbito, la Comisión lleva también a cabo auditorías con arreglo al artículo 45 del Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 ([2]).

2. y 3. El programa plurianual coordinado de control de la UE, que la Comisión se encarga de preparar, tiene como objetivo proporcionar datos estadísticamente representativos sobre los residuos de plaguicidas presentes en los alimentos que están a disposición de los consumidores europeos. Los principales componentes de la dieta europea están representados por entre veinte y treinta productos alimenticios, que se someten a ensayo en un ciclo trianual. Las avellanas no forman parte de ese grupo. De acuerdo con el artículo 30 del Reglamento (CE) n° 396/2005, los programas nacionales de control deben basarse en el riesgo y es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros determinar si el número de muestras y el tipo de producto seleccionado son representativos.

4. La Comisión no tiene noticia de que ningún Estado miembro esté dejando de realizar los controles de las importaciones que exige la legislación de la Unión. Si así fuera, se utilizarían las herramientas mencionadas para determinar los incumplimientos y darles la respuesta oportuna.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 396/2005 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de febrero de 2005, relativo a los límites máximos de residuos de plaguicidas en alimentos y piensos de origen vegetal y animal y que modifica la Directiva 91/414/CEE del Consejo http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:070:0001:0016:ES:PDF.

([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 29 de abril de 2004, sobre los controles oficiales efectuados para garantizar la verificación del cumplimiento de la legislación en materia de piensos y alimentos y la normativa sobre salud animal y bienestar de los animales
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:165:0001:0141:ES:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003948/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Health controls on hazelnuts imported from Turkey

On 23 January 2012, the Commission was asked, in Written Question E-000419/2012, whether insecticides banned in Europe had been found in hazelnuts imported from Turkey. In point 2 of its reply of 28 February 2012, the Commission said that the pesticides sought when analysing hazelnut samples from Turkey included substances banned in the EU, such as Carbaryl, Methidiathion and Azinphos Methyl. It added that it is up to the Member States to establish national control programs.

In view of the above:

1. How does the Commission manage and monitor compliance by all Member States with their obligation to establish national control programs?

2. How does the Commission feel monitoring should be increased, given that the number of samples (14) analysed each year is hardly representative?

3. Given that these analyses are unrepresentative, to what level should controls be increased?

4. How does the Commission respond to Member States' failure to carry out the required checks on imports?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

1. The Commission monitors compliance by Member States with all EU obligations, including that to establish national control programmes under Article 30 of Regulation 396/2005 ([1]), through the tools provided for in the Treaty, *inter alia* the possibility to initiate an infringement procedure if there are reasons to believe that EU legislation has been violated. In addition, in this field, the Commission also carries out audits in accordance with Article 45 of Regulation 882/2004 ([2]).

2 and 3. The coordinated multiannual EU control programme prepared by the Commission aims to provide statistically representative data regarding pesticide residues in food available to European consumers. The major components of the European diet are represented by 20 to 30 food products, which are tested in a three-year cycle. Hazelnuts are not considered among them. According to Article 30 of Regulation 396/2005, national control programmes shall be risk based and it is the responsibility of the Member States to judge whether the number of samples and type of commodity selected are representative.

4. The Commission is not aware of any failure of Member States to carry out controls on imports required by Union legislation. If this happens, the tools mentioned above are used to ascertain and respond to non-compliances.

([1]) Regulation (EC) 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 February 2005 on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin and amending council Directive 91/414/eec http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:070:0001:0016:en:PDF.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:165:0001:0141:EN:PDF.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003949/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Financiación del Proyecto de regadío del Canal Segarra-Garrigues II

El 23 de enero de 2012 se formuló una pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión (E-000733/2012) sobre la justificación y finalidad de la subvención otorgada para el Proyecto «Abastecimiento de agua potable desde el Canal Segarra-Garrigues». En su respuesta, de fecha 12 de marzo de 2012, se señala que el referido proyecto es independiente del denominado «Irrigación del Canal Segarra-Garrigues». Aquel se ha beneficiado de una ayuda adicional de 15,5 millones de euros del Feader respecto a un coste subvencionable total de 31,3 millones de euros para el actual periodo de programación 2007-2013. Se especifica que el desglose de los costes es el siguiente: 1) construcción y edificación: 29,9 millones de euros, 2) asistencia técnica: 1,3 millones de euros, 3) publicidad: 100 000 euros.

Teniendo en cuenta que dicho proyecto de abastecimiento de agua potable ha sido subvencionado por la Unión Europea,

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que un volumen de agua —proyectado y concedido inicialmente por la autoridad competente para el abastecimiento de riego agrícola— derivado a consumo humano e industrial con posterioridad, puede vulnerar los derechos de los regantes?

2. ¿Cómo se justifica su conformidad u oposición, según el caso?

3. ¿Por qué no se hizo la evaluación ambiental del proyecto de abastecimiento de agua potable desde el canal Segarra-Garrigues , a pesar de estar declarado de interés público de primer orden (Acuerdo de Gobierno 184/2010)?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de junio de 2012)

La Comisión no puede opinar sobre una posible vulneración de los derechos de los regantes, ya que es una cuestión que entra en el ámbito de competencia exclusiva de las autoridades nacionales interesadas.

El Acuerdo 184/2010 del Gobierno de Cataluña trata del Proyecto de regadío, y no del de abastecimiento de agua potable. Se llevó a cabo efectivamente una evaluación ambiental del Proyecto de regadío y, por consiguiente, el 14 de abril de 2009 el Gobierno autónomo de Cataluña aprobó oficialmente la Red Natura 2000, y el 18 de junio de 2009 el Ministerio español de Medio Ambiente realizó un informe sobre el impacto ambiental. El 22 de octubre de 2010, la Resolución MAH/3644/2010 hizo público el acuerdo de declaración de impacto ambiental, pero también indicó las medidas necesarias que debían aplicarse a fin de reducir al mínimo su impacto ambiental.

En cuanto al Proyecto de abastecimiento de agua potable desde el canal Segarra-Garrigues, los certificados establecidos por las autoridades ambientales declaran de forma inequívoca que «el procedimiento de evaluación del impacto ambiental no es aplicable» con arreglo a la legislación española, ya que el proyecto no se ajusta a los supuestos del Real Decreto Legislativo 1/2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003949/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Financing of the Segarra-Garrigues Canal Irrigation Plan II

On 23 January 2012, the Commission was asked a parliamentary question (E-000733/2012) on the justification and purpose of the grant made for a project concerning drinking water supply from the Segarra-Garrigues Canal. Its response, dated 12 March 2012, indicates that the above project is independent of the project known as the Segarra-Garrigues Canal irrigation project. The drinking water supply project benefited from further aid of EUR 15.5 million from the EAFRD relative to a total eligible cost of EUR 31.3 million for the current programming period 2007-2013. The breakdown of cost for this project is as follows: 1) construction and building: EUR 29.9 million; 2) technical assistance: EUR 1.3 million; 3) publicity: EUR 100 000.

Bearing in mind that this drinking water supply project has been subsidised by the European Union:

1. Does the Commission take the view that a volume of water initially planned and approved by the appropriate authority to supply irrigation for agriculture, and subsequently diverted to human and industrial use, may violate the rights of the irrigators?

2. How does it justify its agreement or opposition, as the case may be?

3. Why was an environmental assessment not carried out for the project to supply drinking water from the Segarra-Garrigues Canal, despite it being declared to be of overriding public interest (Government Agreement 184/2010)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

The Commission has no views on a possible violation of the rights of irrigators, which is a question that falls under the sole jurisdiction of the national authorities concerned.

The Government agreement 184/2010 of the region of Catalonia is about the irrigation project, not the drinking water supply project. An environmental assessment was effectively carried out for the irrigation project, and consequently there was an official approval on 14 April 2009 for Natura 2000 Net by the Regional Government of Catalonia, and a report on environmental impact on 18 June 2009 by the Spanish Ministry of Environment. On 22 October 2010, a resolution (MAH/3644/2010) of the Environmental Impact Statement (Declaración de impacto ambiental) approved the project, but indicated the necessary measures to carry out in order to minimise its environmental impact.

Concerning the project 'Supply of drinking water from the Segarra-Garrigues Canal', the certificates provided by the environmental authorities state unequivocally 'the procedure of environmental impact assessment do not apply' according to Spanish legislation, because the project does not conform to the assumptions provided by Royal Legislative Decree 1/2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003950/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Controles sanitarios en la Importación de avellana procedente de Turquía II

El 23 de enero de 2012 se formuló por escrito una pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión (E-000418/2012) sobre el control de alimentos importados y el porcentaje de muestras tomadas respecto a la totalidad de los productos importados en el año 2010. Específicamente, para la avellana turca.

En la respuesta de fecha 6 de marzo de 2012, la Comisión manifiesta que se analizaron catorce muestras de entre las 95 250,30 toneladas de avellana turca importada. Se indica, además, que en ninguna de ellas se detectaron plaguicidas con niveles superiores al límite de cuantificación analítica. Asimismo dictamina que si la tasa de incumplimiento lo justificase, se podría evaluar la situación en cooperación con los Estados Miembros, y en caso necesario, incrementar el nivel de los controles específicos modificando el anexo 1 del Reglamento (CE) n° 669/2009.

A la vista de ello,

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que catorce muestras de un total de 95 250,30 toneladas es un porcentaje estadístico significativo y suficiente para garantizar la seguridad alimentaria en la Unión Europea en relación con la presencia de tóxicos prohibidos en la importación de productos alimentarios?

2. ¿Qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión al respecto?

3. ¿En qué lugares del conjunto del territorio europeo, se han llevado a cabo las analíticas de las catorce muestras de 95 250,30 toneladas de avellana turca importada?

4. ¿A qué envíos corresponden dichas muestras?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de junio de 2012)

1. Las muestras destinadas al control oficial de los niveles de residuos de plaguicidas deben tomarse con arreglo a lo dispuesto en la Directiva 2002/63/CE ([1]). De conformidad con el artículo 30 del Reglamento (CE) n° 396/2005 ([2]), los programas nacionales de control deben basarse en el riesgo, y es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros determinar si el número de muestras de la mercancía seleccionada es representativo. Por consiguiente, la Comisión da por supuesto que las catorce muestras son representativas de todos los envíos que han entrado en la UE.

2. El anexo I del Reglamento (CE) n° 669/2009 ([3]) se elaboró y se revisa periódicamente a partir de los datos y la información sobre los riesgos sanitarios actuales o emergentes, incluidos los registros del Sistema de Alerta Rápida para los Productos Alimenticios y los Alimentos para Animales (RASFF) resultantes de los controles realizados por las autoridades competentes de los Estados miembros, los informes de la Oficina Alimentaria y Veterinaria, los informes recibidos de terceros países y diversas evaluaciones científicas. La RASFF no ha emitido ninguna notificación relacionada con la presencia de niveles demasiado elevados de residuos de plaguicidas en avellanas procedentes de Turquía. Teniendo en cuenta toda la información disponible, actualmente no hay ninguna propuesta para que las avellanas procedentes de Turquía queden sujetas al Reglamento relativo a los residuos de plaguicidas.

3. Las muestras de vigilancia se tomaron en Alemania, Dinamarca, Finlandia, Italia y Letonia.

4. La Comisión solo recibe información detallada sobre las muestras si existe riesgo para los consumidores y la RASFF emite una notificación.

([1]) Directiva 2002/63/CE de la Comisión, de 11 de julio de 2002, por la que se establecen los métodos comunitarios de muestreo para el control oficial de residuos de plaguicidas en los productos de origen vegetal y animal y se deroga la Directiva 79/700/CEE.

([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 396/2005 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de febrero de 2005 relativo a los límites máximos de residuos de plaguicidas en alimentos y piensos de origen vegetal y animal y que modifica la Directiva 91/414/CEE del Consejo http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:070:0001:0016:en:PDF.

([3]) Reglamento (CE) n° 669/2009 de la Comisión, de 24 de julio de 2009, por el que se aplica el Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo en lo que respecta a la intensificación de los controles oficiales de las importaciones de determinados piensos y alimentos de origen no animal y se modifica la Decisión 2006/504/CE http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:194:0011:0021:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003950/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Health controls on the import of hazelnuts from Turkey II

On 23 January 2012, a written parliamentary question was presented to the Commission (E-000418/2012) on the control of imported foodstuffs and the percentage of samples taken from the total of products imported in 2010, specifically, for Turkish hazelnuts.

In its reply, dated 6 March 2012, the Commission stated that 14 samples were analysed from the 95 250.30 tonnes of Turkish hazelnuts imported. It further indicated that none of these samples were found to contain pesticides at levels above the analytical quantification limit. It also expressed the opinion that if the non-compliance rate justified it, the situation could be assessed in cooperation with the Member States and, if necessary, the level of specific controls could be increased by amending Annex A to Regulation (EC) No 669/2009.

In view of this,

1. Does the Commission believe that 14 samples from a total of 95 250.30 tonnes is a statistically significant percentage, sufficient to ensure food safety in the European Union in relation to the presence of banned toxins in imported food products?

2. How does the Commission intend to address this matter?

3. In what locations across the entire European territory were analyses made of the 14 samples taken from the 95 250.30 tonnes of imported Turkish hazelnuts?

4. To which shipments do these samples correspond?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2012)

1. Samples intended for the official control of the levels of pesticide residues shall be taken according to Commission Directive 2002/63/EC ([1]). National control programmes according to Article 30 of Regulation 396/2005 ([2]), shall be risk based and it is the responsibility of the Member States to judge whether the number of samples of the commodity selected are representative. The Commission therefore assumes that the 14 samples are representative of all the consignments that have entered the EU.

2. Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 669/2009 ([3]) was set up and is reviewed regularly on the basis of data and information on existing or emerging risks for health, including records of the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed Food (RASFF) following controls carried out by the Member States' competent authorities, reports by the Food and Veterinary Office, reports received from third countries and various scientific assessments. There has not yet been a RASFF notification related to the presence of too high levels of pesticide residue in hazelnuts from Turkey. Taking into account all the available information, Turkish hazelnuts are currently not proposed to be subject to this regulation for pesticide residues.

3. The surveillance samples were taken in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy and Latvia.

4. The Commission receives detailed information on the samples only in cases where there is a risk for the consumers and a RASFF notification is issued.

([1]) Commission Directive 2002/63/EC of 11 July 2002 establishing Community methods of sampling for the official control of pesticide residues in and on products of plant and animal origin and repealing Directive 79/700/EEC.

([2]) Regulation (EC) 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 February 2005 on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin and amending council Directive 91/414/eec http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:070:0001:0016:en:PDF.

([3]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 669/2009, of 24 July 2009 implementing Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the increased level of official controls on imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin and amending Decision 2006/504/EC: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:194:0011:0021:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003951/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Refusal to execute a European Arrest Warrant

During a broadcast of the British TV political panel show *Question Time* in October 2009, the then British Justice Minister, Jack Straw, said that he had ignored a European Arrest Warrant (EAW) against a British politician from a country where Holocaust denial was illegal. This was said after the politician in question repeatedly refused to answer whether he denied the Holocaust or not, citing his fear of extradition to a country with denial laws as grounds for not answering.

Does the government of a Member State have the right to refuse to execute an EAW?

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

Surrender under the framework Decision on the European arrest warrant ([1]) is an entirely judicial procedure. Article 2.2 of the framework Decision lists offences in respect of which the executing judicial authority, when taking its decision on surrender, cannot seek to verify dual criminality (that the act is a crime in both issuing and executing Member States). Outside of this list, depending on the particular circumstances of each case, a judicial authority may refuse surrender for an act that is not a crime in the executing State.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA of 13 June 2002, OJ L 190/1, 18.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003952/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — EEAS security

Is physical security for EEAS missions provided by the EEAS, Member States, or host governments?

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

Physical security to EU Delegations is provided by the EEAS Security Directorate, in coordination with host governments when relevant (cf. the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 18 April 1961).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003953/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — European External Action Service staff grades

Could the Vice-President/High Representative provide details of how many EEAS staff are at what grade (AD, AST etc.)?

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

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the annexed table for AD, AST and CA staff figures.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003954/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — European External Action Service travel and carbon emissions

The EU is committed to lowering carbon emissions.

With that in mind, could the EEAS provide details of how it intends to minimise carbon emissions generated by EEAS staff travel?

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

The EEAS is indeed committed to lowering carbon emissions.

As regards staff travel, the EEAS has cut its budget for missions by 10% from 2011 to 2012 and is proposing to freeze them at their 2012 level in 2013. The EEAS is also developing video-conferencing to reduce travelling.

In addition, in Brussels, the EEAS has adopted the same incentive scheme as the Commission to encourage staff to use public transport rather than their personal cars.

The EEAS effort is not limited to travel. The EEAS headquarters building is certified regarding its low impact on the environment at the highest level (B-).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003955/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Commission delegations transferred to EEAS

With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, 160 Commission delegations transferred to the EEAS.

Could the Vice-President/High Representative provide a list of these delegations?

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

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the annexed table with the list of EU Delegations in 2012. There were 138 Delegations at the time of creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) in 2011. Since then, the HR/VP opened a Delegation in Libya, in Sudan and most recently an office in Myanmar.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003956/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — European External Action Service dismissals

Could the Vice-President/High Representative provide details of how many EEAS officials have been dismissed from their duties?

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

No EEAS official has been dismissed since the creation of the EEAS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003957/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — European External Action Service: meaningful presence of nationalities

Official documents state that 'the EEAS staff shall comprise a meaningful presence of nationals from all the Member States'.

Could the Vice-President/High Representative clarify what is meant by 'a meaningful presence'?

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

Council Decision 2010/427 ([1]) establishing the organisation and functioning of the EEAS provides that 'the High Representative shall establish the selection procedures for EEAS staff, which shall be undertaken through a transparent procedure based on merit with the objective of securing the services of staff of the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity while enduring adequate geographical and gender balance, and a meaningful presence of nationals from all Member States in the EEAS'.

The term 'meaningful presence of nationals from all Member States' is intended to provide further detail on the requirement to ensure adequate geographical balance in the staff of the EEAS. The High Representative/Vice-President takes very seriously this requirement, which aims to ensure that nationals from all Member States of the Union can be found across the organisation, and at all levels and functions.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:201:0030:0040:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003958/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — European External Action Service: simultaneous roles

Official documents state that 'EU officials serving in the EEAS shall have the right to apply for posts in their institution of origin alongside internal candidates'.

Does this mean that EEAS officials can apply for positions in the Commission/Parliament/Council whilst simultaneously working in the EEAS or their own diplomatic service?

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

Article 98(2) of the Staff Regulations (as amended by Regulation 1080/2010) provides that '*institutions other than the EEAS shall, when filling a vacant post, consider applications from internal cndidates and officials of the EEAS who were officials of the institution concerned until they became officials of the EEAS without giving priority to any of these categories*.'

This means that EEAS officials *who were officials of the institution concerned until they became officials of the EEAS* may apply for positions in the Commission, Parliament and General Secretariat of the Council on the same basis as any other category of EU official. EEAS staff from the diplomatic services of the Member States are employed as temporary agents within the EEAS on the basis of Article 2(e) of the Conditions of Employment of other Servants of the European Union. This type of employment does not give them the same rights to apply for posts in other EU institutions as are enjoyed by EU officials.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003959/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — European External Action Service: geographic balance

The documents concerning the make-up of the EEAS talk about the need for the EEAS to show 'geographic balance'.

Could the Vice-President/High Representative explain what this means?

Is this a reference to balance of staff from different EU nations? Or is it a reference to where the EEAS staff will be located in the world?

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

Council Decision 2010/427 ([1]) establishing the organisation and functioning of the EEAS provides that 'the High Representative shall establish the selection procedures for EEAS staff, which shall be undertaken through a transparent procedure based on merit with the objective of securing the services of staff of the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity while enduring adequate geographical and gender balance, and a meaningful presence of nationals from all Member States in the EEAS'.

This means that the staff of EEAS must be drawn from nationals of all Member States of the EU. It does not relate to the location of the staff of the EEAS around the world.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:201:0030:0040:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003960/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — European External Action Service: functional autonomy

Official documents state that 'the EEAS shall be a functionally autonomous body of the European Union, separate from the Commission'. However, the head of the EEAS, Baroness Ashton, is also Vice-President of the EU Commission.

How can an organisation be autonomous from the Commission when it is headed by the Vice-President of that same Commission?

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

Article 1(2) of Council Decision 2010/427 establishing the organisation and functioning of the EEAS provides that the EEAS *'shall be a functionally autonomous body of the European Union, separate from the General Secretariat of the Council and from the Commission with the legal capacity necessary to preform its tasks and attain its objectives.'* In accordance with Article 1(3) of that decision, the EEAS is placed under the sole authority of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003961/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Directorates-General/European External Action Service: duplication of effort

There is tremendous scope for duplication of effort given the overlapping remits of Commission DGs and the EEAS. For example, a situation in the Caucasus could mean that DG External Affairs and DG Enlargement could both legitimately claim it was their area of competency, as well as the EEAS.

How will the Vice-President/High Representative ensure that replication of effort between DGs does not occur? Which agency/DG is senior in the event of disagreement?

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

It should be noted that the former Commission Directorate-General for External Relations does not exist anymore, but has been transferred en bloc to the European External Action Service by Council Decision 2010/427 ([1]) establishing the organisation and functioning of the EEAS (Section 2 of the annex to that Decision). Further, a 'situation in the Caucasus' does normally not come within the remit of the Commission Directorate-General for Enlargement.

More generally, the EEAS and relevant Commission services have entered into service-level agreements and working arrangements which aim, *inter alia*, to avoid duplication of efforts and optimalisize their cooperation.

Precisely because the High Representative is also Vice-President of the Commission the consistency of the Union's external action can be ensured.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:201:0030:0040:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003962/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — EEAS staff conflict of interests

Employees of the European External Action Service (EEAS) are governed under the same rules as EU civil servants. ('All members of the staff of the EEAS covered by the Staff Regulations and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants shall have the same rights and obligations, regardless whether they are officials of the European Union or temporary agents coming from the diplomatic services of the Member States'.)

However, these rules stipulate that they may take no instruction from a Member State. If they are already members of the diplomatic service of their own country (and thus must take orders from it), how will these staff members possibly be able to reconcile the demands of their national post with the EU civil service rules which instruct them not to take such instructions?

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

Article 6(4) of Council Decision 2010/427 establishing the organisation and functioning of the EEAS provides that *'the staff of the EEAS shall carry out their duties and conduct themselves solely with the interests of the Union in mind. (…) they shall neither seek nor take instructions from any government, authority, organisation or person outside the EEAS or from any body or person other than High Representative (…)'*.

This obligation applies to all members of staff of the EEAS, whether officials of the Union or temporary agents coming from the diplomatic services of the Member States.

EEAS staff from the diplomatic services of the Member States take, in practice, unpaid leave from their diplomatic service in order to take up employment at the EEAS. They do not take instructions from their national diplomatic service while they are employed by the EEAS.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-003964/12
an die Kommission
Evelyn Regner (S&D)
(16. April 2012)

Betrifft: Förderung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit in der EU — Reduzierung von Verwaltungslasten für KMU und Mikrounternehmen

Wie die Kommission feststellt, sollen bestmögliche Bedingungen für Wachstum und Entstehung von Arbeitsplätzen innerhalb der EU geschaffen werden. Kleinstunternehmen und KMU machen 89 % der europäischen Unternehmen aus und zählen insgesamt insofern als Gesamtheit zu den „größten" Arbeitgebern der EU.

In ihrer Mitteilung vom 23.11.2011 kündigt die Kommission an, „Lasten für KMU und Mikrounternehmen" im Rahmen einer Überprüfung des bestehenden EU-Besitzstands auszuforschen, um Ausnahmen oder weniger strenge Bestimmungen für diese zu ermitteln. Im Anhang der Mitteilung sind bereits konkrete Vorschläge enthalten.

Darunter finden sich zahlreiche Gesundheits- und ArbeitnehmerInnenschutzvorschriften, welche auf Art. 153 AEUV basieren und Mindestvorschriften zum Gesundheits- und ArbeitnehmerInnenschutz darstellen.

— Sieht die Kommission wie die Fragestellerin diesbezüglich (Stichwort Mindestvorschriften) einen Widerspruch darin, den Mitgliedstaaten nationale Zusatzvorschriften (sogenanntes „gold plating") zu verbieten?

— Im Anhang der Mitteilung finden sich bereits konkrete Ausnahmen im Bereich ArbeitnehmerInnengesundheitsschutz. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission diese Vorhaben, ArbeitnehmerInnen in KMU oder Mikrounternehmen höheren Gefahren für Gesundheit und Leben auszusetzen als ArbeitnehmerInnen in größeren Unternehmen? Entsprechend den Definitionen der Mitteilung wären davon zwei Drittel aller ArbeitnehmerInnen betroffen.

— Teilt die Kommission die Ansicht, dass — soweit Unternehmen unter einer bestimmten Größe von der Entsenderichtlinie ausgenommen werden — immer mehr ArbeitnehmerInnen von Sozialdumping betroffen sind?

— Sieht die Kommission ebenfalls die Gefahr, dass Arbeitgeber oder Unternehmen in Europa bewusst diese Ausnahmen nutzen könnten, um nicht nur nationale Vorschriften, sondern in diesem Falle auch EU-Mindestvorschriften umgehen zu können?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(22. Mai 2012)

Nach dem entsprechenden Bericht der Kommission ([1]) hat diese bei der Vorbereitung aller künftigen Legislativvorschläge davon auszugehen, dass besonders Kleinstunternehmen von vornherein vom Geltungsbereich der vorgeschlagenen Rechtsvorschriften ausgeschlossen werden sollten, wenn nicht in der Folgenabschätzung nachgewiesen werden kann, dass ihre Aufnahme in den Geltungsbereich notwendig und verhältnismäßig ist. In Fällen, in denen Legislativvorschläge aus ordnungspolitischen Gründen auch Kleinstunternehmen erfassen müssen, werden weniger strenge Regelungen angestrebt werden.

Nach dem Bericht wird über Ausnahmen von Fall zu Fall entschieden, wobei den Besonderheiten des Gesamtziels der Rechtsvorschriften vollständig Rechnung getragen wird.

Speziell auf dem Gebiet der Gesundheit und der Sicherheit am Arbeitsplatz räumt der AEUV den Mitgliedstaaten die Möglichkeit ein, strengere Maßnahmen beizubehalten oder zu treffen.

Im Anhang des Berichts sind als Ergebnis einer Überprüfung Rechtsvorschriften aufgeführt, die als Beispiele für etwaige künftige Ausnahmen oder weniger strenge Bestimmungen angesehen werden könnten. Solche Ausnahmen oder weniger strengen Bestimmungen können sich auch auf Berichtspflichten beziehen und müssen nicht notwendigerweise den Geltungsbereich der Rechtsvorschriften betreffen.

([1]) KOM(2011)803 endg.

Der Vorschlag der Kommission für eine Richtlinie zur Durchsetzung der Richtlinie 96/71/EG über die Entsendung von Arbeitnehmern ([2]) erfasst auch KMU und Kleinstunternehmen. Sie werden allgemein von höherer Rechtssicherheit und fairerem Wettbewerb profitieren. Ein Ausschluss von KMU und Kleinstunternehmen aus dem Geltungsbereich dieser Richtlinie würde eine der zentralen Zielsetzungen des Vorschlags (den Kampf gegen Briefkastenfirmen) untergraben und ließe beträchtliche neue Schlupflöcher entstehen ([3]).

Was die letzte Frage der Frau Abgeordneten betrifft, so müssen Arbeitgeber die nationalen Vorschriften zur Umsetzung von EU-Richtlinien anwenden.

([2]) KOM(2012)131 endg. vom 21. März 2012.
([3]) Siehe Seiten 10 bis 13.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003964/12
to the Commission
Evelyn Regner (S&D)
(16 April 2012)

Subject: Facilitation of competitiveness in the EU: reduction of the administrative burden for SMEs and micro-enterprises

As the Commission is aware, the best possible conditions for growth and job creation within the EU must be achieved. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises make up 89% of European companies and together rank among the 'largest' employers in the EU.

In its communication of 23 November 2011, the Commission announced that, within the scope of an examination of the existing EU body of law, it would investigate 'burdens for SMEs and micro-enterprises' to identify exemptions or less strict requirements for them. Concrete suggestions are included in the attachment accompanying the communication.

These include numerous health and employee protection requirements based on Article 153 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which represent minimum health and safety requirements for employees.

— Does the Commission, like myself, see a contradiction in this regard (keyword: minimum requirements) in prohibiting additional requirements for Member States (in other words 'gold plating')?

— The attachment accompanying the communication contains concrete exceptions in the area of employee health and safety. How does the Commission justify this intention to expose employees in SMEs or micro-enterprises to higher levels of danger with regard to health and safety than employees in larger companies? Based on the definitions in the communication, two thirds of all employees would be affected.

— Does the Commission share the view that as long as companies below a certain size are exempted from the Posting of Workers Directive, an increasing number of employees will be affected by social dumping?

— Does the Commission also see the danger that employers or companies in Europe could consciously exploit these exemptions in order to circumvent not only national requirements, but in this case also EU minimum requirements?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2012)

According to the Commission report ([1]), the Commission's preparation of all future legislative proposals shall be based on the premise that in particular micro-enterprises should a priori be excluded from the scope of the proposed legislation unless the necessity and proportionality of their being covered can be demonstrated in the impact assessment. Where micro-enterprises must be covered by legislative proposals for public policy reasons recourse to lighter regimes will be sought.

The report states that exemptions will be decided on a case-by-case basis, taking full account of the specific nature of the overall objective of the legislation.

In the specific area of health and safety at work, the TFEU allows the Member States to maintain or introduce more stringent measures.

The attachment to the report lists examples of legislative acts resulting from a screening and which could be considered as possibilities for future exemptions or lighter regimes. Such exemptions/lighter regimes might be linked to reporting obligations, not necessarily to the scope of legislation.

SMEs and micro-businesses fall within the scope of the Commission proposal ([2]) for a directive on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers. They will benefit in general from more legal certainty and fairer competition. Excluding SMEs and micro-businesses from the scope of that directive would undermine one of the proposal's key objectives (to fight against letter-box companies) and would create considerable new loopholes ([3]).

([1]) COM(2011) 803 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 131 final of 21 March 2012.
([3]) Pages 10 and 11.

Regarding the Honourable Member's last question employers are required to apply the national provisions transposing EU directives.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003967/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(17 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ελληνικό πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποιήσεων, αξιολόγηση πορείας και νέες προοπτικές

Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση ([1]) της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για το δεύτερο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας «ο στόχος της εξασφάλισης 50 δισ. ευρώ από ιδιωτικοποιήσεις παραμένει βιώσιμος αν και σε μεγαλύτερο χρονικό ορίζοντα από τον αρχικώς προβλεπόμενο, … με αποτέλεσμα την αναθεώρηση των ετήσιων στόχων για τα έσοδα», ενώ αναφέρει πως για την ιδιωτικοποίηση πολλών κεφαλαίων εκκρεμούν διάφορα ζητήματα, μεταξύ των οποίων και η διασαφήνιση των δικαιωμάτων ιδιοκτησίας. Παράλληλα, η Ομάδα Δράσης στη 2η Τριμηνιαία Έκθεσή της ([2]) επισημαίνει πως «για να δοθεί μία εικόνα των διαστάσεων του προβλήματος εκτιμάται ότι δεν είναι σαφώς κατοχυρωμένοι οι τίτλοι ιδιοκτησίας για το ήμισυ της ακίνητης περιουσίας που μεταβιβάστηκε στο Ταμείο Ιδιωτικοποιήσεων με σκοπό την πώληση».

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Οι αρχικοί στόχοι του Μεσοπρόθεσμου Πλαισίου Δημοσιονομικής Στρατηγικής ([3]) είχαν λάβει υπόψιν το πρόβλημα των τίτλων ιδιοκτησίας; Αν όχι, γιατί παραβλέφθηκε αρχικώς ένα τόσο βασικό ζήτημα, όπως και το θέμα των κρατικών ενισχύσεων, για την προώθηση των ιδιωτικοποιήσεων και την επίτευξη των χρονοδιαγραμμάτων, και γιατί το πρόβλημα αυτό αποτυπώνεται ένα χρόνο αργότερα παρ' όλη τη βαρύτητά του; Πού είναι η ευθύνη για μη έγκαιρη προεργασία και αξιολόγηση τέτοιων παραμέτρων;

2. Πού βρίσκεται η σχετική προετοιμασία και ποιες οι εγγυήσεις πως τέτοιου είδους ανασταλτικοί παράγοντες θα διευθετηθούν εντός εύλογου χρονικού διαστήματος προκειμένου να διευκολυνθεί η επίτευξη των νέων στόχων για τις ιδιωτικοποιήσεις, κυριότερα δε οι στόχοι για το 2012;

3. Σε περίπτωση που οι στρεβλώσεις αυτές στο πρόγραμμα αποκρατικοποιήσεων δεν αντιμετωπιστούν εγκαίρως, υπάρχουν εναλλακτικές επιλογές άλλων κεφαλαίων προς ιδιωτικοποίηση, απαλλαγμένων από παρόμοια προβλήματα και, αν ναι, σε τι ποσοστό θα κάλυπταν τον αρχικό στόχο των 50 δισ.;

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

Οι στόχοι του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποίησης ήταν, και εξακολουθούν να είναι, γενικοί για το σύνολο των περιουσιακών στοιχείων. Όπως συμβαίνει με κάθε πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποίησης, δεν αποκαλύπτονται τα εκτιμώμενα ποσά ανά επιμέρους περιουσιακό στοιχείο.

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει πολύ καλά τους διάφορους φραγμούς που σχετίζονται με τους τίτλους ιδιοκτησίας και τη χρήση γης. Οι ανησυχίες αυτές αντικατοπτρίζονται στις εκθέσεις συμμόρφωσης της Επιτροπής. Στην έκθεση του Δεκεμβρίου του 2010 αναφέρεται ότι πρέπει να ληφθούν γρήγορα μέτρα για τη συγκέντρωση σε κεντρικό επίπεδο των στοιχείων σχετικά με την αξία των κρατικών περιουσιακών στοιχείων, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της γης και των ακινήτων. Τον Μάρτιο του 2011 στην έκθεση αναφερόταν ότι *η κυβέρνηση είχε αρχίσει προετοιμασίες για τη διενέργεια πλήρους απογραφής των κρατικών περιουσιακών στοιχείων βάσει των οποίων το πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποίησης θα έπρεπε να συγκεκριμενοποιηθεί περισσότερο, και ότι* οι νομικές διαφορές που αφορούσαν γη και ακίνητη περιουσία αποτελούσαν επίσης φραγμό στην ιδιωτικοποίηση.

Η πρόσφατη ανταλλαγή χρέους (PSI — Συμμετοχή Ιδιωτικού Τομέα) συνέβαλε επίσης στην καθυστέρηση της ιδιωτικοποίησης. Για να επιταχυνθούν οι διαδικασίες που αφορούν την ιδιωτικοποίηση ακινήτων, στις αρχές του τρέχοντος έτους άρχισε να λειτουργεί στο Υπουργείο Οικονομικών η Γραμματεία Δημόσιας Περιουσίας.

Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου μπορεί να ανατρέξει για περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες στον ιστότοπο του Ταμείου Ιδιωτικοποιήσεων, καθώς και στο τμήμα 4.3. της τελευταίας έκθεσης της Επιτροπής για την Ελλάδα: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op94_en.htm

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp94_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/speeches-statements/pdf/qr_march2012_en.pdf
([3]) http://government.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/%CE%9C%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%BF%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%BC%CE%BF-%CE%A0%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%AF%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%BF-%CE%94%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%BF%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%BF%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82-%CE%A3%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B7%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82_%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%83%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B71.pdf

Ειδικότερα, όσον αφορά το γεγονός ότι η κυβέρνηση δεσμεύτηκε εκφράζοντας την ετοιμότητά της να προχωρήσει σε πώληση του υπολοίπου της μειοψηφικής συμμετοχής της (υπό μορφή μειοψηφικών μετοχών) σε κρατικές επιχειρήσεις που τελούν υπό δημόσιο έλεγχο, δέσμευση που περιορίζεται μόνο σε περιπτώσεις υποδομών δικτύου καίριας σημασίας, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει στις απαντήσεις της στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-011415/2011 και E-001950/2012 ([4]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003967/12
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Greek privatisation programme, progress report and new prospects

According to the European Commission's report ([1]) on the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece 'the target of collecting EUR 50 billion in privatisation receipts remains viable, although over a longer period than envisaged initially', with the result that 'annual revenue targets have been revised'. It is mentioned that, for privatisation of many capital holdings to proceed, a number of outstanding issues have yet to be resolved, including in some cases clarification of ownership rights. At the same time, the Task Force for Greece notes its Second Quarterly Report ([2]) that 'to illustrate the dimension of the problem, it is estimated that the land title has not been clearly established for half of the real estate assets transferred to the privatisation fund for sale'.

In view of the above, will the Commission answer the following:

1. Did the initial targets of the Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy Framework ([3]) take into account the problem of title deeds? If not, why was such a basic question initially overlooked, as was the subject of state aid for promotion of privatisations and the compliance with deadlines, and why was this problem, notwithstanding its seriousness, identified only after the passage of an entire year? Who is to be held responsible for such lack of promptitude in preparation and assessment of these parameters?

2. At what stage are the relevant preparations and what are the guarantees that such obstacles will be dealt with promptly enough for the new privatisation targets to be met, and first and foremost those for 2012?

3. In the event that these distortions in the privatisation programme are not rectified in time, is there the option of finding other capital holdings that could be privatised, unencumbered by such problems, and if so, what proportion of the initial target of EUR 50 billion could be met in this way?

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

The targets in the Privatisation Plan were, and still are, generic for the complete pool of assets. As in any privatisation planning, the asset-by-asset estimated amounts are not disclosed.

The Commission is well aware of the several hurdles related to land titles and land use. This concern has been reflected in the Commission's compliance reports. In the December 2010 report, it was stated that steps should rapidly be made to centralise data collection on the value of state assets, including land and real estate. The March 2011 report stated that the government had started preparations for the compilation of a comprehensive inventory of state assets on the basis of which the privatisation plan would have to be made more specific, and that legal disputes of land and real estate property also constituted a barrier to privatisation.

The recent debt exchange (PSI) has also contributed to delaying privatisation. In order to accelerate processes related to the privatisation of real estate, a Secretariat on Public Property became operational in the Ministry of Finance early this year.

The Honourable Member can find more details in the Privatisation Fund's website, as well as in Section 4.3. of the Commission's latest Report on Greece:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op94_en.htm

On the specific issue of having the Government committed to stand ready to offer for sale its remaining minority holdings in state-owned enterprises, with public control, in the form of minority shareholdings, limited only to cases of critical network infrastructure, the Commission would refer to its answers to Written Questions E-011415/2011 and E-001950/2012 ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp94_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/speeches-statements/pdf/qr_march2012_en.pdf
([3]) http://government.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/%CE%9C%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%BF%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%BC%CE%BF-%CE%A0%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%AF%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%BF-%CE%94%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%BF%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%BF%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82-%CE%A3%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B7%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82_%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%83%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B71.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003968/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Directive 2004/27/EC

It is important that all citizens have access to information about their medicines, and Article 56a of Directive 2001/83/EC as amended by Directive 2004/27/EC ([1]) states that 'the name of the medicinal product … must also be expressed in Braille format on the packaging. The marketing authorisation holder shall ensure that the package information leaflet is made available on request from patients' organisations in formats appropriate for the blind and partially-sighted'.

The directive is silent as to exactly what formats are required, stating only that they must be appropriate.

In the UK, the approach taken by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency is to allow patients to decide what format is appropriate for their needs.

1. Is the Commission satisfied with this approach?

2. Is the Commission satisfied that national marketing authorisation holders have sufficient powers to ensure that manufacturers provide patients with medicines information? Does it see a need to extend the powers of the European Medicines Agency to ensure that medicines information is provided in alternative formats?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2012)

Following the adoption of Directive 2004/27/EC ([2]) the Commission updated the guideline on the readability of the label and package leaflet of medicinal products for human use ([3]) in order to take into account the new Article 56a.

This guideline includes information on how to make the package leaflet available in formats suitable for the blind and partially-sighted patients.

In particular, it provides that on request from patients' organisations the package leaflet should be provided for partially-sighted people in a suitable print, taking into consideration all aspects determining the readability (e.g. font size, word spacing, layout). For blind people the text has to be provided in an appropriate format and a format perceptible by hearing (CD-ROM, audiocassette, etc.) is recommended. In certain cases the appropriate format may be the package leaflet available in Braille.

Choice of the appropriate medium should be made by the marketing authorisation holder in consultation with representatives of organisations for the blind and partially sighted.

The Commission has focused on the update of the guideline and did not analyse in detail the UK legislation. However, patients' organisations have not drawn the Commission's attention to possible difficulties regarding the UK legislation.

The European Medicines Agency is in charge of a Working Group on the Quality Review of Documents which is composed of representatives from Member States' national authorities, the Commission and the Agency. The group provides, *inter alia*, guidance through templates for product information for use by applicants and marketing-authorisation holders. The Commission does not see any need to change the role of the Agency.

([1]) OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, p. 34.
([2]) OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, p. 34.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/eudralex/vol-2/c/2009_01_12_readability_guideline_final_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003969/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Cross-border healthcare

Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]) provides further clarity on the rights of patients seeking healthcare in another Member State. It also supplements the rights that patients already enjoy at EU level under legislation such as that relating to social security schemes, including Regulation (EC) No 883/04 ([2]).

1. In the case of pensioners residing in a Member State other than their country of origin who return to that country to receive healthcare, which Member State would be responsible for the cost of the healthcare? (For example, if a British pensioner living in France receives treatment back in Britain, would it be for the UK or France to cover the cost of the treatment?)

2. In addition, would the situation change if the treatment sought in the UK in such circumstances was for medical treatment unavailable in France?

3. Will the liability in such cases change after 25 October 2013, the date by which Directive 2011/24/EU has to be transposed by the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2012)

The explanation relates to the situation referred to by the Honourable Member. The rules may differ depending on the country of origin and of residence.

1. According to the social security coordination rules ([3]), the cost of healthcare is covered by the country that pays the pension. When a UK pensioner resides in France, the UK reimburses the cost of healthcare received in France. However, in the UK such pensioner is entitled only to necessary healthcare. This is because the UK is not listed in Annex IV to Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 ([4]). Nonetheless, the pensioner could submit to the Member State of residence a request for prior authorisation to receive planned treatment in the competent Member State. Such authorisation would be issued by the UK on the basis of an assessment made by France. In both scenarios the cost would be borne by the UK.

2. In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 883/2004, if the medical treatment sought in the UK was unavailable in France, the UK could refuse to grant the prior authorisation for it. In such case, the pensioner should be able to appeal under national law. If the refusal was upheld, reimbursement could potentially be claimed on the basis of current jurisprudence ([5]) and in the future, on the basis of Directive 2011/24/EU. ([6])

3. On the basis of Article 7(2)(b) of this directive, the competent Member State (the UK) is obliged to cover the costs of healthcare received on its territory by pensioners resident abroad which is not provided in accordance with the regulation and which is not subject to prior authorisation in the Member State of residence. However, this Article creates a rule for which Member State is liable to bear the cost of the treatment; it does not create new rights for the persons concerned with regard to access to healthcare.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011, p. 45.
([2]) OJ L 166, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 166, 30.04.2004, p. 1.
([4]) Annex IV to Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 outlines the additional rights for pensioners returning to the competent Member State.
([5]) Cases C-158/96 Kohll [1998] ECR I-01931 and C-120/95 Decker [1998] ECR I-01831.
([6]) Directive 2011/24/EU of 9 March 2011 on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, OJ L 88, 4.4.2011, p. 45. The directive is due to be transposed by 25 October 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003970/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Nick Djivanovic and the Serbian Criminal Code

Nick Djivanovic has dual British/EU and Serbian citizenship. The Serbian authorities have been holding him in custody in Belgrade since March 2011. On 28 September 2011 he was charged with 'abuse of office' under Article 359(3) of the Serbian Criminal Code.

Article 359 has been condemned by the European Union, most recently in paragraph 16 of Parliament's resolution of 29 March 2012 on the European integration process of Serbia ([1]), in which Parliament expressed concern about repeated misuse of the article.

1. Are officials aware of the detention of Mr Djivanovic, who is an EU citizen?

2. What representations have been made to the Serbian authorities about his ongoing detention?

3. Reports suggest that Article 359 may be repealed in line with EU and Council of Europe recommendations. Will officials therefore endeavour to press for the release of those currently charged under its provisions?

Question for written answer E-003972/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Serbian criminal justice system

In its 2011 opinion on Serbia's application for European Union membership, the Commission noted that, in order to meet EU standards and accede to the Union, Serbia would need to adopt and implement new legislation across a number of fields, including changes to its constitution and criminal code.

1. Can the Commission confirm that its concerns extended to Article 359 of the Serbian Criminal Code relating to 'abuse of office'?

2. Does the Commission expect this provision to be removed from the Serbian Criminal Code before Serbia's possible accession to the EU?

Question for written answer E-004198/12
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(23 April 2012)

Subject: Article 359 of the Serbian Penal Code

A constituent of mine has been held in a Serbian prison for over a year under Article 359 of the Serbian Penal Code. Twelve months have passed and yet there is still no trial date or any other opportunity for my constituent to face the charges against him. Article 359 has been ruled incompatible with EC law as it was used previously as a means to imprison political opponents without a sound legal reason.

On 2 February this year the Serbian Government announced that they would be dropping Article 359 from their statute book. However, my constituent was subsequently charged with a second offence under Article 359 after this announcement had been made, and the Government have stated that those already charged and awaiting trial will still be tried under this law.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0114.

— Can the Commission please confirm what steps are being taking to ensure that the Serbian Penal Code is brought into line with EC law.

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2012)

Respect for the rule of law is a crucial element on Serbia's way towards the EU. The Commission regularly underlines its importance and urges Serbia to take adequate measures. Developments on the ground are monitored and results published in the Commission's annual Progress Reports.

The Commission is aware of controversies relating to the criminal prosecution of certain cases, in particular as regards the application of Article 359 of the Criminal Code and has raised these issues in its dialogue with the Serbian authorities. Article 359 of the Criminal Code renders abuse of office in both, the public and the private sector, a criminal offence. While the term 'abuse of office' is neither defined in the EU *acquis* nor further regulated, similar provisions exist in some Member States.

The Serbian government has prepared a reform of the criminal code which aims to clarify provisions applicable to economic crime. However, this draft piece of legislation is pending in parliament. Given that Serbia held general elections on 6 May 2012, it is difficult to predict when such a revision of the criminal code could be adopted.

The Commission has to respect the independence of national courts and therefore cannot interfere in individual cases which fall within the scope of the Serbian administration or judiciary. It is nevertheless paying close attention to information received about such cases, in order to assess the situation in Serbia as to how the rule of law is actually being applied.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003971/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Habitats Directive and St Austell Clay Pits SAC

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) ([1]) provides a vital framework for the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. Its Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) include the St Austell Clay Pits SAC (UK0030282), which hosts the rare western rustwort. The Habitats Directive has been transposed into UK law under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

The UK has granted permission for the construction of two energy-from-waste plants adjacent to the St Austell Clay Pits SAC, on the basis of an assessment of the implications for the adjacent conservation site. Under Regulation 61 of the UK law, this assessment follows a two stage approach, in which the authorities first consider whether the proposal is 'likely to have a significant effect' on the site and, if so, then carry out an 'appropriate assessment' of the implications for the SAC.

1. Is the Commission aware of this two stage assessment established by the UK legislation transposing the directive?

2. Can the Commission confirm that it is satisfied that the two stage assessment required by the regulation complies with the Habitats Directive?

3. The UK Courts recently considered the two stage assessment in the Court of Appeal, in the case Cornwall Waste Forum St Dennis Branch v the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (2012) ([2012] EWCA Civ379). Is the Commission aware of this case?

4. Does the Commission have any concerns over the protection and future of the St Austell Clay Pits SAC, especially in light of the proposed energy-from-waste plant?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2012)

A two stage assessment under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive is a common procedure and also recommended in the Commission guidelines ('Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites — Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' to be found on the website of DG ENV ([2])). As far as the Commission is aware, the article has been correctly transposed into national law in the United Kingdom.

From an assessment of the judgment of the Court of Appeal it would appear that the key issue of concern appears to be the process by which the relevant national authorities assessed the potential impacts of increased air pollution on the western rustwort (Marsupella profunda) which is a very rare priority species. The Commission has not received any complaints or petitions with regard to the court proceedings.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_assess_en.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003973/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 aprilie 2012)

Subiect: Cazurile „SOLVIT +" în calitate de indicatori ai problemelor sistemice la nivelul statelor membre

Rețeaua SOLVIT sprijină cetățenii sau întreprinderile ale căror drepturi stabilite de legislația UE sunt afectate sau încălcate de către autoritățile naționale, care aplică incorect legislația în domeniul pieței interne. Potrivit raportului SOLVIT din 2010, dintre cele 3 800 de cazuri prezentate, 1 363, care se încadrează în competențele sale, au fost reținute în vederea prelucrării. Au fost identificate soluții practice pentru 90 % dintre acestea.

Anumite cazuri care nu intră în competența SOLVIT dezvăluie exemple clare de transpunere necorespunzătoare a legislației UE sau de neadoptare a unor măsuri adecvate de punere în aplicare din partea statelor membre. Acestea constituie probleme structurale grave care necesită adesea modificarea legislației naționale. Sunt clasificate drept cazuri „SOLVIT +" și nu sunt tratate în mod obligatoriu de către birourile SOLVIT. Raportul din 2010 arată că 18 astfel de cazuri au fost acceptate de 13 centre SOLVIT. Cu toate acestea, raportul nu menționează câte cazuri „SOLVIT +" au fost respinse de către centrele SOLVIT. Respingerea completă a acestor cazuri reprezintă pierderea unei oportunități de înregistrare a unor exemple concrete de legislație din statele membre care nu respectă legislația UE.

1. Comisia ține evidența cazurilor „SOLVIT +" respinse?

2. Au aceste cazuri un impact asupra eforturilor Comisiei de a urmări nerespectarea de către statele membre a obligațiilor ce le revin în conformitate cu tratatele?

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(4 iunie 2012)

Cetățenii și întreprinderile își transmit direct problemele către centrele SOLVIT prin intermediul bazei de date. Atunci când tratează cazurile și analizează problema, aceste centre pot descoperi la început sau, în multe cazuri, pe parcurs că problema se datorează de fapt transpunerii defectuoase a legislației UE.

În astfel de cazuri, centrele analizează posibilitatea sau imposibilitatea de a rezolva cazul informal. Dacă centrele resping cazul (ceea ce înseamnă că respectivul caz este considerat ca fiind nesoluționat), autorii plângerilor sunt informați în mod sistematic cu privire la posibilitatea de a depune o plângere oficială la Comisie. Comisia are posibilitatea de a ține evidența cazurilor SOLVIT + prin intermediul bazei de date. Dacă, pe de altă parte, un caz SOLVIT nu este soluționat, unitatea responsabilă în domeniul juridic în cauză din cadrul Comisiei este, în general, informată cu privire la cazul respectiv. Serviciile Comisiei pot fie să acționeze în baza unei plângeri depuse, fie să preia astfel de cazuri din oficiu dacă cetățeanul sau întreprinderea nu dorește să depună o plângere la Comisie.

În documentul de lucru al serviciilor Comisiei „Consolidarea soluționării eficiente a problemelor pe piața unică", publicat la 27 februarie 2012, Comisia propune de asemenea idei cu privire la modul în care poate evolua pe viitor utilizarea rezultatelor cazurilor SOLVIT astfel încât să se îmbunătățească funcționarea pieței interne (secțiunea 3.4): în primul rând, printr-o și mai mare îmbunătățire a monitorizării cazurilor nesoluționate și, în al doilea rând, prin utilizarea mai sistematică a datelor obținute din cazurile SOLVIT în scopuri strategice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003973/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: 'Solvit +' cases as indicators of systemic problems at Member State level

The Solvit network supports citizens or businesses whose rights established by EU legislation are hampered or infringed by national authorities misapplying legislation in the field of the internal market. According to the Solvit 2010 report, of the 3 800 cases submitted, 1 363 falling within its competences were retained for processing. Practical solutions were found for 90% of these.

Certain cases that do not fall within Solvit's remit reveal clear examples of bad transposition of EU legislation or failure to adopt adequate implementation measures on the part of Member States. These are serious structural problems that often require a modification of national legislation. They are classified as 'Solvit +' cases and are not mandatorily handled by the Solvit offices. The 2010 report notes that 18 such cases were accepted by 13 Solvit centres. It does not record, however, how many 'Solvit +' cases were rejected by the Solvit centres. To reject these cases outright results in a missed opportunity to record concrete instances of Member State legislation failing to comply with EU legislation.

1. Does the Commission keep track of rejected 'Solvit +' cases?

2. Do these cases have an impact on the Commission's efforts to track Member States' failure to comply with their obligations under the Treaties?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2012)

Citizens and businesses submit their problems through the database directly to the Solvit centres. These centres, when treating the cases and analysing the problem, may discover at the beginning or in many cases also at a later stage that the problem actually stems from bad transposition of EU legislation.

In such cases, an assessment is made by the centres, whether there is a possibility to solve the case informally or not. On the situation they reject the case (which means that the case is counted as an unresolved case), complainants are systematically informed about the possibility to submit a formal complaint to the Commission. The Commission has the possibility to track the Solvit+ cases through the database. If on the other hand a Solvit case is unresolved, generally the unit responsible for the legal area concerned in the Commission is informed of this case. The Commission services may either act on the basis of a submitted complaint or may take up such cases ex officio if the citizen or business does not wish to submit a complaint to the Commission.

In the Commission staff working document 'Reinforcing effective problem-solving in the Single Market', as published on 27 February 2012, the Commission also puts forward ideas on how to further develop the use of Solvit's case results to improve the functioning of the internal market (Section 3.4): first, by further improving the follow up to unresolved cases and second, in order to make a more systematic use of the data from Solvit cases for policy purposes.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003974/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 aprilie 2012)

Subiect: SOLVIT, un echivalent pentru chestiuni legate de justiție și afaceri interne

Mai multe instrumente electronice de sprijin pentru cetățeni și companii din domeniul pieței interne sunt disponibile în prezent pe site-ul internet al Comisiei Europene. Secțiunea „Europa ta" furnizează informații detaliate cu privire la drepturile cetățenilor și ale întreprinderilor din UE.

SOLVIT reprezintă un instrument extrajudiciar remarcabil de sprijin pentru cetățenii sau întreprinderile ale căror drepturi stabilite de legislația UE sunt afectate sau încălcate de către autoritățile naționale, care aplică incorect legislația în domeniul pieței interne. Cu un volum de lucru de peste 1 300 de cazuri și o rată de soluționare de peste 90% (potrivit raportului anual cu privire la SOLVIT din 2010), rețeaua SOLVIT are un impact direct și pozitiv asupra vieții cetățenilor europeni.

Ca urmare a Tratatului de la Lisabona și a „comunitarizării" justiției și a politicii privind afacerile interne, cetățenii și întreprinderile europene vor beneficia de drepturi și obligații în creștere, în conformitate atât cu dispozițiile de drept civil, cât și cu cele de drept penal, care reglementează activitățile transfrontaliere. Portalul e-justiție furnizează date valoroase cu privire la sistemele de drept civil și penal ale UE și ale statelor membre. Cu toate acestea, nu au fost dezvoltate încă în acest domeniu mecanisme alternative convingătoare de soluționare a litigiilor precum rețeaua SOLVIT.

Intenționează Comisia să propună, pentru cetățeni și întreprinderi, mecanisme de sprijin în domeniul dreptului civil și al celui penal, similare cu cele existente în domeniul pieței interne?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(31 mai 2012)

Comisia sprijină în mod activ mecanismele de soluționare alternativă a litigiilor de mai bine de 10 ani. Directiva privind medierea, care se aplică din mai 2011 ([1]), reprezintă un important instrument juridic al UE, prin care accesul la justiție devine mai simplu, mai economic și mai ușor de utilizat pentru cetățeni și întreprinderi.

Mai recent, la 29 noiembrie 2011, Comisia a adoptat o comunicare privind soluționarea alternativă a litigiilor în materie de consum, o propunere de directivă privind SAL în materie de consum, precum și o propunere de regulament privind soluționarea online a litigiilor în materie de consum ([2]). Aceste propuneri au drept scop valorificarea oportunităților oferite de tehnologiile moderne de comunicare pentru a-i asista pe cetățeni în găsirea celui mai adecvat sistem SAL pentru soluționarea rapidă și eficientă a litigiilor în care sunt implicați. În plus, portalul e-justiție conține informații referitoare la diversele posibilități de mediere din diferitele state membre și va continua să extindă informațiile disponibile privind aspectele de drept civil și penal atât la nivelul UE, cât și la nivel național.

Instrumente menite să îi asiste pe cetățeni în găsirea instanței competente din statele membre, precum și în găsirea unui avocat sau a unui notar la alegerea lor, vor fi dezvoltate și integrate în portalul e-justiție în viitorul apropiat. Acesta ar putea deveni, la un moment dat, baza pentru un serviciu de tip SOLVIT disponibil și în materie de drept civil și penal, atunci când se aplică legislația UE.

([1]) Directiva 2008/52/CE din 21 mai 2008 privind anumite aspecte ale medierii în materie civilă și comercială.
([2]) COM(2011) 791, COM(2011) 793 și COM(2011) 794.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003974/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Solvit equivalent for justice and home affairs matters

Several electronic support tools for citizens and companies in the area of the internal market are currently available on the European Commission's website. The 'Your Europe' section offers extensive information on citizens' and businesses' rights in the EU.

Solvit is a remarkable extrajudicial support tool for citizens or businesses whose rights under EC law are hampered or infringed by national authorities misapplying legislation in the field of the internal market. With a caseload of over 1 300 cases and a resolution rate of above 90% (according to the 2010 annual report on Solvit), the Solvit network has a direct and positive impact on the lives of European citizens.

As a result of the Lisbon Treaty and the 'communitarisation' of justice and home affairs policy, European citizens and businesses will benefit from increasing rights and obligations under both civil and criminal law provisions regulating cross-border activities. The e-Justice portal provides valuable data on EU and Member States' civil and criminal law systems. However, convincing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as Solvit have not yet been developed in this field.

Does the Commission intend to propose support mechanisms for citizens and businesses in the field of civil and criminal justice similar to those existing in the field of the internal market?

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

The Commission has been active in supporting alternative dispute resolution for more than 10 years. The Mediation Directive in application since May 2011 ([1]) is an important EU legal instrument making access to justice easier, more economic and friendlier for citizens and businesses.

Most recently, on 29 November 2011, the Commission adopted a communication on ADR for consumer disputes, a proposal for a directive on ADR for consumer disputes, and a proposal for a regulation on online dispute resolution for consumer disputes ([2]). These proposals aim to make use of the opportunities offered by modern communication technologies to assist citizens in finding the most appropriate ADR system to settle their disputes quickly and efficiently. In addition, the e-Justice portal contains information on different mediation possibilities in the different Member States, and will continue to expand the information available on civil and criminal law issues at EU and national level.

Tools to assist citizens in finding the competent court in the Member States, as well as to find a lawyer or notary of their choosing will be further developed and integrated into the e-justice portal in the near future. This may one day become a basis for a Solvit-type service also in the field of civil and criminal justice when EC law is applied or implemented.

([1]) Directive 2008/52/EC of 21 May 2008, 'on certain aspects of mediation in civil and commercial matters'.
([2]) COM(2011) 791, COM(2011) 793 and COM(2011) 794.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003975/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 aprilie 2012)

Subiect: Măsuri pentru combaterea conflictelor de interese care implică funcționarii publici ai UE

Din păcate, conflictele de interese care implică funcționarii publici ai UE se repetă frecvent. Numai în acest an, trei agenții europene nu au reușit să respingă în mod satisfăcător acuzațiile cu privire la conflicte de interese care au loc la toate nivelurile — începând cu managementul superior până la nivelul experților — instituțiilor lor în cauză. Agenția Europeană pentru Medicamente, de exemplu, se confruntă cu amânarea descărcării sale de gestiune bugetară pentru al doilea an la rând ca urmare a conflictelor de interese.

Uneori conflictele de interese apar în mod deschis, însă sunt tratate drept chestiuni nesemnificative de către autoritățile de reglementare. Consilierului președintelui unei mari bănci private care prezidează, în același timp, Grupul de experți la nivel înalt privind supravegherea financiară în UE, i s-a fost solicitat, în această din urmă calitate a sa, să prezinte Comisiei un raport privind reforma financiară din UE. În contextul apariției întrebării legitime cu privire la interesele cui le servește cu adevărat această persoană, această situație ilustrează, implicit, un conflict de interese.

Conflictele de interese sunt legate de integritate. Cu toate acestea, este dificil de stabilit cu certitudine integritatea la nivel individual și aceasta trebuie abordată de la caz la caz. De cele mai multe ori, conflictele de interese nu sunt involuntare. Ele apar cu intenția specifică de a facilita corupția, de a decide în favoarea persoanelor, mai degrabă decât în interes public, administrând incorect fonduri publice sau chiar trecând cu vederea sau facilitând activități criminale. În cea mai periculoasă formă a lor, conflictele de interese pun în pericol siguranța publică și stimulează criminalitatea.

Conflictul de interese este guvernat, în general, de statutul funcționarilor și condițiile de încadrare în muncă. Acestea nu au, însă, neapărat efectul disuasiv necesar. Sunt necesare o reglementare mai puternică, precum și mijloace de executare.

Anumite tipuri de probe constituie indicatori fiabili pentru conflictele de interese cu intenții negative, cum ar fi omisiunile sau minciunile relevante din declarațiile de interese ale funcționarilor publici. În cazul în care este identificat un astfel de conflict de interese, acesta ar trebui investigat cu atenție, iar autorii trebuie penalizați și trebuie să li se interzică accesul la funcția/ poziția în cauză.

În special în perioadele de criză, ar trebui evitate cu orice preț situațiile care favorizează încălcări ale integrității.

Ce măsuri preconizează Comisia să adopte în viitorul apropiat cu scopul de a descuraja în mod eficient conflictele de interese care implică funcționarii publici ai UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Šefčovič în numele Comisiei
(14 iunie 2012)

Comisia este de acord cu distinsul membru că trebuie evitată orice situație care este în detrimentul integrității funcționarilor UE și, în special, cele care presupun conflicte de interes.

Articolele 11-26 din Statutul funcționarilor conțin norme specifice și obligatorii din punct de vedere juridic pentru membrii personalului cu scopul de a preveni astfel de situații de conflict de interese. Orice încălcare a acestor obligații atrage după sine sancțiuni disciplinare asupra membrilor personalului. Comisia adoptă în această privință o politică de „toleranță zero”.

Deși Comisia nu este în măsură să comenteze cu privire la situația din alte instituții și organisme, consideră, cu toate acestea, că dispozițiile Statutului funcționarilor și în particular articolele 11, 11a și 16, furnizează instrumentele legale adecvate de rezolvare a conflictelor de interese reale sau potențiale. Orice reglementare excesivă în acest sens ar putea avea într-adevăr rezultate opuse celor așteptate, întrucât chiar și regulile foarte complexe nu pot acoperi toate situațiile din viața reală. În consecință, Comisia își concentrează atenția asupra menținerii și consolidării unei culturi a unei conduite etice larg răspândite în rândul membrilor personalului prin astfel de acțiuni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003975/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Measures to deter conflicts of interest involving EU public officials

Sadly, conflicts of interest involving EU public officials recur frequently. Only this year, three European agencies were unable to satisfactorily refute allegations about conflicts of interest occurring at all levels — from senior management to experts — of their respective institutions. The European Medicines Agency, for example, is facing postponement of its budgetary discharge for the second year in a row as a result of conflicts of interest.

Sometimes conflicts of interest occur openly, but are treated as insignificant matters by regulators. The adviser to the chairman of a large private bank simultaneously chairing the High-Level Expert Group on EU Financial Supervision was required, in his latter capacity, to present to the Commission a report on financial reform in the EU. As a legitimate question arises as to whose interests this person really serves, this situation implicitly illustrates a conflict of interest.

Conflicts of interest are linked to integrity. However, individual integrity is difficult to establish with certainty, and has to be approached on a case-by-case basis. Most of the time, conflicts of interest are not involuntary. They occur with the specific intention of facilitating corruption, deciding in favour of individuals rather than in the public interest, mismanaging public funds or even overlooking or facilitating criminal activities. In their most dangerous form, conflicts of interest put public safety at risk and foster crime.

Conflict of interest is generally governed by staff regulations and conditions of employment. These, however, do not necessarily have the required dissuasive effect. Stronger regulation and means of enforcement are called for.

Certain types of evidence are reliable indicators of malevolent conflict of interest, such as relevant omissions or lies in public officials' declarations of interests. When any such conflict of interest is identified, it should be thoroughly investigated and the perpetrators penalised and forbidden access to the function/ position concerned.

Particularly in times of crisis, situations that foster breaches of integrity should be avoided at all costs.

What measures does the Commission envisage taking in the near future to effectively deter conflicts of interest involving EU public officials?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that any situation detrimental to the integrity of the officials of the EU, and especially those implying conflicts of interest, must be avoided.

Articles 11 to 26 of the Staff Regulations contain specific and legally binding obligations for staff members to prevent situations of conflicts of interest from arising. Any breach of these obligations makes a staff member liable to disciplinary action. The Commission pursues a policy of 'zero tolerance' in this respect.

Even if the Commission is not in a position to comment on the situation in other institutions and bodies, it considers nevertheless that the provisions of the Staff Regulations, and mainly their Articles 11, 11a and 16, provide the appropriate legal tools to deal with real or potential conflicts of interest. Any overregulation in this respect could indeed have opposite results to the ones expected because even very complex rules cannot cover all real-life situations. The attention of the Commission is focused therefore on upholding and reinforcing a widespread culture of ethical behaviour among the staff through awareness raising actions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003976/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Violenza religiosa contro i cristiani in India

La comunità cristiana in India ha subito altri attacchi legati all'intolleranza religiosa. Il 5 aprile, un gruppo di indù radicali ha scagliato pietre contro fedeli cristiani raccolti in preghiera in una chiesa di Bendore. L'8 aprile, giorno di Pasqua, nello stato dell'Andhra Paradesh, un gruppo di ultranazionalisti indù si è introdotto nella casa di un pastore pentecostale, aggredendo gravemente sia lui che la sua famiglia. La polizia ha accettato solo una denuncia contro ignoti anche in presenza di identificazioni certe. Nella stessa giornata, un altro reverendo pentecostale, che era andato a sporgere denuncia contro alcuni poliziotti che gli avevano intimato di abbandonare la propria dimora poiché egli vi aveva tenuto una cerimonia religiosa, è stato aggredito da attivisti religiosi senza che nessun agente delle forze dell'ordine intervenisse in suo soccorso.

Può dire la Commissione se è a conoscenza di tali eventi? Come ha intenzione di agire per tutelare i cristiani da questa situazione discriminatoria, perpetrata non solo dagli estremisti religiosi, ma addirittura dalle forze di polizia degli stati federali? Come reputa la situazione generale in India circa il rispetto dei diritti dell'uomo?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente, insieme alla delegazione dell'UE a Nuova Delhi, segue da vicino gli atti di intolleranza religiosa e di discriminazione contro le minoranze in India e osserva attentamente la situazione, in particolare a partire dagli episodi di violenza collettiva contro i cristiani a Orissa nel 2007 e nel 2008.

La questione è stata sollevata a più riprese con le autorità indiane, anche al più alto livello possibile, e il tema viene discusso sistematicamente durante la locale sessione annuale del dialogo UE-India in materia di diritti umani.

Inoltre, la delegazione dell'UE e le ambasciate degli Stati membri a Nuova Delhi tengono contatti regolari con interlocutori locali e con le ONG europee in diversi stati dell'India per monitorare la situazione delle minoranze nel paese, compresa quella dei cristiani. L'UE segue, altresì, attentamente gli sviluppi per quanto riguarda la sensibilizzazione al tema dei diritti umani, la riforma delle forze di polizia e la legislazione, tra cui l'atteso disegno di legge sulla prevenzione della violenza collettiva, e ne discute con le autorità.

La preparazione delle relazioni per il prossimo esame periodico universale del 24 maggio 2012 ha rappresentato un'opportunità per fare il punto della situazione per quanto riguarda la libertà di religione e di credo, tema che sarà ampiamente discusso in vista dell'esame periodico universale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003976/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Religious violence against Christians in India

The Christian community in India has suffered further attacks linked to religious intolerance. On 5 April 2012, a group of Hindu radicals hurled stones at Christian faithful praying in a church in Bendore. On 8 April, Easter Sunday, in the state of Andhra Pradesh, a group of Hindu ultranationalists entered the home of a Pentecostal minister and savagely attacked both him and his family. The police only agreed to accept a complaint against unknown persons, although the identity of the perpetrators was known. On the same day, another Pentecostal minister, who had gone to lodge a complaint against some police officers who had ordered him to leave his home because he had held a religious ceremony there, was attacked by religious activists without any police officer coming to his aid.

Is the Commission aware of these events? How does it intend to act to protect Christians from this discrimination perpetrated not only by religious extremists, but even by the police forces of the federal states? What is its opinion of the general situation in India regarding respect for human rights?

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

The HR/VP, together with the EU Delegation in Delhi, closely monitors acts of religious intolerance and discrimination against minorities in India, and has been following the situation closely, particularly since the outbreaks of communal violence against Christians in Orissa in 2007 and 2008.

Concerns in this regard have been raised repeatedly with the Indian authorities, including at the highest possible level, and the subject is systematically discussed during the local annual EU-India Human Rights Dialogue.

The EU Delegation and EU Member State embassies in Delhi are furthermore in regular contact with local interlocutors and with European NGOs in a number of Indian states in order to monitor the situation of minorities in India, including the situation of Christians. The EU is also closely following developments on rights awareness, police reform, and legislation such as the still-awaited Communal Violence Prevention Bill, and discusses these matters with the authorities.

The preparation of reports for India's upcoming 2012 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on 24 May 2012 has provided an opportunity to take stock of the situation regarding freedom of religion or belief and will be broadly discussed in the run-up to the UPR.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003977/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Nodding Disease

In Uganda è in corso un'epidemia definita dall'OMS (Organizzazione mondiale della sanità) con il nome di «Nodding disease»: colpisce bambini dai 5 ai 15 anni, si manifesta con attacchi simili a quelli epilettici e convulsioni del capo, il deterioramento delle funzioni cerebrali, un cambiamento progressivo e radicale della personalità che costringe i pazienti ad abbandonare la scuola ed essere sottoposti ad un controllo continuo affinché non si facciano del male né ne facciano. I casi riscontrati, a febbraio di quest'anno, erano 3097, con 170 decessi, pur essendo stato appurato che il contagio non avviene da persona a persona, rimangono del tutto sconosciute le cause e le cure.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di detta sindrome? Provvede essa a monitorare la situazione nelle aree in cui l'epidemia si sta diffondendo? Si possono escludere pericoli di contagio per i cittadini dell'Unione che si recheranno in Uganda?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(18 giugno 2012)

L'Unione europea è a conoscenza della sindrome definita *nodding disease* (sindrome di nod). Il governo ugandese, che ne sta controllando la diffusione, aggiorna regolarmente la delegazione dell'UE in merito agli ultimi sviluppi. Attualmente la sindrome sta colpendo cinque distretti dell'Uganda del Nord, dove sono in corso d'attuazione progetti agricoli finanziati dall'UE. Un'équipe congiunta del Centro per il controllo delle malattie di Atlanta (*Center for Disease Control* — CDC), dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS) e del Ministero ugandese della sanità sta studiando le cause e l'epidemiologia della sindrome.

Le cause e le modalità di trasmissione della sindrome non sono ancora del tutto conosciute, e non si può quindi escludere il rischio di infezione per chi si reca in Uganda. La malattia è comunque descritta in Uganda dal 2003, e ufficialmente segnalata dall'agosto 2009. Si pensa che i primi casi si siano manifestati più di 30 anni fa. Da quanto risulta a livello dell'UE, nessun turista o viaggiatore nelle aree colpite ha sviluppato i sintomi della malattia. La sindrome, fra l'altro, potrebbe essere legata all'oncocercosi (o cecità fluviale), e potrebbe venire aggravata dalla malnutrizione, ma si tratta solo di correnti ipotesi di lavoro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003977/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Nodding disease

There is an epidemic in Uganda of the illness called 'nodding disease' by the World Health Organisation. It affects children aged 5 to 15 years old and manifests with seizures similar to epileptic fits and convulsions of the head, deterioration of brain function and a progressive and radical change of personality which forces the children affected to leave school and be placed under constant supervision to ensure that they do not hurt themselves or others. By February of this year, 3 097 cases and 170 deaths had been reported and, while it has been ascertained that the disease is not spread by infection from person to person, what causes the disease is still unknown and no cure has been found as yet.

Is the Commission aware of this syndrome? Is it monitoring the situation in the areas in which the epidemic is spreading? Is it possible to rule out the risk of infection for EU citizens travelling to Uganda?

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

The EU is aware of the syndrome called 'nodding disease'.The Government of Uganda who is monitoring its spread, keeps the EU delegation regularly informed on the latest development. Currently the syndrome is affecting five Districts in Northern Uganda, where EU-funded agricultural projects are under implementation. A joint team of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) of Atlanta, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ugandan Ministry of Health is investigating causes and epidemiology of the syndrome.

Since the causes and transmission modalities of the syndrome are yet not fully known, there is no possibility to rule out risks of infection for people travelling to Uganda. However, the disease has been described in Uganda since 2003 and officially reported since August 2009. It is believed that the first cases appeared more than 30 years ago. To the EU's knowledge, no tourist or traveller in the affected areas has reported signs of the disease. Under current hypotheses, the syndrome could be, among others, linked to onchocerciasis (river blindness) and be further aggravated by nutritional disorders, but these are nothing more than working hypotheses.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003978/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Intervento di disboscamento sull'alveo del torrente Rosandra sito nella rete Natura 2000 «Carso triestino goriziano», «Aree carsiche della Venezia Giulia»

Il 24 marzo 2012 la Protezione Civile della Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia ha eseguito sui fiumi di circa 50 comuni della medesima regione il piano «Alvei puliti», consistente nel pressoché totale disboscamento di vaste aree golenali, durante il periodo riproduttivo di molte specie di fauna selvatica. Tra i corsi d'acqua interessati figura il torrente che attraversa la Val Rosandra, riserva naturale regionale nonché sito di importanza comunitaria IT3340006 «Carso triestino e goriziano» e zona di protezione speciale IT3341002 «Aree carsiche della Venezia Giulia».

Per tale intervento della Protezione Civile sono stati invocati motivi d'urgenza non sufficientemente documentati, considerato che l'operazione era stata preannunciata già nel mese di novembre 2011.

In particolare è stata omessa la procedura di valutazione di incidenza di cui all'articolo 6 della direttiva 92/43/CEE «Habitat», recepita nell'ordinamento italiano con il D.P.R. n. 357/97, che non esautora dall'applicazione della valutazione di incidenza le opere di manutenzione dei fiumi, ma vincola invece ogni piano o progetto a precise prescrizioni.

Come denunciato dal WWF del Friuli Venezia Giulia, nell'area interessata dall'intervento è stato quasi totalmente distrutto l'habitat codificato 92A0 «Foreste a galleria», con conseguenze gravi a medio termine per le specie faunistiche che utilizzavano tale habitat, in particolare l'avifauna, in considerazione della presenza di nidificazioni in corso sugli alberi abbattuti e di anfibi.

Nel tratto interessato dal piano «Alvei puliti» la funzionalità fluviale del torrente risultava «ottima», come riportato nello studio redatto nel 2007 dall'Agenzia Regionale per l'Ambiente e dalla Provincia di Trieste. ([1])

Alla luce di quanto esposto, la Commissione non ritiene che l'intervento sopra descritto rappresenti una chiara violazione dell'articolo 6 della direttiva 92/43/CEE per la mancata procedura di valutazione di incidenza ambientale? Non ritiene altresì che risultino violati anche l'articolo 12, comma 1, lettere b) e d), della direttiva 92/43/CEE, e l'articolo 5, lettere b) e d), della direttiva 2009/147/CE «Uccelli», dal momento che l'azione perpetrata ha perturbato specie selvatiche figuranti nell'allegato IV della direttiva 92/43/CEE durante il periodo di riproduzione e ha provocato il deterioramento e la distruzione dei siti di riproduzione di specie selvatiche e di uccelli contenute nell'allegato citato?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

In base alle informazioni trasmesse dall'onorevole parlamentare sul piano «Alvei puliti» e la relativa, potenziale infrazione di diversi articoli della direttiva «Habitat» 92/43/CEE ([2]) della direttiva «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE ([3]), la Commissione chiederà alle autorità italiane di fornirle chiarimenti per consentirle di valutare la conformità con il disposto delle direttive «Natura».

([1]) http://www.arpa.fvg.it/fileadmin/Informazione/Relazioni_annuali/2007_TS/IFF_2007.pdf
([2]) GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([3]) Direttiva 2009/147/CE (versione codificata che sostituisce la direttiva 79/409/CEE), GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003978/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Deforestation along the course of the Rosandra river in the Natura 2000 network of the Trieste-Gorizia Karst Mountains and the Karst Areas of Friuli-Venezia Giulia

On 24 March 2012 the Civil Protection Department of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region launched the 'Clean river beds' plan concerning the rivers of around 50 municipalities in the region. The plan consisted of the near total deforestation of vast areas of flood plains during the breeding seasons of many species of wild animals. Among the water courses affected is the river that flows through the Rosandra Valley, which is a regional nature reserve as well as a site of Community importance: IT3340006 Trieste-Gorizia Karst Mountains; and a special protection zone IT3341002: Karst Areas of Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

The Civil Protection Department declared that such intervention had been required as a matter of urgency, but there was little proof of this given that the operation had already been announced in November 2011.

In particular, the impact assessment procedure under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, transposed into Italian law by Presidential Decree No 357/97, was not carried out; this does not exempt river maintenance work from requiring an impact assessment, but rather binds any plan or project to precise requirements.

As reported by the WWF of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the habitat listed as 92A0 'Gallery forest' has been almost entirely destroyed in the area affected by the intervention. This is having serious medium-term consequences for the animal species that used this habitat, in particular bird life — given the nest-building that had been taking place in the felled trees — and amphibians.

In the area involved in the 'Clean river beds' plan, the fluvial features of the river had been deemed 'excellent' in a study completed in 2007 by the Regional Environment Agency and the Province of Trieste ([1]).

In view of these findings, does the Commission not agree that the intervention described above is in clear breach of Article 6 of Directive 92/43/EEC owing to the absence of an environmental impact assessment procedure? Does it likewise not agree that the action taken also contravenes Article 12(1)(b) and (d) of Directive 92/43/EEC and Article 5(b) and (d) of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC, given that it disturbed wild species included in Annex IV to Directive 92/43/EEC, during their breeding season, and caused the deterioration and destruction of the reproduction sites of the wild animal and bird species listed in the annex in question?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2012)

On the basis of the information supplied by the Honourable Member concerning the 'Clean river beds' plan and the related potential breach of several Articles of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([2]) and of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC ([3]), the Commission will ask for clarifications from the Italian authorities in order to assess compliance with the Nature Directives provisions.

([1]) http://www.arpa.fvg.it/fileadmin/Informazione/Relazioni_annuali/2007_TS/IFF_2007.pdf
([2]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) Directive 2009/147/EC (codified version replacing Directive 79/409/EEC), OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003979/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Le migliori pratiche del programma Azioni Marie Curie

Le «Azioni Marie Curie» sono da tempo uno degli elementi più conosciuti e apprezzati dei programmi quadro comunitari per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico. Il loro orientamento ha subito una notevole evoluzione, trasformando le azioni da semplice programma di borse di studio a favore della mobilità a programma volto a favorire lo sviluppo della carriera dei ricercatori.

In particolare, esse hanno conosciuto un grande successo rispondendo alle esigenze di formazione, mobilità e sviluppo di carriera della comunità scientifica europea. Nel Settimo programma quadro le «Azioni Marie Curie» sono state raggruppate e rafforzate nel programma specifico «Persone».

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

quali sono stati i casi di eccellenza risultanti dallo strumento Azioni Marie Curie.

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

Circa 6 500 Azioni Marie Curie del settimo programma quadro ([1]) sono state completate o sono attualmente in corso. Finora si registrano 4 874 conseguenti pubblicazioni su libri e riviste scientifiche. Va ricordato tuttavia che le pubblicazioni riguardanti i progetti finanziati sono spesso edite dopo la data finale del progetto e successivamente alla presentazione della relazione definitiva.

Con riferimento al periodo 2007-2009, tutte le prime 100 università europee comprese nella classifica delle università mondiali stilata dalla Shanghai Jiao Tong University hanno partecipato ad Azioni Marie Curie. Almeno sei vincitori di premi Nobel hanno collaborato alla formazione dei ricercatori finanziati dal programma.

Esistono dati anche sull'impatto sull'eccellenza scientifica delle Azioni Marie Curie del sesto programma quadro ([2]). In ciascuna delle riviste Nature e Science sono stati pubblicati in media ogni anno 25 articoli basati su Azioni Marie Curie del sesto programma quadro. Nel 2007 ai ricercatori di un partenariato industria-università sul trattamento digitale delle immagini è stato conferito dall'Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences il Premio Oscar al merito tecnico-scientifico (Scientific and Engineering Award). Altri importanti risultati sono stati conseguiti: uno dei ricercatori finanziati dal 2007 ha sviluppato agenti antitumorali basati sull'oro che potrebbero contribuire a sperimentare nuovi trattamenti contro il tumore alla prostata e alla mammella. Per descrizioni dettagliate delle realizzazioni finanziate grazie alle Azioni Marie Curie si rinvia ai seguenti indirizzi:

http://www.fp7peoplenetwork.eu/download-document/135-marie-curie-success-stories-booklet.html e
http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/docs/inspiring_researchers_en.pdf

Quanto all'impatto più in generale del programma, va osservato che alla fine del 2010, tra i beneficiari di finanziamenti dell'European Research Council (ERC) figuravano 66 ex borsisti Marie Curie del sesto programma quadro e 173 coordinatori scientifici di tali progetti. I borsisti Marie Curie hanno registrato un tasso di successo superiore alla media nell'assegnazione di sovvenzioni «ERC Starting Grants», mentre i coordinatori scientifici di Azioni Marie Curie hanno registrato un tasso di successo nell'assegnazione di sovvenzioni «ERC Advanced Grant» del 34 %, superiore al doppio della media.

([1]) Settimo programma quadro della Comunità europea per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (2007-2013).
([2]) Sesto programma quadro della Comunità europea per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (2002-2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003979/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Best practices from the Marie Curie Actions programme

The Marie Curie Actions have long been one of the most widely known and appreciated features of the EU's Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development. Over the years the programme has changed significantly from being an initiative focusing solely on the provision of mobility fellowships to one dedicated to stimulating researchers' career development.

In particular, the programme has been extremely successful in meeting the training, mobility and career development needs of Europe's scientific community. Under the Seventh Framework Programme, the Marie Curie Actions have been brought together and expanded under the People specific programme.

In view of the above, can the Commission say what examples of scientific excellence have resulted from the Marie Curie Actions initiative?

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

Around 6 500 Marie Curie Actions projects of the Seventh Framework Programme ([1]) are now underway or complete. They have to date reported 4 874 publications in scientific journals or books. However, it should be recalled that publications from funded projects are often published after the end date of the project and following submission of the final report.

Regarding the period 2007-2009, all of the first 100 European universities listed in the Academic Ranking of World Universities of the Shanghai Jiao Tong University participated in the Marie Curie Actions. At least six Nobel Prize Laureates have been involved in the training of researchers financed by the programme.

There is also evidence of the impact of Marie Curie Actions on scientific excellence from the Sixth Framework Programme ([2]) (FP6). On average, 25 articles were published per year in each of the journals Nature and Science as a result of FP6 Marie Curie Actions. In 2007, researchers of one Industry Academia Partnership related to digital image processing were awarded a Scientific and Engineering Award (Oscar®) by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Other breakthroughs have resulted. One grantee from 2007 developed gold-based anti-cancer agents that might help pioneer new treatments against breast and prostate cancer. Extensive success stories funded under MCA can be found at the following addresses: http://www.fp7peoplenetwork.eu/download-document/135-marie-curie-success-stories-booklet.html and http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/docs/inspiring_researchers_en.pdf

As for the more systemic impact of the programme, it is worth noting that at the end of 2010, European Research Council (ERC) Grantees included 66 former FP6 Marie Curie Fellows and 173 Scientific Coordinators of FP6 Marie Curie projects. Marie Curie Fellows had a higher success rate for ERC Starting Grants than the average. Marie Curie Scientific Coordinators had an ERC Advanced Grant success rate of 34%, over double the average.

([1]) Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013).
([2]) Sixth Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2002-2006).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003980/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Coltivazioni di cacao

Nel mondo, il consumo di cioccolato è aumentato del 14 % negli ultimi cinque anni ma, paradossalmente, la produzione di cacao si sta riducendo. Il motivo più rilevante sta nella difficoltà che si incontra nel coltivare il cacao: i suoi alberi sono facilmente attaccabili da malattie e funghi, per cui gli agricoltori preferiscono dedicarsi a prodotti più sicuri. Una parte del raccolto, pari a un 30-40 %, è da gettare via per le malattie della pianta o per la cattiva conservazione, unita all'aggressione degli insetti (la produzione avviene in ambienti caldi).

Per incrementare lo sviluppo del cacao, la ricerca scientifica sta facendo passi da gigante, selezionando vegetali più resistenti, di buona qualità, e dalla lunga vita. In alcuni centri di ricerca creano in laboratorio le piantine più performanti. Piante che non sono OGM. Queste nascono in vitro, partendo da cellule scelte, formano «embrioni» alimentati con zucchero, ossigeno e luce, dai quali si manifestano le prime foglie e le prime radici. Il risultato, dopo dieci anni di ricerca, è possibile grazie a un processo naturale conosciuto come moltiplicazione accelerata, che non implica alcuna modificazione genetica.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione comunicare quanto segue:

1. Può essa fornire dati circa le coltivazioni di cacao presenti in Europa?

2. Esistono programmi in atto volti a sostenere l'incremento delle coltivazioni in esame e quali sono i nuovi programmi previsti per far fronte al problema del calo della produzione?

Risposta data da Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2012)

1. Dato che l'Unione europea non produce cacao, non esistono programmi a sostegno di questo tipo di coltura nell'UE.

2. Per quanto riguarda i paesi produttori (principalmente Costa d'Avorio, Ghana e alcuni paesi dell'America latina e dell'Asia sudorientale), la Commissione non attua direttamente programmi volti ad incrementare la produzione. Tuttavia, al fine di realizzare economie di scala e trarre vantaggio dallo scambio di esperienze, l'UE ha scelto di sostenere programmi di ricerca nel settore del cacao attraverso l'Organizzazione internazionale del cacao (ICCO), nel cui ambito la Commissione rappresenta l'Unione europea e contribuisce, con 1,1 milioni di euro, al bilancio amministrativo annuo per conto dell'UE. Gli Stati membri contribuiscono, su base volontaria, al Fondo comune per i prodotti di base, che serve in particolare a finanziare progetti riguardanti tali prodotti.

Nel 2000, l'ICCO ha realizzato un progetto di ricerca quinquennale del valore di 7,5 milioni di euro (utilizzazione e conservazione del germoplasma del cacao) volto a distribuire migliori varietà di cacao resistenti a parassiti e malattie. Il progetto ha comportato un aumento delle rese fino al 60 % rispetto a varietà commerciali di controllo. Parallelamente, un progetto di 2,3 milioni di euro riguardante i paesi dell'America latina ha promosso l'uso delle tecniche della biologia molecolare nella ricerca di varietà resistenti allo scopazzo. È in corso di attuazione un successore di questi due progetti nei principali paesi produttori al fine di fornire livelli di produttività più elevati e sostenibili.

L'ICCO sta inoltre preparando un programma integrato per il controllo del virus che causa il rigonfiamento dei germogli della pianta del cacao (Cocoa Swollen Shoot virus — CSSV) nell'Africa occidentale e centrale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003980/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Cocoa production

Chocolate consumption has risen by 14% over the past five years globally but, paradoxically, cocoa production has been declining. The main reason for this is that cocoa is a difficult crop to grow: cocoa trees are vulnerable to disease and fungi, so farmers prefer to grow safer crops. A proportion of the crop (around 30-40%) is discarded due to plant disease or poor preservation, not to mention insect attacks (production occurs in hot climates).

Scientific research into cocoa is taking great strides forward with the selection of more resistant, better quality plants with a longer life expectancy. In some research centres more efficient plants have been created in the laboratory. These plants are not GMOs. They are cultured *in vitro* from selected cells to form 'embryos' that are fed with sugar, oxygen and light, from which sprout the first shoots and roots. These results have been made possible following 10 years of research, through a natural process known as accelerated proliferation, which does not involve any form of genetic modification.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether:

1. It is in a position to provide information on the cultivation of cocoa in Europe?

2. There are programmes in place to support increased growth of the crops in question and what new programmes are envisaged to address the problem of the decline in production?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2012)

1. In the EU there is no production of cocoa and, consequently, there are no programs to support this type of crop in the EU.

2. Regarding producing countries (mainly Ivory Coast, Ghana, and some countries in Latin America and South East Asia), the Commission is not directly implementing any programmes aimed at increasing production. However, in order to realise economies of scale and to benefit from experience sharing, the EU has chosen to support research programmes in the cocoa sector through the International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO) in which the Commission represents the EU and contributes EUR 1 100 000 to the annual administrative budget on behalf of the EU. Member States contributes, on a voluntary basis, to the Common Fund for Commodities, which serves to finance commodities projects.

In 2000, ICCO implemented a 5-year research project of EUR 7.5 million — Cocoa germplasm utilisation and conservation — which aimed at distributing improved pest and disease resistant varieties of cocoa. The project resulted in up to 60% increase in yields compared to commercial control varieties. In parallel a project of EUR 2.3 million, covering Latin American countries, has promoted the use of molecular biology techniques in a search for varieties resistant to Witches' Broom disease. A successor of these two projects is being implemented in major producing countries with a view to provide higher and sustainable productivity levels.

ICCO is also preparing an integrated programme for the control of Cocoa Swollen Shoot virus disease in West and Central Africa.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003981/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Energie rinnovabili ai Paesi poveri

Unione europea e ONU alleati per portare energie rinnovabili nei Paesi che sono privi di energia elettrica. Così si rispettano anche gli obiettivi di riduzione delle emissioni del 20 %, obiettivo dell'Agenda 2020.

L'Unione europea ha investito molto negli ultimi anni nelle energie rinnovabili, però adesso gli aiuti ai Paesi in via di sviluppo nel loro complesso sono messi a dura prova dalla crisi; raggiungere l'obiettivo di spesa dello 0,7 % del PIL per l'Unione europea sembra un traguardo difficile in questo momento.

L'energia è essenziale per fornire cure sanitarie, istruzione, cibo e soddisfare tutte le necessità fondamentali. Investire in energia pulita nei Paesi più poveri aiuterà a raggiungere il doppio obiettivo di una crescita sostenibile e inclusiva, mitigando i cambiamenti climatici.

Alla luce di quanto precede può dunque la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali saranno i Paesi interessati dagli aiuti dell'Unione europea;

2. come verranno impiegati concretamente questi aiuti per realizzare energia pulita?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2012)

La UE è politicamente e finanziariamente impegnata a promuovere l'utilizzo di fonti di energia rinnovabili nei paesi in via di sviluppo come mezzo per migliorare l'accesso ai servizi energetici delle persone meno abbienti e favorire il percorso di tali paesi verso uno sviluppo più ecologico e sostenibile. Nei paesi poveri in via di sviluppo l'energia rinnovabile rappresenta la fonte più adattabile non solo per garantire l'accesso all'energia in aree non collegate alla fornitura nazionale (per esempio, nelle aree rurali e periurbane), ma anche per riorientare l'economia di tali paesi dall'attuale sfruttamento intensivo delle risorse convenzionali verso risorse più sostenibili e a basso contenuto di carbonio.

I paesi ammissibili beneficiano attualmente di sovvenzioni assegnate al settore energetico nell'ambito dello strumento per il finanziamento della cooperazione allo sviluppo e del Fondo europeo di sviluppo. Nella proposta per il prossimo bilancio dell'UE è previsto un 20 % per attività correlate al clima, tra cui l'accesso alle fonti di energia pulita. L'UE sta inoltre cercando fonti alternative di finanziamento per aumentare gli investimenti nel settore (per esempio, il mercato del carbonio e i fondi di investimento). Inoltre, l'UE supporta attivamente l'obiettivo Sustainable Energy for All (energia sostenibile per tutti) ([1]) per raddoppiare a livello mondiale l'utilizzo delle fonti di energia rinnovabile entro il 2030.

L'UE sta mettendo in atto progetti in collaborazione con gli Stati membri, i paesi in via di sviluppo, le ONG e le imprese private per favorire l'assistenza tecnica, la ricerca e gli investimenti nel settore dell'energia rinnovabile. Lo strumento ACP-UE per l'energia ([2]) è uno dei principali strumenti che garantiscono l'accesso all'energia attraverso progetti relativi all'energia rinnovabile, unitamente al nuovo programma di cooperazione Africa-UE in materia di energie rinnovabili (RECP) ([3]), avviato nel 2010 per aumentare l'utilizzo dell'energia rinnovabile nel continente africano.

([1]) Sustainable energy for all: http://www.sustainableenergyforall.org/.
([2]) Strumento ACP-UE per l'energia: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regional-cooperation/energy/index_en.htm
([3]) Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation: http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/node/2316.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003981/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Renewable energies to poor countries

The European Union and the UN have joined forces to take renewable energies to countries that have no electricity. This measure is also in line with the 2020 Agenda target of a 20% reduction in emissions.

The European Union has invested heavily in renewable energies over the last few years, but now the aid given to developing countries as a whole is being sorely tested by the crisis; achieving the spending target of 0.7% of GDP for the European Union appears to be a difficult objective at the present time.

Energy is essential for providing healthcare, education and food, and for satisfying fundamental needs. Investing in clean energy in the poorest countries will help to achieve the twofold aim of sustainable and inclusive growth while mitigating climate change.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Which countries will be granted EU aid?

2. How, in concrete terms, will this aid be used to create clean energy?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2012)

The EU is politically and financially committed to promote the use of renewable energy sources in developing countries as a means to increase access to energy services to the poor and accompanying those countries toward a greener and more sustainable development. In poor developing countries renewable energy not only represents the most adaptable source to guarantee energy access in areas disconnected from the national distribution (e.g. in rural and peri-urban areas) but also to redirect their economies from the current intensive exploitation of conventional resources to more sustainable and low carbon ones.

Currently eligible countries worldwide are benefiting from grants under the Development and Cooperation Instrument and the European Development Fund allocated to the energy sector. In the proposal for the next EU budget there is a 20% target for climate related activities, which will encompass clean energy access. The EU is also working on alternative sources of finance to increase investment in the sector (e.g. Carbon Market and Investment Facilities). Moreover the EU actively supports the Sustainable Energy for All ([1]) objective to double the use of renewable energy resources globally by 2030.

The EU is implementing energy projects in cooperation with Member States, Developing countries, NGOs and private companies in order to support technical assistance, research and investments in the renewable energy sector. The ACP-EU Energy Facility ([2]) is one of the main instruments guaranteeing energy access via renewable energy projects together with the new initiative Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP) ([3]) launched in 2010 to increase the use of renewable energy in the African continent.

([1]) Sustainable energy for all: http://www.sustainableenergyforall.org/.
([2]) EU-ACP Energy Facility: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regional-cooperation/energy/index_en.htm
([3]) Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation: http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/node/2316.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003982/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Evasione da un carcere in Pakistan

Sono 384 i detenuti evasi da un carcere nel nordovest del Pakistan (roccaforte dei talebani alleati di Al Qaida) dopo un attacco di uomini armati. Più di 150 ribelli con mitra, granate e lanciarazzi hanno preso d'assalto la prigione centrale di Bannu, vicino alle zone tribali di Khyber e di Orakzai. I ribelli, più numerosi dei secondini, sono penetrati nella prigione grazie ad un intenso fuoco di armi automatiche e di razzi e sono fuggiti prima dell'arrivo delle forze di sicurezza: una battaglia per liberare un pericoloso esponente di Al Qaida, che si trovava nel braccio della morte per il suo coinvolgimento nell'attentato contro l'ex presidente del Paese Pervez Musharraf. È quanto riferisce il sovrintendente della prigione Zahid Khan.

L'attacco è stato rivendicato dai talebani. Questa è la prima volta che è presa d'assalto una prigione pakistana. Secondo il ministro «i talebani erano in numero elevato e hanno ferito quattro agenti penitenziari prima di liberare i loro compagni».

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

1. se è a conoscenza di quanto accaduto nella Repubblica Islamica del Pakistan;

2. quali provvedimenti e azioni intende adottare per garantire il rispetto delle norme anti-terrorismo e per evitare che i detenuti evasi si trasferiscano in altri Stati.

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

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza dell'evasione dei detenuti menzionata dall'onorevole parlamentare, rivendicata dal movimento Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Tra gli evasi molti sono combattenti TTP condannati, compreso il detenuto accusato di aver partecipato all'attentato contro l'ex presidente Musharraf.

Evitare che i detenuti evasi si trasferiscano in altri Stati richiede un rigido controllo dell'esteso confine comune tra Pakistan e Afghanistan, che rappresenta una delle principali sfide che impegna le autorità dei due paesi.

Nonostante non possa intervenire direttamente negli affari interni di un paese partner, l'UE mantiene comunque un dialogo politico con il Pakistan e, dopo l'adozione del piano d'impegno UE-Pakistan, i contatti aumenteranno grazie a dialoghi periodici in materia di sicurezza e lotta al terrorismo, che dovrebbero trattare temi quali il rispetto della legge e il rafforzamento del sistema giudiziario, con particolare riguardo ad un'azione penale più efficace nei confronti dei terroristi, nonché la lotta all'estremismo violento.

Uno degli obiettivi principali dell'UE nell'ambito della migrazione clandestina consiste nel garantire l'applicazione dell'accordo di riammissione UE-Pakistan. Una prima riunione ad alto livello si è tenuta nel giugno 2012 e la Commissione continuerà a monitorare attentamente l'applicazione dell'accordo.

L'UE sostiene già progetti finalizzati a migliorare l'accesso alla giustizia e la qualità delle attività di controllo del territorio in Pakistan. In seguito all'adozione, da parte del Consiglio «Affari esteri» del giugno 2012, della strategia dell'UE di lotta al terrorismo e di sicurezza per il Pakistan, è prevedibile che il sostegno dell'UE alle attività volte alla sicurezza e alla lotta contro il terrorismo in Pakistan sarà rafforzato.

L'UE mette inoltre a disposizione assistenza e competenze tecniche nel campo della gestione integrata delle frontiere, al fine di migliorare la cooperazione regionale tra Afghanistan, Pakistan e i paesi confinanti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003982/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Prison escape in Pakistan

384 prisoners have escaped from a prison in the north-west of Pakistan (stronghold of the Taliban allies of al-Qaeda) after an attack by armed men. More than 150 rebels with submachine guns, grenades and rocket launchers stormed the central prison of Bannu, near the tribal areas of Khyber and Orakzai. The rebels, who outnumbered the guards, penetrated the prison with the help of intense fire from automatic weapons and rockets, and fled before the arrival of the security forces. According to the prison superintendent Zahid Khan, the purpose of the battle was to free a dangerous member of al-Qaeda, who was being held on death row for his involvement in the attempted assassination of the country's former president Pervez Musharraf.

Responsibility for the attack has been claimed by the Taliban. This is the first time an assault has been made on a Pakistani prison. According to the Minister, 'there were large numbers of Taliban fighters, and they wounded four prison guards before freeing their companions'.

In view of the above, the High Representative is asked to state:

1. whether she knows what happened in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan;

2. what measures and actions she proposes to take to ensure compliance with anti-terrorism laws and to prevent the escaped prisoners from moving to other countries.

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

The HR/VP is aware of the escape of prisoners, responsibility for which was claimed by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Many of the freed prisoners were convicted TTP fighters, including the inmate accused of involvement in an assassination attempt on former President Musharraf.

With regard to preventing escaped prisoners from moving to other countries, a major challenge for both Pakistan and Afghanistan is control of their long shared border.

The EU cannot intervene directly in the internal affairs of a partner country but is engaged in political dialogue with Pakistan and following adoption of the EU-Pakistan Engagement Plan, the dialogue will be reinforced by dialogues on security, including counter-terrorism. Law enforcement and strengthening the criminal justice system — including more effective prosecutions in terrorist trials — as well as countering violent extremism are expected to be part of the dialogue.

One of the EU's principal objectives in the field of irregular migration is to ensure the implementation of the EU-Pakistan readmission agreement. A first high level meeting took place in June 2012. The Commission will continue close monitoring of the application of the agreement.

The EU is already supporting projects which are intended to improve access to justice and also to improve the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan. After the adoption of the EU Counter Terrorism/Security Strategy for Pakistan by the June 2012 Foreign Affairs Council, it is expected that EU activities in support of security and counter-terrorism in Pakistan will be reinforced.

In addition the EU offers technical assistance and expertise in the field of integrated border management to improve regional cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan and their neighbours.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003983/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Italia bocciata sull'informatica

Gli italiani messi davanti a un computer sono un vero e proprio disastro, soprattutto se paragonati ai vicini europei. Una bocciatura su tutta la linea che suona come un'emergenza nazionale a cui sarebbe opportuno porre rimedio.

Nella fascia tra i 16 e i 74 anni, quattro italiani su dieci (il 39 %) dichiarano di non aver mai usato un computer nella loro vita e non stupisce quindi che solo il 54 % dichiari di essere in grado di spostare un file o copiare una cartella sul pc: operazioni che richiedono la semplice pressione di un tasto del mouse.

Passando all'Europa, a non aver toccato un computer è invece solo il 22 % dei cittadini, mentre il 63 % non ha alcuna difficoltà nello spostamento di file. E se poi noi italiani vogliamo proprio farci del male, basta consultare le statistiche dei paesi scandinavi e del Regno Unito per trovarci di fronte a dati di 20 o 30 punti percentuali superiori ai nostri, con meno di un cittadino su dieci a non aver mai usato un pc.

Si scopre così che solo un terzo degli italiani è capace di fare operazioni aritmetiche usando un foglio di calcolo come Excel, Calc o Numbers, neppure uno su quattro è in grado di allestire una presentazione con slide alla PowerPoint e appena il 9 % è in grado di usare un linguaggio di programmazione (ma almeno in questo caso la media europea è di appena un punto percentuale più alta). Per quanto infatti la fascia dai 16 ai 24 anni sia tecnologicamente assai più competente, restiamo comunque indietro rispetto alla media.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può dunque la Commissione tracciare un quadro europeo dell'alfabetizzazione informatica nei vari Stati membri, evidenziando in quale ambito l'Italia ha il gap maggiore?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2012)

Dai dati sull'alfabetizzazione informatica in tutta l'UE-27 relativi al 2011 emerge che l'Italia è al di sotto della media in termini di alfabetizzazione informatica. In media il 21 % delle persone nell'UE dichiara di non aver mai utilizzato un computer, ma questa percentuale sale al 37 % per l'Italia, solo Romania (50 %), Bulgaria (45 %), Grecia (41 %) e Cipro (38 %) dichiarano percentuali più elevate. Questo fenomeno è in netto contrasto con i migliori risultati; i paesi scandinavi, il Lussemburgo, i Paesi Bassi e il Regno Unito hanno percentuali di non utilizzo di computer a una sola cifra. Un andamento analogo riguarda l'utilizzo/il non utilizzo di Internet.

I dati sulle competenze informatiche indicano inoltre che l'Italia è in ritardo rispetto alla maggior parte degli altri paesi europei. Mentre in media nell'UE il 66 % delle persone dispongono di un certo livello di competenze (basso/medio/alto), in Italia la percentuale è del 56 %. Solo Cipro (55 %), Polonia (55 %), Grecia (49 %), Bulgaria (42 %) e Romania (39 %) hanno tassi inferiori di competenze. Al contrario, nei paesi con i risultati migliori, l'85 % circa degli individui hanno un certo livello di competenze informatiche.

Questa scarsa alfabetizzazione informatica comporta per i cittadini italiani uno svantaggio significativo nella loro vita quotidiana. Le competenze digitali (competenze in materia di computer e Internet), sono diventate le abilità essenziali per la vita nella società odierna, come riconosciuto dal Parlamento europeo nel 2006 quando aveva dichiarato che la competenza digitale costituisce una delle otto competenze chiave per l'apprendimento permanente. L'importanza della competenza digitale è stata riconosciuta anche nell'agenda digitale europea, l'iniziativa faro della Commissione europea per la società dell'informazione. L'agenda digitale prevede un pilastro (6° pilastro) con azioni relative alle competenze e all'inclusione digitale e ha fissato diversi obiettivi per il loro miglioramento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003983/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Italy useless with computers

Faced with a computer, Italians are a total disaster, especially when compared with their European neighbours. This total failure signals a national emergency that it would be prudent to remedy.

In the 16-74 age bracket, four out of ten Italians (39%) say they have never used a computer in their lives, so it is no surprise that only 54% say they know how to move a file or copy a folder on a PC, operations that require the simple click of a mouse button.

In the rest of Europe, only 22% of people have never touched a computer, while 63% have no difficulty in moving files. And if we Italians want to make ourselves feel really bad, we need only look at the statistics for the Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom to find figures 20% or 30% higher than ours, with fewer than one in ten people never having used a PC.

Thus we find that only one-third of Italians are capable of performing arithmetical operations using a spreadsheet programme such as Excel, Calc or Numbers, barely one in four can create a PowerPoint slide presentation and just 9% can use a programming language (but in this case at least, the European average is only one percentage point higher). Although the 16-24 age bracket is technologically somewhat more competent, we nevertheless remain below the average.

In view of the above, can the Commission draw up a European table of computer literacy in the various Member States, showing where Italy has the greatest shortcomings?

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

Data on computer literacy across the EU-27 for 2011 shows that Italy performs below average in terms of its computer literacy. While an average 21% of individuals in the EU reports never having used a computer, this percentage increases to 37% for Italy, with only Romania (50%), Bulgaria (45%), Greece (41%) and Cyprus (38%) reporting higher rates. This lies in stark contrast to the best performers, the Scandinavian countries, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and UK, where rates of non-use are in single digits. A similar pattern is also exhibited with respect to use/non-use of the Internet.

Data on computer skills also shows that Italy lags the majority of other European countries. While on average in the EU 66% of individuals have some level of skill (low/medium/high), in Italy the figure is 56%. Only in Cyprus (55%), Poland (55%), Greece (49%), Bulgaria (42%) and Romania (39%) are rates of skills lower. By contrast, in the best performing countries around 85% of individuals have some level of computer skills.

This lack of computer literacy puts Italian citizens at a significant disadvantage in their everyday lives. Digital skills (computer and Internet skills), have become essential life skills in today's society, as recognised by the European Parliament in 2006 when it declared digital Competence to be one of eight key competences for life long learning. The importance of digital competence was also recognised in the Digital Agenda for Europe, the European Commission's flagship initiative for the information society. The Digital Agenda contains a pillar (pillar 6) with actions relating to skills and inclusion and has set a number of targets regarding their improvement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003985/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Vaccino per prevenire l'infarto

A partire dal 2014, potrebbe essere disponibile un vaccino per prevenire l'infarto contenuto in un'iniezione o in uno spray nasale. Gli scienziati hanno scoperto che il farmaco stimola il sistema immunitario a produrre anticorpi per prevenire le malattie cardiache, interrompendo il deposito di grassi nelle arterie. È la prima volta che la scienza compie un importante passo avanti nella prevenzione delle malattie cardiache e, in particolare, nella prevenzione dell'infarto. Secondo i test eseguiti da parte di ricercatori svedesi, il vaccino può ridurre l'accumulo di grasso nelle arterie fino al 70 %.

Vi sono 1 500 000 persone che soffrono di malattie cardiache e sono già affette da cardiopatia ischemica; ogni anno vengono registrati oltre 1 150 000 ricoveri per queste patologie. I relativi costi di trattamento per il sistema sanitario italiano sono pari a 16 848 miliardi di euro all'anno, ed incidono sull'economia dell'UE per circa € 169 miliardi/anno.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può dire la Commissione se è a conoscenza del nuovo studio e se ritiene che la suddetta ricerca possa essere finanziata attraverso il Settimo Programma Quadro (7° PQ) oppure il Programma Quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(20 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle attività di ricerca intraprese in Europa e altrove per mettere a punto un vaccino contro l'aterosclerosi ([1]), come segnalato dall'onorevole parlamentare. L'idea di un vaccino contro l'aterosclerosi è estremamente allettante, viste l'elevata frequenza e le gravi conseguenze delle malattie cardiovascolari aterosclerotiche, tra cui l'infarto del miocardio.

La ricerca cardiovascolare ha rappresentato una priorità costante nell'ambito del sesto e del settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (6° PQ, 2002-2006; 7° PQ, 2007-2013). Per quanto riguarda le potenziali strategie di vaccinazione, il progetto IMMUNATH ([2]) finanziato nell'ambito del 6° PQ (2,5 milioni di euro) mirava a individuare strategie per curare e prevenire l'aterosclerosi puntando sul sistema immunitario adattativo. Inoltre, sempre nell'ambito del 6° PQ, la rete di eccellenza EVGN ([3]) (9 milioni di euro) ha orientato la propria attività di ricerca sull'area dell'instabilità della placca aterosclerotica.

A seguito degli inviti a presentare proposte per il periodo 2007-2012 nell'ambito del 7° PQ, la ricerca cardiovascolare beneficia attualmente di un contributo complessivo di circa 260 milioni di euro. Il progetto di ricerca ATHEROREMO ([4]) (11,7 milioni di euro) verte specificamente sull'immunità e l'infiammazione nell'aterosclerosi.

In futuro potrebbero emergere ulteriori opportunità di ricerca in questo campo grazie a nuovi inviti a presentare proposte. Le domande di ricerca collaborativa presentate in risposta ai suddetti inviti saranno selezionate attraverso una procedura di valutazione *inter pares*, considerando l'eccellenza scientifica come criterio preponderante, in modo da finanziare le migliori candidature.

([1]) Hansson G, Nilsson J. Vaccination against atherosclerosis? Induction of athero-protective immunity. Semin Immunopathol 26 maggio 2009; 2) Klingenberg R, Lebens M, Hermansson A, Fredrikson GN, Strodthoff D, Rudling M, Ketelhuth DF, Gerdes N, Holmgren J, Nilsson J, Hansson GK. Intranasal Immunization with an Apolipoprotein B-100 Fusion Protein Induces Antigen-Specific Regulatory T Cells and Reduces Atherosclerosis, Arterioscler Thromb Vasc Biol 2010, 30:946-952.

([2]) IMMUNATH: Translating innate immune receptor function into diagnostic and therapeutic applications for atherosclerosis: (http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/84978_it.html).

([3]) EVGN: European Vascular Genomics Network (Rete europea per la genomica vascolare): http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=app.details&TXT=EVGN&FRM=1&STP=10&SIC=&PGA=&CCY=&PCY=&SRC=&LNG=it&REF=75290.

([4]) ATHEROREMO: European Collaborative Project on Inflammation and Vascular Wall Remodelling in Atherosclerosis (http://www.atheroremo.org).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003985/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Vaccine to prevent heart attacks

Starting in 2014, a vaccine which prevents heart attacks could be available in the form of an injection or nasal spray. Scientists have discovered that the drug stimulates the immune system to produce antibodies to prevent heart disease, stopping fats from being deposited in the arteries. This is the first time that science has made a significant step forward in the prevention of heart disease and, in particular, in preventing heart attacks. According to tests carried out by Swedish researchers, the vaccine can reduce the accumulation of fat in the arteries by up to 70%.

1 500 000 people suffer from heart disease and are already affected by ischaemic cardiopathy; each year, there are over 1 150 000 hospital admissions for these diseases. The relevant cost of treatment for the Italian healthcare system amounts to EUR 16.848 billion per year and it impacts the EU economy to the tune of around EUR 169 billion per year.

Can the Commission therefore say whether it is aware of this new study and if it considers that the aforementioned research could be financed via the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2012)

The Commission is aware of research efforts undertaken in Europe and beyond to develop a vaccine for atherosclerosis ([1]) as mentioned by the Honourable Member. The concept of an atherosclerosis vaccine is extremely appealing in view of the high prevalence and serious consequences of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, including myocardial infarction.

Cardiovascular research has been a constant priority within the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006; FP7, 2007-2013). As regards potential vaccination strategies, the FP6 IMMUNATH ([2]) project (EUR 2.5 million) aimed at finding strategies to treat and prevent atherosclerotic disease by targeting the adaptive immune system. In addition, the FP6 Network of Excellence EVGN ([3]) (EUR 9 million) addressed the area of atherosclerotic plaque instability.

An overall contribution of some EUR 260 million is currently devoted to cardiovascular research as a result of FP7 calls for proposals for the period 2007-2012. The project ATHEROREMO ([4]) (EUR 11.7 million) is specifically addressing immunity and inflammation research in atherosclerosis.

Further opportunities for investigating into this area may arise in future calls for proposals. Collaborative research applications submitted for these calls are selected through a peer-review's evaluation procedure with scientific excellence as the overriding criterion and financial support awarded to the best applications.

([1]) 1) Hansson G, Nilsson J. Vaccination against atherosclerosis? Induction of athero-protective immunity. Semin Immunopathol 26 May 2009; 2) Klingenberg R, Lebens M, Hermansson A, Fredrikson GN, Strodthoff D, Rudling M, Ketelhuth DF, Gerdes N, Holmgren J, Nilsson J, Hansson GK. Intranasal Immunization with an Apolipoprotein B-100 Fusion Protein Induces Antigen-Specific Regulatory T Cells and Reduces Atherosclerosis, Arterioscler Thromb Vasc Biol 2010, 30:946-952.

([2]) IMMUNATH: Translating innate immune receptor function into diagnostic and therapeutic applications for atherosclerosis: (http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/84978_en.html).

([3]) EVGN: European Vascular Genomics Network: http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=app.details&TXT=EVGN&FRM=1&STP=10&SIC=&PGA=&CCY=&PCY=&SRC=&LNG=en&REF=75290.

([4]) ATHEROREMO: European Collaborative Project on Inflammation and Vascular Wall Remodelling in Atherosclerosis: (http://www.atheroremo.org).