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 151 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003986/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Attacco in Yemen

Dodici persone sono state uccise nel corso di un attacco di Al Qaida contro un posto di blocco della polizia, attacco cui è seguito uno scontro a fuoco nel Nord di Aden, principale città del sud dello Yemen. La notizia è stata resa nota da fonti della polizia. La stessa fonte ha precisato che un gruppo di uomini di Al Qaida ha attaccato un posto di blocco della polizia, uccidendo quattro poliziotti, ed ha aggiunto che, nel contrattacco delle forze dell'ordine, sono rimasti uccisi otto assalitori. Dalla Presidenza dello stato è giunta subito una condanna dell'accaduto, seguita dall'apertura di un'inchiesta per far luce sull'evento e individuarne i colpevoli.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può dire l'Alto Rappresentante se è a conoscenza di quanto accaduto nella Repubblica Unita dello Yemen? Intende prendere ulteriori provvedimenti e attivare nuove contromisure per evitare i continui attacchi che ogni giorno coinvolgono la società civile?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è bene a conoscenza degli sviluppi in Yemen.

Il governo di transizione sotto la guida del presidente Hadi sta compiendo notevoli sforzi per ristabilire la sicurezza nel paese. I recenti cambiamenti nel comando militare ordinati dal presidente Hadi, nonché i suoi sforzi per ristabilire il controllo del governo nelle aree del sud dello Yemen, nelle quali gli affiliati ad Al-Qaeda sono attivi, costituiscono un valido esempio della determinazione del presidente a procedere con queste riforme. Si tratta tuttavia di un processo lungo e delicato e il governo necessita del massimo sostegno politico da parte dell'UE e della comunità internazionale per ottenere esito positivo. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente continuerà a seguire con attenzione la questione, intervenendo se e quando opportuno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003986/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Attack in Yemen

Twelve people have been killed in an Al-Qaeda attack on a police checkpoint. The attack was followed by a shoot-out in the north of Aden, the main city in southern Yemen. The news came from police sources. The same sources said that a group of Al-Qaeda members attacked a police checkpoint, killing four police officers, and added that eight of the attackers were killed in the counter-attack by police. The country's administration immediately condemned the attack, and then launched an inquiry to shed light on the incident and identify those responsible.

In view of the above, can the High Representative say whether she is aware of what happened in the Republic of Yemen? Does she intend to take further measures and take new countermeasures to prevent the constant daily attacks on people?

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

The VP/HR is fully aware of the developments in Yemen.

The transitional government under the leadership of President Hadi is making considerable efforts to restore security in the country. The recent changes in the military command ordered by President Hadi, offer a good example of his determination to push ahead with reforms, as do his efforts to restore government control in areas in southern Yemen where Al-Qaeda affilates are active. It will however be a long and delicate process and the government needs the political support of the EU and the international community at large to be successful. The HR/VP remains closely involved and will react where and when appropriate.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003987/12
aan de Commissie
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(17 april 2012)

Betreft: Billijke vergoeding — Interpretatie richtlijn 2006/115/EG in Belgische wetgeving

Recent is gebleken dat SIMIM, een beheersvennootschap die de billijke vergoeding int voor producenten, ook geld int voor het afspelen van muziek van rechthebbenden die zij niet vertegenwoordigt. SIMIM argumenteert dat in tegenstelling tot de auteursrechten waarbij de auteurs-componisten zelf kunnen beslissen al dan niet af te zien van hun rechten, de billijke vergoeding verplicht wordt door de wetgever: zodra opgenomen muziek wordt gespeeld in een publiek toegankelijke ruimte, wordt dit naburige recht gegenereerd voor de rechthebbende artiesten en producenten. Die artiesten en producenten kunnen en mogen volgens SIMIM ook geen vrijstellingen verlenen voor het betalen van de billijke vergoeding; ze hebben immers geen zeggenschap meer over hun repertoire in de specifieke gevallen die de wetgever voorzien heeft.

SIMIM verwijst hiervoor naar de EU-richtlijn 2006/115/EG (vroeger 92/100/EG) betreffende het verhuurrecht, het uitleenrecht en bepaalde naburige rechten op het gebied van intellectuele eigendom die in de Belgische wetgeving wordt omgezet via de wet van 30 juni 1994 betreffende het auteursrecht en de naburige rechten. Uit een recente discussie in het Belgische federale parlement blijkt dat de bevoegde minister de redenering van SIMIM steunt.

In die context graag volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de omzetting van de betrokken EU-wetgeving in de Belgische wetgeving, in het bijzonder de artikelen 41, 42 en 66 van de Belgische wetgeving?

2. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat het innen van de billijke vergoeding altijd verplicht is en dat producenten er niet kunnen van afzien? Zo ja, waarom? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Hoe is de situatie terzake in de andere EU-lidstaten?

4. Hoe strookt de interpretatie van de bevoegde minister en van SIMIM met het antwoord van Commissaris McCreevy op een vraag uit 2008 van collega El Khadraoui (E-1797/2008): „Overeenkomstig artikel 8, lid 2, van Richtlijn 92/100/EEG hebben kunstenaars recht op een billijke vergoeding voor de uitzending van hun geluidsopnamen. Het is echter niet verplicht om deze vergoeding te innen. Indien een kunstenaar wenst af te zien van de inning van de billijke vergoeding voor de uitzending van zijn uitvoering, hoeft hij zich niet aan te sluiten bij de auteursrechtenorganisatie van de betrokken uitvoerende kunstenaars voor de inning van dergelijke vergoedingen."

5. Indien blijkt dat de omzetting niet in overeenstemming is met de richtlijn, zal de Commissie dan de gepaste maatregelen treffen? Zo ja, welke en wanneer? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(15 juni 2012)

1. 3. en 5. Wat de omzetting van Richtlijn 2006/115/EG ([1]) („de richtlijn") door de lidstaten betreft, zijn tot op heden geen bewijsgronden aangevoerd of klachten ingediend die aanleiding kunnen geven tot het instellen van een inbreukprocedure tegen België of een andere lidstaat.

2. Krachtens artikel 8, lid 2, van de richtlijn moeten de lidstaten een recht instellen om ervoor te zorgen dat *de gebruiker* een enkele billijke vergoeding *uitkeert* wanneer een fonogram wordt gebruikt voor uitzending via de ether of voor enigerlei mededeling aan het publiek, en dat deze vergoeding wordt verdeeld tussen de betrokken uitvoerende kunstenaars en producenten. De richtlijn laat de lidstaten vrij het mechanisme voor de betaling en de omvang van deze vergoeding vast te stellen ([2]).

([1]) Richtlijn 2006/115/EEG van 12 december 1992 betreffende het verhuurrecht, het uitleenrecht en bepaalde naburige rechten op het gebied van intellectuele eigendom.
([2]) Zie ook zaak C-245/00, SENA vs NOS, van 3 februari 2003.

4. De richtlijn bevat met name geen voorschriften voor regelingen die overeengekomen zijn tussen producenten en uitvoerende kunstenaars of met instanties die de vergoeding moeten innen van commerciële gebruikers. De richtlijn voert voor de gebruiker een verplichting in om een vergoeding te betalen. Zij voert voor de begunstigde geen verplichting in om de vergoeding in ontvangst te nemen. Het antwoord op vraag E-1797/2008 ([3]) stemt hiermee overeen. Indien een kunstenaar wenst af te zien van de ontvangst van de billijke vergoeding voor de uitzending van zijn uitvoering, hoeft hij zich voor de inning van dergelijke vergoedingen niet aan te sluiten bij de desbetreffende auteursrechtenorganisatie van uitvoerende kunstenaars. Om praktische redenen is het momenteel voor de meeste marktspelers technologisch gezien wellicht niet mogelijk om hun individuele geluidsopnamen te laten lichten uit het repertoire dat voor de inning van de vergoeding door een bepaalde auteursrechtenorganisatie wordt behartigd. Op dit ogenblik worden de activiteiten van de auteursrechtenorganisaties geregeld door nationale wetgeving. Het initiatief dat de Commissie binnenkort zal nemen inzake het beheer van collectieve rechten, moet leiden tot een reeks basisregels inzake transparantie en bestuur, die onder meer betrekking zullen hebben op het financiële beheer van de auteursrechtenorganisaties.

([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003987/12
to the Commission
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Equitable remuneration — interpretation of Directive 2006/115/EC in Belgian legislation

Recently it emerged that SIMIM, a management company which collects equitable remuneration for producers, also collects money for the playing of the music of rights holders which it does not represent. SIMIM argues that in contrast to copyright, where the author-composers can decide for themselves whether to waive their rights, equitable remuneration is a legal requirement as soon as recorded music is played in a publicly accessible space. This related right is created for the artists and producers who hold the rights. According to SIMIM, the artists and producers may not grant any exemptions for payment of the equitable remuneration. Indeed, they have no control over their repertoire in the specific cases provided for in the directive.

SIMIM refers to EU Directive 2006/115/EC (previously 92/100/EC) on rental rights and lending rights and on certain rights related to copyright in the field of intellectual property, which is transposed in Belgian law by means of the Act of 30 June 1994 on copyright and related rights. A recent discussion in the Belgian federal parliament shows that the competent minister supports the reasoning of SIMIM.

1. How does the Commission assess the transposition of the EU legislation concerned into Belgian legislation, in particular, Articles 41, 42 and 66 of the Belgian Act?

2. Can the Commission confirm that the collection of equitable remuneration is always mandatory and that producers may not waive this? If so, why? If not, why not?

3. What is the situation with regard to the other EU Member States?

4. How does the interpretation of the competent minister and of SIMIM tie in with answer from Commissioner McCreevy to a question from 2008 asked by El Khadraoui (E-1797/2008): 'Article 8(2) of Directive 92/100/EEC provides artists with a claim to receive equitable remuneration for the broadcast of their sound recordings. There is, however, no obligation to collect these payments. If an artist does not want to participate in the collection of equitable remuneration for the broadcast of his performance, he does not need to join the relevant performers' collecting society for collecting such payments. '?

5. If it proves that transposition fails to comply with the directive, will the Commission take appropriate measures? If so, what measures and when? If not, why not?

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

1, 3 and 5. With regard to the transposition by the Member States of Directive 2006/115/EC ([1]) ('the directive'), no evidence has to date been presented to the Commission, nor any complaint lodged, that would trigger the launch of infringement proceedings against either Belgium or any other Member State.

2. Article 8(2) of the directive requires Member States to provide a right ensuring that *the user pays* a single equitable remuneration when a phonogram is used for broadcasting by wireless means or for any communication to the public, and to ensure that this remuneration is shared between the relevant performers and producers. The directive leaves it up to the Member States to establish the mechanism for payment and the level of this remuneration ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2006/115/EC on rental right and lending right and on certain rights related to copyright in the field of intellectual property of 12 December 2006.
([2]) See also CaseC-245/00, SENA vs NOS of 3 February 2003.

4. The directive is notably silent with respect to the arrangements made between producers and performers on the one hand, and bodies charged with the collection of the remuneration from commercial users on the other. The directive establishes an obligation on the user to pay remuneration. It establishes no obligation on the beneficiary to receive the remuneration. The answer to Question E-1797/2008 ([3]) is consistent. If an artist wishes to waive the receipt of equitable remuneration for the broadcast of his performance, he does not have to join the relevant performers' society which collects such fees. For practical purposes, the carve-out of individual record tracks from the repertoire represented by a given collecting society for purposes of remuneration is currently likely to be beyond the technological capacity of the majority of market players. While at present the activities of collecting societies are governed by national law, the Commission's upcoming initiative on collective rights management should provide for a set of basic rules on transparency and governance, pertaining *inter alia,* to the financial management of collecting societies.

([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003988/12
do Komisji
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(17 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Obszar „Sport" w ramach programu „Erasmus dla wszystkich" w latach 2014-2020

Trwają obecnie prace nad programem „Erasmus dla wszystkich", który ma funkcjonować w latach 2014-2020. Jednym z obszarów priorytetowych programu będzie sport. W związku z licznymi zapytaniami napływającymi do mojego biura poselskiego od związków i stowarzyszeń sportowych zwracam się do Komisji o odniesienie się do następujących kwestii.

1. Czy w ramach programu „Erasmus dla wszystkich" będzie można pozyskiwać środki na budowę infrastruktury sportowej? Czy będą istnieć inne możliwości pozyskania środków europejskich na finansowanie infrastruktury sportowej poza programem „Erasmus dla wszystkich"?

2. Dostęp jakich grup społecznych do sportu będzie priorytetem w ramach programu „Erasmus dla wszystkich"?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(21 czerwca 2012 r.)

Komisja pragnie poinformować Pana Posła, że w proponowanym programie na rzecz kształcenia, szkolenia, młodzieży i sportu „Erasmus dla wszystkich" nie przewidziano możliwości finansowania budowy infrastruktury sportowej. Więcej informacji na temat rozdziału programu „Erasmus dla wszystkich" dotyczącego sportu przedstawiono w odpowiedzi Komisji na pytanie pisemne E-011960/2011 ([1]).

W odniesieniu do obecnych i przyszłych możliwości finansowania dostępnych dla organizacji sportowych Komisja udzieliła bardziej szczegółowych informacji w kilku odpowiedziach na pytania pisemne: P-008604/2010, E-001630/2010, E-002970/2011 i E-001946/2012 ([1]).

Również inne programy nie obejmują specjalnych systemów finansowania budowy infrastruktury sportowej. Działania dotyczące sportu (w tym modernizacja, rozbudowa lub budowa infrastruktury) i związane z nimi sieci transportowe (np. drogi, transport publiczny, infrastruktura lotniskowa) mogą jednak czasem być finansowane z wykorzystaniem instrumentów polityki spójności, takich jak EFRR czy EFRROW, pod warunkiem że są one zgodne z zakresem poszczególnych funduszy. Bardziej szczegółowe informacje przedstawiono niedawno w odpowiedziach na pytania pisemne E-009127/2011 i E-009373/2011 ([1]).

We wniosku dotyczącym programu „Erasmus dla wszystkich" nie wymieniono konkretnie żadnej grupy społecznej, która miałaby być traktowana priorytetowo pod względem dostępu do sportu w ramach nowego programu, jednak jednym z jego celów szczegółowych jest włączenie społeczne poprzez sport.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003988/12
to the Commission
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Sport in the 'Erasmus for All' programme for 2014-2020

Work is under way on the 'Erasmus for All' programme, which is to operate between 2014 and 2020. Sport will be one of the priority areas of the programme. Following the numerous enquiries received by my Constituency Office from sports unions and associations, I ask the Commission to address the following issues.

1. Will it be possible to obtain funds for the construction of sports infrastructure under the 'Erasmus for All' programme? Will there be other ways of obtaining European funds to finance sports infrastructure beyond the 'Erasmus for All' programme?

2. Which social groups will be prioritised for access to sport under the 'Erasmus for All' programme?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the proposed programme for education, training, youth and sport 'Erasmus for All' will not provide possibilities to finance construction of sports infrastructure. More information on the Sport chapter within 'Erasmus for All' has been provided by the Commission in answer to Written Question E-011960/2011 ([1]).

Concerning current and future funding opportunities for sport organisations, the Commission has provided detailed information in several answers to Written Questions, P-008604/2010, E-001630/2010, E-002970/2011 and E-001946/2012 ([1]).

No dedicated funding schemes exist for the construction of sport facilities within other programmes; however sport-related activities (including refurbishment, extension or construction of infrastructure) and connected transport networks (e.g. roads, public transport, facilities at airports) may sometimes be funded by cohesion policy instruments, such as the ERDF or the EAFRD, provided that they are in line with the scope of each Fund. More detailed information was recently provided in replies to Written Questions E-009127/2011 and E-009373/2011 ([1]).

The proposal for the programme 'Erasmus for All' does not mention any specific social group which would be prioritised in terms of access to sport under the new programme; nevertheless, social inclusion through sport is one of its specific objectives.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003989/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(17 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: La Unión Europea «territorio libre de transgénicos»

Si bien la mayoría de los países miembros de la Unión Europea tienen una estricta regulación sobre los cultivos transgénicos, con prohibición de cultivos de este tipo en países como Francia, Alemania y Hungría, otros países como España permiten la plantación de éstos a escala comercial y al aire libre.

Hasta ahora la Unión Europea se ha regido en este asunto siguiendo el principio de precaución pero, día tras día, la imposición de este tipo de cultivos por la vía de los hechos, es decir, la imposibilidad de controlar el cruce de cultivos naturales con los modificados genéticamente a través de la polinización derivada del cultivo al aire libre y gran escala, esta conllevando un aumento permanente de la presencia de la contaminación con este tipo de cultivos de las explotaciones agrícolas europeas mostrando la ineficacia de la regulación europea y de la Directiva 2001/18/CE. Otro motivo por el cual la actual regulación no limita la contaminación transgénica en la cadena alimentaria es la imposibilidad de conocer con certeza los animales que han sido alimentados a base de cultivos transgénicos.

La inmensa mayoría de asociaciones agrícolas y ecologistas europeas señalan como única regulación posible para detener el avance no deseado de estos cultivos, la prohibición total de su uso y la declaración del territorio de la Unión Europea como «territorio libre de transgénicos», ya que la coexistencia entre cultivos transgénicos y tradicionales es imposible. Además, existe un profundo rechazo a los OGM por parte de la mayoría de los ciudadanos y ciudadanas europeas conscientes de las nefastas consecuencias sociales, sanitarias, económicas y medioambientales: desaparición de semillas y cultivos tradicionales, grave pérdida de fertilidad de los suelos, deterioro de la calidad de los alimentos, efectos nocivos en la salud humana, incremento de la necesidad de uso de sustancias químicas degradando los suelos agrícolas y poniendo en serio riesgo la sostenibilidad y perdurabilidad de las pequeñas y medianas explotaciones agrícolas, desaparición del derecho a la seguridad alimentaria e imposibilidad de alcanzar la soberanía alimentaria,

Por todo ello y en el marco de la reforma de la Política Agraria Común, ¿piensa la Comisión prohibir a nivel comunitario las plantaciones de cultivos transgénicos a escala comercial y a cielo abierto y declarar la Unión Europea territorio libre de transgénicos? ¿Dispone la Comisión de un mapa de cultivos contaminados transgénicamente para poder evaluar la posible polinización de cultivos tradicionales de su entorno? ¿Ha alertado la Comisión al Gobierno de España, mayor productor europeo de alimentos transgénicos, de las graves consecuencias de estos cultivos o piensa hacerlo?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de junio de 2012)

La legislación de la UE en materia de organismos modificados genéticamente (OMG) ([1]) prevé que únicamente puedan concederse autorizaciones para el cultivo de OMG en el territorio de la UE después de que la Autoridad Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria (EFSA) haya efectuado una evaluación científica completa del producto en la que se demuestre que no presenta ningún riesgo para la salud y el medio ambiente, de conformidad con el principio de cautela. Además, en el artículo 26 *bis* de la Directiva 2001/18/CE y en la Recomendación de la Comisión sobre la coexistencia, de 13 de julio de 2010 ([2]), también se ofrece la posibilidad a los Estados miembros de adoptar medidas para impedir la presencia accidental de OMG en cultivos convencionales y cultivos biológicos, por ejemplo, mediante la creación de «zonas libres de OMG». La Oficina Europea de Coexistencia ([3]), que está formada por expertos de los Estados miembros, elabora documentos sobre las mejores prácticas para la aplicación de medidas de coexistencia. Por último, la Comisión ha adoptado una propuesta de Reglamento ([4]) que permite que los Estados miembros restrinjan o prohíban el cultivo de OMG en su territorio por motivos diferentes de los basados en una evaluación científica de los riesgos para la salud y el medio ambiente. Esa propuesta se está debatiendo en la actualidad en el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo. Las medidas antes mencionadas y la propuesta de la Comisión tienen como objetivo garantizar que únicamente puedan cultivarse OMG seguros en la UE, y que se tengan adecuadamente en cuenta las preocupaciones de los ciudadanos de la UE en relación con los OMG.

([1]) Directiva 2001/18/CE sobre la liberación intencional en el medio ambiente de organismos modificados genéticamente; DO L 106 de 17.4.2001.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:200:0001:0005:ES:PDF.
([3]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0375:FIN:ES:PDF.

En cuanto a la elaboración de un mapa de los campos de cultivos OMG en los Estados miembros, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta parlamentaria E-000511/2012 ([5]).

([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003989/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: The European Union: 'transgenic-free territory'

Although most EU Member States have strict regulations on transgenic crops, with crops of this kind prohibited in countries such as France, Germany and Hungary, other countries such as Spain permit these crops to be planted on a commercial scale and in the open air.

Until now, the European Union has followed the precautionary principle when addressing this issue. However, the continuous *de facto* encroachment by crops of this kind — due to the impossibility of controlling the cross-pollination of natural crops with genetically modified ones as a result of open-air, large-scale cultivation — is leading to a permanent increase in the transgenic contamination of European farmland , demonstrating the ineffectiveness of European regulations and of Directive 2001/18/EC. Another reason why the current rules are unable to limit transgenic contamination of the food chain is the impossibility of knowing with any certainty which animals have been fed a diet based on transgenic crops.

The vast majority of European agricultural and ecological associations indicate that the only possible means of halting the unwanted advance of these crops is to completely ban them and declare the whole of the EU a 'transgenic-free territory', since it is impossible for transgenic and traditional crops to coexist. Furthermore, GMOs are fundamentally rejected by most European citizens, who are aware of their highly negative social, health, economic and environmental consequences, including the disappearance of traditional seeds and crops, serious loss of soil fertility, declining food quality, harmful effects on human health, increased need to use chemical products which deplete agricultural soils and seriously endanger the sustainability and survival of small and medium agricultural holdings, loss of the right to food security and impossibility of achieving food sovereignty.

For all of these reasons, and within the framework of the reform of the common agricultural policy, does the Commission plan to introduce a Community-wide ban on the planting of transgenic crops on a commercial scale and in the open air, and to declare the European Union a transgenic-free territory? Does the Commission have a map of transgenically-contaminated crops in order to be able to evaluate the possible pollination of traditional crops in the surrounding area? Has the Commission alerted the government of Spain, which is Europe's largest producer of transgenic food, of the serious impact of these crops and, if not, does it intend to do so?

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

The EU legislation on GMOs ([1]) provides that EU authorisations for cultivation of GMOs in the EU can be granted only after a thorough scientific assessment of the product by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) demonstrated that it poses no risk for health and the environment, taking into account the precautionary principle. Furthermore, Article 26.a of Directive 2001/18/EC and the Commission recommendation on co-existence of 13 July 2010 ([2]) also give the possibility to the Member States to adopt measures to avoid the unintended presence of GMOs in conventional and organic crops, for instance by establishing 'GMO-free areas'. Best Practice Documents for implementation of coexistence measures are elaborated by the Co-existence Bureau ([3]), composed with Member States' experts. Finally, the Commission adopted a proposal of regulation ([4]) allowing the Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of GMOs on their territory for grounds other than those based on a scientific assessment of health and environmental risks. This proposal is currently discussed in the European Parliament and the Council. The abovementioned measures and the Commission proposal aim to ensure that only safe GMOs can be cultivated in the EU, and that EU citizens' concerns on GMOs are duly taken into account.

Concerning the mapping of GMO fields in the Member States, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Parliamentary Question E-000511/2012 ([5]).

([1]) Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment, OJ L 106, 17.4.2001.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/docs/new_recommendation_en.pdf
([3]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/docs/proposal_en.pdf
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003990/12
til Kommissionen
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(17. april 2012)

Om: Overførsel af pensionsopsparinger

Arbejdstagere og selvstændige erhvervsdrivende har ifølge direktiv 98/49/EF en række rettigheder og pligter som medlem af en supplerende pensionsordning. Rettighederne gælder blandt andet i forbindelse med, at en arbejdstager flytter inden for EU og ønsker udbetaling af ydelserne på tværs af grænser.

Arbejdstagere, der er hjemvendt til Danmark efter flere års ansættelse i et andet EU-land, oplever imidlertid, at de ikke kan overføre en pensionsordning fra et EU-land til et andet. Dette betyder, at europæiske borgere har udgifter til administrationsomkostninger for hver pensionsopsparing (i forskellige lande), som vedkommende er medlem af, hvilket en hindring for arbejdskraftens frie bevægelighed.

På den baggrund vil jeg gerne bede Kommissionen om at besvare følgende spørgsmål;

1. Finder Kommissionen det af hensyn til arbejdskraftens mobilitet ikke uhensigtsmæssigt, at arbejdstagere og selvstændige erhvervsdrivende ikke kan overføre supplerende pensionsordninger?

2. Hvad agter Kommissionen at gøre, for at forbedre retten til at overføre supplerende pensionsopsparinger?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(5. juni 2012)

Under henvisning til det ærede medlems spørgsmål om overførsel af pensionsopsparinger skal Kommissionen gøre opmærksom på følgende:

1. Direktiv 98/49/EF er første skridt i fjernelsen af hindringer for den frie bevægelighed for supplerende pensionsordninger, fordi det sikres, at personer, der flytter inden for EU, behandles på samme måde som personer, der flytter inden for en medlemsstat. I denne sammenhæng er anvendelsesområdet meget snævert. Med hensyn til overførsel af pensionsrettigheder fastsættes det i direktivets artikel 5, at medlemsstaterne skal træffe de nødvendige foranstaltninger for at sikre, at medlemmer og tidligere medlemmer af en supplerende pensionsordning samt andre personer, der er ydelsesberettigede i henhold til en sådan ordning, får udbetalt alle de ydelser, de har krav på under en sådan ordning, i alle medlemsstater, eftersom enhver begrænsning af den frie bevægelighed for kapital og betalinger er forbudt i henhold til artikel 63 TEUF. Direktiv 98/49/EF dækker dog ikke retten til at overføre supplerende pensionsrettigheder (f.eks. overførsel af et kapitalbeløb fra en ordning til en anden), idet dette stadig henhører under medlemsstaternes eller de enkelte pensionsordningers kompetenceområde.

2. Med hensyn til retten til at overføre supplerende pensioner har de lovgivningstiltag, der er truffet i de senere år, ikke hidtil givet konkrete resultater, men der er overvejelser i gang om den bedste måde at komme videre på. Kommissionen gør det klart i hvidbogen om pensioner ([1]), der bl.a. kommer ind på beskyttelse af supplerende pensionsrettigheder, at Kommissionen i 2012 i tæt samarbejde med Rådet og Europa-Parlamentet vil genoptage arbejdet med et direktiv om overførsel af pensioner med fastsættelse af minimumsstandarder for optjening og bevarelse af supplerende pensionsrettigheder.

([1]) Hvidbogen »En dagsorden for tilstrækkelige, sikre og bæredygtige pensioner«, KOM(2012)0055 endelig af 16.2.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003990/12
to the Commission
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Transfers of pension savings

In accordance with Directive 98/49/EC, employed or self-employed persons have a number of rights and obligations as members of a supplementary pension scheme. One of the rights relates to an employee moving within the EU and seeking the cross-border payment of pension benefits.

Employees returning to Denmark after several years' employment in another EU Member State are, however, finding that they cannot transfer a pension scheme from one EU Member State to another. This means that European citizens incur administration costs for every pension savings scheme (in various countries) to which they belong, which is a barrier to the free movement of labour.

In view of the above, I would like the Commission to answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission not consider it inappropriate with respect to labour force mobility that employed and self-employed persons cannot transfer supplementary pension schemes?

2. What does the Commission intend to do to improve the right to transfer supplementary pension savings?

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

With reference to the questions raised by the Honourable Member regarding transfer of pension savings, the Commission would like to raise the following points.

1. Directive 98/49/EC constitutes a first step in removing obstacles to free movement relating to supplementary pensions by ensuring that persons moving within the European Union are treated in the same way as those moving within a Member State. In this context it has a very limited scope. In relation to the transfer of pension rights it provides in its Article 5 that Member States should take the necessary measures to ensure that benefits under supplementary pension schemes are paid to members and former members thereof as well as others holding entitlement under such schemes in all Member States, given that all restrictions on the free movement of payments and capital are prohibited under Article 63 TFEU. However, this directive does not cover the transferability of supplementary pension rights (e.g. the transferring of a capital amount from one scheme to another) which still remains a matter for Member States or individual pension schemes to determine.

2. In relation to the lack of portability of supplementary pensions, the legislative initiatives proposed in recent years have so far not come to fruition, but reflection is ongoing as to the best way to make progress. The Commission made clear in the White Paper on pensions ([1]) which — amongst others — addresses the issue of supplementary pension rights protection, that in 2012, the Commission will, in close cooperation with the Council and the European Parliament, resume work on a pension portability Directive setting minimum standards in particular for the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights.

([1]) White Paper 'An Agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pension' , COM(2012) 55 final of 16.2.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003991/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — al-Thala solar plant demolition

The hamlet of al-Thala, a community of 80, lies within Area C of the West Bank, south of the city of Hebron. Last year the people of al-Thala installed a number of wind and solar energy generating devices for the benefit of their community.

I understand Israeli officials have issued a demolition order on a local solar energy plant. This facility was, I understand, financed by the German Government at a cost of EUR 400 000.

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this demolition notice?

— What representations has the Vice-President/High Representative made to the Israeli authorities regarding the demolition?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is aware of this demolition notice. The matter has been raised on several occasions with Israel. The EU considers the unwarranted demolition or destruction of Palestinian property to be illegal under International law. It has made this position clear in Council conclusions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003992/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(17 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Informazioni sulla responsabilità penale dei medici

Molti Stati membri non attribuiscono ai medici la responsabilità penale. Questo non avviene in Italia.

È intenzionata a uniformare la legislazione europea in questo campo?

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

La Commissione non intende proporre una legislazione nel campo della responsabilità penale dei medici.

Tuttavia la raccomandazione 2009/C 151/01 ([1]) del Consiglio incoraggia gli Stati membri a informare i pazienti sulle procedure di reclamo e ricorso e sui termini e le condizioni applicabili qualora subiscano un danno mentre ricevono assistenza sanitaria. Tale raccomandazione sollecita inoltre gli Stati membri a incoraggiare gli operatori sanitari a segnalare attivamente gli eventi sfavorevoli e specifica che tale rendicontazione deve essere differenziata dai sistemi e dalle procedure disciplinari applicabili dagli Stati membri agli operatori sanitari.

La direttiva 2011/24/UE ([2]) concernente l'applicazione dei diritti dei pazienti relativi all'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera fa obbligo agli Stati membri di assicurare che siano disponibili procedure e meccanismi trasparenti per le denunce che consentano ai pazienti di esperire i mezzi di ricorso nel caso in cui subiscano un danno a causa dell'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera ricevuta. Essa impone inoltre a tutti gli erogatori di assistenza sanitaria di possedere un'assicurazione di responsabilità professionale e di informarne i pazienti.

Gli Stati membri istituiranno punti di contatto nazionali incaricati di fornire informazioni in merito al diritto degli operatori professionali di prestare servizi e alle eventuali restrizioni nel merito, nonché informazioni sulle procedure per le denunce. Gli Stati membri devono recepire tale direttiva entro il 25 ottobre 2013.

([1]) Raccomandazione del Consiglio del 9 giugno 2009 sulla sicurezza dei pazienti, compresi la prevenzione e il controllo delle infezioni associate all'assistenza sanitaria.
([2]) GU L 88 del 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003992/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Information on the criminal liability of doctors

Many Member States, unlike Italy, do not attach criminal liability to doctors.

Does it intend to standardise EU legislation in this area?

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

The Commission does not intend to propose legislation in the area of criminal liability of doctors.

However, Council Recommendation 2009/C 151/01 ([1]) encourages Member States to disseminate information to patients on complaint procedures, available remedies and redress, and the terms and conditions applicable in case of being harmed while receiving healthcare. This recommendation further asks Member States to encourage health professionals to actively report adverse events, while clearly stating that such reporting should be differentiated from Member States' disciplinary systems and procedures for healthcare workers.

Directive 2011/24/EU ([2]) on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare requires Member States to ensure that transparent complaint procedures and mechanism are in place to allow patients to seek remedies if they suffer harm arising from receiving cross-border healthcare. It also requires all healthcare providers to have appropriate professional liability insurance and to provide information to patients thereof.

Member States will establish national contact points that give information on a health professional's right to provide services or any restrictions on its practice, as well as information on complaint procedures. Member States need to transpose this directive by 25 October 2013.

([1]) Council Recommendation of 9 June 2009 on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections.
([2]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003993/12
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(17 April 2012)

Subject: Roadworthiness tests and braking standards

I understand that the roadworthiness tests which commercial vehicles have to pass before being permitted on European roads allow the braking systems to be tested at only 30% of the brake forces required for safe operation.

Could the Commission explain why the braking requirements are set so low and would it agree that such low requirements have a negative impact on road safety? Furthermore, could the Commission clarify whether it will address this issue as part of the revision of the Roadworthiness Directive?

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

Regarding brake performance the relevant roadworthiness legislation ([1]) requires that during a test on a static brake testing machine, the brakes shall be applied progressively up to the maximum effort.

For vehicles registered for the first time as of 28 July 2010, brake efficiency requirements have been increased to the level of the type approval requirements. For vehicles with a maximum permissible mass exceeding 3 500 kg there is a choice between either testing in fully loaden condition or using reference brake forces established during type-approval or using an extrapolation method.

Therefore the maximum brake forces reached during the test on a roller brake tester, which in general exceed the 30% of brake forces required for safe operation, will have to be used for the assessment of the braking performance and for the calculation of the braking efficiency during roadworthiness tests which is equivalent to the current best practise of vehicle inspections.

The Commission considers the requirements for testing brakes during periodic roadworthiness tests to be on a high level properly addressing the needs of road safety. These testing methods will therefore not be addressed with the upcoming proposal for a revision of the roadworthiness legislation.

([1]) Directive 2009/40/EC on roadworthiness tests(OJ L 141, 6.6.2009, p. 12) as amended by Commission Directive 2010/48/EU (OJ L 173, 8.7.2010, p. 47).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003994/12
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(18 april 2012)

Betreft: Voorspellingen elektriciteitsvraag

Momenteel wordt in België het zogenaamde uitrustingsplan opgesteld. Dit plan analyseert de huidige capaciteit voor de elektriciteitsproductie. Bovendien bekijkt het welke acties nodig en wenselijk zijn om in België bevoorradingszekerheid en prijsstabiliteit inzake elektriciteit te waarborgen, nu en in de toekomst.

Een uiterst belangrijke parameter voor deze berekeningen is uiteraard de (verwachte) energievraag.

Heeft de Commissie cijfers en analyses ter beschikking voor de voorspelde energievraag in Europa en in België voor: 2015, 2020, 2030, 2040 en 2050?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(30 mei 2012)

Met de hulp van modelleringsconsultants maakt de Commissie scenario-analyses waaruit prognoses betreffende de energievraag voortvloeien. Op dat gebied is de meest recente oefening op EU-niveau voor de periode tot 2050 te vinden in de scenario's van het Stappenplan Energie 2050 ([1]) dat door de Commissie op 15 december 2011 is vastgesteld. De effectbeoordeling voor het Stappenplan Energie bevat prognoses inzake de energievraag in zeven verschillende scenario's voor alle jaren in kwestie (opgenomen in aanhangsel 1). In dit verslag wordt alle achtergrondinformatie voor deze prognoses inzake de energievraag verstrekt. Het verslag is beschikbaar via de volgende link: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy2020/roadmap/index_en.htm.

Wat de gegevens betreffende de energievraag voor België, en ook voor de EU, betreft, worden in het in 2010 gepubliceerde rapport inzake de energietrends in de EU in de periode tot 2030 prognoses gemaakt voor twee verschillende scenario's (in de aanhangsels 2A en 2B). Het eerste daarvan is een uitgangsscenario, waarin uitsluitend rekening wordt gehouden met het reeds ten uitvoer gelegde energie- en klimaatbeleid in de periode tot het voorjaar van 2009. Het tweede is een referentiescenario dat een later eindpunt voor het beleid omvat en waarin ook de effecten worden bekeken van het behalen van de wettelijk bindende 2020-streefcijfers inzake hernieuwbare energiebronnen en broeikasgasemissies. Dit verslag met alle achtergrondinformatie over de modellering is beschikbaar via de volgende link: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/trends_2030/doc/trends_to_2030_update_2009.pdf.

([1]) COM(2011) 885 definitief.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003994/12
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Forecasts of electricity demand

At present, an electricity generation plan is being drawn up in Belgium. This plan analyses current electricity generation capacity and looks at what actions are necessary and desirable to achieve supply security of and safeguard price stability in Belgium, now and in the future.

A very important parameter for these calculations is of course the (expected) energy demand.

Does the Commission have any figures and analyses available for the forecasted energy demand in Europe and Belgium for: 2015, 2020, 2030, 2040 and 2050?

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

The Commission undertakes scenario analyses with the help of modelling consultants who provide projections of energy demand. The most recent exercise through 2050 at EU level concerns the scenarios of the Energy Roadmap 2050 ([1]) which was adopted by the Commission on 15 December 2011. The Impact Assessment for the Energy Roadmap provides projections of energy demand for seven different scenarios for all the years requested (contained in Attachment 1). This report gives all the background information for these energy demand projections and is available through the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy2020/roadmap/index_en.htm.

Concerning energy demand data for Belgium and also the EU, the report on EU Energy Trends to 2030, published in 2010, gives energy demand projections for two different scenarios (in Appendix 2A and 2B): a baseline only taking into account implemented energy and climate policies up to spring 2009 and a reference scenario that has a later cut-off point for policies and includes the effects of achieving the legally binding 2020 targets on renewables and greenhouse gas emissions (reference scenario). The report with all the background information about the modelling is available through the following link:
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/trends_2030/doc/trends_to_2030_update_2009.pdf.

([1]) COM(2011) 885 final.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003997/12
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Dyrektywa EED wpływająca na nagrzejnikowe pomierniki ciepła i forma rozliczania ich zużycia

Chciałbym się odnieść do regulacji zawartej w artykule 8 ustęp 1 akapit 4 dyrektywy o efektywności energetycznej nakładającej obowiązek instalacji ciepłomierzy, a w budynkach wielorodzinnych dodatkowo indywidualnych liczników zużycia ciepła. Jeżeli zainstalowanie indywidualnych liczników zużycia ciepła nie jest technicznie wykonalne, zgodnie z brzmieniem dyrektywy, stosuje się indywidualne podzielniki kosztów ciepła.

Chciałbym zadać Komisji pytanie, czy jest ona świadoma dodatkowych kosztów związanych z implementacją przytoczonej regulacji do prawa krajowego w kontekście obowiązku instalacji przez właścicieli i zarządców budynków wielolokalowych indywidualnych pomierników ciepła?

Czy Komisja jest świadoma faktu, iż przewidziane w dyrektywie regulacje mogą znacząco podnieść koszty użytkowania lokali w budynkach wielolokalowych?

Dodatkowo wątpliwości budzi efektywność indywidualnych liczników zużycia ciepła, jak i forma rozliczania kosztów zużycia ciepła w postaci nagrzejnikowych podzielników. Jak wskazują badania i opinie wielu specjalistów w tej dziedzinie, zagraniczne liczniki, jak i przedstawiona forma nagrzejnikowych podzielników, często nie sprawdzają się w warunkach wielolokalowego budownictwa, szczególnie starego, wskazując w mieszkaniach tego samego budynku przy jednakowym stopniu ogrzewania skrajnie odmienne wyniki zużycia ciepła. Wynika to zarówno z przenikania ciepła przez ściany działowe lokali, jak i jego emisji z węzłowych systemów cieplnych. Dlatego też kluczowym jest pytanie, czy podczas formułowania przytoczonego zapisu dyrektywy Komisja miała świadomość istniejących specyficznych różnic w gospodarce mieszkaniowej poszczególnych krajów członkowskich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(25 maja 2012 r.)

W ocenie skutków dotyczącej dyrektywy w sprawie efektywności energetycznej ([1]) Komisja dokonała analizy kosztów i korzyści związanych z wprowadzeniem precyzyjnych indywidualnych liczników zużycia ciepła lub indywidualnych podzielników zużycia ciepła w celu umożliwienia pobierania opłat za rzeczywiste zużycie.

Komisja jest świadoma problemów powstających w starych budynkach, gdzie zastosowanie podzielników kosztów ciepła wymagałoby w pierwszej kolejności wyposażenia kaloryferów w termostaty, a wewnętrzne przewody rurowe są zaizolowane. Komisja stoi na stanowisku, że powyższe rozwiązanie należy uznać za efektywny pod względem kosztów sposób obniżenia wartości rachunków za energię.

([1]) Dokument roboczy służb Komisji, ocena wpływu, dokument towarzyszący dyrektywie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie efektywności energetycznej zmieniającej a następnie uchylającej dyrektywy 2004/8/WE i 2006/32/WE, SEC(2011) 779 wersja ostateczna: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/eed/doc/2011_directive/sec_2011_0779_impact_assessment.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003997/12
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: The EED Directive on radiator heat meters and the method of calculation of consumption

I would like to address the provision in the fourth paragraph of Article 8(1) of the proposal for a directive on Energy Efficiency which imposes an obligation to install heat meters, and in multi-family buildings, additional individual heat consumption meters. If the installation of individual heat consumption meters is not technically feasible, according to the wording of the directive, individual heat cost allocators should be used.

Is the Commission aware of the additional costs associated with transposing the cited Directive into national law, in terms of requiring the owners and managers of multi-family buildings to install individual heat meters?

Is the Commission aware of the fact that the provisions in the directive may significantly increase the operating costs of premises in multi-family buildings?

In addition, the effectiveness of individual heat consumption meters and the method of calculating the costs of heat consumption in the form of heat cost allocators are questionable. As indicated in the research and opinions of many specialists in this field, foreign meters and the proposed form of heat cost allocators often do not work in multi-family building conditions (in particular in old buildings), showing extremely different heat consumption for apartments in the same building with the same degree of heating. This is the result of both the transfer of heat through the partition walls of buildings, and its emission from nodal heating systems. That is why the following question is of key importance: in formulating the cited provision of the directive, was the Commission aware of the specific differences in housing management among the various Member States?

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

In the impact assessment for the Energy Efficiency Directive ([1]) the Commission analysed the costs and benefits of introducing accurate individual heat meters or heat cost allocators to enable billing based on actual consumption.

The Commission is aware of problems in older buildings where the use of heat cost allocators would first require that the radiators are equipped with thermostats and the in-house piping is insulated. The Commission believes that this should be considered as a cost-effective way to help citizens to reduce their energy bills.

([1]) Commission Staff Working Paper, Impact Assessment, Accompanying Document to the directive of the Parliament and of the Council on Energy Efficiency and Amending and Subsequently Repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC, SEC(2011) 779 final: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/eed/doc/2011_directive/sec_2011_0779_impact_assessment.pdf

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003998/12
till kommissionen
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(18 april 2012)

Angående: Cloetta/Leafs fabrik i Levice

Godistillverkaren Cloetta har aviserat att man ämnar att lägga ner den lönsamma och effektiva Läkerolfabriken i Gävle och flytta produktionen till Levice, Slovakien. Det har även förekommit uppgifter om att den slovakiska fabriken skulle ha uppburit EU-stöd.

Jag vill därför fråga kommissionen om det stämmer att EU-stöd lämnats till Cloetta/Leafs fabrik i Levice?

Svar från Johannes Hahn på kommissionens vägnar
(5 juni 2012)

Enligt Slovakiens näringsministerium har företaget Leaf s.r.o. inte fått några bidrag från sammanhållningsfonderna i Slovakien. Slovakiens näringsministerium var den myndighet som förvaltade programmet för industri- och tjänstesektorn under programplaneringsperioden 2004-2006 och som under programplaneringsperioden 2007-2013 förvaltar programmet för ökad konkurrenskraft och ekonomisk tillväxt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003998/12
to the Commission
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Cloetta/Leaf factory in Levice

Confectionery manufacturer Cloetta has announced that it plans to close its profitable and efficient Läkerol factory in Gävle and move production to Levice in Slovakia. It has also emerged that the Slovakian factory has received EU funding.

Therefore, I would like to ask the Commission if it is correct that EU funding has been provided to the Cloetta/Leaf factory in Levice?

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

According to the information provided by the Slovak Ministry of Economy, which was the managing authority for the programme Industry and Services in the 2004-2006 programming period and which is the managing authority for the programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth in the 2007-2013 programming period, the company Leaf, s.r.o. has not obtained any contribution from cohesion policy in Slovakia.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003999/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Sprzedaż dla syryjskiej opozycji rakiet typu Milan

Jak informują niezależne ośrodki analityczne monitorujące konflikt w Syrii w czasie walk o Homs Syryjska Wolna Armia użyła rakiet przeciwpancernych typu Milan. Rakiety te produkowane są jedynie przez dwie europejskie firmy North Aviation (Francja) oraz MBB (Niemcy). Firmy te są również pośrednikami w ich sprzedaży.

1. Czy sprzedaż lub przekazanie broni Syryjskiej Wolnej Armii nie łamie sankcji nałożonych przez Unię Europejską na dostawy broni do Syrii?

2. Co Wysoka Przedstawiciel zrobi, aby sprawdzić informacje przekazane w interpelacji?

3. Jakie kary grożą firmom lub państwom nielegalnie dostarczającym broń do Syrii?

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

1. Zakaz sprzedaży, dostaw, przekazywania lub wywozu broni i materiałów z nią związanych do Syrii przewidziany jest w decyzji Rady 2011/782/WPZiB ([1]). Zakaz odnoszący się do Syrii został wprowadzony po raz pierwszy w dniu 9 maja 2011 r. decyzją Rady 2011/273/WPZiB ([2]). Każda sprzedaż lub dostawa broni do Syrii zrealizowana po dacie wejścia w życie powyższej decyzji stanowiłaby więc naruszenie embarga.

2. i 3. W odniesieniu do konkretnej dziedziny dotyczącej zakazu wywozu broni i sprzętu wojskowego do Syrii, odpowiedzialność za podjęcie środków niezbędnych do egzekwowania tego zakazu leży w gestii właściwych organów państw członkowskich. Kary za naruszenie środków ograniczających UE nakładane są również przez państwa członkowskie na szczeblu krajowym, zgodnie ze stosownym ustawodawstwem krajowym. Zgodnie z obowiązującymi zasadami w zakresie środków ograniczających dotyczących wywozu broni i sprzętu wojskowego, państwa członkowskie nie są zobowiązane do przekazywania Komisji lub Wysokiej Przedstawiciel informacji na temat uregulowań krajowych dotyczących sankcji za naruszenie krajowych przepisów. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca nie jest zatem w stanie podać informacji dotyczących tych sankcji.

([1]) Decyzja Rady 2011/782/WPZiB z dnia 1 grudnia 2011 r. w sprawie środków ograniczających wobec Syrii i uchylenia decyzji 2011/273/WPZiB, Dz.U. L 319 z 2.12.2011.

([2]) Decyzja Rady 2011/273/WPZiB z dnia 9 maja 2011 r. dotycząca środków ograniczających skierowanych przeciwko Syrii, Dz.U. L 121, z 10.5.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003999/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Sale of Milan missiles to the Syrian opposition

As reported by independent analytical centres monitoring the conflict in Syria, the Free Syrian Army has used Milan anti-tank missiles during the battle for Homs. These missiles are only produced by two European companies: North Aviation (France) and MBB (Germany). These companies are also their selling agents.

1. Does the sale or hand-over of weapons to the Free Syrian Army not violate the sanctions imposed by the European Union against supplying weapons to Syria?

2. What does the High Representative intend to do to check the information provided in this question?

3. What penalties may be imposed on the companies or countries that illegally supply weapons to Syria?

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

1. Council Decision 2011/782/CFSP ([1]) prohibits the sale, supply, transfer or export of arms or related material to Syria. This prohibition regarding Syria was first introduced on 9 May 2011 by Council Decision 2011/273/CFSP ([2]). Any sale or supply of weapons to Syria after the date of entry into force of this decision would thus be in violation of the embargo.

2 and 3. In the specific area of prohibition of export of arms and military equipment to Syria, it is the responsibility of competent authorities of the Member States to take the necessary measures for the enforcement of this prohibition. Penalties for the violation of EU restrictive measures are also imposed at national level by the Member States in accordance with relevant national legislation. Under the current rules concerning restrictive measures related to exports of arms and military equipment, Member States are not required to inform the Commission or the High Representative of the national rules on penalties for infringement of their legislation. The HR/VP is therefore not in a position to provide information on these penalties.

([1]) Council Decision 2011/782/CFSP of 1 December 2011 concerning restrictive measures against Syria and repealing Decision 2011/273/CFSP, OJ L 319, 2.12.2011.
([2]) Council Decision 2011/273/CFSP of 9 May 2011 concerning restrictive measures against Syria, OJ L 121, 10.5.2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004000/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(18. April 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Berufsständische Vertretungen in EU-Delegationen

Das Personalstatut sieht in den Institutionen der EU und den Delegationen in Drittstaaten Personalvertretungen vor. Es scheint, dass es in den EU-Delegationen neben den Personalvertretungen auch Vertretungen für einzelne Berufsgruppen innerhalb der Kommission und des EAD in Drittstaaten gibt (Bsp.: Bureau de chefs de délégation; bureau de chefs d'administration etc.).

1. Welche derartigen Vertretungen nach Berufsgruppen gibt es? Wie viele Sitzungen gab es 2011 und 2012; wie viele Personen nahmen daran teil; wie oft fanden diese Sitzungen statt, und wie lange dauern diese Sitzungen einschließlich der Reisetage?

2. Welches ist die Rechtsgrundlage für diese berufsständischen Vertretungen?

3. Wo fanden die Sitzungen statt? Auf welcher Rechtsgrundlage erfolgt die Übernahme der Kosten durch den EAD bzw. die Kommission?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004001/12
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(18. April 2012)

Betrifft: Berufsständische Vertretungen in EU-Delegationen

Das Personalstatut sieht in den Institutionen der EU und den Delegationen in Drittstaaten Personalvertretungen vor. Es scheint, dass es in den EU-Delegationen neben den Personalvertretungen auch Vertretungen für einzelne Berufsgruppen innerhalb der Kommission und des EAD in Drittstaaten gibt (Bsp.: Bureau de chefs de délégation; bureau de chefs d'administration etc.).

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Gemeinsame Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(3. Juli 2012)

1. Derzeit gibt es drei Büros, die auf Ersuchen des Personals in den Delegationen und zur Verbesserung des Verständnisses zwischen den zentralen Dienststellen und den Delegationen eingerichtet wurden: das Büro der Delegationsleiter (8 Mitglieder für 141 Delegationen), das Büro der Leiter der Verwaltungsabteilungen (6 Mitglieder) und das Büro der Regionalen Sicherheitsbeauftragten (3 Mitglieder). Die zentralen Dienststellen konsultieren diese regelmäßig, wenn sie politische Maßnahmen und Dokumente ausarbeiten, die sich auf die Arbeit in den Delegationen auswirken. Der Konsultationsprozess hat sich durch die Entwicklung Gemeinsamer Standpunkte als nützlich und positiv erwiesen. Abgesehen von den jährlichen Veranstaltungen, an denen das gesamte zuständige Personal (einschließlich der Mitglieder der Büros) teilnimmt, gibt es keine spezifische Regelung für die Häufigkeit der Dienstreisen nach Brüssel. Diese können mit anderen wichtigen Sitzungen in Brüssel zusammenfallen und erfordern nicht notwendigerweise die Teilnahme aller Mitglieder eines Büros.

2. Diese Aktivitäten sind Teil des normalen Beitrags des Personals zur Arbeit des Dienstes. Es gibt keine spezifische formale Rechtsgrundlage.

3. Die Sitzungen finden in den Räumlichkeiten des EAD statt. Die jährlichen Sitzungen aller Personalkategorien (jährliche Konferenz der Delegationsleiter, jährliches Seminar der Leiter der Verwaltungsabteilungen und der Regionalen Sicherheitsbeauftragten) finden in der Regel in den Gebäuden der EU-Institutionen statt, die über angemessene Sitzungsräume verfügen (meist in der Europäischen Kommission). Die Reisekosten werden aus dem üblichen Haushalt für Dienstreisen des EAD gedeckt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004000/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Professional organisations represented in EU delegations

The Staff Regulations allow for staff committees in the EU institutions and in delegations to third countries. However, it appears that in the EU delegations to third countries, there are committees for individual professional groups within the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) in addition to the staff committee (for example, the office of Heads of Delegation and the office of Heads of Administration etc.).

1. Which committees of this kind exist for professional groups? How many meetings did they hold in 2011 and 2012 and how many people took part? How often do these meetings occur and how long do they last, including travelling time?

2. What is the legal basis for these professional committees?

3. Where did the meetings take place? On what legal basis does the Commission or the EEAS pay the cost of these meetings?

Question for written answer E-004001/12
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Professional organisations represented in EU delegations

The staff regulations allow for staff committees in the EU institutions and in delegations to third countries. However, it appears that in the EU delegations to third countries, there are committees for individual professional groups within the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) in addition to the staff committee (for example, the office of Heads of Delegation and the office of Heads of Administration etc.).

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2. What is the legal basis for these professional committees?

3. Where did the meetings take place? On what legal basis does the Commission or the EEAS pay the cost of these meetings?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 July 2012)

1. At the request of staff in Delegations, and in order to strenghten the understanding between Headquarters services and the Delegations, there are currently three Bureaux: the Bureau of the Heads of Delegation (composed of 8 members for 141 Delegations), the Bureau of the Heads of Administration (composed of 6 members) and the Bureau of the Regional Security Officers (composed of 3 members). HQ services regularly consult them when preparing policies and documents that have an impact on the work in Delegations. The consultation process has proved to be useful and positive by developing common views. Apart from the annual events where all the relevant staff participates (including members of the Bureaux), there is no specific rule for the frequency of missions to Brussels. These could coincide with other necessary meetings in Brussels and would not necesseraly involve all members of a Bureau.

2. These activities are part of the normal contribution of the staff to the work of the service. There is no specific formal legal base.

3. The meetings take place in EEAS premises. The annual meetings of all staff categories (annual Head of Delegations' conference, annual seminar of Heads of administration and Regional security officers) usually take place in EU institutions' building offering adequate meeting rooms (usually the European Commission). The travel costs are covered by the normal mission budget of the EEAS.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004002/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(18 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διακίνηση αλλοδαπών

Τέσσερις αλλοδαποί διακινητές που μετέφεραν από την Τουρκία στην Ελλάδα 15 παράνομους μετανάστες (υπηκόους Συρίας και Ιράκ), συνελήφθησαν από την αστυνομία στην περιοχή Φερών Έβρου, μετά από συντονισμένη επιχείρηση. Οι άνδρες της Ειδικής Ομάδας Δίωξης Λαθρομετανάστευσης Αλεξανδρούπολης, ύστερα από παρακολούθηση, εντόπισαν τους διακινητές που αποβίβασαν από δύο πλαστικές βάρκες τους λαθρομετανάστες και τους οδήγησαν σε αγροτική οδό των Φερών.

Οι τέσσερις αλλοδαποί διακινητές (δύο υπήκοοι Ιράκ, ηλικίας 35 και 22 ετών και δύο Συρίας, ηλικίας 33 και 24 ετών), που κατηγορούνται για αδικήματα κακουργηματικού χαρακτήρα, θα οδηγηθούν στην Εισαγγελέα Πρωτοδικών Αλεξανδρούπολης, ενώ την προανάκριση διενεργεί το Τμήμα Συνοριακής Φύλαξης Φερών Αλεξανδρούπολης.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι αυξάνεται η παράνομη είσοδος μεταναστών στη χώρα μας, με ποιο τρόπο μπορεί η Επιτροπή να πιέσει την Τουρκική Κυβέρνηση να πατάξει το έγκλημα της ανθρώπινης εκμετάλλευσης από διακινητές;

Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή συνεχίζει να βρίσκεται σε στενή συνεργασία με τις τουρκικές αρχές προκειμένου να εντείνουν τις προσπάθειες τους για την πρόληψη της παράνομης μετανάστευσης, να συνάψουν τη συμφωνία επανεισδοχής οι διαπραγματεύσεις της οποίας ολοκληρώθηκαν, σε τεχνικό επίπεδο, τον Ιανουάριο του 2011, και να αναπτύξουν συνεργασία με τον FRONTEX, την EUROPOL και τις υπηρεσίες εφαρμογής του νόμου των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση εγκληματικών οργανώσεων που εμπλέκονται στη λαθραία μεταφορά μεταναστών. Στις 15 Μαρτίου, η Επιτροπή, από κοινού με τον FRONTEX, άρχισε συγκεκριμένο διάλογο με τις τουρκικές αρχές για το θέμα αυτό. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή δρομολόγησε το θετικό πρόγραμμα με την Τουρκία, με σκοπό να ενισχυθεί η συνεργασία ΕΕ-Τουρκίας σε ορισμένους κρίσιμους τομείς κοινού ενδιαφέροντος. Οι τομέας των θεωρήσεων, της μετανάστευσης και της κινητικότητας αποτελεί ουσιαστική συνιστώσα αυτής της πρωτοβουλίας.

Η Επιτροπή έχει θέσει σε λειτουργία αρκετά τεχνικά μέτρα και έχει παράσχει σημαντική οικονομική βοήθεια για την αντιμετώπιση των παράνομων μεταναστευτικών ροών από την Τουρκία προς την Ελλάδα. Οι προσπάθειες αυτές ενισχύονται, ιδίως με τη διεύρυνση των δραστηριοτήτων στα ελληνοτουρκικά σύνορα, τις οποίες συντονίζει ο FRONTEX, με την ενίσχυση της διοργανικής συνεργασίας μεταξύ FRONTEX, Europol και ΕΥΥΑ, και με τη συνεχιζόμενη στήριξη της Ελλάδας για τη δημιουργία ενός αποτελεσματικού συστήματος διαχείρισης των συνόρων και για τη χάραξη πολιτικής επιστροφών. Στις 28 Μαΐου, η Τουρκία και ο FRONTEX υπέγραψαν συμφωνία που θα επιτρέψει την αναβάθμιση της συνεργασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004002/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Human trafficking

Four foreign traffickers who had transported fifteen illegal immigrants (Syrian and Iraqi nationals) from Turkey to Greece were arrested by the police near Feres, in the prefecture of Evros, as part of a coordinated operation. Agents from the Alexandroupolis Special Illegal Immigration Unit, who had the traffickers under surveillance, caught them disembarking the illegal immigrants from two plastic boats and leading them to a country road near Feres.

The four foreign traffickers (two Iraqis, aged 35 and 22, and two Syrians, aged 33 and 24) have been charged accordingly and will be referred to the public prosecution service of the Alexandroupolis court of first instance, the preliminary interrogation being conducted by the Feres-Alexandroupolis Division of the National Border Guard.

Bearing in mind that the number of illegal immigrants entering our country is increasing, how will the Commission seek to persuade the Turkish Government to crack down on human trafficking?

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

The Commission continues in close consultations with the Turkish authorities to step up their efforts to prevent irregular migration; to conclude the readmission agreement, the negotiation of which was completed at technical level in January 2011; and to develop cooperation with Frontex, Europol and the EU Member States' law enforcement agencies in combating the criminal organisations involved in smuggling migrants. On 15 March the Commission, jointly with Frontex, started a specific dialogue with Turkish authorities on this endeavour. Additionally, the Commission launched the positive agenda with Turkey, intended to enhance EU-Turkey cooperation in a number of crucial areas of joint interest. The area of visa, migration and mobility is a key element of this initiative.

The Commission has put in place several technical measures and provided considerable financial support to tackle irregular migration flows from Turkey into Greece. Those efforts are being reinforced, notably by expanding the current operations at the Greek/Turkish border coordinated by Frontex, by increasing inter-agency cooperation, especially between Frontex, Europol and EASO, and by assisting Greece in building an efficient border management system and return policy. On 28 May Turkey and Frontex signed a working arrangement that will allow stepping up cooperation.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004003/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(18 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Καρκίνος του δέρματος

Αυξάνεται ανησυχητικά ο αριθμός κρουσμάτων καρκίνου του δέρματος σε άτομα ηλικίας μικρότερης των 40 ετών στις ΗΠΑ τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες, σύμφωνα με μελέτη που δημοσιεύεται σήμερα και που αποδίδει το φαινόμενο αυτό μερικώς στη χρήση των σολάριουμ.

Οι ερευνητές ανέλυσαν τα στατιστικά στοιχεία ασθενών ηλικίας 18 έως 39 ετών, στα οποία διαγνώστηκε για πρώτη φορά μελάνωμα μεταξύ 1970 και 2009.

Διαπίστωσαν ότι, κατά τη συγκεκριμένη περίοδο, τα κρούσματα αυτού του καρκίνου οκταπλασιάστηκαν στις νέες γυναίκες και τετραπλασιάστηκαν στους άνδρες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν έχουμε παρόμοιες στατιστικές μελέτες και στις χώρες της ΕΕ και αν χρηματοδοτούνται μελέτες για την καταπολέμηση του καρκίνου του δέρματος και στην Ευρώπη.

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η Στατιστική Υπηρεσία της ΕΕ (Eurostat) συλλέγει στοιχεία σχετικά με το ποσοστό θνησιμότητας από καρκίνο του δέρματος σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ ([1]). Επιπλέον, το σχέδιο Globocan στο Διεθνές Κέντρο Έρευνας για τον Καρκίνο παρέχει τα πιο πρόσφατα (2008) στοιχεία σύμφωνα με τις εκτιμήσεις για τη συχνότητα εμφάνισης και τον πενταετή επιπολασμό ([2]).

Τα στοιχεία της Eurostat δείχνουν ότι το ποσοστό θνησιμότητας από καρκίνο του δέρματος ανά 100 000 κατοίκους έχει παραμείνει σταθερό κατά την περίοδο 2000-2009, με ελαφρά μεταβολή από 2,0 σε 2,1 συνολικά, και 1,3 σε 1,2 σε άτομα κάτω των 65 ετών. Ωστόσο, κατά τη διάρκεια της ίδιας περιόδου, η θνησιμότητα από καρκίνο του δέρματος αυξήθηκε σε άτομα άνω των 65 ετών από 8,3 σε 9,6 ανά 100 000 άτομα. Η αύξηση αυτή είναι μεγαλύτερη για τους άνδρες ηλικίας άνω των 65 ετών (10,6 σε 12,9) από ό,τι για τις γυναίκες (6,8 σε 7,2).

Η συχνότητα εμφάνισης του καρκίνου του δέρματος αυξάνεται με την ηλικία. Η εκτιμώμενη συχνότητα εμφάνισης καρκίνου του δέρματος στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, σύμφωνα με το σχέδιο Globocan, είναι έξι φορές μεγαλύτερη για άτομα ηλικίας άνω των 75 ετών σε σύγκριση με την ηλικιακή ομάδα 15-39. Για τα άτομα κάτω των 55, η εκτιμώμενη συχνότητα εμφάνισης είναι υψηλότερη για τις γυναίκες. Αυτή η τάση αλλάζει μετά την ηλικία των 55, όπου η συχνότητα στους άνδρες είναι υψηλότερη από ό,τι στις γυναίκες.

Η έρευνα για τους καρκίνους του δέρματος είναι προτεραιότητα βάσει του έβδομου προγράμματος-πλαισίου για την έρευνα και την τεχνολογική ανάπτυξη (ΠΠ7, 2007-2013). Μέχρι σήμερα, έχουν επενδυθεί 46 εκατ. ευρώ (33 έργα) για την κατανόηση, τη διάγνωση και τη θεραπεία των ασθενειών αυτών.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Causes_of_death_statistics
Και απευθείας σύνδεσμος στη βάση δεδομένων http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/setupModifyTableLayout.do.
([2]) http://globocan.iarc.fr/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004003/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Skin cancer

In recent decades there has been a worrying increase in the number of cases of skin cancer among people under 40 in the United States, according to a study published today which also attributes the problem, in part, to the use of sunbeds.

Researchers studied the statistical data regarding patients aged between 18 and 39 years old who were diagnosed with melanoma for the first time between 1970 and 2009.

They found that during the period in question, cases of this type of cancer among young women had increased eightfold and fourfold among men.

Will the Commission say whether any similar statistical studies exist in EU countries and whether studies are being funded for combating skin cancer in Europe?

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

The EU statistical office Eurostat collects data on the rate of skin cancer mortality in all EU Member States ([1]). In addition, the Globocan project at the International Agency for Research on Cancer provides the most recent (2008) estimated incidence and five-year prevalence data ([2]).

The Eurostat data shows that skin cancer standard mortality rate per 100 000 inhabitants has remained stable over the period 2000-2009, with a small variation from a rate of 2.0 towards 2.1 overall, and from a rate of 1.3 to 1.2 in people below 65 years of age. During the same period, the skin cancer mortality rate has however increased in people over 65 from 8.3 towards 9.6 per 100 000 people. This increase is greater for men over 65 (10.6 towards 12.9) than for women (6.8 towards 7.2).

The incidence rate of skin cancer increases over age. The Globocan estimated incidence rate for skin cancer in the European Union is six times higher for people over 75 years compared to age group 15-39. For people under 55, the estimated incidence rate is higher for women. This trend changes after the age of 55, where men's incidence rate is higher than women's.

Research on skin cancers has been a priority across the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). So far, EUR 46 million (33 projects) has been devoted to the understanding, diagnosis and treatment of these diseases.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Causes_of_death_statistics
And direct link to database: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/setupModifyTableLayout.do.
([2]) http://globocan.iarc.fr/.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004004/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(18 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αποθέματα νερού στην Ευρώπη

Εάν συνεχιστεί η αλόγιστη χρήση των υδάτινων πόρων της Ευρώπης, τότε θα κινδυνεύσουν τα οικοσυστήματά της, αλλά και η οικονομία και η παραγωγικότητά της, σύμφωνα με μελέτη της Ευρωπαϊκής Υπηρεσίας Περιβάλλοντος (ΕΕΑ — European Environment Agency).

Όπως αναφέρεται στη μελέτη της ΕΕΑ, τα αποθέματα νερού της Ευρώπης βρίσκονται υπό πίεση και η κατάσταση επιδεινώνεται, καθώς συνεχίζεται η αλόγιστη σπατάλη τους, ενώ είναι ήδη περιορισμένα, κάτι που καθιστά επιτακτική την αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή της υπάρχουσας νομοθεσίας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν υπάρχει σχέδιο δράσης και σε ποιες ενέργειες σκοπεύει να προβεί ύστερα από αυτές τις διαπιστώσεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Ιουνίου 2012)

Από την ανάλυση σεναρίων που διενήργησε η Επιτροπή στο πλαίσιο της μελέτης ClimWatAdapt ([1]) και η οποία αντικατοπτρίζεται στην αναφερόμενη μελέτη του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Περιβάλλοντος προκύπτει ότι, ακόμη και αν βελτιωθεί σημαντικά η αποδοτικότητα της χρήσης του νερού σε όλους τους τομείς, η πίεση που δέχονται τα ύδατα θα εξακολουθήσει να αποτελεί πρόβλημα σε πολλές λεκάνες απορροής της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης τα επόμενα 40 έτη. Στο πλαίσιο του σχεδίου για τη διαφύλαξη των υδατικών πόρων της Ευρώπης ([2]), το οποίο θα καταθέσει η Επιτροπή τον Νοέμβριο του 2012 και στο οποίο θα εμπλουτιστούν τα αποτελέσματα της μελέτης ClimWatAdapt, διατυπώνεται ένα σενάριο αναφοράς που συνδυάζει αφενός σενάρια για το κλίμα, τις χρήσεις γης και τις κοινωνικοοικονομικές πτυχές, και, αφετέρου, τη χάραξη πολιτικής και εξετάζει τις συνέπειες για τη διαθεσιμότητα και τη χρήση των υδατικών πόρων. Τα σενάρια αυτά θα χρησιμοποιηθούν για τον καθορισμό δράσεων ενωσιακού επιπέδου με τους ακόλουθους στόχους:

προώθηση της ένταξης του νερού στις τομεακές πολιτικές, με μέριμνα ώστε να συνεκτιμώνται πλήρως οι επιπτώσεις των κοινωνικοοικονομικών δραστηριοτήτων και των νομοθετικών ρυθμίσεων στην κατάσταση των υδατικών πόρων·

ενίσχυση της χρήσης οικονομικών μέσων με σκοπό την καλύτερη κατανομή των πόρων και εσωτερίκευση του εξωτερικού κόστους·

επίτευξη αποτελεσματικότερης διακυβέρνησης στον υδατικό τομέα και αποτελεσματικότερων σχέσεων εργασίας μεταξύ των θεσμικών οργάνων και πλήρης ένταξη των θεμάτων ποιότητας και ποσότητας του νερού και υδρομορφολογίας στις διαχειριστικές δράσεις·

βελτίωση των γνώσεων και των εργαλείων που έχουν στη διάθεσή τους οι φορείς διαχείρισης υδάτων, καθώς και τα διοικητικά στελέχη όλων των κλάδων που εξαρτώνται από το νερό, ώστε να καταστεί δυνατή η αποτελεσματική λήψη αποφάσεων και να μειωθεί η διοικητική επιβάρυνση.

([1]) http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/env/wfd/library?l=/framework_directive/climate_adaptation.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004004/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Water reserves in Europe

If the present excessive use of Europe's water resources continues, then Europe's ecosystems — but also its economy and productivity — are all threatened, according to a study by the European Environment Agency (EEA).

As indicated in the EEA study, Europe's water reserves are under pressure and the situation is getting worse, since the already limited reserves are continuing to be wasted, making it imperative that existing legislation be implemented effectively.

Will the Commission say:

Is there a relevant action plan and what measures does it intend to take in the light of these findings?

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

Scenario analysis performed by the Commission in the context of ClimWatAdapt ([1]) study and reflected in the mentioned EEA study show that, even with strong improvements in water efficiency in all sectors, water stress would remain a problem in numerous EU catchments in the forthcoming 40 years. In the context of the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources ([2]) to be presented by the Commission in November 2012 and refining the result of ClimWatAdapt, a baseline scenario is being developed bringing together climate, land-use, socioeconomic scenarios and policy development, looking at the implication for water resources availability and use. These scenarios will be used for the definition of actions at EU level aiming at:

Fostering integration of water into sectoral policies, by ensuring that impact of socioeconomic activities and regulations on the state of water resources is fully taken on board

Increasing the use of economic instruments for a better allocation of resources and internalisation of external costs.

Achieving a more efficient water governance and effective working relationships between institutions, and fully integrate water quality, quantity and hydromorphology issues in management actions.

Improving knowledge and tools available to water managers and managers of all sectors dependent on water, enabling effective decision making and reducing administrative burden.

([1]) http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/env/wfd/library?l=/framework_directive/climate_adaptation.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004007/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(18 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή κανόνων στην Ελλάδα για τη διευκόλυνση εγκατάστασης τηλεπικοινωνιακών δικτύων

Τον Οκτώβριο του 2011 η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ζήτησε από την Ελλάδα «να θεσπίσει νομοθεσία που θα διευκολύνει τις εταιρίες τηλεπικοινωνιών να εγκαταστήσουν ευκολίες, όπως αγωγούς, φρεάτια, ιστούς ή κεραίες επί, πάνω ή κάτω από δημόσια ή ιδιωτική ιδιοκτησία». Σύμφωνα με την Επιτροπή, «η Ελλάδα είχε αρχικά προγραμματίσει να θεσπίσει νομοθεσία σχετικά με τα εν λόγω δικαιώματα διέλευσης ήδη από το τέλος του 2006, όταν η χώρα εφάρμοσε τους ενωσιακούς κανόνες του 2002 για τις τηλεπικοινωνίες. Δεν έχουν όμως ακόμη τεθεί σε εφαρμογή όλοι οι απαιτούμενοι κανόνες».

Δεδομένης της σημαντικής υστέρησης της Ελλάδας στους στόχους του Ψηφιακού Θεματολογίου και της τεράστιας σημασίας που έχει το ευρυζωνικό διαδίκτυο για την οικονομική και κοινωνική ανάπτυξη, η διευκόλυνση των ιδιωτικών και δημοσίων επενδύσεων στον συγκεκριμένο τομέα είναι απαραίτητη.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Ανταποκρίθηκε εμπρόθεσμα η Ελλάδα στην «αιτιολογημένη γνώμη» της Επιτροπής για την εφαρμογή κανόνων διευκόλυνσης εγκατάστασης τηλεπικοινωνιακών δικτύων;

2. Έχουν ληφθεί από την Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση μέτρα για την επίλυση του προβλήματος και, αν ναι, αυτά κρίνονται ικανοποιητικά;

3. Πώς αξιολογεί η Επιτροπή την κατάσταση των τηλεπικοινωνιακών δικτύων στην Ελλάδα; Πώς θα μπορούσαν αυτά να συμβάλλουν στην ανάπτυξη και ανταγωνιστικότητα της Ελληνικής οικονομίας; Τι συνιστά η ΕΕ για την προσέλκυση επενδύσεων στον εν λόγω τομέα και μέσω ποιων χρηματοδοτικών εργαλείων και προγραμμάτων μπορεί να ενισχύσει την ανάπτυξη τηλεπικοινωνιακών δικτύων στην Ελλάδα;

4. Τι προβλέπεται για τις εκτεταμένες νησιωτικές και ακριτικές περιοχές της Ελλάδας, όπου η οικονομική βιωσιμότητα των τηλεπικοινωνιακών δικτύων και η προσέλκυση επενδύσεων είναι δύσκολη;

Απάντηση της κας Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η Ελλάδα υιοθέτησε το 2012 σειρά νομοθετικών πράξεων στον τομέα των δικαιωμάτων διέλευσης. Η Επιτροπή χαιρετίζει την έκδοση αυτής της νομοθεσίας και επί του παρόντος την εξετάζει ενόψει των εν εξελίξει διαδικασιών επί παραβάσει.

Η πρόοδος της Ελλάδας στην επίτευξη των στόχων του Ψηφιακού Θεματολογίου για την Ευρώπη όσον αφορά την ανάπτυξη ευρυζωνικών συνδέσεων υψηλής ταχύτητας (30 Mbps) και πολύ υψηλής ταχύτητας (100 Mbps) ήταν μέχρι στιγμής αμελητέα, τόσο από πλευράς κάλυψης όσο και αφομοίωσης. Τα δίκτυα υψηλής ταχύτητας είναι, ωστόσο, όχι μόνο η σπονδυλική στήλη της ψηφιακής ενιαίας αγοράς, αλλά και καίριας σημασίας καταλύτης της ανάπτυξης και της απασχόλησης.

Προκειμένου να προσελκύσει επενδύσεις στον τομέα, η Ελλάδα μπορεί να χρειαστεί να επιταχύνει την εφαρμογή της ψηφιακής στρατηγικής της, η οποία έχει ως στόχο να διευκολύνει την αξιοποίηση των δικτύων πρόσβασης νέας γενεάς, και να ολοκληρώσει την απενεργοποίηση των αναλογικών εκπομπών και να απελευθερώσει το ψηφιακό μέρισμα.

Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει με πολλούς τρόπους τις προσπάθειες των κρατών μελών για τόνωση των επενδύσεων σε ευρυζωνικές υποδομές υψηλών ταχυτήτων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των χρηματοοικονομικών εργαλείων, π.χ. πιστωτική ενίσχυση από την Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Επενδύσεων, τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία και το ταμείο αγροτικής ανάπτυξης, καθώς και άλλες προγραμματιζόμενες πρωτοβουλίες όπως η διευκόλυνση «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη», η αναθεώρηση των κατευθυντήριων γραμμών για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις, ή η πρωτοβουλία για μείωση του κόστους θέσης σε λειτουργία υποδομής επικοινωνίας υψηλής ταχύτητας.

Ενώ η ύπαρξη εκτεταμένων νησιωτικών και παραμεθόριων περιοχών μπορεί να είναι ένας από τους λόγους για τους οποίους η Ελλάδα θίγεται από το ψηφιακό χάσμα, η Επιτροπή έδωσε πρόσφατα το πράσινο φως, από πλευράς κανόνων για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις, σε έργο «Αγροτικής Ευρυζωνικότητας» ([1]) το οποίο στοχεύει στην παροχή κάλυψης με ευρυζωνικές υποδομές ουσιώδους τμήματος των ανεπαρκώς εξυπηρετούμενων περιοχών της χώρας, καθώς και στην παροχή αξιόπιστων και οικονομικά προσιτών υπηρεσιών συνδετικότητας.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/index.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_result.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004007/12
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Implementation of rules in Greece to facilitate the construction of telecommunications networks

In October 2011, the Commission requested Greece to adopt legislation making it easier for telecom operators to install facilities such as ducts, shafts, masts or antennas on, over or under public or private property. According to the Commission, Greece had originally planned to adopt legislation on such rights of way by the end of 2006 when the country implemented the EU's 2002 telecom rules. But not all the necessary rules have yet been put in place.

Given Greece's significant lag in promoting the objectives of the Digital Agenda and the huge importance of eurozone Internet for economic and social development, it is essential to facilitate private and public investment in this specific sector.

In view of the above, will the Commission answer say:

1. Did Greece respond in time to the Commission's 'reasoned opinion' on the implementation of rules to facilitate the installation of telecommunications networks?

2. Have measures been taken by the Greek Government to solve the problem and, if so, are they deemed satisfactory?

3. How does the Commission evaluate the situation with regard to telecommunications networks in Greece? How could they contribute to the growth and the competitiveness of the Greek economy? What are the EU's recommendations for attracting investment to the sector in question and with which financial tools and programmes can it support the development of telecommunications networks in Greece?

4. What provisions are being made for the extensive island and border regions of Greece, where the economic viability of telecommunications networks and the task of attracting investment are difficult?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

Greece adopted in 2012 a number of legislative acts in the area of rights of way. The Commission welcomes the adoption of this legislation and is currently examining it, in view of the ongoing infringement proceedings.

Greece's progress in reaching the targets of the Digital Agenda for Europe concerning the deployment of high-speed (30 MBps) and very-high speed broadband (100 MBps) has so far been negligible, both in terms of coverage and take-up. High-speed networks are, however, not only the backbone of the digital single market, but also a key enabler of growth and jobs.

In order to attract investment in the sector, Greece may need to accelerate the implementation of its Digital strategy, which aims to facilitate the deployment of NGA networks, and to complete the analogue switch-off and release the digital dividend.

The Commission is supporting Member States' efforts to stimulate investment in high speed broadband infrastructure in many ways including financial tools e.g. credit enhancement by the European Investment Bank, structural funds and rural development funds, as well as other planned initiatives such as the Connecting Europe Facility, the revision of State Aid guidelines, or the initiative on reducing the cost of rolling out high speed communication infrastructure.

While the existence of extensive insular and border regions may be one of the reasons why Greece is affected by the Digital Divide, the Commission has recently cleared under State Aid rules a 'Rural Broadband' project ([1]), which aims to provide broadband infrastructure coverage to a substantial part of the poorly served areas of the country as well as providing reliable and affordable connectivity services.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/index.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_result.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004008/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(18 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Έλεγχοι εφαρμογής στο 7ο Πρόγραμμα Πλαίσιο για την Έρευνα

Τον Νοέμβριο του 2010, σε απάντησή της στην κοινοβουλευτική ερώτηση E-8013/2010 σχετικά με τους ελέγχους εφαρμογής στο 7ο Πρόγραμμα-Πλαίσιο, η Επίτροπος, κ. Γκέγκεν-Κουήν, παρουσίασε ορισμένα ανησυχητικά στοιχεία για τα ευρήματα των εκ των υστέρων οικονομικών λογιστικών ελέγχων που είχαν διεξαχθεί ως τότε σε έργα του 7ου ΠΠ.

Με βάση τα στοιχεία της κ. Επιτρόπου, το ποσοστό των δημοσιονομικών διορθώσεων που ζητήθηκαν για τα ως τότε ελεγχθέντα έργα ξεπερνούσαν το 4 % επί των συνεισφορών της ΕΕ στο 7ο ΠΠ.

Σήμερα, με μεγαλύτερο αριθμό ολοκληρωμένων έργων και με δεδομένη την εμπειρία της μεσοπρόθεσμης αξιολόγησης του 7ου ΠΠ και την εμπέδωση των κανόνων υλοποίησης, αναμένεται από την Επιτροπή οι έλεγχοί της να έχουν καλύψει ικανοποιητικό ποσοστό έργων, αλλά και να έχουν ελαχιστοποιηθεί οι απαιτούμενες δημοσιονομικές διορθώσεις.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιος είναι ο αριθμός των ελέγχων που έχουν διεξαχθεί σε προγράμματα και συμμετέχοντες του 7ου ΠΠ ως τώρα; Πώς συγκρίνεται ο αριθμός των ελέγχων του 7ου ΠΠ με προηγούμενα προγράμματα-πλαίσια (σε αντίστοιχη φάση υλοποίησής τους);

2. Ποιο είναι το ύψος των δημοσιονομικών διορθώσεων που προέκυψαν από τους παραπάνω ελέγχους;

3. Πώς αξιολογεί η Επιτροπή τα ευρήματα των ελέγχων και τις απαιτούμενες διορθώσεις; Θεωρεί ικανοποιητικά τα ευρήματα αυτά; Κρίνει απαραίτητη τη λήψη διορθωτικών μέτρων και αν ναι ποιων;

4. Δεδομένου ότι αρκετά κράτη μέλη, ιδίως τα νεότερα, διαθέτουν σημαντικά μικρότερη εμπειρία στην υλοποίηση έργων των προγραμμάτων-πλαισίων, είναι εύλογη η διαπίστωση διαφορών στην πιστότητα τήρησης των διαδικασιών. Κρίνει η Επιτροπή ικανοποιητική την απλή δειγματοληπτική επιλογή συμμετεχόντων, χωρίς να λαμβάνει υπόψη την διαθέσιμη εμπειρία; Σε ποια κράτη μέλη διαπιστώθηκε ο μεγαλύτερος αριθμός σφαλμάτων; Πώς σχεδιάζει η Επιτροπή να βοηθήσει τα κράτη μέλη αυτά για την καλύτερη τήρηση των κανόνων εφαρμογής;

Απάντηση της κας Geoghegan-Quinn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιουνίου 2012)

1. Στις 31 Δεκεμβρίου 2011, μετά από πρόγραμμα λογιστικών ελέγχων που υπερέβη τη διετία στο πλαίσιο του εβδόμου προγράμματος-πλαισίου έρευνας και τεχνολογικής ανάπτυξης (7ο ΠΠ, 2007-2013), το οποίο προβλέπεται να διαρκέσει μέχρι το 2016, η Επιτροπή ολοκλήρωσε 901 ελέγχους. Κατά το πέρας αντίστοιχης χρονικής περιόδου, τον Απρίλιο του 2009 είχαν ολοκληρωθεί 1 264 έλεγχοι στο πλαίσιο του 6ου ΠΠ (2002-2006).

Για να κατανοήσουμε αυτή τη διαφορά, πρέπει να διευκρινίσουμε ότι το πρόγραμμα λογιστικών ελέγχων του 6ου ΠΠ ξεκίνησε αργότερα εντός της περιόδου προγραμματισμού του 6ου ΠΠ σε σύγκριση με το 7ο ΠΠ (5 έτη για το 6ο ΠΠ έναντι 2 ετών για το 7ο ΠΠ). Ως εκ τούτου, υπήρχε περισσότερο υλικό προς έλεγχο, το οποίο επέτρεψε τη γρήγορη διενέργεια περισσότερων ελέγχων.

2. Οι εν λόγω 901 έλεγχοι στο πλαίσιο του 7ου ΠΠ κατέληξαν σε προτάσεις προσαρμογών κατά τι άνω των 16 εκατ. ευρώ, μετά από λογιστικούς ελέγχους συνεισφορών της ΕΕ στο 7ο ΠΠ ύψους σχεδόν 363 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ.

3. Η Επιτροπή παρατήρησε ότι τα ίδια είδη λαθών με αυτά του 6ου ΠΠ έγιναν και στο 7ο ΠΠ. Τα λάθη αυτά τα αντιμετωπίζει με διενέργεια λογιστικών ελέγχων «διορθωτικού/προληπτικού» χαρακτήρα, δηλαδή εστιάζοντας σε δικαιούχους που λαμβάνουν μεγάλα ποσά, έτσι ώστε τα τυχόν πορίσματα των ελέγχων να τους γνωστοποιούνται σε πρώιμο στάδιο. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή πραγματοποίησε ενημερωτική εκστρατεία το 2012 με στόχο τους δικαιούχους και τους ελεγκτές πιστοποίησης προκειμένου να εξηγήσει τα κριτήρια επιλεξιμότητας και τον τρόπο αποφυγής λαθών. Η προσέγγισή της επιτυγχάνει σωστή ισορροπία μεταξύ της ανάγκης χρηστής δημοσιονομικής διαχείρισης και της ανάγκης στήριξης της έρευνας και της καινοτομίας.

4. Οι διαφορές στην ακρίβεια εφαρμογής των διαδικασιών δεν συνδέονται με το κράτος μέλος, αλλά με τα χαρακτηριστικά των συστημάτων ελέγχου των δικαιούχων. Η Επιτροπή δεν υπολογίζει τα ποσοστά λάθους ανά κράτος μέλος, δεδομένου ότι σε αυτό το επίπεδο δεν διατίθενται αντιπροσωπευτικά αποτελέσματα. Με την ενημερωτική εκστρατεία η Επιτροπή προσπαθεί να αποτρέψει να συμβούν λάθη ώστε οι δικαιούχοι να συμμορφώνονται με τους κανόνες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004008/12
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Checks on implementation of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research

In November 2010, in response to parliamentary Question E-8013/2010 concerning checks on implementation of the Seventh Framework Programme, Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn presented some worrying data on the findings of the *ex-post* financial audits conducted to date on Seventh Framework Programme projects.

According to the Commissioner's data, the financial adjustments that were proposed for the projects audited so far exceeded 4% of EU contributions to the Seventh Framework Programme.

Today, given the greater number of completed projects, the experience of the mid-term review of the Seventh Framework Programme and consolidation of the implementing rules, it is expected that the Commission will have conducted checks on an adequate proportion of projects but also that the required financial adjustments will have been minimised.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How many checks have been carried out to date on programmes and participants in the Seventh Framework Programme? How does the number of checks on the Seventh Framework Programme compare with those on previous framework programmes (at a corresponding phase of their implementation)?

2. What is the total amount of financial adjustments resulting from the abovementioned checks?

3. How does it assess the findings from the checks and the required adjustments? Does it regard these findings as satisfactory? Does it consider it necessary for corrective measures to be taken, and if so which?

4. Given that a number of Member States, and particularly the newer ones, are much less experienced in implementing framework programme projects, it is understandable that there should be differences in their degree of compliance with the correct procedures. Does the Commission regard as satisfactory the selection of participants by a simple sampling process, without taking into account their level of experience? In which Member States have the greatest number of mistakes been detected? How does the Commission plan to help these Member States improve their ability to adhere to implementing rules?

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

1. As of 31 December 2011, after over two years' audit campaign under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) foreseen to last until 2016, the Commission completed 901 audits. After the same period of time, under FP6 (2002-2006), in April 2009, 1 264 audits had been completed.

In order to understand this difference, it must be noted that the FP6 audit campaign started later into the FP6 programming period than FP7 (5 years for FP6 against 2 years for FP7). As such, there was more auditable material which permitted launching more audits quickly.

2. These 901 FP7 audits have resulted in proposed adjustments of just over EUR 16 million, after auditing almost EUR 363 million in FP7 EU contributions.

3. The Commission has noticed that the same types of errors of FP6 occur in FP7. It is addressing this by launching audits of a 'corrective/preventive' nature i.e. focusing on beneficiaries receiving large amounts so that any audit findings are known to them at an early stage. Moreover, the Commission has set up a communication campaign in 2012 targeted at beneficiaries and certifying auditors to explain the eligibility criteria and how to avoid errors. Its approach is a good balance between the need for sound financial management and the need to support research and innovation.

4. Differences in the accuracy of the implementation of procedures are not linked to the Member State, but to the characteristics of the beneficiaries' control systems. The Commission does not calculate error rates by Member State as representative results at this level are not available. With the communication campaign, the Commission tries to prevent errors from happening in order for beneficiaries to comply with the rules.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004009/12
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Mali – kryzys humanitarny

Niedawny konflikt w Mali doprowadził do masowego przesiedlania się ludności, które stanowi problem w niektórych najbardziej dotkniętych brakiem bezpieczeństwa żywnościowego regionach północnego Mali i państw sąsiadujących. Kryzys żywnościowy w 2012 r. ma ogromny wpływ na większość państw Sahelu, w tym na północne regiony niektórych państw nadbrzeżnych Afryki Zachodniej. Liczba osób, które cierpią z powodu kryzysu, wynosi 15,5 miliona, z czego 8 milionów potrzebuje obecnie natychmiastowego wsparcia.

Komisja precyzyjnie określiła swoje stanowisko i planowane działania w komunikacie z dnia 11 kwietnia 2012 r. (MEMO/12/247). Doniesienia medialne wskazują jednak na to, że obecnie UE rozważa udzielenie „innego wsparcia" zaproponowanej przez ECOWAS misji bezpieczeństwa prowadzonej przez Unię Afrykańską. Czy Komisja może się ustosunkować do tych informacji?

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

W konkluzjach Rady w sprawie Mali z dnia 23 kwietnia 2012 r. stwierdza się, że UE jest gotowa udzielić wsparcia dla przemian odbywających się pod auspicjami podmiotów cywilnych w Mali w ścisłej współpracy ze Wspólnotą Gospodarczą Państw Afryki Zachodniej (ECOWAS), Unią Afrykańską i innymi partnerami międzynarodowymi. Jeśli chodzi o sytuację w północnej części Mali, UE popiera zaangażowanie ECOWAS, Unii Afrykańskiej, Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych i międzynarodowej społeczności w kwestie ochrony bezpieczeństwa, suwerenności i integralności terytorialnej państwa.

W związku z ewentualną pomocą dla misji bezpieczeństwa w Mali UE jest w bliskim kontakcie z Unią Afrykańską i ECOWAS w celu zidentyfikowania ich potrzeb. Przed rozpoczęciem planowania strategicznego należy wyjaśnić szereg nieuregulowanych kwestii.

Jak tylko wyjaśnione zostaną parametry planowych działań ECOWAS (mandat, wniosek ze strony malijskich władz), można będzie rozważyć konkretne wsparcie ze strony UE. Pierwszym wariantem pozostaje jednak rozwiązanie polityczne oparte na pokojowym dialogu, popierane również przez ECOWAS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004009/12
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Mali: humanitarian crisis

The recent conflict in Mali has caused massive displacement, which is affecting some of the most food-insecure areas of northern Mali and the neighbouring countries. The 2012 food crisis is having a major impact on most countries of the Sahel region, including the northern zones of some West African coastal states. The number of those affected stands at 15.5 million, of whom 8 million are now in need of emergency assistance.

The Commission's response and actions are clearly set out in its communication of 11 April 2012 (MEMO/12/247), but media reports have indicated that the EU is now considering whether to provide 'other support' to an African Union-led security mission proposed by Ecowas. Can the Commission elaborate on this point?

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

The Council conclusions on Mali dated 23 April 2012 stated that the EU stands ready to provide support to the civilian-led transition in Mali in close cooperation with Ecowas, the African Union and other international partners. Concerning the situation in the north of Mali, the EU supports the commitment of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas), the African Union, the United Nations and the international community to preserve the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

Concerning possible support for a security mission in Mali, the EU is in close contact with the African Union and Ecowas to identify their needs. Many uncertain elements remain to be clarified before strategic planning can proceed.

As soon as the planned Ecowas operation's parameters (mandate, request from the Malian authorities) are clear, concrete EU support may be considered, but the first option remains a political solution through peaceful dialogue, which Ecowas also supports.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004010/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Nowa polityka UE wobec Białorusi

W trakcie drugiej sesji zwyczajnej Zgromadzenia Parlamentarnego Euronest, która odbyła się w dniach 2-4 kwietnia w Baku, posłowie do PE i ich odpowiednicy z parlamentów wschodnich krajów sąsiadujących spotkali się w ramach grupy roboczej ds. Białorusi z czterema przedstawicielami białoruskiego społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i opozycji. Białoruscy dysydenci stwierdzili, że UE powinna udzielać większego rzeczywistego wsparcia, a nie tylko organizować seminaria i przyjmować rezolucje, jeśli oczekuje rzeczywistych zmian na Białorusi. Aleksiej Janukiewicz z Białoruskiego Frontu Ludowego stwierdził: „Oczekujemy od was konkretnych działań – propozycji dotyczących waszego wsparcia finansowego, technicznego i politycznego. Z waszej strony padło już wiele słów, ale najwyraźniej nie jest to dobry sposób wywierania wpływu na Aleksandra Łukaszenkę". Białoruski dysydent Aleksandr Milinkiewicz, który w 2006 r. został uhonorowany przyznawaną przez Parlament Europejski Nagrodą im. Sacharowa za wolność myśli, stwierdził, że wysoko ceni sobie wsparcie moralne ze strony Parlamentu, ale że brakuje rzeczywistych instrumentów zmian. Inni dysydenci wypowiadali się jeszcze ostrzej. Stwierdzili, że „polityka UE jest bardzo słaba. Nakładane sankcje są jedynie ostrzeżeniami, a nie rzeczywistymi ograniczeniami. Potrzebne są realne plany, pieniądze i warunki, a nie jedynie seminaria i rezolucje".

Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel zgodzi się, że podwójna polityka UE, polegająca z jednej strony na otwartości, a z drugiej – na nakładaniu sankcji na Białoruś, okazała się bezskuteczna i że należy znaleźć inny sposób?

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

UE jest głęboko zaniepokojona represjami wobec opozycji politycznej, społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i niezależnych mediów na Białorusi.

W świetle pogorszenia sytuacji UE musiała podjąć stosowne działania. Unia dała wyraz swoim zastrzeżeniom w licznych wnioskach, oświadczeniach i deklaracjach Rady. Ponadto od stycznia 2011 r. UE ponownie zastosowała, poszerzyła i wielokrotnie zaostrzyła środki ograniczające wobec osób odpowiedzialnych za represje i osób z nimi związanych. W ocenie UE komunikaty publiczne wydane przez UE i środki ograniczające przez nią zastosowane miały kluczowe znaczenie dla wywierania presji politycznej na reżim białoruski i tym samym przyczyniły się do uwolnienia niektórych więźniów politycznych.

Jednak same zdecydowane komunikaty i środki ograniczające nie wystarczą. Z tego względu UE wzmocniła również swoje zaangażowanie w kwestie związane ze społeczeństwem obywatelskim i opozycją polityczną. Wsparcie UE wobec społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i ofiar represji zostało zwiększone czterokrotnie z 5,1 mln EUR do 19,6 mln EUR na lata 2011-2013. W czerwcu 2011 r. Komisja zaprosiła Białoruś do negocjacji w sprawie umów o ułatwieniach wizowych i readmisji, które przyniosłyby korzyści całemu społeczeństwu. Białoruś jak dotąd nie odpowiedziała na zaproszenie. Ponadto w marcu 2012 r. komisarz ds. rozszerzenia i polityki sąsiedztwa rozpoczął dialog ze społeczeństwem białoruskim dotyczący reform koniecznych dla modernizacji Białorusi i związanego z nimi potencjalnego rozwoju stosunków z UE, w tym ewentualnego wsparcia ze strony UE w tym zakresie. Działania te przyczynią się do wzmocnienia dialogu politycznego między UE a przedstawicielami społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i opozycji politycznej na Białorusi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004010/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — New EU policy for Belarus

During the second ordinary session of the Euronest inter-parliamentary assembly, which took place between 2 and 4 April in Baku, MEPs and their counterparts from Eastern neighbourhood parliaments met four Belarusian civil society and opposition representatives in a working group on Belarus. The Belarusian dissidents stated that the EU should provide more real help, not just 'seminars and resolutions', if it wants real change in Belarus. Alexei Yanukevich, of the Belarusian People's Front, said 'what we expect from you is concrete action — proposals for your financial, technical and political support. A lot of things have been said from your side, but obviously this is not a way to influence Alexander Lukashenko'. Belarusian dissident Alexander Milinkevich, who won the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2006, said that Parliament's moral support is highly appreciated, but real instruments of change are missing. Other dissidents were even harsher, stating that 'the policy of the EU is very weak. The sanctions you are imposing are not real sanctions, only warnings. We need real plans, money and conditions, not just seminars and resolutions'.

Would the High Representative agree that the EU's dual policy of openness and sanctions against Belarus has failed, and that a 'third way' must be found?

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

The EU is deeply concerned about the ongoing repression of the political opposition, civil society, and independent media in Belarus.

In the light of the deterioration of the situation, the EU has had no choice but to react. It has been vocal about its concerns through numerous Council conclusions, statements and declarations. In addition, the EU has, since January 2011, reactivated, broadened and repeatedly strengthened its restrictive measures towards those responsible and those associated with them. It is the EU's assessment that the EU's public messages and restrictive measures have been instrumental in keeping up the political pressure on the regime and therefore contributed to the release of some political prisoners.

A policy of tough messages and restrictive measures alone would be insufficient, so the EU has also strengthened its engagement with civil society and the political opposition. The EU's support to civil society and victims of repression has quadrupled from EUR 5.1 to 19.6 million for 2011-2013. In June 2011 the Commission invited Belarus to start negotiations for visa facilitation and readmission agreements for the benefit of the public at large. Belarus has up to now not responded to the offer. In addition, in March 2012 Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy launched a Dialogue on Modernisation with Belarusian society on the necessary reforms for the modernisation of Belarus and on the related potential development of relations with the EU including possible EU support in this regard. This will contribute to a strengthened EU policy dialogue Belarusian civil society and opposition.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004011/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Przeniesienie z Białorusi organizacji Mistrzostw Świata w Hokeju na Lodzie w 2014 r.

W swojej rezolucji z dnia 29 marca 2012 r. w sprawie sytuacji na Białorusi ([1]) Parlament Europejski wezwał krajowe związki hokeja na lodzie państw członkowskich UE i wszystkich innych demokratycznych krajów, by naciskały na Międzynarodową Federację Hokeja na Lodzie (IIHF), aby rozważyła ponownie swoją wcześniejszą decyzję i przewidziała możliwość odebrania Białorusi na rzecz innego państwa prawa do przeprowadzenia w 2014 r. Mistrzostw Świata w Hokeju na Lodzie, które na Białorusi nie powinny się odbywać do czasu uwolnienia wszystkich więźniów politycznych uznanych przez międzynarodowe organizacje broniące praw człowieka za więźniów sumienia oraz do czasu wysłania przez reżim wyraźnych sygnałów potwierdzających jego zaangażowanie w przestrzeganie praw człowieka i zaprowadzenie praworządności.

Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel zgadza się ze stanowiskiem Parlamentu, zgodnie z którym Mistrzostwa Świata w Hokeju na Lodzie w 2014 r. nie powinny odbyć się na Białorusi?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest w dalszym ciągu głęboko zaniepokojona utrzymującym się na Białorusi brakiem poszanowania praw człowieka, demokracji i praworządności i ubolewa, że nadal podejmowane są środki represyjne.

Dnia 23 marca 2012 r. Rada do Spraw Zagranicznych wyraziła obawy i przedstawiła swoje polityki w odniesieniu do Białorusi. W tym kontekście Rada do Spraw Zagranicznych zgodziła się na bieżące informowanie Międzynarodowej Federacji Hokeja na Lodzie oraz związków krajowych o swoim głębokim zaniepokojeniu utrzymującym się na Białorusi brakiem poszanowania praw człowieka, praworządności i zasad demokracji.

W ten sposób Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca pozostanie zaangażowana w powyższą sprawę.

([1]) Teksty przyjęte, P7_TA(2012)0112.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004011/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Relocating the 2014 World Ice Hockey Championship from Belarus

In its resolution of 29 March 2012 on the situation in Belarus ([1]), the European Parliament called on the National Ice Hockey Federations of the EU Member States and all other democratic countries to urge the IIHF to re-discuss its earlier decision envisaging the possibility of relocating the 2014 World Ice Hockey Championship from Belarus to another host country until all political prisoners recognised by international human rights organisations as 'prisoners of conscience' were released and until the regime showed clear signs of its commitment to respect human rights and the rule of law.

Does the High Representative agree with Parliament's view that the 2014 World Ice Hockey Championship should not take place in Belarus?

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

The HR/VP remains gravely concerned about the continued lack of respect for human rights, democracy and rule of law in Belarus, and regrets that further repressive measures are taking place.

On 23 March 2012, the Foreign Affairs Council outlined its concerns and policies as regards Belarus. In this context, the Foreign Affairs Council agreed to keep International and National Ice Hockey Federations informed of its deep concern as regards the lack of respect by Belarus for human rights, the rule of law and democratic principles.

On this basis, the HR/VP will continue to remain engaged on this matter.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0112.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004012/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Prześladowanie Rosyjskiej Inicjatywy „Sprawiedliwość"

Około 20 % skarg złożonych w Europejskim Trybunale Praw Człowieka pochodzi z Rosji – wiele z Czeczenii i sąsiednich republik. Rosyjska Inicjatywa „Sprawiedliwość" jest inicjatorem większości z nich. Organizacja ta pomogła ponad 100 skarżącym wygrać sprawy przeciwko rosyjskiemu rządowi dotyczące okrutnych zbrodni dokonanych przez wojska federalne w Północnym Kaukazie oraz zmusiła Rosję do wypłaty odszkodowań w wysokości około 10 mln euro na rzecz ludności cywilnej. Rok temu rosyjskie Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości wykreśliło Rosyjską Inicjatywę „Sprawiedliwość" ze swojego rejestru oficjalnych organizacji pozarządowych ze względów formalnych. Podanym powodem było niedostarczenie w terminie wszystkich niezbędnych dokumentów. Po licznych odmowach ponownej rejestracji organizacja postanowiła wnieść sprawę do moskiewskiego sądu.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zna wyżej opisany przypadek? W jaki sposób UE zamierza podejść do tej kwestii (oraz innych kwestii związanych z prawami człowieka) w kontekście partnerstwa na rzecz modernizacji? Jaka jest długofalowa strategia UE, jeżeli chodzi o przestrzeganie praw człowieka w Rosji?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest poinformowana o tej sprawie i uważnie śledzi rozwój wydarzeń. ESDZ podniosła kwestię rejestracji organizacji pozarządowych w rozmowach z władzami rosyjskimi podczas 14. rundy konsultacji UE-Rosja na temat praw człowieka, które odbyły się w dniu 29 listopada 2011 r. W ramach przygotowań do kolejnej rundy konsultacji ESDZ odbyła również wiosną spotkania w Moskwie z przedstawicielami Rosyjskiej Inicjatywy „Sprawiedliwość". Zgodnie ze swoją polityką dotyczącą obrońców praw człowieka UE jest przekonana, że organizacje pozarządowe zajmujące się drażliwymi kwestiami powinny mieć możliwość prowadzenia działalności bez utrudnień. W tym kontekście UE jest zaniepokojona sytuacją opisaną przez Szanownego Posła.

UE jest zaangażowana na rzecz wspierania praw człowieka na swoim terytorium i poza jego granicami. Kwestia sytuacji w zakresie praw człowieka w Rosji jest stałym tematem większości spotkań UE z przedstawicielami Federacji Rosyjskiej, począwszy od szczebla ekspertów, a skończywszy na najwyższym szczeblu. UE będzie przede wszystkim nadal zachęcać Rosję do pełnej współpracy z Europejskim Trybunałem Praw Człowieka oraz wykonywania wyroków tego trybunału, zwłaszcza w Północnym Kaukazie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004012/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Harassment of the Russian Justice Initiative

Some 20% of all complaints filed with the European Court of Human Rights come from Russia, many from Chechnya and neighbouring republics. The Russian Justice Initiative is a driving force behind the bulk of these cases; the group has helped more than 100 plaintiffs win cases against the Russian Government for atrocities committed by federal troops in the North Caucasus and has forced Russia to pay some EUR 10 million in damages to civilians. A year ago, the Russian Justice Ministry struck the Russian Justice Initiative off its registry of approved non-governmental organisations on a technicality, claiming that the group had failed to submit all necessary documents on time. After numerous attempts to reregister were rejected, the group decided to bring the matter before a Moscow court.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this case? How will the EU raise this issue (and other human rights issues) in the context of the Partnership for Modernisation? What is the EU's long-term strategy with regard to upholding human rights in Russia?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is aware of this case and has followed the developments closely. The EEAS has raised the issue of the registration of non-governmental organisations with the Russian authorities at the 14th round of the EU-Russia human rights consultations on 29 November 2011. In preparation for the next round of consultations, the EEAS has also met with the representatives of the Russian Justice Initiative this Spring in Moscow. In accordance with its policy on Human Rights Defenders, the EU believes that NGOs working on sensitive issues should be able to work unhindered. In that regard the EU is concerned with the situation mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The EU is committed to promoting human rights inside as well as outside of its borders. As such, the human rights situation in Russia is a standing agenda item in most meetings the EU has with the Russian Federation, from the expert to the highest level. The EU will in particular continue to encourage Russia to cooperate fully with the European Court of Human Rights and implement the ECHR judgments, in particular in the Northern Caucasus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004014/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: EU flag on commercial aircraft

It is common to see national flags painted on the bodies of commercial aircraft. Could the Commission explain whether EU carriers are obliged to have an EU flag on the body of the aircraft, and if so, what regulation or directive stipulates this?

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

There are no EU rules governing either the display of national flags or the display of the EU flag on the bodies of commercial aircraft.

The display of a flag on the body of aircraft is a national requirement for aircraft registration in numerous jurisdictions. It is linked to the regime established by the Convention on International Civil Aviation signed in 1944 (the Chicago Convention), and it draws its origins from the rules governing international maritime navigation.

The Chicago Convention provides that every (civil) aircraft shall have the nationality of the state in which it is registered and that it shall bear its appropriate nationality and registration marks. Such registration is to be effectuated according to national laws. National laws, in turn, must follow in this domain certain minimum standards established by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and contained in Annex A to the Chicago Convention. The ICAO standards do not regulate the display of a flag on the body of a civil aircraft, they only require the display of a specific combination of characters (letters and numbers) assigned by ICAO and the national registering authorities.

However, painting a flag on the body of a civil aircraft is a national regulatory requirement in many ICAO (including many EU) Member States, in addition to the minimum international standards mentioned above.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004015/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Auditing and accountability of pre-accession funding for Serbia

Will the Commission outline the auditing and accountability measures which ensure proper and appropriate use of monies made available as pre-accession funding for Serbia?

Question for written answer E-004061/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Auditing and accountability of pre-accession funding for Albania

Will the Commission outline the auditing and accountability measures applied to ensure proper and appropriate use of monies made available as pre-accession funding for Albania?

Question for written answer E-004327/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(25 April 2012)

Subject: Auditing and accountability of pre-accession funding for Bosnia-Herzegovina

Will the Commission outline the auditing and accountability measures intended to ensure proper and appropriate use of monies made available as pre-accession funding for Bosnia-Herzegovina?

Question for written answer E-004698/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(8 May 2012)

Subject: Auditing and accountability of pre-accession funding for Montenegro

Will the Commission outline the auditing and accountability measures intended to ensure proper and appropriate use of monies made available as pre-accession funding for Montenegro?

Question for written answer E-004699/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(8 May 2012)

Subject: Auditing and accountability of pre-accession funding for Kosovo

Will the Commission outline the auditing and accountability measures intended to ensure proper and appropriate use of monies made available as pre-accession funding for Kosovo?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

In Albania (AL), Montenegro (MNG), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Serbia (SR) and Kosovo ([1]) the implementation of pre-accession assistance remains centralised. Therefore primary and secondary controls ensuring the legality and regularity of individual tenders, contracts and payments are carried out by the Commission itself through its staff in the EU Delegations to AL, MNG, BiH and SR and in the EU Office to Kosovo. The Delegations' and EU Office's accountability measures are defined in their Annual Assurance Strategy. Their control system involves various types of control: desk review of documents on the basis of detailed checklists, monitoring of contract progress, on-the-spot checks and expenditure verifications by external auditors. Apart from regular project management monitoring of contracts, all contracts with a value over EUR 1 million are systematically included in the Results Oriented Monitoring plan as well as contracts of lower values when deemed necessary. The Delegations and EU Office are in constant contact with the competent Commission services concerning the management of the funds and formally report on this every three months. In addition, the Commission, the EU Delegations/Office and the beneficiary institutions meet regularly to assess the implementation of IPA projects in the framework of the IPA Monitoring Committee and, if necessary, conduct follow-up meetings. The competent Commission audit unit visits regularly the EU Delegations/Office in the IPA beneficiary countries. The last *ex-post* control audits were carried out in October 2010 (in Kosovo), March 2011 (in AL), May 2011 (in BiH), June 2011 (in MNG) and July 2011 (in SR).

([1]) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004016/12
alla Commissione
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(18 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Iniziative urgenti su verifica dell'uso dei fondi europei del POR 2000-2006 da parte della Regione Siciliana

Premesso che:

— i Programmi Operativi Regionali (POR) sono i documenti di programmazione delle regioni, che costituiscono il quadro di riferimento per l'utilizzo dei Fondi strutturali europei;

— i POR sono strumenti strategici per lo sviluppo economico delle regioni interessate;

— è pervenuta all'interrogante una denuncia, inviata anche alle competenti autorità, nella quale viene rappresentata una situazione di gravi irregolarità relative ai procedimenti di ammissione ed assegnazione di finanziamenti dal Dipartimento Pesca dell'Assessorato Regionale Cooperazione Artigianato e Pesca della Regione Siciliana, attraverso il POR Sicilia 2000/2006, misura 4.17, sottomisura A e B, per promuovere la valorizzazione e commercializzazione del pesce povero di Mazara del Vallo;

— con tale denuncia, supportata da puntuale documentazione, si rappresentano gravi carenze nel sistema di redazione e di valutazione dei bandi, l'utilizzo di associazioni e studi di consulenza appositamente creati per la presentazione di progetti non adeguatamente pubblicizzati, la mancanza di attestazione di congruità dei prezzi, lo scorrimento di graduatorie con procedure di dubbia legittimità e, più in generale, varie ipotesi di condotte omissive e/o comportamenti lesivi della normativa nazionale e comunitaria;

— gli elencati fatti, qualora ritenuti fondati dalle competenti autorità, avrebbero provocato un grave danno sia alla PA interessata, per aver attuato un procedimento dannoso, costoso e non conforme alla normativa di riferimento, che all'Unione europea nel suo complesso, in quanto erogatrice dei fondi,

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. quali urgenti iniziative intende assumere per fare chiarezza alla luce dei fatti segnalati sull'uso dei fondi europei del POR 2000-2006 da parte della Regione Siciliana?

2. se non ritiene di verificare tempestivamente quanto denunciato al fine di individuare, per quanto di competenza e ove ne ricorrano i presupposti, eventuali responsabilità relative al paventato cattivo uso di risorse pubbliche destinate a contribuire allo sviluppo e alla ripresa economica della Regione Siciliana?

3. quali iniziative intende intraprendere per verificare il rispetto della normativa comunitaria circa la destinazione e l'utilizzo dei suddetti fondi, anche accertando quali comportamenti siano stati posti in essere e/o quali adempimenti siano stati omessi dai responsabili della vigilanza sui procedimenti in questione?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(15 giugno 2012)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza di quanto riferito dall'onorevole parlamentare e chiederà alle autorità competenti italiane di trasmettere informazioni esaustive al riguardo.

La chiusura finanziaria degli interventi cofinanziati dallo SFOP nell'ambito del POR 2000-2006 della Regione Sicilia è ancora in via di discussione. Conformemente alla legislazione, la Commissione è tenuta a verificare la regolarità delle spese dichiarate dalle autorità della Regione Sicilia. Se dovesse riscontrare irregolarità nella domanda, la Commissione procederà al recupero della somma indebitamente versata detraendo l'importo corrispondente dal saldo finale del contributo e informerà l'OLAF dell'accaduto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004016/12
to the Commission
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Urgent action to verify Sicilian Regional Council's use of EU funding in connection with the 2000-2006 ROP

Regional Operational Programmes (ROPs) are regional planning documents which provide a reference framework for the use of European structural funding.

As such, they are of strategic importance to the economic development of the regions concerned.

I have received a complaint, which was also sent to the competent authorities, about serious irregularities in procedures for determining funding eligibility and allocating funds used by the Fisheries Department of the Sicilian Regional Council's Crafts and Fisheries Cooperation Office in connection with the implementation of sub-measures A and B of measure 4.17 in the 2000-2006 ROP for Sicily, covering the promotion and marketing of 'pesce povero' (fish considered unsaleable) from Mazara del Vallo.

This complaint, which is supported by detailed documentation, points to serious shortcomings in tender drafting and evaluation procedures, the setting up of associations and consultancies expressly for the purpose of submitting bids in inadequately publicised procedures, a failure to establish whether quoted prices are correct, dubious procedures for choosing from among ranked candidates, and, in general, negligence and/or failure to comply with national and EU rules.

If the above claims are found to be true by the competent authorities, the situation will be extremely damaging both for the public authority concerned, owing to its having carried out a damaging and costly procedure in breach of the relevant rules, and for the European Union as a whole, which provided the funding.

1. Given the above, what urgent steps does the Commission propose to take to establish exactly how the EU funds available under the 2000-2006 ROP were used by the Sicilian Regional Council?

2. Would it not agree that it should, without delay and within the bounds of its authority, look into the above claims in order to establish where the responsibility lies for any improper use of public resources intended to contribute to the development and economic recovery of the Sicily region?

3. How does it intend to establish whether EU rules governing the allocation and use of such funding were complied with, *inter alia* by investigating the role played by the persons responsible for overseeing the above procedures?

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

The Commission has no previous information in this regard and will ask the competent Italian authorities to retrieve all possible information on the case.

The financial closure exercise for the FIFG 2000-2006 ROP Sicily assistance is still under discussion. In accordance with the legislation the Commission has to evaluate the regularity of the expenditure declared by the Sicilian authority. Should the Commission conclude that the claim refers to an irregularity, it will recover the sum unduly paid by deducting the corresponding amount from the final balance of the assistance and OLAF would be notified accordingly.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004017/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Mancata applicazione di azioni compensative, prosecuzione di violazioni delle direttive comunitarie e del degrado della ZPS IT9110008 «Valloni e steppe pedegarganiche»

La Corte di Giustizia dell'UE, con la sentenza 20.9.2007, causa C-388/05 ([1]), ha condannato lo Stato italiano per non aver adottato provvedimenti adeguati per evitare, nella ZPS IT9110008 «Valloni e steppe pedegarganiche» ([2]), il degrado di habitat naturali e habitat di specie, nonché la perturbazione delle specie per cui tale zona è stata creata, essendo venuto meno agli obblighi dell'articolo 4, paragrafo 4 della direttiva «Uccelli» e dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 2 della direttiva «Habitat», a causa dell'industrializzazione provocata dal c.d. «Patto d'area di Manfredonia». In base alla sentenza lo Stato italiano avrebbe dovuto adottare misure compensative congrue e adeguate volte a sanare la distruzione del territorio. Come ampiamente documentato da LIPU-Birdlife Italia, invece, le misure tardivamente adottate sono state del tutto inadeguate, insufficienti e incoerenti, non avendo contribuito all'effettivo ripristino della ZPS. Ad es. la gallina prataiola (Tetrax tetrax) risulta essere pressoché estinta, mentre l'espansione del grillaio (Falco naumanni), vantata come risultato della compensazione, non interessa specificatamente la ZPS, dove non nidifica tuttora, ma è parte di una spontanea colonizzazione di nuovi areali, da anni in atto in tutta la Puglia, come dimostrano monitoraggi e pubblicazioni.

Il degrado perpetrato a danno di questo territorio in violazione delle direttive «Habitat», «Uccelli» e «VIA», è proseguito non solo prima, ma addirittura durante e dopo la condanna, attraverso altre gravi azioni denunciate (es. spietramenti di centinaia di ettari).

L'oggettiva non efficacia dei rimedi adottati, in solo apparente compensazione alla condanna comunitaria, rappresentano quindi un evidente, grave precedente circa le garanzie di rispetto e la concreta applicazione delle direttive, in particolare in alcune regioni, dove il persistere di azioni inique, determina un senso di impunità e deresponsabilizzazione nei confronti delle norme comunitarie, in evidente spregio della condanna comunitaria.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di quanto esposto? È in grado di effettuare controlli più precisi per verificare l'effettiva efficacia delle misure intraprese dallo Stato membro in caso di condanna, come nel caso della ZPS «Valloni e steppe pedegarganiche» e predisporre concrete iniziative per rimediare al degrado, tutt'oggi in atto, causato da dodici anni di gestione sconsiderata di questo territorio?

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

Dopo la sentenza del 20 settembre 2007, cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento, la Commissione ha sorvegliato l'operato delle competenti autorità italiane per assicurarsi che venissero adottate misure compensative per dare esecuzione alla sentenza.

Nel 2008 la Commissione ha concluso che non erano state attuate misure concrete per rimediare ai danni causati alla ZPS «Valloni e steppe pedegarganiche», situata a Manfredonia (Puglia). Pertanto, il 1º dicembre 2008 la Commissione ha inviato alla Repubblica italiana una lettera di costituzione in mora.

In risposta alla lettera di costituzione in mora, la Repubblica italiana ha trasmesso una serie di aggiornamenti sulle misure intraprese dalle autorità competenti per conformarsi alla sentenza, tra cui la definizione e la realizzazione di misure compensative. La Commissione ha ricevuto l'ultimo aggiornamento il 5 aprile 2012 e il caso è stato discusso in una riunione con le autorità italiane tenutasi a Roma il 20 aprile 2012.

La Commissione ha anche ricevuto due denunce (nel dicembre 2010 e nell'aprile 2012), nelle quali si sostiene che le autorità italiane non stanno applicando misure compensative adeguate e continuano a consentire il degrado della zona.

Sulla base della valutazione delle informazioni fornite da entrambe le parti, ossia le autorità italiane e i denuncianti, la Commissione deciderà tra breve i prossimi provvedimenti da adottare nel caso di specie.

([1]) innescata da una denuncia della LIPU-Birdlife Italia.
([2]) oggi ZPS IT9110039 «Promontorio del Gargano».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004017/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Non-implementation of compensatory actions, infringements of Community directives, and damage to the SPA 'Valloni e steppe pedegarganiche' (Code No IT9110008)

The Court of Justice of the European Union, in its judgment of 20 September 2007, Case C-388/05 ([1]), criticised the Italian State for not having taken adequate measures to prevent, in the SPA 'Valloni e steppe pedegarganiche' ([2]) (Code No IT9110008), deterioration of natural habitats and species habitats, as well as disturbance of the species for which this area was created, in breach of the obligations of Article 4(4) of the 'Birds' Directive and of Article 6(2) of the 'Habitats' Directive, caused by the industrialisation resulting from the so-called 'Manfredonia Regional Pact'. According to the judgment, the Italian State should have adopted suitable and adequate measures to remedy the damage to the area. As amply documented by LIPU-Birdlife Italy, however, the measures belatedly adopted were entirely inadequate, insufficient and incoherent, and did not contribute to the effective restoration of the SPA. For example, the little bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*) is all but extinct, while the spread of the lesser kestrel (*Falco naumanni*), claimed as a success due to the compensatory measures, does not specifically concern the SPA, where it still does not nest, but is part of a spontaneous colonisation of new areas that has been taking place throughout Apulia for a number of years, as demonstrated by monitoring and publications.

The damage inflicted on this area in breach of the 'Habitats', 'Birds' and 'EIA' Directives was done not only before, but even during and after the judgment, through other serious denounced actions (e.g. clearing of stones from hundreds of hectares).

The objective inefficacy of the remedies adopted, in merely apparent response to the Community judgment, therefore represents an evident and serious precedent regarding guarantees of compliance with and concrete implementation of the directives, particularly in certain regions, where the persistence of improper actions produces a sense of impunity and freedom from responsibility vis-à-vis Community rules, in clear contempt of the Community judgment.

Is the Commission aware of these matters? Is it able to carry out more precise checks to verify the real efficacy of the measures taken by the Member State in response to a judgment, as in the case of the SPA 'Valloni e steppe pedegarganiche', and to organise concrete initiatives to remedy the damage, which is still taking place, caused by 12 years of careless management of this area?

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

Following the judgment of 20 September 2007 mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Commission has been monitoring the competent Italian authorities to ensure they take adequate compensation measures to execute the judgment.

In 2008 the Commission concluded that no definite measures, aimed at remedying the damage caused to the SPA 'Valloni e steppe Pedegarganiche' in Manfredonia (Apulia) had been implemented. Therefore, on 1 December 2008 the Commission sent to the Italian Republic a letter of formal notice.

Following the letter of formal notice, the Italian Republic has provided a series of updates on the measures undertaken by the competent authorities to comply with the judgment. These include the identification and execution of compensatory measures. The latest update from the Italian authorities was sent to the Commission on 5 April 2012 and the case was discussed in a meeting with the Italian authorities which took place in Rome on 20 April 2012.

The Commission has also received complaints (in December 2010 and April 2012) alleging that the Italian authorities are not implementing adequate compensation measures and continue to allow deterioration of the site concerned.

Based on the assessment of the information provided by both the Italian authorities and the complaints, in the near future the Commission will decide which next steps to take in this case.

([1]) Prompted by a complaint from LIPU-Birdlife Italy.
([2]) Now SPA 'Promontorio del Gargano' (Code No IT9110039).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004018/12
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Iva Zanicchi (PPE) e Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(18 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Misure di sicurezza per la salute degli sportivi

Eventi tragici scuotono spesso il mondo dello sport europeo. Ultime, in ordine cronologico, sono le premature scomparse di Vigor Bovolenta e Piermario Morosini, due atleti rispettivamente di 37 e 25 anni, entrambi deceduti durante lo svolgimento di una gara. Molti altri casi avvengono nelle manifestazioni dilettantistiche e giovanili, benché non vi sia lo stesso risalto mediatico.

Al dramma della scomparsa, si aggiungono dubbi sull'adeguatezza delle misure di sicurezza adottate nel mondo dello sport professionistico.

Il recente caso dell'inglese Fabrice Muamba dimostra l'importanza della tempestività dell'intervento e della presenza di strumentazione adeguata a bordo campo.

Nel «Libro Bianco sullo Sport» la Commissione ha espresso chiaramente il suo rispetto dell'autonomia delle organizzazioni sportive ed ha dichiarato di ritenere la materia di competenza degli enti sportivi preposti, degli Stati membri e delle parti sociali.

Ciò nonostante, intende la Commissione agire al fine di garantire una maggiore sicurezza per gli sportivi, che si tratti di professionisti o di dilettanti, predisponendo linee guida in termini di prevenzione e salute nello sport?

Ritiene essa che rendere obbligatoria la presenza di adeguata strumentazione tecnica e di personale adibito al suo utilizzo almeno nelle manifestazioni sportive professionistiche potrebbe ridurre i casi di decesso in modo significativo?

Intende intervenire incoraggiando gli Stati membri e le federazioni sportive nazionali e internazionali a effettuare controlli medici preventivi più severi?

Intende infine promuovere azioni che abbiano l'obiettivo di garantire che lo sforzo richiesto a ciascun atleta sia maggiormente sostenibile?

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

La Commissione ha affrontato il tema della sicurezza nello sport nelle risposte date ai quesiti ([1]) posti dagli onorevoli Papanikolaou (E-6354/09), Silvestris (E-003825/2012), Werthmann (E-2609/10), Patriciello (E-0702/10), Zanicchi e Iacolino (E-6110/2010), Iacolino (P-5136/10) e Zanicchi (E-2774/2011).

Al momento è in corso di attuazione una serie di iniziative nel campo dello sport, in base alle priorità individuate dalla Commissione nella comunicazione intitolata «Sviluppare la dimensione europea dello sport», del 2011; dal Consiglio nel suo piano di lavoro dell'UE per lo sport, anch'esso del 2011; e dal Parlamento europeo nella sua risoluzione del 2012 sulla dimensione europea dello sport. Il lavoro dedicato a stabilire linee guida o altre misure relative al tema della salute e della sicurezza degli sportivi non è stato considerato prioritario in questi documenti programmatici, per cui la Commissione non ha intenzione di prendere nel medio termine iniziative in questo campo.

La Commissione desidera richiamare l'attenzione degli onorevoli parlamentari sugli strumenti finanziari esistenti nei settori della sanità pubblica e della ricerca, per i quali si vedano le risposte ai quesiti sopra citati, che possano sostenere le attività dei soggetti interessati nel settore dello sport e delle autorità pubbliche al fine di comprendere e combattere meglio le minacce alla salute degli atleti.

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

La Commissione intende avviare una fase sperimentale riguardante l'istituzione di un nuovo comitato europeo di dialogo sociale settoriale per lo sport e il tempo libero attivo, che potrà diventare uno strumento importante per il miglioramento della salute e delle condizioni di sicurezza di chi opera nel settore dello sport.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004018/12
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Iva Zanicchi (PPE) and Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Safety measures for sportsmen and women

Tragic events occur all too often in the world of European sport, the most recent being the premature deaths of Vigor Bovolenta and Piermario Morosini, aged 37 and 25 respectively, both of whom died while taking part in a sporting event. They are also common in amateur and youth events, although in such cases they are not given the same prominence in the media.

These tragedies are giving rise to doubts about the adequacy of the safety measures in place in the world of professional sport.

The events surrounding the recent collapse of the footballer Fabrice Muamba during an English Premier League match demonstrated the importance of timely intervention by medical staff and of having appropriate medical equipment available on the touchline.

In the White Paper on Sport, the Commission clearly stated that it would respect the independence of sporting organisations and said that safety was a matter for the relevant sporting bodies, the Member States and the social partners.

Despite this, does the Commission intend to seek to improve the safety of sportsmen and women, whether professional or amateur, by laying down guidelines on health and safety in sport?

Does the Commission consider that making it compulsory for appropriate medical equipment and staff trained in its use to be on hand, at least at professional sporting events, could significantly reduce deaths?

Does it intend to encourage Member States and national and international sports federations to introduce more thorough health screening programmes?

Does it intend to promote action to ensure that the performances required of sportsmen and women do not place unreasonable demands on their bodies?

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

The Commission has covered the issue of safety in the field of sport in its replies to the questions ([1]) asked by Mr Papanikolaou (E-6354/09), by Mr Silvestris (E-003825/2012), by Ms Werthmann (E-2609/10), by Mr Patriciello (E-0702/10), by Ms Zanicchi and Mr Iacolino (E-6110/2010), by Mr Iacolino (P-5136/10) and by Ms Zanicchi (E-2774/2011).

A series of initiatives in the field of sport are currently being implemented, on the basis of priorities identified by the Commission in the communication 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport' of 2011; by the Council, in its 2011 EU Work Plan for sport; and by the European Parliament, in its 2012 Resolution on the European dimension in sport. Work intended to lay down guidelines or other measures on the issue of health and safety for sportpersons has not been considered a priority in these policy documents and therefore the Commission does not plan to take, in the medium term, any initiative in this field.

The Commission would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Members to the existing financial instruments in the fields of Public Health and Research, referred to in the abovementioned earlier replies to questions, which are relevant in this area and can support activities of sport stakeholders and public authorities to better understand and fight against threats to athletes' health.

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

Finally, the Commission intends to start a test phase regarding the establishment of a new European sectoral social dialogue committee in the field of sport and active leisure, which can become an important tool in improving the health and safety working conditions in the field of sport.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004019/12
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Apparent non-implementation of European Court of Justice decision relating to equal tax treatment for all EU citizens owning property in Spain

It has been brought to my attention by a London constituent who has sold his holiday home in Spain that the Spanish tax authorities have allegedly refused to compensate him for the overpayment of capital gains tax on his holiday property. The European Court of Justice has apparently ruled that Spanish tax law discriminated against non-resident EU citizens unfairly and that, therefore, they were entitled to compensation. My constituent's lawyers in Spain have reportedly informed him that his claim along with other UK citizens is not valid and that the Spanish tax authorities are going to disregard the ruling of the ECJ in this matter.

Can the Commission confirm the understanding my UK resident constituent has of his right to financial compensation for overpayment of capital gains tax on his holiday home in Spain and investigate the legal basis for EU Member State authorities to refuse to enforce such a clear-cut ECJ judgment? What further remedies does my constituent have to obtain his financial compensation from Spain's tax authority as decided by the ECJ ruling?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2012)

As regards the procedure that non-resident taxpayers who have suffered from the application of the Spanish discriminatory rules need to follow when claiming their tax refund, it should be noted that the pertinent ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union ([1]) does not directly grant non-resident taxpayers the right to financial compensation for overpayment of capital gains tax. Such compensation has to be sought before the national courts, in accordance with the national procedural rules. Union law does not contain precise prescriptions in regard to those rules, but requires respect of certain general principles only, notably the principles of equivalence and effectiveness ([2]).

Under the Spanish legislation, the taxable person has the right to request that his tax self-assessments be corrected and, when appropriate, to demand repayment of sums paid but not due provided that he does so within a period of four years.

As regards those taxpayers whose entitlement to correction and to recovery of sums unduly paid was foreclosed when the CJEU's judgment was delivered, they are nevertheless entitled to make an application to the Council of Ministers for compensation for the loss they have sustained. The European Commission is aware that the Council of Ministers and the *Tribunal Supremo* have dismissed an application on this issue, holding that the breach of the EU Treaty by the Spanish Law was not sufficiently serious, one of the three conditions required, according to settled case-law of the CJEU.

Taxpayers should consult a tax advisor in Spain in order to consider the different options available to claim their tax refund.

([1]) Case C-562/07 *Commission* v *Spain*, judgment of 6 October 2009.
([2]) According to those principles, national procedural rules governing actions for safeguarding rights which individuals derive from EC law must be not less favourable than those governing similar domestic actions and, secondly must not render virtually impossible or excessively difficult the exercise of rights conferred by EC law.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004020/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(18 april 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Duits schip met Iraanse wapens voor het Syrische regime

Op vrijdag 14 april 2012 werd gemeld ([1]) dat de *Atlantic Cruiser*, een in Antigua en Barbados geregistreerd Duits schip dat wapens uit Iran vervoerde, bij de Syrische haven Tartus tot stoppen was gedwongen. Het schip zou in de haven van Djibouti met militaire uitrustingsstukken en munitie voor het Syrische regime zijn geladen. Het schip is naar verluidt eigendom van de expediteur Reederei Bockstiegel Emden. Volgens de te Hamburg gevestigde GmbH C. E. G. Bulk Chartering was het schip gecharterd door het in de Oekraïne gevestigde bedrijf White Whale Shipping. Naar verluidt probeerde het schip bij te tanken in de Cypriotische haven Limassol, maar werd het geweigerd en kon het 24 uur lang niet gevolgd worden met zijn transponder. In januari 2012 werd melding gemaakt van een soortgelijk verhaal, waarover ik vragen ([2]) heb gesteld en in verband waarmee ik om een duidelijke uiteenzetting heb gevraagd, die tot op heden niet is gegeven. Dit incident geeft aanleiding tot ernstige zorgen over zowel het vermogen als de inspanningen van de lidstaten om bindende beperkende maatregelen ten uitvoer te leggen.

1. Kan de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger bovengenoemde meldingen van imminente leveringen van wapens en munitie, die duidelijk in strijd zijn met de huidige EU-sancties, bevestigen? Zo niet, waarom niet?

2. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger door de lidstaten wier wateren door de *Atlantic Cruiser* zijn bevaren op de hoogte gesteld? Zo ja, kan ze meedelen welke instructies of advies er aan de autoriteiten van de respectieve lidstaten gegeven is?

3. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger bereid om met spoed onderzoek in te stellen naar deze zaak, met name ten aanzien van de handelswijze van de Duitse autoriteiten, teneinde te kunnen beoordelen of er strafmaatregelen tegen hen getroffen moeten worden? Zo niet, waarom niet?

4. Heeft de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger contact gehad met het Duitse ministerie van Economische Zaken, de regeringen van Antigua en Barbados, alle betrokken lidstaten en buurlanden om ervoor te zorgen dat de wapens en munitie de Syrische haven Tartus niet bereiken? Zo niet, waarom niet?

5. Welke maatregelen gaat de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de lidstaten EU-sancties daadwerkelijk implementeren en handhaven?

6. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger bereid om onderzoek in te stellen naar de vraag hoe en of de lidstaten alle EU-sancties daadwerkelijk implementeren en handhaven, en om aan het Parlement verslag uit te brengen over de bevindingen van dit onderzoek? Zo niet, waarom niet?

7. Kan de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger uitleggen waarom er geen antwoord is gegeven op mijn eerdere vragen omtrent een soortgelijk incident met een Russisch schip, vragen die ook door het Parlement zijn gesteld in zijn resolutie van 16 februari 2012 over de situatie in Syrië ([3])? Zo niet, waarom niet?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(18 juli 2012)

Artikel 1, lid 1, van Besluit 2011/782/GBVB ([4]) van de Raad voorziet in een wapenembargo tegen Syrië dat van toepassing is op leveringen „door onderdanen van de lidstaten of vanaf of via het grondgebied van de lidstaten, of met gebruik van onder hun vlag varende schepen of hun luchtvaartuigen". Bij Verordening (EU) nr. 36/2012 betreffende beperkende maatregelen in het licht van de situatie in Syrië ([5]) is deze bepaling niet in het EU-recht opgenomen.

1. Schepen die in een derde land zijn geregistreerd, vallen onder de jurisdictie van de vlaggenstaat, zelfs als zij het bezit zijn van EU-burgers. Behalve wanneer de goederen in een EU-haven worden geladen, zal er vaak geen sprake zijn van een duidelijke inbreuk op het EU-embargo.

([1]) http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,827553,00.html
([2]) E-000493/2012.
([3]) Aangenomen teksten, P7_TA(2012)0057.
([4]) PB L 319 van 2.12.2011, blz. 56.
([5]) PB L 16 van 19.1.2012, blz. 1.

2. Het EU-recht voorziet niet in een algemene verplichting voor een lidstaat om de EU-instellingen op de hoogte te brengen wanneer een buitenlands schip zijn wateren binnenkomt.

3. In het onderhavige geval is het aan de Duitse autoriteiten om na te gaan of het toepasselijke recht is geschonden. Op het eerste gezicht zijn er geen redenen om uit te gaan van een schending van Besluit 2011/782/GBVB door de Duitse autoriteiten.

4. Wanneer er vermoedens bestaan dat het wapenembargo is geschonden, wordt de staat die bevoegd is om passende actie te ondernemen, gevraagd dat te doen. Een blokkade van een Syrische haven maakt echter geen deel uit van het EU-beleid.

5. Op EU-niveau vindt regelmatig een informatie-uitwisseling plaats om ervoor te zorgen dat sancties van de EU door de lidstaten op een doeltreffende en coherente manier worden geïmplementeerd en toegepast. Dit geldt ook voor het EU-wapenembargo tegen Syrië.

Wanneer de sancties in het EU-recht zijn opgenomen, kan de Commissie of een lidstaat een inbreukprocedure tegen een lidstaat inleiden. Hetzelfde is echter niet mogelijk wanneer dit niet het geval is.

6. Momenteel zijn er geen redenen die een algemeen onderzoek naar de handhaving van alle EU-sancties door alle lidstaten rechtvaardigen. Waar nodig kunnen specifieke onderzoeken worden geopend.

7. Op 7 mei 2012 is een antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-000493/2012 gestuurd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004020/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — German ship carrying Iranian arms for Syrian regime

On Friday, 14 April 2012 it was reported ([1]) that a German-owned ship registered in Antigua and Barbados, the *Atlantic Cruiser*, which was carrying weapons from Iran, had been stopped near the Syrian port of Tartus. The ship was allegedly stocked in the Port of Djibouti with military equipment and munitions meant for the Syrian regime. The ship is reportedly owned by the carrier Reederei Bockstiegel Emden. According to Hamburg-based C.E.G. Bulk Chartering GmbH, the ship was chartered by the Ukraine-based company White Whale Shipping. Reportedly, the ship attempted to refuel in the Cypriot port of Limassol, but was turned away, and for 24 hours could not be tracked through its transponder. In January 2012 a similar story was reported, about which I have asked questions ([2]) and called for a clear statement, which to date has not been given. This incident raises serious concerns regarding both the ability and the efforts of the Member States to implement binding restrictive measures.

1. Can the Vice-President/High Representative confirm the aforementioned reports of the imminent supply of weapons and munitions, in clear breach of current EU sanctions? If not, why not?

2. Was the Vice-President/High Representative notified by those Member States through whose waters the *Atlantic Cruiser* passed? If so, can she comment on the instructions or advice given to the authorities of the respective Member States?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative willing to conduct an urgent investigation into this matter, in particular regarding the conduct of the German authorities, with the aim of deciding whether punitive measures are appropriate? If not, why not?

4. Has the Vice-President/High Representative been in contact with the German Economics Ministry, the Government of Antigua and Barbados, all the Member States concerned and neighbouring countries with a view to ensuring that the weapons and munitions do not reach the Syrian port of Tartus? If not, why not?

5. What action will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ensure that the Member States are effectively implementing and enforcing EU sanctions?

6. Is the Vice-President/High Representative willing to conduct an investigation into how, and whether, the Member States effectively implement and enforce all EU sanctions, and to report to Parliament on the findings of this investigation? If not, why not?

7. Can the Vice-President/High Representative explain why no answers have been given to my previous questions relating to the similar incident involving a Russian ship, which were also raised by Parliament in its resolution of 16 February 2012 on the situation in Syria ([3])? If not, why not?

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

Article 1(1) of Council Decision 2011/782/CFSP ([4]) provides for an arms embargo against Syria applying to supplies 'by nationals of Member States (MS) or from the territories of MS or using their flag vessels or aircraft'. Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria ([5]) does not make it into EC law.

1. Ships registered in a non-EU State are, under the jurisdiction of the flag State, even if they are owned by EU citizens. Except where the goods are loaded in a port in the EU, there will often not be a clear breach of the EU embargo.

2. EC law does not comprise a general requirement for a MS to inform the EU institutions whenever a foreign ship enters its waters.

([1]) http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,827553,00.html
([2]) E-000493/2012.
([3]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0057.
([4]) OJ L 319, 2.12.2011, p. 56.
([5]) OJ L 16, 19.1.2012, p. 1.

3. In the present case it is up to the German authorities to investigate whether there is a breach of applicable law; there is no prima facie case of a breach of Council Decision 2011/782/CFSP by the German authorities.

4. Where suspicions of a breach of the arms embargo exist, the State having jurisdiction to take appropriate action, will be asked to take such action. A blockade of any Syrian port is, however, not part of the EU policy.

5. A regular exchange of information takes place at EU level with a view to ensuring effective and coherent implementation and application by Member States of EU sanctions, including with regard to the EU arms embargo against Syria.

Where the sanctions are given effect in EC law the Commission or a MS may initiate an infringement procedure against a MS. This is, however, not possible where the sanctions are not given effect in EC law.

6. Currently there are no grounds to justify a general investigation on enforcement of all EU sanctions by all the MS. Specific investigations may be opened where appropriate.

7. A reply to Written Question E-000493/2012 was sent on 7 May 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004021/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Regulation establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights

The Commission has had meetings with the national enforcement bodies and remains in contact with them in connection with the development of an information document on the application of the regulation establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights ([1]). When does the Commission anticipate the release of this document?

What measures does the Commission intend to implement for passengers who are offered alternative flight arrangements, but find the alternatives unacceptable (for example, if someone is travelling to New York to participate in an annual parade and the alternative arrangements result in the parade being missed)?

There are no publicly available statistics for European carriers in relation to denied boarding and downgrading of passengers. I understand that carriers were asked to provide this information, but all except two refused, stating that this aspect is part of individual commercial business strategies.

What mechanisms is the Commission putting in place to ensure that information is obtained in relation to denied boarding?

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

The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the interpretive guidelines for Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 on the rights of air passengers agreed by the Commission in 2007 ([2]), and to the further information document issued to assist National Enforcement Bodies following the volcanic ash cloud crisis in 2010 ([3]). While the Commission is not planning to add to such guidance at this stage, this is an area that it keeps under continual review.

As announced in its communication of 11 April 2011 (COM(2011)174) the Commission is currently undertaking an impact assessment to consider where the regulation could be improved to build upon the benefits that it has brought to air passengers to date. The Commission will as part of this work assess what additional measures could be adopted to improve the collection of monitoring information, including that in respect of denied boarding. The Commission intends to announce the outcome of this work towards the end of 2012.

Where rerouting does not meet a passenger's need, Article 8 of the regulation already requires an air carrier to offer a choice between either being rerouted to their destination at the earliest opportunity, or receiving a full refund where the purpose of their journey is no longer relevant.

([1]) OJ L 46, 17.2.2004, p. 1.
([2]) See at http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passengers/air/doc/neb/questions_answers.pdf_reg_2004_261.pdf
([3]) See at http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passengers/air/doc/2011_ash-cloud-crisis-guidelines-for-interpretation.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004023/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(18 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Vendita illegale di neonati a coppie sterili

I Carabinieri di Mondragone (Caserta) hanno arrestato una coppia di bulgari e un italiano con l'accusa di associazione a delinquere finalizzata all'alterazione dello stato civile di due neonati. Mentre i due bulgari avvicinavano in patria giovani ragazze incinte e in condizioni economiche disagiate, convincendole a recarsi in Italia per partorire e consegnare il bimbo a coppie italiane, il complice si occupava di reperire coppie sterili desiderose di avere figli e di assisterle nelle pratiche legali per il riconoscimento del neonato.

Considerando che lo scorso 19 gennaio 2011 il Parlamento europeo ha approvato una risoluzione in materia di adozioni internazionali nell'Unione europea, che prevede l'adottabilità di minori orfani, abbandonati o bambini di strada, problematica che non riguarda solamente il terzo mondo, ma anche l'Europa, si chiede alla Commissione quanto segue:

Anche alla luce della risoluzione di cui sopra, quali progressi sono stati realizzati al fine di garantire un diritto trasparente all'adozione che scongiuri il rischio di adozioni illegali?

Non ritiene opportuno semplificare e agevolare le procedure di adozione internazionale, eliminando la burocrazia superflua e cercando soluzioni giuridiche volte a facilitare gli Stati membri in tale processo?

Non ritiene inoltre opportuno creare un coordinamento tra la Commissione stessa e gli Stati membri per lo scambio di buone prassi al fine di eliminare drasticamente l'adozione illegale?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2012)

L'adozione internazionale è attualmente disciplinata da leggi nazionali e da convenzioni internazionali, in particolare la Convenzione dell'Aia del 29 maggio 1993 sulla protezione dei minori e sulla cooperazione in materia di adozione internazionale, a cui aderiscono tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea.

Il principio informatore della convenzione è l'interesse superiore del minore. Gli Stati contraenti devono provvedere affinché l'adozione internazionale non generi indebiti profitti. La Commissione sostiene la corretta applicazione della convenzione dell'Aia del 1993 partecipando periodicamente alle commissioni speciali organizzate nel contesto della conferenza dell'Aia e incoraggia i paesi terzi ad aderire alla convenzione al fine di rafforzare la cooperazione internazionale in materia e contrastare le adozioni illegali.

Atteso che tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea hanno aderito alla citata convenzione, la Commissione non prevede di proporre una specifica normativa in questo campo.

Si rammenta all'onorevole parlamentare che la Commissione sta fattivamente sostenendo la lotta contro la tratta dei minori a livello mondiale, mediante apposite politiche e i suoi programmi finanziari. Inoltre, la direttiva 2011/36/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 aprile 2011 ([1]) concernente la prevenzione e la repressione della tratta di esseri umani e la protezione delle vittime fornisce all'Unione europea un quadro comune per la prevenzione della tratta di esseri umani, l'applicazione del diritto penale a questo reato così come per la protezione delle vittime. Nella misura in cui soddisfa gli elementi costitutivi della tratta di esseri umani, l'adozione illegale figura esplicitamente tra le forme della tratta di esseri umani nei considerando della direttiva.

([1]) GU L 101 del 15.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004023/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Illegal sale of newborn babies to infertile couples

Carabinieri in Mondragone (province of Caserta) have arrested a Bulgarian couple and an Italian man on charges of conspiracy to alter the civil status of two newborn babies. While the two Bulgarians contacted poor, young, pregnant women in their homeland, persuading them to come to Italy to give birth and hand their babies over to Italian couples, their accomplice found infertile couples wishing to have children and assisted them with the legal formalities to legitimise the newborn babies.

Considering that on 19 January 2011, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on international adoption in the European Union, which establishes the suitability for adoption of orphans, abandoned children and street children, a problem that affects not only the developing world but also Europe, can the Commission say:

In view of the abovementioned resolution, what progress has been made on guaranteeing a transparent right to adoption that avoids the risk of illegal adoptions?

Would it not consider it appropriate to simplify international adoption procedures and make them easier, cutting unnecessary red tape and seeking legal solutions to assist the Member States in this process?

Would it not also consider it appropriate to establish coordination between the Commission and the Member States for the exchange of good practices in order to achieve a major reduction in illegal adoptions?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

International adoption is currently governed by national laws and international conventions, in particular the Hague Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption to which all the Member States of the European Union are party.

The principle of the best interests of the child is the overriding principle in the Convention. The Contracting States have to ensure that international adoption does not generate any abusive financial profit. The Commission supports the correct implementation of the 1993 Hague Convention by participating on a regular basis to the Special Commissions organised in the context of the Hague Conference and encourages third countries to become parties to the Convention with a view to strengthening international cooperation in this matter and combat illegal adoptions.

Considering that all the Member States of the European Union are party to this Convention, the Commission does not envisage to propose specific legislation in this field.

The Honourable Member should be aware that the Commission is actively supporting the fight against child trafficking worldwide, politically and through its financial programmes. Moreover, Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 ([1]) on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims provides the EU with a common framework for prevention of, and penal law on, trafficking, as well as for victim protection. Illegal adoption in so far as they fulfil the constitutive elements of trafficking in human beings is specifically mentioned as a form of trafficking in the recitals of the directive.

([1]) OJ L 101, 15.4.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004025/12
al Consiglio
Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(18 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Ritiro dalla circolazione di una moneta commemorativa slovena anti-italiana

Lo scorso anno la Slovenia ha emesso una moneta commemorativa da due euro per celebrare la nascita dell'eroe nazionale Franc Rozman-Stane (Gazzetta Ufficiale dell'UE serie C numero 57 del 23 febbraio 2011).

Il generale Rozman-Stane fu membro del IX Corpus, reparto dell'esercito comunista jugoslavo di Tito che tra il 1943 e il 1945 eseguì la pulizia etnica ai danni della popolazione italiana nella zona del confine italo-slavo; migliaia di italiani furono soppressi, molti di loro mediante fucilazione a seguito della quale i loro corpi vennero gettati in fosse comuni dette foibe, profonde cavità naturali tipiche della zona. Per sfuggire alla pulizia etnica, circa 350 000 italiani furono costretti ad abbandonare le loro abitazioni e quelle terre e i loro beni vennero confiscati e nazionalizzati.

Considerando che in Italia ogni anno, il 10 febbraio, si celebra il Giorno del ricordo per commemorare le vittime delle foibe e gli esuli dall'Istria, da Fiume e dalla Dalmazia; alla luce delle polemiche che hanno accompagnato in Slovenia la scelta di questo soggetto per una moneta commemorativa; tenendo conto del fatto che la stella a cinque punte rappresentata sulla moneta era l'effige nella bandiera della Repubblica Socialista Federale di Jugoslavia da cui la Slovenia si è proclamata indipendente nel giugno 1991; visto che Italia e Slovenia sono da anni impegnate nel rafforzamento di relazioni di vicinato amichevole, volto a superare le fratture storiche del passato secondo i principi dell'integrazione europea; visto infine il considerando 10 («È opportuno che le emissioni di monete commemorative in euro destinate alla circolazione commemorino unicamente eventi della massima rilevanza nazionale o europea, giacché tali monete circoleranno in tutta l'area dell'euro») della raccomandazione della Commissione, del 19 dicembre 2008, sugli orientamenti comuni per l'emissione di monete in euro destinate alla circolazione e loro relativa faccia nazionale, pubblicata nella Gazzetta Ufficiale dell'UE serie L numero 9 del 14 gennaio 2009; si chiede al Consiglio quanto segue:

Come mai si è comunque approvato il tema succitato come soggetto di una moneta commemorativa?

Non ritiene tale soggetto lesivo del principio «uniti nella diversità», tanto più necessario tra paesi confinanti?

Intende dare mandato alla Slovenia di ritirare dalla circolazione le suddette monete da due euro?

Risposta
(16 luglio 2012)

I principi comuni per l'emissione di monete commemorative in euro sono attualmente specificati nella raccomandazione 2009/23/CE della Commissione, del 19 dicembre 2008, su orientamenti comuni per l'emissione di monete in euro destinate alla circolazione e loro relativa faccia nazionale ([1]). A norma del punto 7 della raccomandazione gli Stati membri si informano a vicenda sulle bozze dei disegni delle nuove facce nazionali. La Commissione verifica quindi che l'immagine rispetti gli orientamenti indicati nella summenzionata raccomandazione ed informa gli altri Stati membri tramite il sottocomitato competente del comitato economico e finanziario, ovvero il sottocomitato delle monete in euro, il cui segretariato è assicurato dalla Commissione.

La legislazione dell'UE in vigore prevede il ritiro da parte degli Stati membri solamente delle monete in euro non adatte alla circolazione per ragioni tecniche o delle monete in euro che sono state scartate durante il processo di autenticazione per qualsiasi altra ragione ([2]). Non spetta pertanto al Consiglio agire nel modo suggerito dall'onorevole parlamentare.

([1]) GU L 9 del 14.1.2009, pag. 52, avallata dalle conclusioni del Consiglio del 10 febbraio 2009, su orientamenti comuni per l'emissione di monete in euro destinate alla circolazione e loro relativa faccia nazionale.

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1210/2010 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 15 dicembre 2010, relativo all'autenticazione delle monete in euro e al trattamento delle monete non adatte alla circolazione, GU L 339 del 22.12.2010, pag. 1.

Per l'onorevole parlamentare potrebbe tuttavia essere di particolare interesse sapere che la Commissione ha recentemente sottoposto al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio due proposte volte a modificare l'attuale quadro sull'emissione di monete in euro ([3]) e renderlo giuridicamente vincolante. Queste due proposte si trovano attualmente in fase di discussione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio. Le nuove regole conferiscono al Consiglio, che delibera a maggioranza qualificata, il potere di approvare le facce nazionali, nuove o modificate, delle monete in euro normali e commemorative.

([3]) Proposta di regolamento del Consiglio che modifica il regolamento (CE) n. 975/98 del Consiglio, del 3 maggio 1998, riguardante i valori unitari e le specificazioni tecniche delle monete metalliche in euro destinate alla circolazione, COM(2011)296 final, e proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sull'emissione di monete in euro, COM(2011)295.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004025/12
to the Council
Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Withdrawal from circulation of a Slovenian anti-Italian commemorative coin

Last year, Slovenia issued a commemorative two-euro coin to celebrate the birth of the national hero Franc Rozman, nicknamed Stane (*Official Journal of the European Union*, OJ No C 57, 23 February 2011).

General Rozman was a member of the IX Corpus, a division of Tito's communist Yugoslav army which, between 1943 and 1945, carried out ethnic cleansing against the Italian population in the border area between Italy and Yugoslavia. Thousands of Italians were killed, many by shooting, after which their bodies were thrown into mass graves called *foibe*, deep natural pits typical of the region. In order to flee the ethnic cleansing, some 350 000 Italians were forced to abandon their homes, and their assets were confiscated and nationalised.

Considering that every year in Italy, on 10 February, a day of remembrance is held to commemorate the victims of the *foibe* and the exiles from Istria, Fiume (Rijeka) and Dalmatia; in view of the controversies in Slovenia that have surrounded the choice of this figure for a commemorative coin; taking account of the fact that the five-pointed star shown on the coin was the symbol on the flag of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, from which Slovenia declared independence in June 1991; considering that Italy and Slovenia have for a number of years been committed to strengthening good neighbourly relations, with the aim of overcoming the historical rifts of the past in line with the principles of European integration; and finally, in view of Recital 10 ('Issues of commemorative euro coins intended for circulation should only commemorate subjects of major national or European relevance, since such coins are intended for circulation throughout the euro area') of the Commission Recommendation of 19 December 2008 on common guidelines for the national sides and the issuance of euro coins intended for circulation, published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, series L No 9 of 14 January 2009; can the Council say:

— Why was the aforementioned theme approved as the subject of a commemorative coin?

— Does it not believe that this issue violates the 'united in diversity' principle, which is all the more necessary between neighbouring countries?

— Does it intend to order Slovenia to withdraw the aforementioned two-euro coins from circulation?

Reply
(16 July 2012)

Common principles for the issuance of commemorative euro coins are currently specified in the Commission Recommendation 2009/23/EC of 19 December 2008 on common guidelines for the national sides and the issuance of euro coins intended for circulation ([1]). Pursuant to point 7 of the recommendation, Member States inform each other on the draft designs of new national sides of euro coins. The Commission should then verify compliance with the guidelines of the abovementioned recommendation and inform the other Member States via the Economic and Financial Committee's relevant subcommittee, i.e. the Euro Coin Subcommittee, whose secretariat is provided by the Commission.

The EU legislation in force only foresees withdrawal by Member States of euro coins unfit for circulation for technical reasons or euro coins that have been rejected by an authentication procedure for any other reasons ([2]). Consequently, it is not for the Council to act in the way suggested by the Honourable Member.

([1]) OJ L 9, 14.1.2009, p. 52, endorsed by the Council conclusions of 10 February 2009 on common guidelines for the national sides and the issuance of euro coins intended for circulation.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1210/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2010 concerning authentication of euro coins and handling of euro coins unfit for circulation, OJ L 339, 22.12.2010, p. 1.

The Honourable Member may, however, be interested to learn that the Commission recently submitted to the European Parliament and to the Council two proposals for amending the existing framework on the issuance of euro coins ([3]) and giving it a legally binding form. These two proposals are currently under discussion in the European Parliament and the Council. The new rules confer to the Council, acting by qualified majority, the power to approve new or modified national sides of regular and commemorative euro coins.

([3]) Proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 975/98 of 3 May 1998 on denominations and technical specifications of euro coins intended for circulation, COM(2011) 296 final, and proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the issuance of euro coins, COM(2011) 295.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004026/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(18 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Dia do Prisioneiro Palestiniano

Cerca de 1 600 prisioneiros palestinianos em prisões israelitas começam hoje o Dia do Prisioneiro Palestiniano, uma greve de fome para reivindicar melhores condições de encarceramento.

Os prisioneiros exigem, entre outras coisas, que se termine a política de prisões administrativas, o fim dos castigos de prisão solitária, a possibilidade de os prisioneiros obterem educação de nível secundário e superior, a permissão de visitas familiares e a melhoria das condições médicas e de saúde — exigências que esbarram, inadmissivelmente, no permanente desprezo e desrespeito, por parte de Israel, dos direitos dos prisioneiros, consignados na Convenção de Genebra.

Esta é uma situação que se arrasta desde o início da ocupação, contando com a total cumplicidade da União Europeia.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente da Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que avaliação faz desta situação?

2. Para quando a condenação, por parte da União Europeia, deste tratamento desumano de Israel aplicado aos prisioneiros palestinianos?

3. Para quando o fim da cumplicidade da UE, sempre tão lesta em condenar os países que não se submetam aos interesses do grande capital e das grandes potências e tão complacente com as permanentes violações dos direitos dos Palestinianos por Israel?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(26 de junho de 2012)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente congratula-se com o acordo alcançado a 14 de maio de 2012 que pôs termo à greve de fome levada a cabo pelos prisioneiros palestinianos em prisões israelitas. Insta todas as partes a implementar o acordo com a maior brevidade possível e de boa-fé. Aplaude ainda o papel do Egito como mediador do acordo.

Ainda a 14 de maio de 2012, na sequência do Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente fez as seguintes declarações à imprensa:

«No decurso das nossas conversações, analisámos também a greve da fome dos prisioneiros palestinianos. Temos seguido o caso muito de perto e continuamos empenhados, incluindo através da nossa delegação, nos esforços em curso para encontrar uma solução. Os nossos Chefes de Missão [em Jerusalém] já emitiram, na semana passada, uma comunicação sobre esta questão.

Estamos muito preocupados com o estado de saúde crítico dos palestinianos em prisão administrativa em Israel, que estão em greve da fome há mais de dois meses. Existem sinais positivos de uma eventual solução e convido Israel e a todas as partes a fazer tudo o que for possível para encontrar de imediato uma solução para a situação atual».

A União Europeia levanta regularmente a questão das condições de prisão administrativa e as condições nas prisões com Israel, no quadro do diálogo político UE-Israel e noutros contextos apropriados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004026/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Day of the Palestinian Prisoner

Around 1 600 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons are today starting the Day of the Palestinian Prisoner: a hunger strike to demand better prison conditions.

The prisoners are demanding, *inter alia*, an end to administrative prisons, an end to solitary confinement as a punishment, the chance for prisoners to receive secondary and higher education, permission for family visits, and improved medical and health conditions. These demands clash unacceptably with the continual contempt and disrespect shown by Israel for the prisoners' rights that are enshrined in the Geneva Convention.

This is a situation that has dragged on since the start of the occupation and with which the European Union has been fully complicit.

In view of the above, we ask the High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission to answer the following:

1. What is her assessment of this situation?

2. When will the European Union condemn Israel's inhumane treatment of Palestinian prisoners?

3. When will there be an end to the complicity of the EU, which is always so quick to condemn countries that do not comply with the interests of big business and the major powers, and that is so complacent about Israel's continual violations of the rights of the Palestinians?

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

Earlier on the 14 May 2012, following the Foreign Affairs Council, the High Representative/Vice-President made the following remarks to the press:

'In the course of our discussions we have also looked at the hunger strike by Palestinian prisoners. We have been following this issue very closely and remained engaged, including through our Delegation, in the ongoing efforts to find a solution. Our Heads of Missions [in Jerusalem] already issued a statement on this issue last week.

We are very concerned about the critical health condition of the Palestinians held in Israeli administrative detention who have been on hunger strike for more than two months. There are positive signals about a possible solution and I urge Israel and all sides to do everything possible to find an immediate solution to the current situation'.

The European Union regularly raises the question of administrative detention and prison conditions with Israel in the framework of the EU-Israel political dialogue and in other appropriate settings.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004027/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Guiné-Bissau: ação militar e detenção do Primeiro-Ministro

Notícias recentes dão conta de que, na cidade de Bissau, unidades militares revoltosas terão cercado a residência do Primeiro-Ministro e candidato a Presidente da República, Carlos Gomes Júnior, e que, após confrontos que duraram várias horas, este se encontraria detido à guarda dos sublevados que controlam pontos estratégicos da capital guineense. Persistem ainda dúvidas sobre quem serão os líderes deste golpe militar.

Esta grave situação compromete a segunda volta das eleições presidenciais e adensa a preocupação dos povos da Guiné-Bissau e da comunidade internacional acerca das possibilidades de estabilidade política, segurança e prosperidade naquele país e da própria viabilidade do Estado e das suas instituições.

O Brasil terá já pedido uma reunião de emergência do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas sobre este assunto e a Comunidade de Países de Língua Portuguesa acompanha de perto o sucedido.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— De que informações dispõe acerca do sucedido? Contactou os militares revoltosos? Conhecem-se os motivos da sua ação?

— Em seu entender, quais são as principais causas de instabilidade na Guiné-Bissau?

— De que modo pode a União Europeia contribuir para a estabilização do país?

— Caso haja acordo das autoridades guineenses, admite reforçar o apoio às instituições do Estado e, em particular, às forças armadas guineenses, de modo a promover a sua subordinação ao poder político e o respeito pelas cadeias de comando e pelo bem-estar das populações? Por que formas concretas?

— Caso a Guiné-Bissau retome o regular funcionamento das suas instituições democráticas, está disponível para continuar a apoiar e acompanhar no terreno a realização de futuras eleições?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(26 de junho de 2012)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente tem acompanhado de perto a situação na Guiné-Bissau. O golpe de Estado de 12 de abril de 2012 foi uma tentativa de interromper o processo eleitoral e uma oportunidade que as forças armadas tiveram para manter o seu controlo sobre a sociedade civil.

As ameaças e o controlo do poder político por parte das forças armadas, alimentados pelo tráfico de droga em grande escala, representam as principais causas da instabilidade na Guiné-Bissau.

A UE está a contribuir para os esforços no sentido de estabilizar o país através de ações políticas, diplomáticas e de cooperação e apoiando os esforços da Cedeao ([1]), da UA ([2]) e da Organização das Nações Unidas (ONU), bem como de outros parceiros internacionais tais como a CPLP ([3]), na atual crise, nomeadamente através da manutenção das sanções até ao regresso completo à ordem constitucional.

A Comissão já tinha suspendido parte da sua cooperação na Guiné-Bissau na sequência dos acontecimentos de 2010, que conduziram à realização de consultas nos termos do artigo 96.° do Acordo de Cotonu e à adoção da Decisão 2011/492/UE, de 18 de julho de 2011 ([4]), que estabelece um conjunto de medidas adequadas para o relançamento da cooperação. Apenas a cooperação com o Governo foi congelada, prosseguindo as atividades que beneficiam diretamente a população e que são principalmente financiadas pelas rubricas orçamentais temáticas e pelas Facilidades para a água e para a energia.

([1]) Cedeao = Comunidade Económica dos Estados da África Ocidental.
([2]) UA = União Africana.
([3]) CPLP = Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa.
([4]) 2011/492/UE: Decisão do Conselho, de 18 de julho de 2011, relativa à conclusão do processo de consultas com a República da Guiné-Bissau ao abrigo do artigo 96.° do Acordo de Parceria entre os Estados de África, das Caraíbas e do Pacífico e a Comunidade Europeia e os seus Estados-Membros, JO L 203 de 6.8.2011.

O desbloqueio de parte da nossa cooperação dependerá da evolução da crise e da capacidade do futuro Governo para aplicar uma série de reformas cruciais, principalmente no domínio da segurança e da luta contra o tráfico de drogas ilícitas.

Quando a ordem constitucional for restabelecida e implementadas as reformas essenciais como a reforma do setor da segurança, a UE estará disposta a apoiar o Governo legítimo da Guiné-Bissau, nomeadamente através do apoio ao processo eleitoral.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004027/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Guinea-Bissau: military action and detention of the Prime Minister

It has recently been reported that rebel military units in the city of Bissau surrounded the residence of Carlos Gomes Júnior, the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau and a presidential candidate, and that, following clashes lasting several hours, he was detained by the rebels, who control strategic points in the country's capital. It is still unclear who the leaders of this military coup are.

This serious situation puts the second round of the presidential elections at risk, and compounds concern of the citizens of Guinea-Bissau and the international community about the chances for political stability, security and prosperity in the country, and about the very viability of the state and its institutions.

Brazil has already requested an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council on this matter and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries is monitoring events closely.

Therefore, I ask the Commission:

— What information does it have on these events? Has it contacted the rebel groups? Is it aware of the motives for their actions?

— What does it consider to be the principal causes of instability in Guinea-Bissau?

— How can the European Union contribute to stabilising the country?

— If agreement can be reached with the Guinea-Bissau authorities, will the Commission consider stepping up support for the State institutions, and in particular for the country's armed forces, in order to bring them into line with political authority, and to respect chains of command and public well-being? What methods would it use for this?

— If Guinea-Bissau's democratic institutions return to normal operations, is the Commission prepared to support future elections and monitor how they are organised on the ground?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President has been closely monitoring the situation in Guinea-Bissau. The coup d'état of 12 April 2012 was an attempt to interrupt the electoral process and an opportunity for the armed forces to maintain their grip on the civil power.

The threats and control by the armed forces over the civil power, fuelled by large scale illegal drugs trafficking, represent the main causes of instability 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 Ecowas ([1]), the AU ([2]) and the United Nations (UN), as well as other international partners such as the CPLP ([3]), in the current crisis, including through the maintenance of sanctions until the full return to constitutional order.

The Commission had already put on hold part of its cooperation in Guinea-Bissau following the 2010 events, which led to Cotonou Agreement Article 96 consultations and to Council Decision 2011/492/EU of 18 July 2011 ([4]) 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.

([1]) Ecowas = Economic Community of West African States.
([2]) AU = African Union.
([3]) CPLP = Community of Portuguese Language Countries.
([4]) 2011/492/EU: Council Decision of 18 July 2011 concerning the conclusion of consultations with the Republic of Guinea-Bissau under Article 96 of the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, OJ L 203, 6.8.2011.

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.

When constitutional order is re-established, and the implementation of key reforms such as the Security Sector Reform is undertaken, the EU will be ready to support the legitimate government of Guinea-Bissau, including by supporting the electoral process.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004029/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Post-EU withdrawal trade: legal obligation

In the event that an EU Member State leaves the European Union, is the EU legally obliged to seek a trade deal with it following withdrawal?

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

According to Article 50(2) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the Union shall negotiate and conclude an agreement with a withdrawing Member State, setting out the arrangements for its withdrawal, taking account of the framework for its future relationship with the Union. However, two years following the notification of withdrawal by a Member State, the withdrawal would become effective even in the absence of a withdrawal agreement (Article 50(3) of the TEU). No provisions in the EU Treaties refer specifically to the trade relationships between the EU and a Member State that would withdraw from the Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004030/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Airline tax and response of non-EU countries (1)

It has been reported by the press that government representatives from several countries, including the US and China, recently attended a meeting held in Moscow to discuss retaliatory measures against the EU's carbon tax on airlines ([1]).

Could the Commission give its view of this meeting?

Question for written answer E-004031/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Airline tax and response of non-EU countries (2)

It has been reported by the press that government representatives from several countries, including the US and China recently attended a meeting held in Moscow to discuss retaliatory measures against the EU's carbon tax on airlines ([2]).

In the event that retaliatory measures are taken, does the Commission have any contingency plan to deal with the economic effects of these measures?

Question for written answer E-004032/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Airline tax and response of non-EU countries (3)

It has been reported by the press that government representatives from several countries, including the US and China, recently attended a meeting held in Moscow to discuss retaliatory measures against the EU's carbon tax on airlines ([3]).

One of the main objections raised is that the EU charges carbon taxes based on the length of journey, regardless of how much of that journey is over EU airspace. Given the strength of feeling this has clearly generated, does the EU intend to revise its policy?

Joint answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

The Commission has been actively engaging with third countries present in Moscow to address any legitimate concerns they may have. The Commission notes that the inclusion of aviation in the ETS is fully consistent with international law and in particular with the 1944 Chicago Convention. The legislation has been upheld by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and the Commission encourages third countries to respect the rule of law.

The Commission would further refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001849/2012 by Mr Nuno Teixeira ([4]).

([1]) http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/18/business/global/countries-seek-retaliation-to-europes-carbon-tax-on-airlines.html?pagewanted=all.
([2]) http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/18/business/global/countries-seek-retaliation-to-europes-carbon-tax-on-airlines.html?pagewanted=all.
([3]) http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/18/business/global/countries-seek-retaliation-to-europes-carbon-tax-on-airlines.html?pagewanted=all.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004033/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Land grabbing: il caso del Brasile

In Brasile la comunità indigena dei Guarani sta subendo, come accade in molti altri paesi in via di sviluppo, quello che viene definito da molti studiosi del settore agricolo «*land grabbing*»: multinazionali si accaparrano, con accordi di acquisto o di sfruttamento del territorio stretti con i paesi sovrani, vaste porzioni di terreno e ne riconvertono le produzioni agricole a «colture energetiche», ossia piantagioni (di canna da zucchero nel caso di specie) volte alla produzione di biocarburanti.

Il popolo dei Guarani si è visto negare l'accesso alle storiche terre formalmente riconosciute di loro proprietà da parte di Cosan, azienda leader nel settore energetico, la quale ha stretto con Shell un accordo da 12 miliardi di dollari per la produzione di bioetanolo. I Guarani sono stati relegati in riserve, senza poter provvedere al proprio sostentamento che veniva dall'agricoltura, e il tasso di malattie e mortalità fra essi è esponenzialmente aumentato a causa dei prodotti chimici utilizzati per le coltivazioni intensive.

— È la Commissione a conoscenza di tali accadimenti?

— Che posizione intende prendere la Commissione per far rispettare al Brasile la tutela della democrazia e dei diritti dell'uomo, come sancito dall'articolo 1 dell'accordo quadro di cooperazione tra la Comunità economica europea e la Repubblica federativa del Brasile stipulato nel 1995?

— È essa a conoscenza di altri Stati terzi con i quali l'UE ha concluso accordi e nei quali sono poste in essere politiche di questo tipo?

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

L'Unione europea è al corrente della situazione della comunità dei Guarani e di altre tribù indigene del Brasile.

Nel 1992 il governo brasiliano ha risposto al problema del «land grabbing» nelle aree tribali riconoscendo alle popolazioni indigene il pieno diritto d'uso dei terreni indigeni e delle aree tribali attraverso un rigoroso piano di demarcazione e registrazione degli appezzamenti. Nel 2002 il governo ha ratificato la convenzione dell'Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro (OIL) n. 169 sui popoli indigeni e tribali, che sancisce il riconoscimento dei diritti di proprietà e di possesso delle popolazioni indigene sulle terre da loro tradizionalmente possedute. Pare, tuttavia, che il governo incontri difficoltà nell'assicurare il pieno rispetto di questi diritti.

La situazione delle popolazioni indigene del Brasile e dei loro diritti viene affrontata nell'ambito del dialogo sui diritti umani tra UE e Brasile. Inoltre, gli Stati membri sono in costante contatto con le pertinenti organizzazioni della società civile brasiliana e con i rappresentanti dei popoli indigeni. La delegazione dell'UE a Brasilia intrattiene contatti periodici con la Fondazione nazionale per gli indigeni (FUNAI), l'ente pubblico che si occupa delle questioni legate a tali popolazioni.

Da anni l'UE sostiene attivamente i diritti degli indigeni in Brasile tramite la linea di bilancio per le organizzazioni non governative, l'Iniziativa europea per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR) e la linea di bilancio per le foreste tropicali. I progetti finanziati mirano a conferire maggiori poteri alle popolazioni indigene promuovendo il riconoscimento e il rispetto dei loro diritti civili e fondiari e lo sviluppo sostenibile dell'utilizzo dei terreni.

La Commissione è al corrente del numero crescente di investimenti su larga scala su terreni agricoli nei paesi in via di sviluppo e delle loro possibili ripercussioni sociali e ambientali, specialmente nei paesi con un governo debole ([1]).

([1]) La Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte fornite a precedenti interrogazioni scritte, in particolare alle risposte E-005522/2012 e E-005839/2012 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004033/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Land grabbing: the case of Brazil

The Guarani indigenous community in Brazil is being affected, as is happening in many other developing countries, by a process defined by numerous agricultural experts as 'land grabbing'. Based on purchase or land-use agreements signed with sovereign countries, multinationals are grabbing huge sections of land and are turning them into areas for producing 'energy crops', in other words, plantations (of sugar cane in this case) for the production of biofuels.

The Guarani people have been denied access to historical lands officially recognised as their property by Cosan, a leading company in the energy sector, which has signed an agreement with Shell worth USD 12 billion to produce bioethanol. The Guarani have been consigned to reservations and are now deprived of their livelihood, which came from farming. There has been an exponential rise in the rate of disease and mortality among them due to the chemicals being used for intensive cultivation.

— Is the Commission aware of such events taking place?

— What stance does the Commission intend to take to make Brazil respect the protection of democracy and human rights as stipulated by Article 1 of the framework Agreement for Cooperation between the European Economic Community and the Federative Republic of Brazil signed in 1995?

— Is the Commission aware of other third countries with which the EU has signed agreements where policies of this kind are being implemented?

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

The EU is aware of the situation faced by the Guaraní community as well as other indigenous tribes in Brazil.

In 1992, the Brazilian Government responded to land grabbing problems in tribal areas by recognising the full right of use of indigenous lands and tribal areas to indigenous populations, through strict land demarcations and registration schemes. In 2002 it ratified the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No169 on indigenous and tribal people, which stipulates the recognition of rights of ownership and possession of indigenous peoples over lands they traditionally owned. It appears, however, that the Government finds it difficult to ensure the full enforcement of the rights.

The situation of Brazilian indigenous people and their rights are being addressed in the framework of the EU-Brazil Human Rights Dialogue. Moreover, EU Member States are in regular contact with relevant Brazilian civil society organisations and indigenous peoples' representatives. The EU Delegation in Brasilia maintains regular contacts with the National Indigenous Foundation (FUNAI), the government agency responsible for indigenous issues.

The EU has been actively supporting indigenous rights in Brazil over the years, through the Non-governmental organisations budget line, the European Initiative for Human Rights and Democracy (EIDHR) and the tropical forest budget line. The funded projects aim at enhancing the empowerment of indigenous populations, promoting the recognition and enforcement of their civil and land rights and the sustainable development of the land use.

The Commission is aware of the increasing number of large-scale investments in agricultural land in developing countries and the potential negative social and environmental consequences especially in countries with weak governance ([1]).

([1]) The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answers to previous written questions in particular E-005522/2012 and E-005839/2012, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004034/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Attuazione della direttiva sul ritardo dei pagamenti: creazione di una lista nera delle pubbliche amministrazioni insolventi

Il tessuto economico italiano affronta oggi un'emergenza sociale: gli imprenditori italiani, soprattutto veneti e del nord-est, esasperati dalla congiuntura negativa, dalla caduta dei consumi, dalla pressione fiscale, dalla burocrazia, dalla stretta creditizia e dai ritardi nei pagamenti, decidono sempre più frequentemente di togliersi la vita. I dati pubblicati dal centro studi dell'Associazione artigiani e Piccoli imprenditori di Mestre sono chiari: 23 suicidi dall'inizio dell'anno, di cui 9, cioè il 40 % del totale, avvenuti in Veneto. Un fenomeno, questo, che secondo l'Istat (Istituto nazionale di statistica) è in continuo aumento: tra il 2008 e il 2010 il numero di chi ha scelto di togliersi la vita per motivi di natura economica è infatti cresciuto ben del 25 %.

— È la Commissione consapevole di quanto sta accadendo in Veneto?

— Come intende affrontare il fenomeno dei suicidi degli imprenditori?

— Considerato che il FEG prevede un sostegno per i lavoratori vittime della globalizzazione, ha la Commissione pensato di stanziare delle risorse anche per gli imprenditori?

— Può rendere conto dello stato di attuazione della direttiva 2000/35/CE nei diversi Stati membri?

— Al fine di agevolare il corretto funzionamento del mercato interno e la libera circolazione dei servizi aumentando la trasparenza, intende la Commissione costituire una lista nera delle pubbliche amministrazioni insolventi al fine di permettere agli appaltatori una valutazione corretta e trasparente del rischio?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(15 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei problemi che gli operatori economici europei incontrano in tutta l'Unione a causa dei ritardi nei pagamenti.

L'esigenza di trovare una soluzione alle gravi conseguenze negative dei ritardi di pagamento è stata una delle ragioni principali per la rifusione della direttiva 2000/35/CE relativa alla lotta contro i ritardi di pagamento nelle transazioni commerciali. La direttiva 2011/7/UE, che contiene disposizioni più rigorose, è stata pertanto adottata nel febbraio 2011 e deve essere recepita entro il 16 marzo 2013.

Per quanto concerne la situazione particolare dell'Italia, la Commissione è al corrente dei suicidi di imprenditori italiani e può soltanto esprimere il proprio rincrescimento per questi atti di disperazione. Considerato il detrimento che i ritardi di pagamento causano alle aziende il Vicepresidente Tajani ha sollecitato personalmente gli Stati membri ([1]) ad accelerare i loro sforzi a livello nazionale per recepire e attuare anticipatamente la direttiva prima della fine del 2012.

La Commissione ha proposto ([2]) di espandere la popolazione ammissibile a fruire degli aiuti del futuro FEG ([3]) in modo da includere in particolare i proprietari-amministratori delle micro, piccole e medie imprese e i lavoratori autonomi. Se la proposta sarà approvata dai colegislatori ciò consentirà a partire dal 2014 al futuro FEG di fornire assistenza — nella forma di misure attive sul mercato del lavoro — nei casi in cui un'azienda debba cessare le attività a causa della globalizzazione degli scambi o di una crisi imprevista.

La Commissione attribuisce la massima importanza a una maggiore trasparenza e in effetti la direttiva 2011/7 contiene una disposizione specifica che incoraggia gli Stati membri a promuovere le pratiche ottimali, anche attraverso la pubblicazione di elenchi dei pagatori tempestivi.

([1]) Lettere del 24 ottobre 2011 e dell'8 maggio 2012.
([2]) COM(2011)608 definitivo, Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sul Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) 2014-2020.
([3]) Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004034/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Implementation of the Late Payments Directive: creation of a blacklist of insolvent public authorities

Italy's business sector is currently in the throes of a social crisis, particularly in Veneto and the north-east of the country, where increasing numbers of businessmen, reduced to despair by the difficult economic situation, falling consumption, taxation, red tape, the credit squeeze and late payments, are taking their own lives. The figures published by the research centre of the Associazione artigiani e Piccoli imprenditori di Mestre (Mestre craft and small business association) are alarming, showing as they do that there have been 23 suicides since the beginning of the year, nine of which (40% of the total) occurred in the Veneto region. According to the Istituto nazionale di statistica (the national statistics body), this is a steadily rising trend: between 2008 and 2010 the number of people committing suicide because of financial problems increased by fully 25%.

— Is the Commission aware of what is happening in the Veneto region?

— How does it propose to tackle the issue of suicides among businessmen?

— Given that the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund provides support for workers who are victims of globalisation, has the Commission thought of earmarking resources for businessmen as well?

— Can it give a progress report on the implementation of Directive 2000/35/EC in the various Member States?

— With a view to increasing transparency and thus helping to ensure the proper operation of the internal market and the free movement of services, does the Commission propose to draw up a blacklist of insolvent public authorities in order to enable contractors to make a thorough assessment of the risks to which they are exposed?

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

The Commission is aware of the problems faced by European economic operators throughout the Union due to late payment.

Addressing the important negative impact of late payments was one of the main reasons for the recast of Directive 2000/35/EC on combating late payment in commercial transactions. Directive 2011/7/UE, containing more stringent provisions, was thus adopted in February 2011 and has to be transposed by the latest 16 March 2013.

As regards the particular situation in Italy, the Commission has been informed about the news of Italian businessmen committing suicide and it can only regret to hear about such actions of despair. Considering the detrimental effects of late payment on businesses, Vice-President Tajani personally urged Member States ([1]) to step up their efforts at national level for an early transposition and implementation of the directive before the end of 2012.

The Commission proposed ([2]) to expand the eligible population of the future EGF ([3]) to include in particular the owner-managers of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and the self-employed. If approved by the co-legislators, this will enable the future EGF from 2014 onwards to provide assistance — in the form of active labour market policy measures -when activity had to cease because of trade related globalisation or an unexpected crisis.

The Commission attaches great importance to increasing transparency, and indeed Directive 2011/7 contains a specific provision that encourages Member States to foster best practices, including by encouraging the publication of list of prompt payers.

([1]) Letters of 24 October 2011 and 8 May 2012.
([2]) COM(2011) 608 final, Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) 2014-2020.
([3]) European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-004036/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(18 aprilie 2012)

Subiect: Candidații la consiliul de administrație al Agenției Europene pentru Siguranța Alimentară

În ceea ce privește nominalizările din 2012 pentru consiliul de administrație al Agenției Europene pentru Siguranța Alimentară, au fost dezvăluite mai multe potențiale conflicte de interese în legătură cu anumiți candidați. Irin Mella Frewen, un fost lobbyist Monsanto, reprezintă numai una dintre noile nominalizări controversate. Jiří Ruprich, membru al comitetului științific al Institutului Danone din Cehia, fiind una dintre nominalizările controversate de anul trecut, în prezent, membru al consiliului de administrație al EFSA, este nominalizat din nou anul acesta pentru un nou mandat.

În prezent, declarațiile anuale de interese ale membrilor consiliului de administrație, care sunt publicate pe site-ul EFSA, sunt precedate de următoarea declarație: „A se avea în vedere că înalta calitate a expertizei științifice se bazează în mod firesc pe experiența anterioară și, prin urmare, existența unui interes nu presupune neapărat existența unui conflict de interese."

Cu toate acestea, „experiența anterioară" nu este o condiție necesară pentru „înalta calitate a expertizei": un aspect evident, întrucât mulți alți membri ai consiliului de administrație nu au interese privind industria în cauză. Dată fiind această situație, declarația menționată anterior demonstrează în mod exact că pot exista conflicte de interese. În plus, declarația pare să încerce să legitimeze potențialele conflicte de interese, ceea ce este inacceptabil. Mai mult, nu este implementat niciun mecanism clar care să asigure că orice astfel de potențiale conflicte de interese sunt prevenite în mod eficient. Articolul 37 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 178/2002 prevede pur și simplu ca membrii consiliului de administrație să facă un „angajament" anual, care se presupune că este suficient pentru a le garanta independența.

În plus, într-o scrisoare recentă adresată Președintelui Parlamentului European, președintele Comisiei pentru mediu, sănătate publică și siguranță alimentară s-a plâns, de asemenea, de lipsa de transparență a procesului de numire a noului consiliu de administrație al EFSA.

— Ce măsuri intenționează Comisia să adopte pentru a se asigura că sunt prevenite în mod eficient conflictele de interese, în cazul în care unii membri ai consiliului de administrație au interese privind industria în cauză?

Răspuns dat de domnul Dalli în numele Comisiei
(12 iunie 2012)

În conformitate cu articolul 25 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 178/2002 ([1]) în temeiul căruia a fost instituită Autoritatea Europeană pentru Siguranța Alimentară (EFSA), patru dintre membrii Consiliului de administrație trebuie să fi lucrat în organizații care reprezintă consumatorii și alte interese din lanțul alimentar. Membrii Consiliului de administrație au obligația de a acționa în interes public și nu reprezintă vreun guvern, organizație sau sector. În timpul procedurii de preselecție, Comisia a verificat cu atenție declarațiile de interese ale candidaților. Consiliul numește membrii în urma consultării cu Parlamentul European, pe baza unei liste scurte de candidați întocmite de Comisie.

Rolul Consiliului de administrație nu este de a oferi consiliere științifică, ci de a elabora, pe baza propunerii directorului executiv, bugetul și programul de activitate al Autorității și de a urmări executarea acestora.

Regulamentul menționat anterior a instituit EFSA ca agenție independentă și, prin urmare, a impus Autorității cerințe stricte cu privire la independență și conflictele de interese. Pentru a îndeplini aceste cerințe, EFSA a adoptat norme interne care reglementează aceste aspecte. Aceste norme includ o nouă politică pentru independență, un ghid cu privire la declarațiile de interese și, precum și proceduri de identificare și soluționare a eventualelor conflicte de interese. Membrii Consiliului de administrație trebuie să semneze o declarație anuală de interese, o declarație de angajament și să acționeze conform Codului lor de conduită.

([1]) JO L 31, 1.2.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004036/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: European Food Safety Agency management board candidates

In connection with the nominations for the management board of the European Food Safety Agency for 2012, several potential conflicts of interest have been revealed in relation to some of the candidates. Irin Mella Frewen, a former Monsanto lobbyist, is just one of the controversial new nominations. Jiří Ruprich, a member of the scientific committee of the Czech Danone Institute, one of last year's controversial nominations and currently a member of the board, is nominated again this year for a new mandate.

At present, the annual declarations of interests of management board members, which are published on the EFSA Internet site, are preceded by the statement: 'Please note that high quality of scientific expertise is by nature based on prior experience and that therefore having an interest does not necessarily mean having a conflict of interest.'

'Prior experience', however, is not a necessary condition for 'high quality expertise': an obvious point, since several other members of the management board do not have interests related to the industry concerned. That being so, the abovementioned statement signals precisely that conflicts of interest are possible. Moreover, the statement seems to attempt to legitimise potential conflicts of interest, which is unacceptable. Furthermore, no clear mechanisms are in place to ensure that any such possible conflicts of interest are effectively prevented. Article 37 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 merely requires management board members to make an annual 'declaration of commitment', which is supposedly sufficient to ensure their independence.

Moreover, in a recent letter to the President of the European Parliament, the chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety also complained about the lack of transparency of the process leading to the installation of a new management board for EFSA.

— What measures does the Commission envisage taking to ensure that conflicts of interest are effectively prevented in the event of management board members having interests related to the industry concerned?

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

Article 25 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([1]) that established the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) requires that four members of the Management Board shall have a background in organisations representing consumers and other interests in the food chain. Members of the Management Board are required to act in the public interest and shall not represent any government, organisation or sector. During the pre-selection procedure, declarations of interest of the candidates were carefully checked by the Commission. Council appoints the members in consultation with the European Parliament, upon a shortlist of the Commission.

The role of the Management Board is not to give scientific advice, but to establish, upon proposal of the Executive Director, the budget and work programmes of the Authority and to monitor their implementation.

The aforementioned Regulation established EFSA as an independent agency and therefore imposed strict requirements on the Authority in respect of independence and conflicts of interests. In order to comply with these requirements, EFSA has established internal rules which deal with such matters. These include a new revised Policy on Independence, Guidance document on Declarations of Interest and Procedures for identifying and handling potential conflicts of interest. Management Board members have to sign an annual declaration of interests, a declaration of commitment and have to act upon their Code of Conduct.

([1]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004037/12
adresată Consiliului
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(18 aprilie 2012)

Subiect: Candidații la consiliul de administrație al Agenției Europene pentru Siguranța Alimentară

În ceea ce privește nominalizările din 2012 pentru consiliul de administrație al Agenției Europene pentru Siguranța Alimentară, au fost dezvăluite mai multe potențiale conflicte de interese în legătură cu anumiți candidați. Irin Mella Frewen, un fost lobbyist Monsanto, reprezintă numai una dintre noile nominalizări controversate. Jiří Ruprich, membru al comitetului științific al Institutului Danone din Cehia, fiind una dintre nominalizările controversate de anul trecut, în prezent, membru al consiliului de administrație al EFSA, este nominalizat din nou anul acesta pentru un nou mandat.

În prezent, declarațiile anuale de interese ale membrilor consiliului de administrație, care sunt publicate pe site-ul EFSA, sunt precedate de următoarea declarație: „A se avea în vedere că înalta calitate a expertizei științifice se bazează în mod firesc pe experiența anterioară și, prin urmare, existența unui interes nu presupune neapărat existența unui conflict de interese."

Cu toate acestea, „experiența anterioară" nu este o condiție necesară pentru „înalta calitate a expertizei": un aspect evident, întrucât mulți alți membri ai consiliului de administrație nu au interese privind industria în cauză. Dată fiind această situație, declarația menționată anterior demonstrează în mod exact că pot exista conflicte de interese. În plus, declarația pare să încerce să legitimeze potențialele conflicte de interese, ceea ce este inacceptabil. Mai mult, nu este implementat niciun mecanism clar care să asigure că orice astfel de potențiale conflicte de interese sunt prevenite în mod eficient. Articolul 37 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 178/2002 prevede pur și simplu ca membrii consiliului de administrație să facă un „angajament" anual, care se presupune că este suficient pentru a le garanta independența.

În plus, într-o scrisoare recentă adresată Președintelui Parlamentului European, președintele Comisiei pentru mediu, sănătate publică și siguranță alimentară s-a plâns, de asemenea, de lipsa de transparență a procesului de numire a noului consiliu de administrație al EFSA.

— Ce măsuri intenționează Consiliul să adopte pentru a se asigura că sunt prevenite în mod eficient conflictele de interese, în cazul în care unii membri ai consiliului de administrație au interese privind industria în cauză?

Răspuns
(22 iunie 2012)

Normele privind desemnarea Consiliului de administrație al Autorității Europene pentru Siguranța Alimentară (EFSA) sunt prevăzute de Regulamentul (CE) nr. 178/2002 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 28 ianuarie 2002, în special la articolul 25. Parlamentul European a fost, în calitate de colegiuitor, profund implicat în redactarea acestui text juridic, convenit în temeiul fostei proceduri legislative de codecizie.

Articolul respectiv prevede, în special, faptul că lista redactată de Comisie include un număr de candidați substanțial mai mare decât numărul de membri ce urmează a fi numiți și că patru dintre membri trebuie să fi lucrat în organizații care reprezintă consumatorii și alte interese din lanțul alimentar. De asemenea, articolul precizează faptul că membrii Consiliului de administrație se numesc astfel încât să se asigure cele mai ridicate standarde de competență, o gamă largă de experiențe în materie și o cât mai mare repartizare geografică pe teritoriul Uniunii. Mandatul membrilor este de patru ani și poate fi reînnoit o singură dată.

La 10 februarie 2012, Comisia a transmis Consiliului o listă cu 14 candidați în vederea numirii, înainte de 30 iunie 2012, a șapte noi membri în cadrul Consiliului de administrație, al căror mandat va expira la data respectivă. Un deputat în Parlamentul European a participat la redactarea acestei liste în calitate de observator.

La 27 februarie 2012, Consiliul a înaintat lista candidaților către Parlamentul European astfel încât acesta să își prezinte opiniile spre examinare în termen de trei luni de la primirea listei.

Ulterior, Consiliul va numi membrii Consiliului de administrație înainte de termenul de 30 iunie 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004037/12
to the Council
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: European Food Safety Agency management board candidates

In connection with the nominations for the management board of the European Food Safety Agency for 2012, several potential conflicts of interest have been revealed in relation to some of the candidates. Irin Mella Frewen, a former Monsanto lobbyist, is just one of the controversial new nominations. Jiří Ruprich, a member of the scientific committee of the Czech Danone Institute, one of last year's controversial nominations and currently a member of the board, is nominated again this year for a new mandate.

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'Prior experience', however, is not a necessary condition for 'high quality expertise': an obvious point, since several other members of the management board do not have interests related to the industry concerned. That being so, the abovementioned statement signals precisely that conflicts of interest are possible. Moreover, the statement seems to attempt to legitimise potential conflicts of interest, which is unacceptable. Furthermore, no clear mechanisms are in place to ensure that any such possible conflicts of interest are effectively prevented. Article 37 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 merely requires management board members to make an annual 'declaration of commitment', which is supposedly sufficient to ensure their independence.

Moreover, in a recent letter to the President of the European Parliament, the chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety also complained about the lack of transparency of the process leading to the installation of a new management board for EFSA.

— What measures does the Council envisage taking to ensure that conflicts of interest are effectively prevented in the event of management board members having interests related to the industry concerned?

Reply
(22 June 2012)

The rules for the appointment of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) are laid down in Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002, and in particular in Article 25 thereof. The European Parliament as a co-legislator was deeply involved in the drafting of this legal text, undertaken under the former co-decision legislative procedure.

That Article provides in particular that the list drawn up by the Commission shall include a number of candidates substantially higher than the number of members to be appointed, and that four of the members shall have their background in organisations representing consumers and other interests in the food chain. The article also indicates that the members of the Board shall be appointed in such a way as to secure the highest standards of competence, a broad range of relevant expertise and the broadest possible geographical distribution within the Union. A member's term of office shall be four years, and may be renewed once.

On 10 February 2012 the Commission submitted to the Council a list of 14 candidates with a view to appointing 7 new members of the Board before 30 June 2012, whose term of office will expire on that date. A Member of the European Parliament was involved, as an observer, in the drawing-up of this list.

On 27 February 2012 the Council forwarded this list of candidates to the European Parliament for it to make its views available for consideration within three months of receiving the list.

The Council will then appoint the members of the Management Board before the deadline of 30 June 2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004038/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(18 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Sacerdote vietnamita aggredito nei dintorni di Hanoi

Il 17 aprile la Associated Press ha riferito dell'aggressione perpetrata nei dintorni di Hanoi ai danni di un sacerdote cattolico vietnamita, malmenato fino a perdere conoscenza da un gruppo di teppisti dopo la distruzione di una casa che l'ecclesiastico intendeva trasformare in un orfanotrofio. Il reverendo Nguyen Van Binh aveva costruito la casa su un appezzamento di terreno che aveva acquistato nei pressi della sua parrocchia nel distretto di Chuong My, nei dintorni di Hanoi. Dopo essersi recato alla casa, che ha trovato distrutta, il sacerdote è stato aggredito e malmenato sul posto da un gruppo di uomini, fino a perdere conoscenza. L'arcivescovo di Hanoi ha chiesto alla polizia del distretto di Chuong My di indagare sull'accaduto.

Tale incidente è soltanto uno dei tanti episodi che dimostrano le tensioni esistenti tra il governo comunista vietnamita e la chiesa cattolica, che sta rivendicando la restituzione delle terre confiscate in passato. Tra il Vaticano e il governo vietnamita non intercorre alcuna relazione ufficiale, anche se in Vietnam vivono sei milioni di cattolici. I gruppi religiosi devono iscriversi a un registro governativo e operare in base a linee guida precedentemente approvate.

Un'ulteriore relazione di Human Rights Watch riporta inoltre segnalazioni circa un aumento della repressione contro i membri cristiani delle minoranze indigene negli altipiani centrali del Vietnam, note come Montagnard. A seguito del dialogo UE-Vietnam sui diritti umani di gennaio, la delegazione UE in Vietnam ha rilasciato un comunicato stampa in cui afferma: «Pur plaudendo ai significativi miglioramenti nel campo della libertà di religione o credo registrati in Vietnam negli ultimi anni, l'UE ha rilevato alcuni preoccupanti sviluppi avvenuti nel 2011. Entrambe le parti concordano sulla necessità di compiere ulteriori sforzi volti a migliorare e accelerare il processo di registrazione di congregazioni e chiese in Vietnam».

1. Il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è a conoscenza delle segnalazioni di aggressioni continue contro i cristiani vietnamiti ed è al corrente della recente aggressione ai danni del reverendo Nguyen Van Binh nei dintorni di Hanoi?

2. Nell'ambito del dialogo UE-Vietnam sui diritti umani, quali misure concrete si è impegnato ad adottare il governo vietnamita per migliorare le condizioni dei vari gruppi religiosi presenti nel paese?

3. Secondo la delegazione UE in Vietnam, il governo di Hanoi ha dimostrato il suo impegno nell'adozione di tali misure?

4. Rispetto all'aggressione a un sacerdote cattolico, ritengono i funzionari dell'UE in Vietnam che ciò possa inscriversi all'interno di una crescente tendenza alla violenza nei confronti della comunità cattolica del paese?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004449/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(27 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Rispetto dei diritti umani in Vietnam

Il 12 aprile in Vietnam un pastore cristiano è rimasto vittima di una feroce aggressione da parte di persone armate che oltre a colpire il religioso hanno devastato l'orfanotrofio da lui inaugurato, minacciando anche gli operatori e i bambini. Dalle testimonianze pare appurato che le forze dell'ordine e le autorità locali fossero conniventi con tale attacco, essendo la polizia presente sul luogo dell'attacco col preciso scopo di tenere lontani i fedeli cristiani e assicurarsi che esso fosse portato a termine. Gli appelli del vescovo di Hanoi di aprire un'inchiesta in merito sono caduti nel vuoto.

È la Commissione a conoscenza dei fatti?

È in grado di riferire in merito alla situazione della comunità cristiana in Vietnam?

Può indicare se nell'ambito degli incontri dell'undicesima riunione ASEAN-UE tenutasi a Phnom Penh, e in particolare durante le riunioni collaterali UE-Vietnam dove si è stilato il documento di scopo per i futuri negoziati commerciali, è stato trattato il tema del rispetto dei diritti umani?

Risposta congiunta di Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione

(15 giugno 2012)

L'UE è a conoscenza delle segnalazioni relative alle recenti aggressioni in Vietnam e continuerà a seguire da vicino tutti gli sviluppi relativi al tema della libertà di religione e di credo nel paese. La delegazione dell'UE e le ambasciate degli Stati membri dell'UE a Hanoi sono tuttavia dell'opinione che le violenze di cui il reverendo Nguyen Van Binh e la comunità cattolica nel paese sono sistematicamente oggetto non siano imputabili ad una persecuzione religiosa a motivo delle loro attività. Gli incidenti e i conflitti che coinvolgono periodicamente le comunità e le parrocchie cattoliche in Vietnam sono spesso dovuti ad iniziative intraprese dalle autorità locali e a controversie relative ai diritti per l'utilizzo del suolo.

Nell'ambito del recente Dialogo UE-Vietnam sui diritti umani, svoltosi il 12 giugno a Hanoi, l'UE ha espresso le sue preoccupazioni anche con riguardo alle notizie relative ad episodi di violenza contro le comunità cristiane e a ritardi ed ostacoli nella registrazione di alcune congregazioni. Il governo ha riconosciuto che il quadro giuridico nazionale sulla libertà di religione e di credo non è applicato in modo uniforme a livello locale e ha ammesso che la registrazione delle cosiddette «case-chiesa», in particolare negli altipiani a nord-ovest, procedeva lentamente. A questo proposito, le autorità centrali sembrano aver intensificato i loro sforzi volti a formare le autorità locali affinché migliorino l'applicazione del quadro giuridico per le attività religiose. Il governo, inoltre, ha compiuto notevoli progressi verso la normalizzazione delle sue relazioni con il Vaticano. L'UE ha esortato il governo vietnamita a invitare il relatore speciale delle Nazioni Unite sulla libertà di religione e di credo a visitare il paese.

L'onorevole parlamentare può essere certo che le preoccupazioni dell'UE relative ai diritti umani sono state e continueranno ad essere espresse al livello più alto dal presidente del Consiglio europeo e dal presidente della Commissione, così come dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e dal commissario per il commercio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004038/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Vietnamese priest attacked outside Hanoi

On 17 April, the Associated Press reported that a Vietnamese Catholic priest outside the city of Hanoi was beaten unconscious by a group of 'thugs' following the destruction of a house he intended to turn into an orphanage. The Revd Nguyen Van Binh had built the house on a piece of land he purchased near his church in Chuong My District, outside Hanoi. After going to visit the house — which he found destroyed — he was attacked and knocked unconscious by a group of men at the site. The Archbishop of Hanoi has asked Chuong My District police to investigate the case.

This incident is just one amongst many which illustrate the tensions between the Communist Vietnamese government and the Catholic Church, which is calling for the return of church land which was confiscated in the past. There are no official relations between the Vatican and the Vietnamese government, even though six million Roman Catholics live in the country. Religious groups must register with the government and operate under approved guidelines.

A further report by Human Rights Watch cites reports of increased repression against Christian members of indigenous minorities in the country's Central Highlands, also known as Montagnards. After the EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue in January, the EU delegation in Vietnam issued a press release in which it stated: 'While welcoming significant improvements in the field of freedom of religion or belief in Vietnam in recent years, the EU pointed to some worrying developments in 2011. Both sides agreed that further efforts are needed to improve and accelerate the process of registration of congregations and churches in Vietnam'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of reports of ongoing attacks against Vietnamese Christians, and does she know about this recent attack against the Revd Nguyen Van Binh outside Hanoi?

2. At the EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue, what concrete steps did the Vietnamese government pledge to take to improve conditions for the country's various religious groups?

3. According to the Delegation of the EU in Vietnam, has the government in Hanoi demonstrated its commitment to taking these steps?

4. With regard to the attack on a Catholic priest, do EU officials in Vietnam believe this is part of a growing pattern of attacks against the country's Catholic community?

Question for written answer E-004449/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(27 April 2012)

Subject: Human rights in Vietnam

On 12 April 2012, in Vietnam, a Christian pastor was the victim of a vicious assault by armed attackers, who not only beat the cleric but also destroyed the orphanage he had opened, and threatened workers and children. From the evidence available, it appears that local police and authorities colluded in this attack, with the police being present at the site specifically in order to keep Christians away and ensure that the attack was successfully concluded. Calls from the Bishop of Hanoi for an investigation to be opened into the matter have been ignored.

Is the Commission aware of this incident?

Can it provide an update on the situation of Vietnam's Christian community?

Can it say whether the issue of human rights was addressed during the 11th ASEAN-EU meeting held in Phnom Penh, in particular during the EU-Vietnam side meetings at which a document setting out the scope of future trade negotiations was drafted?

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

The EU is aware of reports of recent attacks in Vietnam and the EU will continue to monitor closely all developments relating to freedom of religion or belief in the country. The EU Delegation and EU Member States' Embassies in Hanoi believe though that Reverend Nguyen Van Binh and the Catholic community in the country are not being systematically targeted because of their religious belief and activities. Regular incidents and conflicts involving Catholic communities and parishes in Vietnam are often due to initiatives by local authorities and disputes related to land use rights.

During the last EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue which took place on 12 January 2012 in Hanoi, the EU raised its concerns, including reports of violence against Christian communities as well as delays and obstacles in the registration of some congregations. The Government acknowledged the uneven implementation of the national legal framework on Freedom of Religion and Belief at local level, and admitted that the registration of 'house-churches', particularly in the North-West Highlands, was processing slowly. In this regard, central authorities seem to have intensified efforts aimed at providing training to local authorities to improve the implementation of the legal framework for religious activities. The Government has also made significant progress to normalise relations with the Vatican. The EU has encouraged the Government of Vietnam to invite the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief to visit the country.

The Honourable Member can be assured that EU human rights concerns have been, and will continue to be raised at the highest level by the President of the European Council and the President of Commission, as well as HR/VP and the Commissioner for Trade.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004039/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(18 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Budowanie zdolności w zakresie nauki w Afryce

W dniach 29 i 30 listopada 2010 r. szefowie afrykańskich i unijnych państw i rządów odbyli spotkanie w Trypolisie, podczas którego omówili nowe możliwości dla państw afrykańskich w zakresie rozwoju gospodarczego i społecznego. W takcie tego szczytu unijni i afrykańscy przywódcy przyjęli drugi plan działania (2011-2013) w ramach wspólnej strategii Afryka-UE.

Zgodnie z tym dokumentem planuje się podjęcie działań sprzyjających „stymulowaniu szybszego, niewykluczającego nikogo wzrostu gospodarczego i rozwoju społecznego w Afryce". Unia Europejska określiła zasady obejmujące współpracę między afrykańskimi i europejskimi zainteresowanymi stronami (społeczeństwem obywatelskim, parlamentami, sektorem prywatnym i władzami lokalnymi) oraz zainteresowanymi partnerami międzynarodowymi, w dążeniu do stworzenia w afrykańskich krajach gospodarek tworzących wiedzę/opartych na wiedzy oraz określenia wspólnej odpowiedzialności za ten proces. W celu stworzenia kompleksowych wytycznych dotyczących sposobu osiągnięcia uzgodnionych założeń, uczestnicy szczytu zapowiedzieli zainicjowanie między rządami krajów uczestniczących dialogu politycznego na wysokim szczeblu, odnoszącego się do kwestii związanych z nauką i technologią.

Czy Komisja zamierza stworzyć i udostępnić niezbędne instrumenty i mechanizmy wsparcia w celu zapewnienia szybkiego włączenia afrykańskich środowisk naukowych w te infrastruktury badawcze, które mogą mieć bezpośrednie korzyści pod względem świadczenia opieki zdrowotnej w Afryce, podwyższenia standardów nauczania i ukierunkowania działań na rzecz podejmowania globalnych wyzwań na zdolności w zakresie nauki?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(5 czerwca 2012 r.)

Komisja jest przekonana, że UE i Afryka powinny wspólnie wspierać rozwój gospodarek opartych na wiedzy, i dlatego objęła ona przewodnictwo w dziedzinie wdrażania priorytetowego celu wspólnej strategii Afryka-UE dotyczącego nauki.

Jeśli chodzi o kwestie polityczne, podczas spotkania urzędników wyższego szczebla w Addis Abebie w październiku 2011 r. zainaugurowano dialog na wysokim szczeblu na temat polityki dotyczącej nauki i technologii oraz utworzono wspólne biuro w celu przygotowania kolejnego spotkania urzędników wyższego szczebla lub pierwszego spotkania ministerialnego.

Jeśli chodzi o projekty, UE sfinansowała programy nauki i technologii AKP o wartości 58 mln EUR. Kolejnych 15 mln EUR w formie dotacji na afrykańskie badania przyznano za pośrednictwem Komisji Unii Afrykańskiej, która otrzymała specjalne wsparcie w zarządzaniu tymi funduszami.

W zakresie siódmego programu ramowego UE w dziedzinie badań (7PR) sfinansowano uczestnictwo 904 afrykańskich naukowców w 365 projektach 7PR, przyznając na ten cel 131 mln EUR, w tym 56,5 mln EUR dla 209 uczestników projektów dotyczących kwestii zdrowotnych. Ponadto partnerstwo państw europejskich i krajów rozwijających się w zakresie badań klinicznych (EDCTP) otrzymało wsparcie ze strony UE w wysokości 200 mln EUR na zwiększenie możliwości przeprowadzania badań klinicznych w dziedzinie HIV/AIDS, malarii i gruźlicy w Afryce.

Komisja stale wspiera zaangażowanie różnego rodzaju podmiotów z Afryki i Europy. Gdy wspólne grupy ekspertów zaczną w pełni funkcjonować zgodnie z drugą wspólną strategią Afryka-UE, podobny postęp będzie możliwy do osiągnięcia na poziomie UA-UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004039/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Science capacity building in Africa

On 29 to 30 November 2010, African and EU Heads of State and Government met in Tripoli to discuss new opportunities for African countries in the sphere of economic and social development. During the Tripoli Summit, EU and African leaders adopted the second Action Plan (2011-2013) of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy.

According to that document, action will be taken to leverage 'faster inclusive economic growth and social development in Africa'. The European Union has established principles including cooperation between African and European stakeholders (civil society, parliaments, private sector and local authorities), as well as interested international partners, in efforts to create knowledge-generating/knowledge-based economies in African countries and their joint responsibility to seek to do so. To ensure enhanced guidance in terms of achieving the agreed objectives, the Summit announced it would launch a high-level science and technology policy dialogue between the governments of the participating countries.

Does the Commission plan to establish and enable the necessary instruments and support mechanisms to ensure the rapid engagement of the science community in Africa in those research infrastructures which can directly benefit healthcare provision in Africa, improve educational standards and place science capacity at the centre of action to address global challenges?

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

The Commission is convinced that the EU and Africa need to jointly sustain the development of knowledge-generating/knowledge-based economies and has thus taken the lead in implementing the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) science priority.

At policy level, a high-level science and technology policy dialogue was inaugurated at a senior official meeting (SOM) in Addis Ababa in October 2011 and a joint SOM bureau has been set up to prepare the ground for the next SOM/first Ministerial meeting.

At project level, the EU has financed EUR 58 million's worth of ACP Science and Technology programmes. Another EUR 15 million African Research Grants are being provided through the African Union Commission whose capacity has been specially supported to manage them.

The Seventh EU Research Framework Programme (FP7) has financed the participation of 904 African scientists in 365 FP7 projects, by allocation of EUR 131 million, including EUR 56.5 million to 209 participants in projects on health. In addition, the European and Developing Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) has received an EU contribution of EUR 200 million to build capacity for clinical trials on HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in Africa.

The Commission consistently promotes the involvement of a broad a range of African and EU stakeholders. As the Joint Experts Groups (JEGs) become more functional under the Second JAES Action Plan, it may be possible to obtain similar progress at the overall AU-EU level.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004041/12
au Conseil
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(18 avril 2012)

Objet: Protection des droits des bascophones, catalanophones et occitanophones de France

Selon un arrangement administratif de 2006 (JO C 73 du 25.3.2006) se fondant sur les conclusions du Conseil du 13 juin 2005 relatives à l'emploi officiel de langues additionnelles au sein des institutions européennes, les citoyens espagnols peuvent utiliser, dans leur communication écrite avec la Commission, les langues officielles de l'État espagnol autres que le castillan, et notamment le basque, le catalan et l'occitan. Ces trois langues sont également traditionnellement parlées en France.

Vous ayant interrogé pour savoir si cet arrangement s'appliquait également aux citoyens français de langue catalane, basque ou occitane, vous m'avez répondu le 27 février dernier que ce n'était pas le cas, que cet arrangement s'appliquait uniquement «aux citoyens espagnols ou toute personne physique ou morale résidant ou ayant son siège en Espagne».

Je dois bien avouer que, si cette réponse ne m'a pas surprise, elle m'a choquée. Comment pouvez-vous justifier cette discrimination vis-à-vis des citoyens français appartenant à une minorité linguistique? En effet, selon la Charte européenne des droits fondamentaux, «toute discrimination fondée sur la nationalité est interdite» (article 21, paragraphe 2), de même qu'est interdite «toute discrimination fondée […] sur […] la langue [ou] l'appartenance à une minorité nationale» (article 21, paragraphe 1). Ce qui est confirmé par l'article 2 du traité sur l'Union européenne, qui dispose: «L'Union est fondée sur les valeurs de respect de la dignité humaine, de liberté, de démocratie, d'égalité, de l'État de droit, ainsi que de respect des Droits de l'homme, y compris des droits des personnes appartenant à des minorités».

J'aurais donc voulu savoir ce que le Conseil compte faire pour mettre fin à cette discrimination dont sont victimes les citoyens français appartenant à une minorité linguistique?

Si un citoyen français écrivait à la Commission en anglais ou en allemand, refuseriez-vous de lui répondre au motif que ces langues ne sont pas officielles en France? J'imagine que non.

Je vous serais donc reconnaissante de me faire état des démarches et des initiatives que vous comptez mettre en œuvre pour que les locuteurs de langues régionales en France bénéficient des mêmes droits que les locuteurs de langues régionales en Espagne.

Réponse
(11 juin 2012)

Comme indiqué à l'Honorable Parlementaire dans la réponse du Conseil aux questions écrites E-1014/2012 et E-1016/2012, l'arrangement administratif de 2006 a été conclu entre le Royaume d'Espagne et le Conseil de l'Union européenne et s'applique aux citoyens espagnols. Le gouvernement espagnol assume les coûts (tels que les frais de traduction et d'interprétation) que la mise en œuvre de l'arrangement entraîne pour le Conseil.

Aucun arrangement similaire n'a été conclu avec la République française.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004041/12
to the Council
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Protecting the rights of Basque, Catalan and Occitan speakers in France

In accordance with an administrative agreement of 2006 (OJ C 73, 25.3.2006) based on the Council conclusions of 13 June 2005 relating to the official use of additional languages within European institutions, Spanish citizens can, in their written communications with the Commission, use the official languages of the Spanish State other than Castilian (Spanish), in particular Basque, Catalan and Occitan. These three languages are also traditionally spoken in France.

Having asked whether this agreement also applies to French citizens who speak Catalan, Basque or Occitan, I received a response on 27 February 2012 stating that this was not the case and that this agreement applied only to 'Spanish citizens, or any other natural or legal person residing or established in Spain'.

I must admit that although this response did not surprise me, it did shock me. How can you justify discriminating against French citizens belonging to a linguistic minority in this way? According to the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, 'any discrimination on grounds of nationality shall be prohibited' (Article 21(2)), as shall 'discrimination based […] on […] language [or] membership of a national minority' (Article 21(1)). This is confirmed by Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, which establishes that: 'The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities'.

I would therefore like to know what the Council intends to do to end this discrimination against French citizens belonging to a linguistic minority?

If a French citizen were to write to the Commission in English or German, would he or she be refused an answer on the grounds that these are not official languages in France? I should think not.

I would therefore be grateful if you could state what steps and initiatives you plan to take so that speakers of regional languages in France enjoy the same rights as speakers of regional languages in Spain.

Reply
(11 June 2012)

As indicated to the Honourable Member in the Council reply to Written Questions E-1014/2012 and E-1016/2012, the 2006 administrative arrangement was concluded between the Kingdom of Spain and the Council of the European Union and applies to Spanish citizens. The costs accruing to the Council (such as translation and interpretation) from the implementation of the arrangement are borne by the Spanish Government.

No similar arrangement has been concluded with the French Republic.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004043/12
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(18 aprilie 2012)

Subiect: Sprijinirea autorităților locale sau regionale pentru realizarea eficienței energetice

Așa cum este precizat în COM(2011)0571, intitulat „Foaie de parcurs către o Europă eficientă din punct de vedere energetic", statele membre trebuie să elaboreze sau să consolideze strategiile naționale de eficiență a resurselor existente și să integreze aceste elemente în politicile naționale pentru creștere și locuri de muncă (până în 2013) […].

Implicarea autorităților locale sau regionale în procesul de elaborare sau consolidare a acestor strategii naționale este esențială pentru a asigura eficacitatea acesteia.

Comisia oferă sau intenționează să ofere sprijin autorităților locale sau regionale, astfel încât acestea să poată să facă față unor astfel de responsabilități, având în vedere nivelul redus de competențe existente la nivel local?

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(14 iunie 2012)

Autoritățile locale și regionale joacă un rol esențial în procesul de transformare economică menit să conducă spre o Europă eficientă în ceea ce privește resursele. Acest rol constă în a oferi mobilitate și soluții locative sustenabile, în îmbunătățirea eficienței apei și a eficienței energetice, în transformarea deșeurilor în resurse prețioase, dar se face simțit și în alte domenii, cum ar fi dezvoltarea infrastructurii ecologice și păstrarea biodiversității. Aceste autorități dispun de o serie de instrumente, de la achizițiile publice ecologice la urbanism. Inițiative precum Convenția primarilor demonstrează că orașele au un potențial mai mare decât se consideră la nivel național sau la nivelul UE în ceea ce privește reducerea emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră, iar Comisia sprijină extinderea sferei de activitate a acestei organizații, astfel încât să abordeze și chestiuni mai ample, legate de eficiența resurselor. De asemenea, Comisia a creat premiul „Capitala europeană verde" care constituie o distincție pentru orașele cu cele mai bune rezultate în domeniul ecologic și promovează schimbul de bune practici.

Comisia este conștientă că este din ce în ce mai important să se ia în considerare, în politica de dezvoltare regională, dimensiunea locală, regională și urbană și de aceea a integrat această dimensiune în măsurile propuse în Cadrul financiar multianual 2014-2020. De exemplu, propunerea de reformă a politicii de coeziune prevede, *inter alia*, acțiuni integrate care combină investiții din cadrul mai multor priorități și programe și care vor fi delegate orașelor pentru administrare. Comisia a propus extinderea sprijinului pentru dezvoltare locală coordonată la nivelul comunității (pe baza experienței acumulate în cadrul programului LEADER pentru dezvoltare rurală), scopul fiind acela de a crește eficacitatea strategiilor de dezvoltare teritorială prin delegarea deciziilor și a implementării către un parteneriat local format din reprezentanți ai sectorului public, privat și ai societății civile. Proiectele integrate propuse în cadrul Life+ vizează aceleași obiective.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004043/12
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(18 April 2012)

Subject: Supporting energy efficiency initiatives by local or regional authorities

As stated in COM(2011)0571, entitled Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe, Member States are required to develop or strengthen existing national resource efficiency strategies, and mainstream these into national policies for growth and jobs (by 2013).

The involvement of local or regional authorities in the process of developing or strengthening these national strategies is essential to ensure their effectiveness.

Does the Commission offer or intend to offer support to local or regional authorities so that they can fulfil such responsibilities, given the limited powers wielded at local level?

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

Regional and local authorities have a key role to play in the economic transformation towards a resource efficient Europe — in providing for sustainable housing and mobility, in improving water and energy efficiency, in turning waste into precious resources, but also in areas, like developing green infrastructure and preserving biodiversity. They have a number of instruments in their hands, from green public procurement to urban planning. Initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors demonstrate the potential of cities to perform even better than prescribed at national or EU level as regards the green house gas emissions reduction, and the Commission has supported broadening its scope to wider resource efficiency issues. The Commission has also set up the European Green Capital Award, which rewards top performing cities and promotes exchange of good practices.

The Commission recognises the increasing importance of taking into account the local, regional and urban dimension in policy development, and has integrated it in its proposals under the Multi-annual Financial Framework 2014-2020. For instance, the proposal for Cohesion Policy reform foresees, *inter alia*, integrated actions combining investment from different priorities and programmes that will be delegated to cities for management. The Commission has proposed to widen support for community-led local development (based on the experience of Leader under rural development) which aims at increasing effectiveness and efficiency of territorial development strategies by delegating decision-making and implementation to a local partnership of public, private and civil society actors. The proposed integrated projects under Life+ go in the same direction.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004044/12
al Consejo
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Lugares de detención secreta y servicios secretos

Como consecuencia del atentado del 11 de septiembre, la administración Bush estableció un sistema de «entrega extraordinaria» («extraordinary rendition») donde sospechosos de terrorismo fueron transferidos, secretamente detenidos e interrogados fuera de los EE.UU. De forma ilegal, arrestaban y secuestraban a personas en un Estado y lo transferían a través de vuelos de la CIA a Guantánamo o a prisiones secretas situadas en terceros países donde, mayoritariamente, no hay protección contra la tortura.

Según el estudio de Naciones Unidas de 2010 sobre «Prácticas Globales en relación a detenciones secretas» ([1]) y según los estudios de Dick Martin, ponente especial del CoE, Estados miembros colaboraron con los EE.UU. Entre 2001 y 2005, 1 245 vuelos de la CIA y un número no especificado de vuelos militares pasaron por el espacio europeo o realizaron escalas en Estados miembros y en al menos tres estados miembros (Polonia, Rumania y Lituania) se construyeron lugares de detención secreta para los prisioneros trasladados. Estas son graves violaciones de las leyes internacionales y de la Carta de Derechos de la UE.

Considerando las «Directrices de la política de la UE frente a terceros países en relación con la tortura y otros tratos o penas crueles, inhumanos y degradantes», donde se afirma que «se deben aplicar y adoptar las garantías en los derechos de detención» y donde se prohíben específicamente «que existan lugares secretos de detención» y se debe «garantizar que todas las personas privadas de libertad se encuentren en lugares reconocidos de detención y que se conozca su paradero», preguntamos al Consejo:

— ¿Puede asegurar el Consejo que ningún servicio secreto de un país miembro de la UE cuenta con centros de detención secretos?

— ¿Han llevado a cabo una investigación al respecto?

Respuesta
(6 de junio de 2012)

El Consejo recomienda a Su Señoría que consulte la respuesta del Consejo a la pregunta escrita E-010827/2010.

([1]) http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/13session/A-HRC-13-42.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004044/12
to the Council
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Secret detention centres and secret services

Following the 11 September 2001 attacks, the Bush administration established a system of 'extraordinary rendition' whereby terrorism suspects were transferred, secretly detained and interrogated outside the United States. People were illegally arrested and abducted in other States and transferred by CIA flights to Guantanamo or to secret prisons in third countries offering, for the most part, no protection against torture.

According to the 2010 UN study 'Global Practices in Relation to Secret Detention' ([1]) and according to studies conducted by Dick Martin, a special rapporteur for the Council of Europe, Member States collaborated with the US. Between 2001 and 2005, 1 245 CIA flights and an unspecified number of military flights passed through European air space or stopped off in Member States, while secret detention centres were built for the transferred prisoners in at least three Member States (Poland, Romania and Lithuania). These are serious violations of international law and of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Bearing in mind the Guidelines to EU policy towards third countries on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, which state that safeguards relating to places of detention should be adopted and implemented and which specifically ban 'secret places of detention ensuring that all persons deprived of their liberty are held in officially recognised places of detention and that their whereabouts are known', we would ask the Council:

— Can the Council offer any guarantee that no secret service of any EU Member State operates secret detention centres?

— Has an inquiry been carried out into this matter?

Reply
(6 June 2012)

The Honourable Member should refer to the Council's reply to Written Question E-010827/2010.

([1]) http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/13session/A-HRC-13-42.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-004046/12
a la Comisión
Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Adquisición de la CAM por el Banco Sabadell

El pasado mes de diciembre se autorizó la operación de compra de la Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo (CAM) por parte del Banco Sabadell. Sin embargo, para que la adquisición sea efectiva y el Banco Sabadell se convierta en titular de la Caja es preciso el visto bueno de la Comisión de Competencia de la UE.

1. ¿Podría la Comisión explicar cuál es la situación actual de este proceso?

2. ¿Para cuándo tiene previsto la Comisión adoptar una decisión y en qué sentido?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de mayo de 2012)

En lo que se refiere a la primera pregunta de Su Señoría, la Comisión aprobó medidas de rescate en forma de capital y liquidez en julio de 2011. El rescate desencadenó la obligación de que las autoridades españolas presentaran un plan de reestructuración de la entidad bancaria en un plazo de seis meses. Dicho plan se presentó en diciembre de 2011.

Con respecto a la segunda cuestión, la Comisión está analizando el plan de reestructuración presentado en cooperación con las autoridades españolas, que han asociado al Banco Sabadell por ser el comprador de la CAM tras un procedimiento de licitación abierto. La Comisión espera que tal colaboración permita tomar pronto una decisión. Como en todos los casos de ayudas estatales, la decisión adoptará la forma de una Decisión del Colegio de Comisarios que será notificada a las autoridades españolas en su totalidad y se hará pública una vez se hayan resuelto las cuestiones de confidencialidad.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004046/12
to the Commission
Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Acquisition of CAM by Banco Sabadell

In December 2011, the purchase of the Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo (CAM) savings bank by the Banco Sabadell bank was authorised. For the acquisition to take effect, however, and for Banco Sabadell to become the owner of the savings bank, the transaction must be approved by the EU's competition authorities.

1. Can the Commission provide information as to what stage this process has now reached?

2. When does the Commission expect to take a decision and what form will it take?

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

Regarding the Honourable Member's first question, the Commission approved rescue measures in the form of capital and liquidity in July 2011. The rescue triggered the obligation for the Spanish authorities to present a restructuring plan for the bank within six months. The plan was duly presented in December 2011.

Regarding the second question, the Commission is analysing the restructuring plan submitted in cooperation with the Spanish authorities who have associated Banco Sabadell, as the buyer of Banco CAM after an open and competitive tender procedure. The Commission hopes that collaboration will allow it to reach a decision soon. As in all state aid cases, the decision will take the form of a decision from the College of Commissioners, which will be notified to the Spanish authorities in full and made public once confidentiality issues are resolved.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-004047/12
à Comissão
Paulo Rangel (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Acompanhamento da situação na Guiné-Bissau pela CE

Na sequência do golpe de Estado que ocorreu na véspera da campanha eleitoral para a segunda volta das eleições presidenciais na Guiné-Bissau, o país encontra-se, uma vez mais, numa situação política frágil.

Com receio da violência, muitas pessoas abandonaram Bissau em direção ao interior do país.

O golpe de Estado mereceu já uma alargada condenação internacional.

Tendo a União Europeia a responsabilidade histórica de fazer todos os esforços para a salvaguarda de valores como o respeito pelos Direitos do Homem e a Democracia, venho questionar a Comissão no seguinte sentido:

1. Que mecanismos prevê a Comissão acionar para salvaguardar as condições de vida e de segurança interna dos deslocados?

2. Que meios de cooperação colocou a Comissão à disposição das autoridades da região no sentido de contribuir para a salvaguarda da paz e da Democracia no país?

3. Que instrumentos e canais de ajuda financeira está a Comissão a estudar para ajudar diretamente o povo guineense?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(12 de junho de 2012)

A UE está atenta à situação política, humanitária e da segurança na Guiné-Bissau. O golpe de Estado de 12 de abril teve um impacto negativo nas condições de vida de um grande número de pessoas e deu origem a um aumento dos preços dos produtos alimentares e dos combustíveis. Muitas pessoas abandonaram a capital e foram para o campo. Neste momento, não existe um risco iminente de crise humanitária, mas a UE continuará a acompanhar atentamente a situação.

A Comissão já tinha suspendido parte da ajuda da UE à Guiné-Bissau na sequência dos acontecimentos ocorridos em 2010, que conduziram às consultas previstas no artigo 96.° e à Decisão do Conselho 2011/492/UE, que prevê um conjunto de medidas apropriadas para restabelecer a cooperação. Foi congelada a cooperação com o Governo, mas prosseguem as atividades que beneficiam diretamente a população, e que são financiadas, principalmente, pelas rubricas orçamentais temáticas e pelas Facilidades para a água e para a energia.

O desbloqueio de parte da ajuda da União Europeia dependerá da evolução da crise e da capacidade do futuro Governo para aplicar uma série de reformas cruciais, principalmente no domínio da segurança e da luta contra o tráfico de drogas ilícitas. Tais reformas são essenciais para se conseguir a paz e uma verdadeira democracia no país.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004047/12
to the Commission
Paulo Rangel (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Monitoring of the situation in Guinea-Bissau by the Commission

Following the coup d'état that took place on the eve of the campaign for the second round of presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau, the country is once again in a fragile political situation.

Fearing violence, many people have fled Bissau for the country's interior.

There has already been widespread international condemnation of the coup.

Since the European Union has a historical responsibility to make every effort to ensure that values such as respect for human rights and democracy are upheld, I wish to ask the following:

1. What mechanisms does the Commission intend to set in motion to safeguard the living conditions and general security of those who have been displaced?

2. What forms of cooperation has the Commission offered the region's authorities to help safeguard peace and democracy in the country?

3. What instruments and channels of financial aid is the Commission considering to directly assist the people of Guinea-Bissau?

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

The EU is following closely the political, security and humanitarian situation in Guinea-Bissau. The coup of 12 April negatively affected the living conditions of many people and created the conditions for an increase of food and fuel prices. Many people left Bissau for the countryside. At this stage, a humanitarian crisis is not imminent, but the EU will continue monitoring the situation very closely.

The Commission had already put on hold part of EU aid to Guinea-Bissau following the 2010 events, which led to Article 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, funded mainly by thematic lines and the 'water' and 'energy' facilities.

The unblocking of part of the EU aid 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. Those reforms are essential for the achievement of peace and real democracy in the country.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004049/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(19 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις από την κατασκευή του οδικού άξονα Ηγουμενίτσας-Πρέβεζας

Στο πρώτο υποτμήμα του έργου «Βελτίωση Εθνικής Οδού Ηγουμενίτσας-Πρέβεζας» στην περιφέρεια Ηπείρου, και συγκεκριμένα στο κομμάτι από τον κόμβο Εγνατίας (λιμάνι) έως τη θέση Πλαταριά, προγραμματίζεται να κοπεί το βουνό σε σχήμα ανάποδου «Π» για να διέλθει ισόπεδα ο δρόμος. Η επέμβαση αυτή, που προστίθεται σε ήδη υπάρχουσα ανάλογη επέμβαση, θα επιβαρύνει σοβαρά την αισθητική του τοπίου σε μια τουριστικά σημαντική περιοχή και θα καταστρέψει τμήμα πυκνής δασικής βλάστησης. Ο Δήμος ([1]), η Αντιπεριφέρεια Θεσπρωτίας ([2]) και οι κάτοικοι αντιτίθενται σφοδρά και έχουν αντιπροτείνει σήραγγα ή απλή βελτίωση των γεωμετρικών χαρακτηριστικών του δρόμου στο σημείο αυτό, ώστε να περιορισθεί η επίπτωση στο τοπίο και το δάσος.

Η κατασκευάστρια εταιρία εμμένει όμως διότι ο συγκεκριμένος τρόπος κατασκευής θα τους παράσχει 500 000 κυβικά μέτρα αδρανών υλικών με πολύ συμφέρον μεταφορικό κόστος σε σχέση με την εναλλακτική λύση άλλου λατομείου, προκειμένου να τα χρησιμοποιήσουν στο συγχρηματοδοτούμενο από ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους έργο του νέου λιμανιού της Ηγουμενίτσας ([3]). Πιέζουν για την άρση των αντιρρήσεων του Δήμου με το επιχείρημα ότι η προτεινόμενη από το Δήμο λύση αποτελεί αλλαγή του φυσικού αντικειμένου της Γ' φάσης του έργου του λιμανιού, πράγμα που θα οδηγήσει στην απένταξη του έργου αυτού από την ευρωπαϊκή συγχρηματοδότηση ([4]). Η εκβιαστική αυτή θέση της εταιρίας υποστηρίζεται και από το Υπουργείο Υποδομών ([5]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι αληθείς οι ισχυρισμοί της εταιρίας ότι η λύση που προτείνει ο Δήμος συνιστούν αλλαγή του φυσικού αντικειμένου του έργου του λιμανιού, και άρα το τελευταίο δεν θα είναι πλέον εφικτό να συγχρηματοδοτηθεί από ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους;

— Εκτιμά ότι είναι δυνατή η υιοθέτηση της πολύ ηπιότερης για το τοπίο και το περιβάλλον λύσης της σήραγγας στο σημείο αυτό, χωρίς να απειλείται η χρηματοδότηση του έργου;

— Συνάδει ο προτεινόμενος τρόπος κατασκευής και μεταφοράς αδρανών υλικών με την ουσία της Μελέτης Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων, δεδομένου μάλιστα ότι προτείνεται από τους τοπικούς φορείς ένας διαφορετικός τρόπος υλοποίησης του έργου, που — όπως ισχυρίζονται οι φορείς — θα έχει μικρότερο περιβαλλοντικό κόστος;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Ιουνίου 2012)

Για το νέο λιμάνι της Ηγουμενίτσας και τη βελτίωση της οδικής σύνδεσης του είχε ζητηθεί αρχικά από την Επιτροπή συγχρηματοδότηση ως μεγάλο έργο (άρθρα 39-41 του κανονισμού 1083/06 ([6])). Επειδή το συνολικό κόστος του προταθέντος έργου ήταν χαμηλότερο από 50 εκατ. ευρώ, δεν θεωρήθηκε ως μεγάλο έργο. Τα έργα που δεν θεωρούνται ότι συνιστούν μεγάλα έργα επιλέγονται και αξιολογούνται από τις αρμόδιες εθνικές, περιφερειακές και τοπικές αρχές και τις διαχειριστικές Αρχές οι οποίες είναι υπεύθυνες για τη συγχρηματοδότηση στο πλαίσιο του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος *«Βελτίωση της προσβασιμότητας»*. Οι εν λόγω αρχές πρέπει επίσης να αξιολογούν τα κριτήρια επιλεξιμότητας και να διασφαλίζουν τη συμμόρφωση με τη σχετική νομοθεσία της ΕΕ.

Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που υποβλήθηκαν από τις ελληνικές αρχές, το έργο είχε αποτελέσει αντικείμενο εκτίμησης περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων (ΕΠΕ), σύμφωνα με τις απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας 2011/92/ΕΕ ([7]). Η διαδικασία ΕΠΕ ολοκληρώθηκε με την έκδοση των Κοινών Υπουργικών Αποφάσεων (ΚΥΑ) 139663/18-05-09 και 129334/23-08-10.

([1]) ΑΔΑ: Β44ΥΩΡΙ-Ι5Δ.
([2]) http://www.vdella.com/2011-01-29-09-21-07/3711-2012-03-28-21-45-58.html.
([3]) http://www.vdella.com/enviroment/3301-2012-01-23-15-23-21.html.
([4]) http://www.vdella.com/enviroment/3397-----lr---.html.
([5]) http://www.vdella.com/enviroment/3542-2012-03-02-10-11-35.html.
([6]) ΕΕ L 49 της 31.7.2007.
([7]) ΕΕ L 26 της 28.1.2012.

Η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να υποκαταστήσει τα κράτη μέλη όσον αφορά τις ευθύνες τους σε σχέση με την αδειοδότηση και την αξιολόγηση των έργων, και μπορεί να παρέμβει μόνο σε περίπτωση σαφούς παραβίασης του ενωσιακού δικαίου. Η απόφαση για τη χωροθέτηση του έργου εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των εθνικών αρχών. Εάν οι ελληνικές αρχές υιοθετήσουν διαφορετική εναλλακτική λύση, θα πρέπει να εξετάσουν τις περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις της και, ενδεχομένως, να τροποποιήσουν το φυσικό αντικείμενο του συγχρηματοδοτούμενου έργου.

Στη μελέτη εκτίμησης των περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων που είχε εκπονηθεί πριν από την έκδοση της κοινής υπουργικής απόφασης 129334/23-08-10 προβλέπεται ότι τα αδρανή υλικά από τη βελτίωση της υφιστάμενης εθνικής οδού είναι δυνατόν να χρησιμοποιηθούν για την κατασκευή του λιμανιού.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004049/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Environmental impact of the construction of the Igoumenitsa-Preveza highway

As part of the first subsection of the project 'Improvement of Igoumenitsa-Preveza National Highway' in Epirus, notably in the section from the Egnatia junction (port) to Plataria, a cut into the mountain is planned in the shape of an inverted 'Π' to make the road level. This cut, which has been added to the existing plans, will severely affect the appearance of the landscape, in an area of major tourist importance, and will destroy part of the dense forest vegetation. The Municipality ([1]), the Thesprotia sub-regional administration ([2]) and local residents are strongly opposed to this plan and have proposed instead the creation of a tunnel or a simple improvement of the geometrical characteristics in this particular part of the road, in order to limit the impact on the landscape and the forest.

However, the construction company is insisting on its solution, because this construction method will produce 500 000 cubic meters of aggregates to be used in building the new port of Igoumenitsa which is co-financed by European funds, with very advantageous transportation costs compared to the alternative solution of creating another quarry ([3]). They are agitating for the lifting of the Municipality's objections on the grounds that its proposed solution constitutes a change to the physical object of the third phase of the new port project which will lead to its exclusion from the European co-financing ([4]) ([5]). This blackmail on the part of the company is being supported by the Ministry of Infrastructure ([6]).

In view of this, will the Commission say:

— Are the company's claims true that the solution proposed by the Municipality constitutes a change to the physical object of the port project, and hence the latter will no longer be eligible for co-financing from European funds?

— Does it believe that it is possible to adopt the tunnel solution, which is less damaging for the landscape and the environment in this particular location, without undermining the funding of the project?

— Is the proposed method of construction and transportation of aggregates in line with the content of the Environmental Impact Study, given that the local authorities have proposed a different way of implementing the project, which — as argued by these bodies — will have less environmental impact?

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

The new port of Igoumenitsa and the improvement of its road connection were initially submitted to the Commission for co-financing as a Major Project (Articles 39-41 of Regulation 1083/06 ([7])). As the total cost of the proposed project was lower than EUR 50 million, this was not considered as a Major Project. Projects other than the Major Projects are selected and appraised by the competent national, regional and local authorities and Managing Authorities, which are responsible for co-funding in the framework of the Operational Programme 'Accessibility Improvement'. These authorities will also have to assess the eligibility criteria and ensure conformity with the relevant EU legislation.

The information submitted by the Greek authorities shows that the project was made subject to an environmental impact assessment (EIA), in accordance with the requirements of Directive 2011/92/EU ([8]); the EIA process was concluded with the adoption of the Joint Ministerial Decisions (KYA) 139663/18-05-09 and 129334/23-08-10.

([1]) ΑΔΑ: Β44ΥΩΡΙ-Ι5Δ.
([2]) http://www.vdella.com/2011-01-29-09-21-07/3711-2012-03-28-21-45-58.html.
([3]) http://www.vdella.com/enviroment/3301-2012-01-23-15-23-21.html.
([4]) http://www.vdella.com/enviroment/3397-----lr---.html.
([5]) http://www.vdella.com/enviroment/3397-----lr---.html.
([6]) http://www.vdella.com/enviroment/3542-2012-03-02-10-11-35.html.
([7]) OJ L 49, 31.7.2007.
([8]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

The Commission cannot substitute Member States in their responsibilities with respect to the permitting and evaluation of projects, and can only intervene in case of a clear breach of EC law. The decision on the localisation of a project falls within the responsibility of the national authorities. If the Greek authorities adopt a different alternative, they have to consider the environmental impacts of such a modification and possibly modify the physical object of the co-funded project.

The Environmental Impact Study prepared prior to the adoption of the Joint Ministerial Decision 129334/23-08-10 foresees that the aggregates from the improvement of the existing national road can be used for the construction of the port.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004050/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE) και Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(19 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προτάσεις στοχευμένης αντιμετώπισης της ανεργίας των νέων στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με εκθέσεις του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου και της Eurostat που έχουν δημοσιευθεί κατά το πρώτο τετράμηνο του 2012, τα ποσοστά ανεργίας σε νεαρές ηλικίες (15 με 24) στα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωζώνης παρουσιάζουν ραγδαία αύξηση κατά τα τελευταία έτη, με ορατό πλέον τον κίνδυνο δημιουργίας μιας «χαμένης γενιάς». Ειδικώς δε για την περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, το ποσοστό ανεργίας των νέων για το 2012 ξεπερνά το 50 %. Έχοντας πλήξει ανεπανόρθωτα την κοινωνική συνοχή των λαών του ευρωπαϊκού νότου, η παρούσα οικονομική κρίση έχει αναδείξει εναργώς την αλληλεξάρτηση των οικονομιών και των αγορών εργασίας της ΕΕ, ώστε να καθίσταται αναγκαίος ο ενισχυμένος συντονισμός των πολιτικών απασχόλησης.

Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι στοχευμένα μέτρα όπως:

— η αύξηση του ποσοστού χρηματοδότησης του προγράμματος «Erasmus για νέους επιχειρηματίες», καθώς και η παροχή κινήτρων στους επιχειρηματίες προκειμένου να επιτευχθεί υψηλότερος βαθμός συμμετοχής τους στο πρόγραμμα,

— η παροχή κινήτρων στους εργοδότες για την πρόσληψη περισσότερων νέων, όπως η επιδότηση των εισφορών κοινωνικής ασφάλισης που καταβάλλουν για την πρόσληψη νέων ανέργων, η επιδότηση των επιχειρήσεων που προσλαμβάνουν μαθητευόμενους και ανειδίκευτους νέους που έχουν μείνει εκτός αγοράς εργασίας για μεγάλο χρονικό διάστημα μέσω της διάθεσης πόρων του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου, καθώς και η δυνατότητα μείωσης των φορολογικών συντελεστών των επιχειρήσεων που προβαίνουν σε προσλήψεις νέων εργαζόμενων — με την προϋπόθεση ότι δεν λειτουργεί σε βάρος των δικαιωμάτων των ήδη απασχολούμενων (αποφυγή εκούσιας αντικατάστασης ήδη εργαζομένων με νέους με σκοπό τη μεγιστοποίηση του κέρδους),

— η στενότερη διασύνδεση μεταξύ των δημόσιων και ιδιωτικών φορέων εύρεσης απασχόλησης καθώς και των πανεπιστημίων με το πρόγραμμα EURES έτσι ώστε να διευκολυνθεί η πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση — στο πλαίσιο της κινητικότητας — και να αντιμετωπιστεί το πρόβλημα αδυναμίας κάλυψης θέσεων εργασίας λόγω έλλειψης κατάλληλων υποψηφίων,

δύνανται να συμπεριληφθούν σε προτάσεις της για τη δημιουργία συνθηκών οικονομικής μεγέθυνσης και αντιμετώπισης της ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Ιουνίου 2012)

Όπως υπογραμμίστηκε στην ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής *Ανάπτυξη για την Ελλάδα* [1] με το νέο χρηματοοικονομικό πρόγραμμα ΕΕ/ΔΝΤ, την αποτελεσματικότερη χρήση των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων της ΕΕ και τη δημιουργία μιας ειδικής ομάδας δράσης για την Ελλάδα, η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τις ελληνικές αρχές στην υλοποίηση ολοκληρωμένων μεταρρυθμιστικών προγραμμάτων με σκοπό την άρση των εμποδίων στην οικονομική ανάπτυξη, την υποστήριξη της φορολογικής και δημοσιονομικής σταθερότητας, τη δημιουργία θέσεων απασχόλησης και την άμβλυνση του κοινωνικού αντικτύπου της κρίσης. Οι προσπάθειες αυτές θα είναι ουσιαστικές για τη δημιουργία ευκαιριών απασχόλησης και για τους νέους.

Η χρηματοδότηση του Erasmus για νέους επιχειρηματίες ανήλθε σε 5 εκατομμύρια ευρώ ετησίως. Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος για την ανταγωνιστικότητα των επιχειρήσεων και τις ΜΜΕ προβλέπεται να συνεχιστεί το πρόγραμμα για την περίοδο 2014 και 2015 και να σημειωθεί αύξηση μετά.

Η αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας των νέων είναι το επίκεντρο πολλών πρωτοβουλιών που υποστηρίζονται από τα ταμεία της ΕΕ. Περιλαμβάνουν την πρόβλεψη κινήτρων ώστε οι επιχειρήσεις να προσλαμβάνουν νέους, την υποστήριξη για την απόκτηση της πρώτης επαγγελματικής εμπειρίας, επιχορηγήσεις για βραχυπρόθεσμες τοποθετήσεις σε θέσεις εργασίας στον ιδιωτικό τομέα ή στην τοπική κοινότητα, ευκαιρίες μαθητείας ή πρακτικής άσκησης και την υποστήριξη της επιχειρηματικότητας.

Όπως προβλέπεται στο πρόγραμμα ΕΕ/ΔΝΤ, η Ελλάδα επιδιώκει να κάνει μια (ουδέτερη από δημοσιονομική άποψη) στροφή από τους φόρους επί των κοινωνικών εισφορών για την προώθηση της δημιουργίας θέσεων εργασίας και της προσαρμογής των κατώτατων μισθών των νέων.

[1] COM(2012)183 τελικό της 18ης Απριλίου 2012.

Στο πακέτο για την απασχόληση ([2]) η Επιτροπή προτείνει μεταρρυθμίσεις του EURES ώστε να περιλαμβάνει ιδιωτικούς φορείς και να ενθαρρύνει τη μεγαλύτερη παροχή υπηρεσιών μέσω συμπράξεων του ιδιωτικού και του δημόσιου τομέα. Η μεταρρύθμιση αυτή, με ισχύ από το 2014, προβλέπει επίσης τη χρηματοδότηση μεγάλου μέρους των δραστηριοτήτων EURES μέσω των προγραμμάτων του ΕΚΤ στα κράτη μέλη, επιτρέποντας έτσι τον εξατομικευμένο σχεδιασμό τους σύμφωνα με τις εθνικές τους ανάγκες για την αγορά εργασίας.

([2]) COM(2012)173 της 18ης Απριλίου 2012, (βλέπε SWD 100 τελικό).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004050/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE) and Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Proposals for a targeted response to youth unemployment in Greece

According to reports by the International Monetary Fund and Eurostat published in the first four months of 2012, youth unemployment rates (15-24 years) in the Member States of the euro area have been rapidly increasing in recent years, posing an obvious risk of a 'lost generation'. In particular, in the case of Greece, the youth unemployment rate for 2012 is over 50%. The current economic crisis has caused irreparable damage to the social cohesion of the peoples of southern Europe and highlighted the interdependence between the EU economies and labour markets so that it is clear we need increased coordination of employment policies.

Does the Commission consider that targeted measures such as:

— an increase of the rate of funding of the Erasmus Young Entrepreneurs programme and the provision of incentives for entrepreneurs in order to achieve a higher participation rate in the programme;

— the provision of incentives for employers to recruit more young people, such as subsidising the social security contributions they pay for hiring young unemployed people, subsidising businesses that hire apprentices and unskilled young people who have been out of the labour market for a long time, through the deployment of European Social Fund resources and the possibility of reducing tax rates for businesses that recruit young employees — provided it does not end up damaging current employees' rights (the voluntary replacement of current employees by *young workers* in order to maximise profit must be avoided);

— stronger links between public and private employment agencies and universities through the EURES programme, in order to facilitate access to employment — in the context of mobility — and to address the problem of the failure to fill job vacancies due to the lack of suitable candidates;

could be included in its proposals to create better conditions for economic growth and tackle unemployment in Greece?

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

As stressed in the Commission's communication 'Growth for Greece' ([1]) with the new EU/IMF financial program, more effective use of EU structural funds and the setting up of a dedicated Taskforce for Greece, the Commission supports Greek authorities implementing comprehensive reform programs to unblock economic growth, support fiscal and financial stability, create jobs and mitigate the social impact of the crisis. These efforts will be essential to spur job opportunities, also for young people.

The funding for the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs amounted to EUR 5 million per year. In the framework of the Programme for Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs continuation is foreseen for 2014 and 2015 with an increase after.

Addressing youth unemployment is the focus of many initiatives supported by EU funds. They include provision of incentives to firms to recruit young people, support for the acquisition of first work experience, subsidies for short-term private sector or local community job placements, apprenticeship or traineeship opportunities and support for entrepreneurship.

As put down in the EU/IMF program, Greece intends to pursue a budget-neutral tax shift away from social contributions stimulating job creation and adjustment in youth minimum wages.

([1]) COM(2012) 183 final of 18 April 2012.

In the Employment Package ([2]) the Commission proposes reforms of EURES to include private operators and encourage greater service delivery through public private partnerships. This reform, effective from 2014, also foresees to finance a large part of EURES activities through the ESF programmes in the Member States thus allowing for their customised design according to national labour market needs.

([2]) COM(2012) 173 of 18 April 2012 (see SWD 100 Final).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004051/12
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: The testing of baby carriers

There appears to be a huge flaw with the testing of baby carriers that puts newborns and toddlers at risk. The present tests do not test the position of the baby in the carrier. Many carriers support the baby between its legs so that the weight of its head (the heaviest part of its body) goes straight down its spine, thereby compressing the disks. When a baby is born, its hips are mainly cartilage. If the leg is left to dangle, its weight may pull the hip joint out of its socket, causing hip dysplasia ([1]).

Does the Commission agree that an extra element needs to be added to the testing of baby carriers to ensure that all babies are provided with the support needed for their tiny hips, spine and head?

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

The Commission assumes that the Honourable Member refers to the European (voluntary) Standard EN 13209 on framed back carriers (Part 1) and soft carriers (Part 2). The standard is applicable for soft carriers that are designed to transport a child in an essentially vertical position whilst attached to the carer's torso.

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to share any available information on the alleged flaws in the testing procedure laid down in this standard. The Commission will pass this information to the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) which is currently revising this particular standard.

([1]) http://www.hipdysplasia.org/Developmental-Dysplasia-Of-The-Hip/Prevention/Default.aspx.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004052/12
aan de Raad
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Recent G8 „Non-paper betreffende bescherming van intellectuele eigendomsrechten"

Afgaande op het recentelijk gelekte „Non-paper betreffende bescherming van intellectuele eigendomsrechten" ([1]) lijkt het G8-intergouvernementele forum het grondwerk te verrichten voor een nieuwe internationale wettelijke reactie op namaak en piraterij, die een geïntegreerd waarschuwingssysteem en een pleidooi door de G8-landen om hun wettelijke en regelgevende regimes te verstevigen, zou omvatten. Verschillende EU-lidstaten (Frankrijk, Duitsland, Italië en het Verenigd Koninkrijk) nemen deel aan het G8-forum. Het document roept verschillende vragen op:

1. Wat vindt de Raad van dit G8-ontwerpinitiatief, en is er enige strategie voor de hele EU betreffende deelname aan dergelijke multilaterale fora, en in het bijzonder aan de voorbereiding van het Non-paper betreffende bescherming van intellectuele eigendomsrechten?

2. Kan de Raad bevestigen of de Commissie betrokken is, in het bijzonder in verband met het algemene commerciële beleid, bij de voornoemde voorbereidingen van de grote lidstaten van en deelname aan het G8-forum?

3. Is de Raad het ermee eens dat de overheden van de betrokken lidstaten in plaats daarvan zouden moeten opteren voor het tegenhouden van namaakproducten middels een sectorspecifieke benadering? Indien niet, waarom beschouwt hij een sectorspecifieke benadering als minder effectief?

4. Kan de Raad uitleggen wat de overheden van die lidstaten beschouwen als „gepaste actie tegen onwettige websites"? Wat voor soort website is onwettig? Wat soort actie is gepast?

5. Is de Raad het ermee eens dat, door het gebruik van onlinebetalingsdiensten om diegenen te benadelen die namaakproducten produceren of verhandelen, de betrokken overheden rechtshandhaving zouden uitbesteden aan particuliere partijen? Indien wel, kan de Raad aangeven of hij vindt of deze benadering in lijn is met huidige EU-wetgeving?

6. Is de Raad het ermee eens dat het uitbesteden van rechtshandhaving (a) risico-aversie door betalingsverwerkers zou kunnen aanmoedigen, en zodoende mogelijkerwijs de kasstroom naar legitieme handelaars afsluiten, (b) zou kunnen leiden tot het opleggen van buitensporige boetes door bedrijven, waarvan zaken al zijn gerapporteerd ([2]), en (c) zou kunnen resulteren in (voornamelijk Amerikaanse) multinationale bedrijven die als niet-juridische handhavingsdiensten optreden? Als de Raad het er niet mee eens is dat ieder van de bovengenoemde punten een mogelijk gevolg is, waarom dan niet?

7. Is de Raad het ermee eens dat wanneer mogelijke schenders nagetrokken kunnen worden via onlinebetalingsdiensten, ze onderzocht en gearresteerd moeten worden door openbare rechthandhavingsinstanties in plaats van financieel verminkt te worden? Indien niet, waarom niet?

Antwoord
(6 juni 2012)

De Raad heeft deze kwestie niet besproken.

([1]) http://tinyurl.com/G8IPRnon-paper.
([2]) http://chaordicmind.com/blog/2009/08/06/mastercard-kicks-it-up-a-notch-with-fine-schedule/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004052/12
to the Council
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Recent G-8 'Non-paper on intellectual property rights protection'

Judging from the recently leaked 'Non-paper on intellectual property rights protection' ([1]), the G-8 intergovernmental forum appears to be laying the groundwork for a new international legal response to counterfeiting and piracy, which would include an integrated warning system and a pledge by the G-8 countries to strengthen their legal and regulatory regimes. Several EU Member States (France, Germany, Italy and the UK) participate in the G-8 forum. The document raises several issues:

1. how does the Council view this draft G-8 initiative, and is there any EU-wide coordinated strategy regarding participation in such multilateral forums, and in particular in the preparation of the Non-paper on intellectual property rights protection?

2. can the Council confirm whether the Commission is involved, in particular in connection with the common commercial policy, in the aforementioned large Member States' preparations for, and participation in, the G-8 forum?

3. does the Council agree that the governments of the Member States involved should instead opt to tackle counterfeited products by means of a sector-specific approach? If not, why does it consider a sector-specific approach to be less effective?

4. can the Council explain what the governments of those Member States consider to be 'appropriate action against unlawful websites'? What type of website is unlawful? What type of action is appropriate?

5. does the Council agree that, by using online payment services to cripple those producing or trading in counterfeit products, the governments involved would be outsourcing law enforcement to private parties? If so, can the Council comment on whether it considers this approach to be in line with current EU legislation?

6. does the Council agree that the outsourcing of law enforcement could (a) encourage risk-aversion by payment processors, thereby potentially cutting off cash flow to legitimate traders, (b) lead to the imposition of excessive fines by companies, cases of which have already been reported ([2]), and (c) result in (mainly American) multinational companies acting as non-judicial enforcement agencies? If the Council does not agree that each of the abovementioned points is a possible outcome, why not?

7. does the Council agree that if potential infringers can be traced via online payment services, they should be investigated and arrested by public enforcement authorities rather than being financially crippled? If not, why not?

Reply
(6 June 2012)

The Council has not discussed the issue.

([1]) http://tinyurl.com/G8IPRnon-paper.
([2]) http://chaordicmind.com/blog/2009/08/06/mastercard-kicks-it-up-a-notch-with-fine-schedule/.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004053/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(19. April 2012)

Betrifft: Neuansiedlung in Österreich

Aktuellen Medienberichten zufolge sehen sich Flüchtlinge und Asylbewerber in Österreich mit wachsenden Ablehnungsquoten konfrontiert. Dies wird auf die Tatsache zurückgeführt, dass sie von Politikern und der örtlichen Polizei als Bedrohung für die Gesellschaft dargestellt werden.

1. Welche Ausgleichszahlungen erhalten Mitgliedstaaten aus dem EU-Haushalt, wenn sie die Ansiedlung von Drittstaatsflüchtlingen auf ihrem Staatsgebiet gestatten?

2. Wie hoch ist die genaue Zahl der aktuell von Österreich aufgenommenen Flüchtlinge?

3. Was sind in Relation zu BIP und Bevölkerung die Vergleichswerte anderer Mitgliedstaaten?

4. Beabsichtigt die Kommission, ein europaweites Programm zur Bewältigung der immer weiter wachsenden Zahl von Drittstaatsflüchtlingen ins Leben zu rufen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(29. Mai 2012)

Der Europäische Flüchtlingsfonds hat die Mitgliedstaaten bei der Verbesserung ihrer Asylsysteme unterstützt und viel zum Kapazitätenaufbau beigetragen. Für die Neuansiedlung anerkannter Flüchtlinge aus Drittstaaten stehen den Mitgliedstaaten Mittel aus diesem Fonds zur Verfügung — ob und in welchem Umfang sie diese in Anspruch nehmen, steht jedoch völlig in ihrem eigenen Ermessen. Österreich hat bis jetzt von dieser Möglichkeit noch keinen Gebrauch gemacht.

Die Kommission kann keine genauen Angaben zur Zahl der zurzeit von den Mitgliedstaaten aufgenommenen Flüchtlinge machen. Diese Angaben dürften von den zuständigen Behörden der jeweiligen Mitgliedstaaten zu erhalten sein. Die EUROSTAT-Datenbank enthält nach Maßgabe der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 862/2007 Angaben zur Zahl der jährlich in jedem Mitgliedstaat registrierten Asylanträge. Diese Angaben werden von den zuständigen nationalen Behörden übermittelt. Im Jahr 2011 wurden in Österreich 14 420 Asylanträge gestellt; dies macht 5 % aller Asylanträge in der EU aus.

Die Zahl der Asylbewerber in der EU nimmt nicht ständig zu, und sie ist auch nicht Jahr für Jahr gleich. Die Zahl der Anträge erreichte 2001 mit über 424 000 Anträgen ihren Gipfel, fiel dann aber auf weniger als 197 500 im Jahr 2006 zurück. Der drastische Anstieg der Anträge im Jahr 2011 ist vor allem auf den Arabischen Frühling zurückzuführen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004053/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Resettlement in Austria

According to recent media reports, refugees and asylum-seekers face increasing rates of refusal in Austria. This is attributed to the fact that they are portrayed by politicians and local police forces as a threat to society.

1. What compensation do Member States receive under the EU budget for allowing refugees from third countries to settle in their territory?

2. What is the exact number of refugees currently hosted by Austria?

3. How does this figure compare to other Member States, in terms of GDP and population?

4. Does the Commission intend to set up a Europe-wide programme to cope with the ever- increasing number of third-country refugees?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2012)

The European Refugee Fund has assisted Member States in improving their asylum systems and has done much to build capacity. Funding is available for resettlement of recognised refugees from third countries to Member States, but this is a totally voluntary process. Austria has not, to date, chosen to resettle any refugees using European Refugee Fund resources.

The Commission cannot provide an exact figure for the number of refugees currently hosted by any Member State. This information may be obtainable from the competent authorities in the Member State. The Eurostat database contains figures concerning the number of registered asylum applications made each year in each Member State pursuant to Regulation 862/2007. These figures are supplied by national competent authorities. In 2011, Austria received 14 420 asylum applications, representing 5% of the EU total.

The number of asylum-seekers coming to the EU is not ever-increasing. Asylum figures are not stable year-on-year. Applications peaked in 2001 with over 424 000 applications, but dropped to fewer than 197 500 in 2006. The sharp increase in applications in 2011 is due predominantly to the Arab Spring.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004054/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(19. April 2012)

Betrifft: „*e*Passports" in Österreich

Österreich hat am 16. Juni 2006 als einer der ersten Mitgliedstaaten einen neuen elektronischen Reisepass eingeführt.

Dieser „*e*Passport" (in Österreich „*e*Pass" genannt) unterscheidet sich vom früheren nichtelektronischen Reisepass dadurch, dass er zusätzlich das in digitaler Form gespeicherte Gesichtsbild und seit März 2009 zwei Fingerabdrücke des Reisepassinhabers enthält.

1. Ist sich die Kommission der Gefahr bewusst, dass unbefugte Dritte heimlich die auf dem Reisepass gespeicherten privaten Daten auslesen könnten? Ist sich die Kommission des persönlichen und wirtschaftlichen Schadens bewusst, den ein derartiger Missbrauch für den Reisepassinhaber bedeuten würde? Welche Maßnahmen hat die Kommission ergriffen, um dieses Problem anzugehen?

2. Was sollte nach Ansicht der Kommission in Fällen geschehen, in denen keine automatische Grenzkontrolle erfolgt und die Grenzbeamten nicht in der Lage sind, Fälle versuchter Manipulation, etwa durch bearbeitete Fotografien oder Silikonfinger, zu erkennen?

3. Was hat die Kommission unternommen, um die Sicherheit der neuen „*e*Passports" zu erhöhen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(14. Juni 2012)

Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage P-006307/2008 ([1]), die nach wie vor Gültigkeit hat.

Zusätzlich zu den in der Antwort oben beschriebenen Sicherheitsmaßnahmen hat die Kommission beschlossen ([2]), ein neues von der Internationalen Zivilluftfahrt-Organisation (ICAO) empfohlenes Verfahren für die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtend zu machen: Die „Supplementary Access Control" (SAC) oder „Password Authenticated Connection Establishment" (PACE) gewährleistet einen höheren Verschlüsselungsgrad der Daten und somit eine höhere Sicherheit gegen unerlaubten Zugriff. Die Umsetzung sollte bis 31. Dezember 2014 erfolgen.

Gemäß dem Schengener Grenzkodex müssen die Mitgliedstaaten sicherstellen, dass es sich bei den Grenzbeamten um ausgebildete Fachleute handelt. Die Kommission unterstützt die Initiativen von Frontex und den Mitgliedstaaten, eine spezielle Schulung der Grenzbeamten in Bezug auf den Umgang mit den „ePassports" — einschließlich der Verwendung geeigneter Instrumente zur Authentizitätsüberprüfung — zu entwickeln.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2008-6307&language=DE.
([2]) Beschluss der Kommission K(2011)5499 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004054/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: 'ePassports' in Austria

On 16 June 2006 Austria was one of the first Member States to introduce a new electronic passport.

This 'ePassport' (in Austria named 'ePass') differs from the previous non-electronic passports in that it also contains the passport holder's facial image and, since March 2009, two fingerprints, stored in digital form.

1. Is the Commission aware of the danger that unauthorised third parties could secretly read out the private data stored in the passports? Is the Commission aware of the personal and economic damage such misbehaviour would cause to the passport holder? What measures has the Commission taken to tackle this problem?

2. What, in the Commission's view, should happen where there are no automated border controls and border officials are not able to recognise cases of attempted manipulation, such as doctored photographs or the use of silicone fingers?

3. What action has the Commission taken to increase the security of the new 'ePassports'?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question P-006307/2008 ([1]) which is still valid.

In addition to the security measures described in the above reply, the Commission has decided ([2]) to render a new procedure recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) mandatory for Member States: this Supplementary Access Control (SAC) or Password Authenticated Connection Establishment (PACE) ensures a higher standard of encryption of the data and thus higher security against unauthorised access. It should be implemented by 31 December 2014.

According to the Schengen Borders Code, Member States must ensure that border guards are specialised and properly trained professionals. The Commission fully supports Frontex's and Member States' initiatives to develop specific training of border guards on the handling of e-passports, including the use of appropriate tools to verify their authenticity.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2008-6307&language=EN.
([2]) Commission decision C(2011) 5499 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004055/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(19. April 2012)

Betrifft: Vorschriften zur Korruptionsbekämpfung in der Erdöl- und Erdgasindustrie

Die jüngsten Umweltkatastrophen haben die verheerenden und langfristig negativen Auswirkungen, die solche Ereignisse auf die Natur und ihre Fauna und Flora haben, deutlich gemacht.

1. Wie ist die aktuelle Lage hinsichtlich der für die Erdöl- und Erdgasaktivitäten geltenden Rechtsvorschriften in der Europäischen Union? Beurteilt die Kommission die Lage als zufriedenstellend?

2. Wie beurteilt die Kommission das Argument, dass Erdöl- und Erdgasunternehmen in Europa durch Konzessionen, die ausschließlich auf EU-Ebene gewährt werden, zugelassen werden sollten?

3. Inwieweit könnten nach Auffassung der Kommission auf die Erdöl- und Erdgasindustrie ausgerichtete europaweite Vorschriften zur Korruptionsbekämpfung dazu beitragen, Katastrophen wie die oben genannten zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2012)

1. Die Kommission hat nach der Deepwater Horizon-Katastrophe im April 2010 eine umfassende Bestandsaufnahme der europäischen Rechtsvorschriften für die Öl- und Erdgasindustrie durchgeführt. Die Kommission möchte die Frau Abgeordnete in diesem Zusammenhang auf ihre Mitteilung „Die Sicherheit von Offshore-Erdöl- und Erdgasaktivitäten — eine Herausforderung“ ([1]) und das Begleitdokument der Kommissionsdienststellen ([1]) sowie auf ihren anschließenden Legislativvorschlag ([2]) und weitere begleitende Dokumente einschließlich einer Folgenabschätzungsstudie ([3]) verweisen, die im November 2011verabschiedet wurden.

2. Die Kommission hat keine solche Zentralisierung von Kompetenzen vorgeschlagen. Sie trägt dem Umstand Rechnung, dass im EU-Recht ([4]) das ausschließliche Recht jedes Mitgliedstaats verankert ist, über die Nutzung seiner natürlichen Ressourcen, einschließlich Öl und Gas, zu bestimmen.

3. In Bezug auf die Sicherheit derartiger Tätigkeiten, die Umweltunfälle verursachen könnten, haben weder die verschiedenen Bewertungen und Befragungen der Akteure noch sonstige Untersuchungen im Vorfeld des Legislativvorschlags Hinweise darauf ergeben, dass Korruption ein Hauptfaktor für die Infragestellung der Integrität der beteiligten Akteure sein könnte. Die Kommission hält es für sehr wichtig, potenziell im Widerspruch zueinander stehende Aufgaben der nationalen Behörden (z. B. Umweltschutz und Förderung von Offshore-Tätigkeiten zur Förderung von Öl und Gas) funktionell voneinander zu trennen, um Interessenkonflikte zu vermeiden. Außerdem hat die Kommission kürzlich einen Vorschlag ([5]) zur Änderung der Transparenzrichtlinie ([6]) verabschiedet. Diese Änderung soll die Offenlegung aller Zahlungen der mineralgewinnenden Industrie an Regierungen weltweit gewährleisten. Durch größere Transparenz würde die Zivilgesellschaft wesentlich mehr Informationen darüber erhalten, welche Beträge EU-Unternehmen für Gewinnungsrechte an natürlichen Ressourcen an die Regierungen des betreffenden Landes zahlen.

([1]) KOM(2010)560 endg.
([2]) KOM(2011)688 endg.
([3]) SEK(2011)1293 endg.
([4]) Artikel 194 AEUV.
([5]) 2011/0307 (COD).
([6]) Richtlinie 2004/109/EG, ABl. L 390 vom 31.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004055/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Anti-corruption rules in the oil and gas industries

Recent environmental accidents have revealed the disastrous and long-lasting negative effects that such incidents have on nature and its flora and fauna.

1. What is the current situation regarding legislation applicable to oil and gas activities in the European Union? Does the Commission judge the situation to be satisfactory?

2. What is the Commission's view of the argument that oil and gas businesses in Europe should be licensed by concessions granted solely at EU level?

3. In the Commission's view, to what extent might pan-European anti-corruption rules targeted on the oil and gas industries help prevent disasters such as those mentioned above?

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

1. The Commission carried out a detailed overview of European legislation applicable to oil and gas operations when reacting to the Deepwater Horizon accident in April 2010. Accordingly, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its communication 'Facing the challenge of the safety of offshore oil and gas activities' ([1]) and its accompanying Staff Working Document ([1]) as well as its subsequent legislative proposal ([2]) and supporting documents including an Impact Assessment study ([3]) adopted in November 2011.

2. The Commission has not proposed such a centralisation of competences. The Commission respects the fact that EC law ([4]) recognises the exclusive right of each Member State to decide on the exploitation of its natural resources, including oil and gas.

3. As regard the safety of activities similar to those that could recent environmental accidents, neither the different assessments, stakeholder consultations nor other research preceding the legislative proposal have yielded information that would point at corruption as a principal factor undermining their integrity. However, the Commission considers it very important to ensure that any potentially conflicting duties of national administrations (such as environmental protection and promotion of offshore oil and gas activities) are functionally separated to prevent conflict of interest. In addition to that, the Commission has recently adopted a proposal ([5]) to amend the Transparency Directive ([6]). The amendment to the directive aims at ensuring disclosure of all payments made to governments all over the world by the extractive industries. Increased transparency would provide civil society with significantly more information on what specifically is paid by EU companies to host governments in exchange for the right to extract the relevant countries' natural resources.

([1]) COM(2010) 560 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 688 final.
([3]) SEC(2011) 1293 final.
([4]) Article 194 of the TFEU.
([5]) 2011/0307 (COD).
([6]) Directive 2004/109/EC, OJ L 390, 31.12.2004.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004056/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL), Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL) und Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(19. April 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Ausweisung von EU-Bürgern durch Israel und Verstoß gegen die Rechte von Fluggästen durch Fluggesellschaften

Am 15. April 2012 hat Israel Bürgern aus mehreren EU-Mitgliedstaaten, die auf dem Weg nach Palästina waren, die Einreise verweigert und sie ausgewiesen. Fluggesellschaften mehrerer Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union haben die Flugscheine der Aktivisten storniert, nachdem ihnen angeblich von Israel gedroht wurde. Dabei beriefen sich die Fluggesellschaften auf Drohungen Israels, Sanktionen zu verhängen, wenn sie sich gegen die Forderung weigerten, keine Fluggäste an Bord zu nehmen, die auf der von den israelischen Behörden versendeten schwarzen Liste stehen. Einer dieser Fluggesellschaften zufolge wurde von ihnen verlangt, den israelischen Behörden die Namen, Geburtsdaten, Passnummern und Staatsangehörigkeiten der Fluggäste mitzuteilen. Darüber hinaus wurde einigen Fluggästen, deren Flugscheine storniert wurden, der Flugpreis nicht erstattet.

Mehrere Aktivisten für die Rechte des palästinensischen Volkes nahmen an einer sogenannten „Flytilla" teil, in deren Rahmen sie sich an verschiedenen Initiativen beteiligen wollten, um auf die Notwendigkeit der Beendigung der israelischen Besatzung von Palästina wie auch auf die Verschlechterung der Lage des palästinensischen Volkes aufmerksam zu machen.

Eine ähnliche „Flytilla" im Juli letzten Jahres hatte die Verhaftung und Ausweisung mehrerer Aktivisten nach sich gezogen. Und im Mai 2010 endete eine Flotilla mit Schiffen, die versuchten, Gaza zu erreichen, mit der Erschießung von neun Aktivisten durch Israel.

Vor dem Hintergrund dieser Tatsachen fragen wir die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin:

1. Waren Sie über das Vorhandensein dieser schwarzen Liste informiert, die eine erneute Verletzung der Bürgerrechte seitens Israel und der betreffenden Fluggesellschaften darstellt?

2. Könnten Sie uns Informationen über die Fluggesellschaften, Länder und Staatsangehörigkeit der Bürger geben, denen dieses Verbot durch die israelischen Behörden und mehrere Fluggesellschaften galt?

3. Handelt es sich bei diesem Vorgang, eine schwarze Liste zu erstellen und Listen von Fluggästen (samt ihren PNR-Daten) an Israel oder andere Länder zu schicken und damit gegen Bürgerrechte zu verstoßen, um einen normalen Vorgang?

4. Beabsichtigen Sie, diese Vorgehensweise den israelischen Behörden gegenüber entschieden zu verurteilen?

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

Sicherheitsvorkehrungen für den Zugang von Fluggästen zu Luftfahrzeugen für Flüge von EU-Mitgliedstaaten in Drittländer, die dazu dienen, die Sicherheit des Fluges zu gewährleisten oder Fluggäste ausgehend von einer Liste, die Informationen wie Name, Geburtsdatum, Nationalität und Passnummer (alle erweiterten Fluggastdaten oder API-Daten) enthält, am Einstieg zu hindern, werden nicht auf EU-Ebene, sondern auf bilateraler Ebene geregelt, das heißt zwischen den EU-Mitgliedstaaten und den Drittländern. Üblicherweise sehen diese Vereinbarungen vor, dass die auf Sicherheitsbedenken beruhenden Anweisungen der nationalen Behörden für die Fluglinien verbindlich sind.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004056/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL), Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL) και Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(19 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Απέλαση πολιτών της ΕΕ από το Ισραήλ και παραβίαση των δικαιωμάτων των επιβατών από αεροπορικές εταιρείες

Στις 15 Απριλίου 2012, το Ισραήλ απαγόρευσε την είσοδο σε πολίτες που προέρχονταν από διάφορα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ και τους απέλασε, ενώ προσπαθούσαν να μεταβούν στην Παλαιστίνη. Οι αεροπορικές εταιρείες διαφόρων κρατών μελών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ακύρωσαν τα εισιτήρια των ακτιβιστών όταν, κατά τους ισχυρισμούς τους, δέχθηκαν απειλές από το Ισραήλ. Οι εν λόγω εταιρείες ισχυρίστηκαν ότι το Ισραήλ τους απείλησε με κυρώσεις σε περίπτωση που δεν συμμορφώνονταν με το αίτημα μη επιβίβασης των επιβατών που αναφέρονταν στη μαύρη λίστα των ισραηλινών αρχών. Σύμφωνα με μία από τις αεροπορικές εταιρείες, υποχρεώθηκαν να αποστείλουν στις ισραηλινές αρχές τα ονόματα, τις ημερομηνίες γεννήσεων, τους αριθμούς διαβατηρίων και τις ιθαγένειες των εν λόγω επιβατών. Επιπλέον, ορισμένοι από τους επιβάτες δεν αποζημιώθηκαν για την ακύρωση των εισιτηρίων τους.

Αρκετοί από τους ακτιβιστές που υπερασπίζουν τα δικαιώματα των Παλαιστινίων συμμετείχαν στην εκστρατεία την επονομαζόμενη «flytilla», προσπαθώντας να λάβουν μέρος σε πρωτοβουλίες ευαισθητοποίησης ως προς την ανάγκη να τεθεί ένα τέλος στην ισραηλινή κατοχή της Παλαιστίνης και στην επιδείνωση της κατάστασης των Παλαιστινίων.

Μια αντίστοιχη «flytilla», που διοργανώθηκε τον περασμένο Ιούλιο, είχε ως αποτέλεσμα την κράτηση και την απέλαση αρκετών ακτιβιστών. Τον Μάιο του 2010, όταν ένας στολίσκος σκαφών επιχείρησε να προσεγγίσει τη Γάζα, το εγχείρημα κατέληξε στη δολοφονία εννέα ακτιβιστών από τους Ισραηλινούς.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα εν λόγω γεγονότα, ερωτάται η Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

1. Έχετε ενημερωθεί για την ύπαρξη αυτής της μαύρης λίστας με την οποία το Ισραήλ παραβιάζει εκ νέου τα δικαιώματα των πολιτών, με τη συνέργεια αρκετών αεροπορικών εταιρειών;

2. Μπορείτε να μας ενημερώσετε για τις αεροπορικές εταιρείες, τις χώρες και την ιθαγένεια των πολιτών στους οποίους εφαρμόστηκε η εν λόγω απαγόρευση από τις ισραηλινές αρχές και τις αεροπορικές εταιρείες;

3. Η εν λόγω πρακτική δημιουργίας μαύρων λιστών και αποστολής των λιστών των επιβατών (με τα στοιχεία τους) στο Ισραήλ ή σε τρίτες χώρες, αποτελεί συνήθη διαδικασία;

4. Σκοπεύετε να ενημερώσετε τις ισραηλινές αρχές ότι καταδικάζετε απόλυτα την εν λόγω διαδικασία;

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

Το ζήτημα των ρυθμίσεων ασφαλείας, που αφορούν την πρόσβαση των επιβατών στα αεροσκάφη με στόχο να διασφαλιστεί η ασφάλεια μιας πτήσης ή να αποτραπεί η επιβίβαση ενός επιβάτη σε αεροσκάφος βάσει καταλόγου που περιέχει πληροφορίες όπως το ονοματεπώνυμο, η ημερομηνία γέννησης, η εθνικότητα και ο αριθμός διαβατηρίου (εκ των προτέρων πληροφορίες σχετικά με τους επιβάτες ή δεδομένα API) για πτήσεις από την ΕΕ προς τρίτες χώρες ρυθμίζεται σε διμερές επίπεδο, δηλαδή μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ και των τρίτων χωρών, και όχι σε επίπεδο ΕΕ. Συνήθως, αυτές οι συμφωνίες προβλέπουν ότι η εφαρμογή των οδηγιών που δίνονται από τις εθνικές αρχές βάσει ανησυχιών που σχετίζονται με την ασφάλεια είναι υποχρεωτική για τις αεροπορικές εταιρείες.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004056/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente / Haute Représentante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL), Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL) et Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(19 avril 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Expulsion par Israël de citoyens européens et violation des droits des passagers par les compagnies aériennes

Le 15 avril 2012, Israël a refusé l'entrée sur son territoire à des citoyens de plusieurs États membres de l'UE tentant de se rendre en Palestine et les a expulsés. Des compagnies aériennes de plusieurs États membres de l'Union européenne ont annulé les billets des militants après avoir été soi-disant menacées par Israël. Ces compagnies aériennes ont affirmé qu'Israël les avait menacées de sanctions si elles refusaient de se soumettre à sa demande de ne pas embarquer les passagers figurant sur la liste noire envoyée par les autorités israéliennes. D'après une compagnie aérienne, elles ont été obligées à fournir aux autorités israéliennes les noms, dates de naissance, numéros de passeport et nationalités des passagers. En outre, certains passagers dont le billet a été annulé n'ont pas été remboursés.

Plusieurs personnes militant en faveur des droits du peuple palestinien ont pris part à ce qu'elles ont appelé la «flottille», tentant de participer à plusieurs initiatives visant à attirer l'attention sur la nécessité de mettre fin à l'occupation de la Palestine par Israël et à la dégradation de la situation du peuple palestinien.

En juillet dernier, une «flottille» similaire s'est soldée par la détention et l'expulsion de plusieurs militants. En mai 2010, le parcours d'une flottille de bateaux tentant d'atteindre Gaza s'est terminé par la mort de neuf militants sous les balles israéliennes.

À la lumière de ces considérations, nous souhaitons poser les questions suivantes à la vice-présidente/haute-représentante:

1. avez-vous été informée de l'existence de cette liste noire, qui représente une nouvelle violation des droits des citoyens par Israël avec la complicité de plusieurs compagnies aériennes?

2. pourriez-vous nous indiquer quels sont les compagnies aériennes, les pays et les nationalités des citoyens auxquels s'est appliquée cette interdiction imposée par les autorités israéliennes et plusieurs compagnies aériennes?

3. cette procédure consistant à élaborer des listes noires et à envoyer des listes de passagers (avec leurs données PNR) à Israël ou d'autres pays tiers, violant dès lors les droits des citoyens, est-elle une procédure normale?

4. Avez-vous l'intention de faire part de votre ferme condamnation de cette procédure aux autorités israéliennes?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(9 juillet 2012)

La question des dispositions de sécurité régissant la montée des passagers à bord des avions, afin d'assurer la sécurité d'un vol ou d'interdire l'embarquement à un passager sur la base d'une liste contenant des informations telles que nom, date de naissance, nationalité et numéro de passeport (tous les renseignements préalables sur les passagers ou données RPV), pour les vols au départ de l'Union européenne à destination de pays tiers, n'est pas réglementée au niveau de l'Union européenne mais à un niveau bilatéral comme par exemple, entre les États membres de l'UE et des pays tiers. Le plus souvent, ces accords établissent que les instructions données par les autorités nationales et qui sont fondées sur des questions de sécurité revêtent un caractère contraignant pour les compagnies aériennes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004056/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL), Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL) e Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(19 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Deportação de cidadãos da UE por parte de Israel e violação dos direitos dos passageiros por parte das companhias aéreas

Em 15 de abril de 2012, Israel recusou a entrada de e deportou cidadãos de diversos Estados-Membros da UE que tentavam chegar à Palestina. Companhias aéreas de vários Estados-Membros da União Europeia cancelaram os bilhetes dos ativistas após terem sido alegadamente ameaçados por Israel. As companhias invocaram as ameaças feitas por Israel destinadas a impor sanções em caso de incumprimento do pedido de não embarcar os passageiros incluídos na lista negra enviada pelas autoridades israelitas. De acordo com uma das companhias, estas foram obrigadas a fornecer às autoridades israelitas os nomes, as datas de nascimento, os números de passaporte e as nacionalidades dos passageiros. Além disso, alguns passageiros que viram os seus bilhetes cancelados não foram reembolsados.

Muitos dos ativistas pelos direitos do povo palestiniano participaram naquilo que os próprios denominaram de «flotilha», na tentativa de participar em diversas iniciativas com vista a chamar a atenção para a necessidade de pôr termo à ocupação israelita da Palestina e para a deterioração da situação do povo palestiniano.

Uma «flotilha» semelhante no último mês de julho resultou na detenção e deportação de inúmeros ativistas. E, em maio de 2010, uma frota de embarcações que tentava chegar a Gaza resultou em disparos provenientes de Israel, matando nove ativistas.

Considerando os factos em causa, perguntamos à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

1. Foi informada da existência desta lista negra, que constitui numa repetição da violação dos direitos dos cidadãos por Israel com a cumplicidade de diversas companhias aéreas?

2. Poderia informar-nos as companhias aéreas, os países e a nacionalidade dos cidadãos aos quais esta interdição foi aplicada por parte das autoridades israelitas e diversas companhias aéreas?

3. Trata-se de um procedimento normal a criação de listas negras e o envio de listas de passageiros (juntamente com os seus dados pessoais) a Israel ou a países terceiros, o que viola o direito dos cidadãos?

4. Pretende expressar a sua condenação total às autoridades israelitas relativamente a este procedimento?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(9 de julho de 2012)

A questão das disposições de segurança que regulam o acesso dos passageiros aos aviões para garantir a segurança de um voo ou evitar o embarque de um passageiro com base numa lista que utiliza informações como o nome, a data de nascimento, a nacionalidade e o número do passaporte (todas as informações prévias sobre passageiros ou dados API) para os voos a partir da UE com destino a países terceiros, não está regulamentada a nível da UE, mas a nível bilateral, ou seja, entre os Estados-Membros da UE e os países terceiros. Normalmente, estes acordos preveem que as instruções dadas pelas autoridades nacionais com base em questões de segurança são obrigatórias para as companhias aéreas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004056/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL), Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL), Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL) and Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Deportation of EU citizens by Israel and violation of passengers' rights by airlines

On 15 April 2012, Israel denied entry to and deported citizens from several EU Member States trying to reach Palestine. Airlines from several European Union Member States cancelled the tickets of the activists after allegedly being threatened by Israel. Airlines invoked threats by Israel to impose sanctions if they refused to comply with the request not to board passengers included on the blacklist sent by the Israeli authorities. According to one of the airlines, they were obliged to provide the Israeli authorities with passengers' names, dates of birth, passport numbers and nationalities. Moreover, some of the passengers who had their tickets cancelled were not reimbursed.

Several activists for the rights of the Palestinian people took part in what they called the 'flytilla', trying to participate in several initiatives aiming to call attention to the need to put an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine and to the deterioration of the situation of the Palestinian people.

A similar 'flytilla' last July resulted in the detention and deportation of several activists. And in May 2010, a flotilla of boats attempting to reach Gaza ended in Israel shooting dead nine activists.

Taking these facts into consideration, we ask the Vice-President/High Representative:

1. Have you been informed of the existence of this blacklist, which constitutes a repetition of the violation of citizens' rights by Israel with the complicity of several airlines?

2. Could you inform us of the airlines, countries and the nationality of citizens to whom this ban was applied by the Israeli authorities and several airlines?

3. Is this procedure of creating blacklists and sending lists of passengers (with their PNR data) to Israel or to third countries, thus violating citizens' rights, a normal procedure?

4. Do you intend to express your full condemnation to the Israeli authorities of this procedure?

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

The matter of security arrangements for passengers' access to aircraft to ensure the security of a flight or to prevent a passenger from boarding on the basis of a list, using information like name, date of birth, nationality and passport number (all advance passenger information or API data) for flights from the EU to third countries, is not regulated at EU level but at bilateral level, i.e. between EU Member States and third countries. Typically, these agreements stipulate that the instructions given by national authorities based on security concerns are mandatory for airlines.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004057/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Expulsion of a Member State from the EU

While the treaties allow for disciplinary measures to be taken against Member States (cf. Article 7 TEU), there seems to be no mechanism for expelling a Member State from the EU. Can the Commission comment on this?

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

Whereas Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union provides for the suspension of certain rights of Member States, there is no Treaty provision concerning the expulsion of a Member State. The terms of any European Union Treaty are decided by the Member States of the European Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004058/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Airline data and compliance with ETS data type

It has been reported in the press that non-EU airlines are obliged to submit 'data' to the EU (see 'Global Opposition Grows against EU Emissions Law' — *Der Spiegel*, 24 February 2012). Could the Commission detail what data airlines have to submit?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

All operators who choose to fly to and from European Union airports must report emissions data and tonne-kilometre data annually for flights covered by the legislation. The details of the information required by the Honourable Member are available on the Commission's website.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004059/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: GSP+ scheme — compliance inspection

Once the EU has granted a third country GSP+ status, what steps does the Commission take to check that the beneficiary country is continuing to comply with its obligations?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2012)

Under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) Regulation, the Commission shall keep under review the status of ratification and effective implementation of the GSP+ Conventions by examining available information from the relevant monitoring bodies. On 17 May 2011, the Commission adopted the report to Parliament and the Council on the status of ratification and recommendations by monitoring bodies concerning conventions listed in Annex III to Council Regulation (EC) No 732/2008 ([1]). The report identified some shortcomings in the effective implementation of the conventions by several GSP+ beneficiary countries.

To address these shortcomings the Commission has intensified bilateral dialogues with the GSP+ beneficiary countries on implementation issues and has engaged the governments of GSP+ beneficiary countries in the dialogue to address the problematic issues identified by the relevant monitoring bodies and to support improvements in effective implementation of the conventions. Wherever it has been found that a GSP+ beneficiary country no longer fulfils its commitments to effectively implement GSP+ conventions, the Commission has acted by initiating an investigation. In the case of Sri Lanka, the GSP+ preferences were withdrawn due to non-effective implementation of three human rights conventions.

Furthermore under the new GSP proposal, it was envisaged to further reinforce the monitoring and withdrawal mechanisms which ensure effective implementation of international conventions.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 732/2008 of 22 July 2008 applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences for the period from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011 and amending Regulations (EC) No 552/97, (EC) No 1933/2006 and Commission Regulations (EC) No 1100/2006 and (EC) No 964/2007, OJ L 211, 6.8.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004060/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Geographic limits of the European Union

Could the Commission comment on what countries it regards as being qualified for potential EU membership, based on their geographic location?

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

The Treaty on European Union says in Article 49 that 'any European State' which respects the values on which the Union is founded and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union. These values are referred to in Article 2 of the same Treaty.

Every country meeting the conditions of Article 49 TEU has to meet the basic conditions laid down by the European Council, in particular the criteria set out at its meeting in Copenhagen in 1993. These criteria require the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union, and the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including the administrative capacity to effectively apply and implement the *acquis*. The capacity of the Union to integrate new members is also an important consideration.

The enlargement process currently encompasses Iceland, Turkey and the countries of the western Balkans. Croatia has the status of an acceding country, and is scheduled to join the EU on 1 July 2013 following ratification by all Member States of its Accession Treaty. Accession negotiations are ongoing with Iceland and Turkey. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia have the status of candidate countries, with which accession negotiations have not yet begun. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo ([1]) are potential candidates.

([1]) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004062/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Sclerosi multipla e autismo

Da una recente indagine svolta dal Censis (Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali) emerge un quadro certamente preoccupante delle condizioni assistenziali riservate alle persone affette da sclerosi multipla e da autismo. Dallo studio emerge che, per entrambe le patologie, si incontri spesso una forte difficoltà ad arrivare a una diagnosi tempestiva e corretta. Sovente, infatti, il paziente è costretto a consultare diversi medici per ottenere una corretta valutazione e una terapia adeguata. A livello europeo si lamentano, inoltre, gravi carenze in termini di strutture di ricovero, assistenza domiciliare e offerta del necessario sostegno psicologico e finanziario ai malati e alle loro famiglie. È proprio sulle famiglie, infatti, che ricadono, soprattutto nei casi più gravi, la vera e propria assistenza dei malati e i costi, anche in termini psicologici e sociali. Basti pensare alle madri che rinunciano al proprio impiego per poter curare i propri cari, mentre i centri specializzati spesso risultano essere solo un luogo dove si distribuiscono farmaci.

— È la Commissione a conoscenza delle difficoltà in cui versano i malati di sclerosi multipla e di autismo, e le loro famiglie?

— Negli altri Stati membri sono state compiute indagini simili e qual è il quadro che ne emerge?

— Intende la Commissione intervenire a sostegno delle persone e delle famiglie colpite da queste patologie?

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

La Commissione è consapevole delle difficoltà che incontrano le persone affette da sclerosi multipla o autismo e le loro famiglie.

La Commissione non dispone di ulteriori informazioni sulle indagini condotte dagli Stati membri in merito alle condizioni assistenziali per le persone affette da sclerosi multipla e autismo.

Per quanto concerne la sclerosi multipla, la Commissione è in contatto con l'organizzazione centrale dei cittadini colpiti da tale patologia, la Piattaforma europea per la sclerosi multipla (EMSP) ([1]). Dal 2011, con il sostegno del programma Salute 2008-2013, questa Piattaforma sviluppa un «Registro europeo per la sclerosi multipla» al fine di disporre di uno strumento per valutare, comparare e migliorare le condizioni dei malati di sclerosi multipla in tutta l'UE (EUReMS) ([2]). Per informazioni più dettagliate sull'azione UE in tema di sclerosi multipla si rinvia al server EUROPA ([3]).

Per quanto concerne l'autismo, la Commissione ha sostenuto il Sistema informativo europeo sull'autismo (EAIS) ([4]) ([5]) nell'ambito del programma Salute 2003-2008. Inoltre, nel 2010, la Commissione ha finanziato la Conferenza «European Autism Action 2020» (Conferenza europea sull'azione in materia di autismo 2020) tenutasi a Dublino. La futura Presidenza irlandese del Consiglio europeo ha inserito l'autismo tra le priorità da trattare durante tale Presidenza. Una descrizione esaustiva delle attività dell'UE in questo settore è reperibile sul server EUROPA.

In forza del trattato, il sostegno sociale e l'erogazione di assistenza sanitaria ai cittadini affetti da entrambe le patologie ricadono essenzialmente sotto la responsabilità degli Stati membri.

([1]) http://www.ms-in-europe.org/news/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html cercare la voce EUREMS.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/brain_neurological/index_en.htm#fragment0.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_projects/2005/action1/action1_2005_13_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/autistic/index_en.htm#fragment3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004062/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Multiple sclerosis and autism

A recent investigation performed by Censis (Social Investment Studies Centre) presents a worrying picture of the support conditions concerning people suffering from multiple sclerosis and autism. The study shows that for both pathologies, it is often very difficult to obtain a timely and correct diagnosis. Often, in fact, the patient is obliged to consult various doctors to obtain a correct assessment and suitable treatment. There are also reports at European level of serious shortcomings in terms of care facilities, domestic help and the provision of the necessary psychological and financial support for patients and their families. In fact, it is precisely the families that bear the burden of patient support and costs, including in psychological and social terms, particularly in the more serious cases. We only have to think of the mothers who give up their careers to care for family members, while often specialist centres are merely a place where medication is distributed.

— Is the Commission aware of the difficulties encountered by people suffering from multiple sclerosis and autism and by their families?

— Have other Member States conducted similar investigations, and if so, what was the outcome?

— Does the Commission intend to take action to support the people and families affected by these pathologies?

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

The Commission is aware of the difficulties encountered by people with multiple sclerosis or autism and by their families.

The Commission does not have further information about investigations that Member States have conducted concerning support conditions for people suffering from multiple sclerosis and autism.

For multiple sclerosis, the Commission is in contact with the European umbrella organisations for citizens suffering from this condition, the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP) ([1]). Since 2011, with the support of the Health Programme 2008-2013, this Platform is developing a 'European Register for Multiple Sclerosis', with a view to developing a tool to assess, compare and enhance the status of people with multiple sclerosis, throughout the EU (EUReMS) ([2]). More detailed information on EU action on multiple sclerosis can be found on the Europa server ([3]).

For autism, the Commission supported the European Autism Information System project (EAIS) ([4]) ([5]) under the Health Programme 2003-2008. In addition, in 2010, the Commission financed the 'European Autism Action 2020' Conference in Dublin. The future Irish Presidency of the European Council retained Autism as a priority during their Presidency. A comprehensive description of EU activities in this policy area can be found on the Europa server.

Under the Treaty, the social support and the provision of healthcare to citizens with either condition is primarily under the responsibility of the Member States.

([1]) http://www.ms-in-europe.org/news/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html search for EUREMS.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/brain_neurological/index_en.htm#fragment0.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_projects/2005/action1/action1_2005_13_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/autistic/index_en.htm#fragment3.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004063/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Pericolo truffe assicurative nelle gare d'appalto pubbliche

Il 17 aprile 2012, con le perquisizioni delle forze dell'ordine negli uffici della sede fiscale italiana della «City Insurance» di Bucarest, si sono concretizzate le indagini svolte dal Servizio ispettivo regionale della Regione Veneto e dalla Guardia di Finanza. Essendosi presentata come unica candidata, questa società si era aggiudicata la gara d'appalto da EUR 76 milioni della Regione Veneto per la gestione delle assicurazioni delle ASL venete per danni superiori a 500 000 EUR.

I sospetti sono nati sia per il notevole ribasso proposto (10.6 %) sia per via delle documentazioni non trasparenti depositate. La società si era già aggiudicata peraltro appalti simili in molte altre regioni d'Italia. Le accuse ufficiali mosse al suo direttore generale, un cittadino romeno, sono per ora quelle di aver fornito una falsa documentazione che mostra una struttura societaria diversa da quella reale. Le indagini si stanno muovendo anche per appurare la presunta infiltrazione della malavita organizzata. Infatti la proprietà della «City Insurance» sarebbe riconducibile, risalendo la catena delle controllate, a due soggetti noti per la vicinanza agli ambienti della camorra.

Può la Commissione dire:

— se è a conoscenza di questa vicenda o di altre che coinvolgono la «City Insurance»;

— come intende agire per intensificare la lotta alle infiltrazioni della malavita organizzata nel tessuto economico degli Stati membri?

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

La Commissione non è a conoscenza della situazione denunciata dall'onorevole parlamentare.

La Commissione concorda che l'infiltrazione della criminalità organizzata nell'economia rappresenta una seria minaccia e una sfida da affrontare. Essa ha quindi adottato una serie di misure per proteggere l'economia legale, tra cui una comunicazione sulla strategia generale dell'UE nella lotta contro la corruzione (COM(2011)308 def.), una proposta di un nuovo quadro normativo relativo al congelamento e alla confisca dei proventi di reato (COM(2012)85 final) e una strategia anti frode (COM(2011)376 final).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004063/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Danger of insurance fraud in public procurement tenders

On 17 April 2012, the seizures made by police at the Italian registered offices of 'City Insurance' of Bucharest finalised the investigations carried out by the regional inspection service of the Veneto Region and by the Guardia di Finanza. Having presented itself as the only candidate, this company had been awarded the EUR 76 million contract by the Veneto Region to manage the insurance affairs of the Veneto Local Health Authorities for claims exceeding EUR 500 000.

Suspicions were raised both by the substantial discount offered (10.6%) and by the lack of transparency in the documentation submitted. The company had, moreover, already been awarded similar contracts in many other regions of Italy. The official charges laid against its managing director, a Romanian citizen, are currently the supply of false documentation indicating a corporate structure that does not correspond to the truth. Investigations are also being carried out to verify the suspected involvement of organised crime, since it appears that the ownership of 'City Insurance' can be traced, by going up through the chain of subsidiaries, to two individuals known for their closeness to Camorra circles.

Can the Commission state:

— Whether it is aware of this matter, or of any other matters involving 'City Insurance'?

— How it proposes to act to intensify the fight against organised crime in the economic fabric of the Member States?

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

The Commission is not aware of the allegations as indicated by the Honourable Member.

The Commission agrees that infiltration of organised crime in the economy is a serious threat and a challenge to be addressed. It has therefore adopted a number of measures designed to protect the licit economy. They include a communication on a comprehensive EU anti-corruption policy (COM(2011) 3673 final), a proposal for a new legal framework on confiscation of criminal assets (COM(2012) 85 final) and an anti-fraud strategy (COM(2011) 376 final).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004064/12
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE) e Marco Scurria (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Effetti negativi della direttiva servizi sul comparto degli operatori balneari

Gli stabilimenti balneari italiani e le aziende a uso turistico ricreativo rappresentano una realtà fondamentale e peculiare del sistema turistico italiano.

La direttiva servizi 2006/123/CE, come attualmente formulata, potrebbe creare un forte squilibrio sociale ed economico, mettendo a rischio gli stabilimenti balneari e tutte le attività operanti in regime concessorio (bar, ristoranti, campeggi o negozi).

Il Parlamento europeo si è espresso in merito a questo tema con la risoluzione «Europa, prima destinazione turistica mondiale — un nuovo quadro politico per il turismo europeo» (2010/2206(INI)) approvata a larga maggioranza il 27 settembre 2011. In particolare, al paragrafo 56 di codesta risoluzione, il Parlamento europeo «ribadisce l'importanza del turismo balneare come peculiarità di alcune regioni costiere europee; invita la Commissione a valutare se la direttiva 2006/123/CE abbia ripercussioni negative sulle PMI di questo settore e, se lo ritiene necessario, a proporre misure per attenuare tali ripercussioni e garantire che le caratteristiche specifiche di questa categoria professionale siano prese in considerazione nell'applicazione della direttiva (…)»

Sulla base di questa presa di posizione, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. Ha la Commissione effettuata, o ha intenzione di effettuare, uno studio in merito all'impatto della direttiva sulle PMI del comparto balneare?

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

La Commissione non ha eseguito uno studio particolare sull'incidenza della direttiva sui servizi ([1]) sulle PMI del comparto balneare, né al momento intende farlo.

In sintesi la direttiva sui servizi (in particolare tramite l'articolo 12, che è stato oggetto di varie interrogazioni scritte, ad esempio la E-001282/2012) garantisce che gli operatori economici, in particolare le PMI, abbiano accesso ad attività per le quali il numero di autorizzazioni è limitato per via della scarsità delle risorse naturali o delle capacità tecniche utilizzabili. La direttiva consente agli Stati membri di stabilire un quadro giuridico adeguato a tali attività, tenendo conto degli obiettivi di interesse pubblico, e di accordare concessioni per un periodo di tempo che permetta alle imprese di recuperare il costo degli investimenti. Pertanto la Commissione ritiene che l'applicazione della direttiva sui servizi favorirà anche la crescita delle PMI del settore balneare.

([1]) Direttiva 2006/123/CE, GU L 376 del 22.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004064/12
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE) and Marco Scurria (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Adverse effects of the Services Directive on seaside operators

Seaside establishments and tourism and leisure businesses are a vital and unique part of the Italian tourism industry.

In its current wording, the Services Directive (Directive 2006/123/EC), could bring about a significant social and economic imbalance, jeopardising seaside establishments and all businesses operating under concession (bars, restaurants, campsites or shops).

The European Parliament gave its opinion on this issue with the Resolution 'on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe' (2010/2206(INI)), adopted by a large majority on 27 September 2011. In particular, in paragraph 56 of this Resolution, the European Parliament 'reasserts the importance of beach tourism as a feature of some European coastal regions; calls on the Commission to examine whether the directive 2006/123/EC is having a negative impact on SMEs in this sector and, if deemed necessary, to propose measures to alleviate this impact and ensure that the specific characteristics of this professional category are taken into account in the application of the directive'.

In view of this position:

1. Has the Commission conducted, or does it intend to conduct, a study on the impact of the Services Directive on SMEs in the beach sector?

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

The Commission did not conduct a study specifically on the impact of the Services Directive ([1]) on SMEs in the beach sector, and does not currently intend to do so.

In essence, the Services Directive (in particular through its Article 12, which was the subject of several written questions, for example E-001282/2012) ensures that economic operators and in particular SMEs have access to activities for which the number of authorisations is limited because of the scarcity of natural resources or technical capacity available. The directive allows Member States to set an appropriate framework for such activities taking into account public interest objectives and grant concessions for a period of time which allows businesses to recoup the cost of their investments. Therefore, the Commission considers that the application of the Services Directive will be beneficial also to the growth of SMEs in the beach sector.

([1]) Directive 2006/123/EC, OJ L 376, 2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004065/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Abuso di antidolorifici

Molti antidolorifici non richiedono la ricetta medica e spesso chi li usa non sa neppure se servono veramente e, soprattutto, non conosce gli effetti collaterali. In Italia c'è il boom degli antidolorifici, presi per qualsiasi dolore, spesso a sproposito.

Sono ottanta milioni le confezioni di antidolorifici vendute ogni anno in Italia. Dal mal di testa ai problemi muscolari, dalla schiena bloccata fino al mal di denti, ogni problema sembra buono per assumere un antidolorifico. Si tratta di un abuso di farmaci inconsapevole, visto che milioni di italiani sono convinti che un medicinale senza prescrizione non abbia effetti collaterali e non sia pericoloso. L'aumento dell'utilizzo di antidolorifici fa aumentare il rischio d'infarto e non solo. Infatti, secondo i ricercatori di Tel Aviv, in Israele, l'utilizzo di antidepressivi, antinfiammatori, antidolorifici e antibiotici può accrescere la possibilità di sviluppare l'ipertensione, con il rischio di provocare infarti, ictus e aneurismi. Sono controindicazioni note che, tuttavia, sia gli utenti «fai da te» sia molti medici non prendono in giusta considerazione quando utilizzano o prescrivono gli antidolorifici. Il pericolo non è solo italiano, visto che l'abuso di farmaci è ormai globale.

1. Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, può la Commissione far sapere se può fornire dati inerenti alle percentuali di utilizzo di antidolorifici negli Stati membri?

2. Può indicare se l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali (EMA), che coordina la valutazione scientifica della qualità, della sicurezza e dell'efficacia dei prodotti farmaceutici, ha nell'ultimo anno svolto studi sulla tipologia dei medicinali summenzionati?

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

1. La Commissione non dispone di dati relativi alla diffusione dell'uso di antidolorifici negli Stati membri.

2. L'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio di un medicinale nella UE prevede che ad esso siano accluse informazioni destinate ai pazienti relative alle indicazioni, alle controindicazioni, al dosaggio e agli effetti collaterali negativi del medicinale autorizzato. Si trovano sul foglietto illustrativo inserito anche nelle confezioni dei medicinali venduti senza ricetta.

Gli obblighi delle autorità competenti e dei titolari di un'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio sono fissati dalla legislazione farmaceutica ([1]). Ogni aggiornamento che possa influenzare la valutazione dei benefici e dei rischi del medicinale, o suscitare il sospetto di reazioni indesiderabili, devono essere segnalate alle autorità competenti. L'Agenzia europea per i medicinali non effettua studi sulla sicurezza che possono invece essere chiesti al titolare dell'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio. Il comitato per i medicinali per uso umano dell'Agenzia sta attualmente rivedendo i dati più recenti sulla sicurezza per il sistema cardiovascolare ([2]) dei farmaci antiinfiammatori non steroidei non selettivi, per aggiornare il parere da esso reso nel 2006 ([3]) alla luce dei risultati più recenti, come quelli della ricerca sulla sicurezza dei farmaci antiinfiammatori non steroidei, finanziata dalla Commissione nell'ambito del VII programma quadro ([4]).

La legislazione farmaceutica modificata, in vigore dal luglio 2012, rafforza le disposizioni che consentono alle autorità competenti di imporre al titolare dell'autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio studi sulla sicurezza in qualsiasi momento del ciclo di vita del prodotto e quelle che hanno ampliato l'ambito della farmacovigilanza all'abuso di droghe.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 726/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 31 marzo 2004 che istituisce procedure comunitarie per l'autorizzazione e la sorveglianza dei medicinali per uso umano e veterinario, e che istituisce l'agenzia europea per i medicinali — GU L 136 del 30.4.2004 — e successive modifiche nonché direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano — GU L 311 del 28.11.2001 — e successive modifiche.

([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Press_release/2011/10/WC500116887.pdf

([3]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Press_release/2009/12/WC500017362.pdf

([4]) http://www.sos-nsaids-project.org/?q=home.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004065/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Painkiller abuse

Many painkillers do not require a prescription and often people who use them do not even know if they will really be useful or, in particular, the side effects they may have. Italy is experiencing a boom in the use of painkillers taken for any kind of pain, often inappropriately.

Some 80 million packs of painkillers are sold each year in Italy. From headaches to muscle problems, back seizures to toothaches, every problem seems appropriate for taking a painkiller. This is unwitting drug abuse, as millions of Italians are convinced that any drug that does not require a prescription does not have side effects and is therefore not dangerous. The increasing use of painkillers heightens the risk of heart attack and other complications. In fact, according to researchers in Tel Aviv, Israel, the use of antidepressants, anti-inflammatories, painkillers and antibiotics can increase the chance of developing hypertension, with an increased risk of heart attacks, strokes and aneurysms. There are contraindications, however, that both the 'do-it-yourself' user and many doctors do not take into consideration properly when using or prescribing painkillers. The danger is however not limited to Italy alone, given that drug abuse is now global.

1. In view of the above, can the Commission state whether it can provide any percentage data on painkiller use in the Member States?

2. Can it indicate whether any studies have been carried out on the type of medicines mentioned above in the last year by the European Medicines Agency, which coordinates the scientific assessment of the quality, safety and efficacy of pharmaceutical products?

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

1. The Commission does not have data regarding the percentages of use of painkillers in the Member States.

2. Marketing authorisation of a medicinal product in the EU includes approved product information for patients, which addresses indications, dosing, contraindications and adverse effects. It is provided as a package insert also for medicinal products without prescription.

Obligations of competent authorities and marketing authorisation holders in post-marketing surveillance are set by the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]). Any new information which might influence the evaluation of the benefits and risks of the medicinal product as well as suspected adverse reactions have to be reported to competent authorities. The European Medicines Agency does not carry out safety studies. They can be requested from the marketing authorisation holder. The Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use is currently reviewing the latest data on the cardiovascular safety of non-selective non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs ([2]), to update its 2006 opinion ([3]) in light of recently published evidence, including the results of the research on safety of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs funded by the Commission under the VII Framework Programme ([4]).

Amended pharmaceutical legislation, to be applied from July 2012, strengthens provisions allowing competent authorities to impose safety studies on a marketing authorisation holder at any time during the product life-cycle as well as including drug abuse under the scope of pharmacovigilance.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended, Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Press_release/2011/10/WC500116887.pdf
([3]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Press_release/2009/12/WC500017362.pdf
([4]) http://www.sos-nsaids-project.org/?q=home.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004066/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Guasto a centrale nucleare

Il secondo reattore della centrale nucleare di Iuzhnokrainsk, nell'Ucraina meridionale, è stato spento dal sistema di sicurezza a causa di un guasto elettrico al generatore. Il livello di radioattività è comunque dichiarato «nella norma», sia al di fuori che all'interno della centrale, così come il rischio di incendi.

Secondo un comunicato stampa rilasciato stamattina dal ministero, il guasto si sarebbe verificato lunedì sera alle 20.30. La centrale nucleare di Iuzhnokrainsk risale all'epoca sovietica ed è la seconda per ordine di grandezza fra le centrali attualmente in funzione in Ucraina; dotata di tre reattori e con una capacità di 2 850 megawatt, è operativa da circa 30 anni.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si interroga la Commissione per sapere se è a conoscenza di quanto avvenuto in Ucraina e se non ritiene di dover prendere provvedimenti affinché si possa garantire che non vi sia alcun rischio per l'ambiente.

Risposta data da Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2012)

In caso di un evento di rilevanza radiologica, l'Ucraina dovrebbe riferire all'agenzia internazionale per l'energia atomica (AIEA) ai sensi della Convenzione sulla pronta notifica e, in seguito, la Commissione dovrebbe riceverne notifica dall'AIEA.

Secondo quanto riferito dai media, l'evento sembra aver riguardato la parte dell'impianto relativa alla generazione/trasmissione elettrica, senza impatto radiologico. In quanto tale, esso non dovrebbe in genere essere notificato ai sensi della Convenzione sulla pronta notifica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004066/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Nuclear power plant breakdown

The second reactor at the Yuzhnoukrainsk nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine has been shut down by its security system due to an electrical failure in the generator. The level of radioactivity is nonetheless said to be normal, both outside and inside the plant, as is the fire risk.

A Ministry press release from this morning indicates that the failure took place on Monday evening at 20.30. The Yuzhnoukrainsk nuclear power plant dates back to Soviet times and is the second largest currently in operation in the Ukraine. It has three reactors and a capacity of 2 850 megawatts, and has been operating for about 30 years.

In view of the above, can the Commission confirm whether it is aware of what happened in Ukraine and whether it considers it necessary to take measures to ensure there are no risks to the environment?

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

In case of an event of radiological significance, Ukraine would report to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under the Convention on Early Notification and the Commission would then be notified by the IAEA.

According to media reports, this appears to have been an event on the electrical generation/transmission side of the plant, with no radiological impact. As such, it would normally not be reported under the Convention on Early Notification.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004067/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Nuova applicazione per evitare collisioni con le balene

Con una nuova applicazione, che è possibile inserire negli strumenti delle navi, si possono evitare le collisioni con le balene. È stata sviluppata da ricercatori del servizio per il controllo dell'atmosfera e degli oceani statunitense.

L'applicazione collega i segnali sonori emessi dalle balene e, una volta raccolti da una serie di boe oceaniche, vengono trasferiti direttamente al ponte di comando delle navi che utilizzano il medesimo strumento.

Le collisioni con le imbarcazioni sono la prima causa di morte delle balene franche del nord Atlantico, tra i cetacei a maggior rischio di estinzione. Secondo una stima degli scienziati ne rimangono tra 350 e 500 esemplari in tutto il mondo. Inoltre, più del 20 % delle balene trovate morte nel Mediterraneo si sono scontrate con una delle 200 000 navi che solcano il nostro mare. Collisioni che minacciano non solo i cetacei — dieci specie popolano le nostre acque: come il capodoglio che è considerato «in pericolo» e la balenottera comune — ma anche le imbarcazioni coinvolte, a volte con incidenti fatali a bordo.

È la Commissione a conoscenza della nuova ricerca e ritiene che si debba rendere obbligatoria l'applicazione al fine di proteggere una specie in estinzione?

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

La Commissione è consapevole dell'esistenza di attività di ricerca per ridurre il rischio di collisioni tra imbarcazioni e cetacei (balene, delfini e focene); tra queste rientrano l'applicazione citata, che fornisce ai naviganti informazioni recenti e affidabili per ridurre il rischio di collisione tra imbarcazioni e balene franche, e il sistema REPCET (monitoraggio in tempo reale dei cetacei) creato per la navigazione mercantile e lanciato nel 2010.

La Commissione ricorda che nel 2009 l'Organizzazione marittima internazionale (IMO) ha adottato una serie di orientamenti specifici ([1]) per ridurre il rischio di urti tra imbarcazioni e cetacei, incluse azioni specifiche che gli Stati interessati possono implementare a tal fine.

([1]) Circ. MEPC.1 (674) — Documento di orientamento per ridurre il rischio di urti tra imbarcazioni e cetacei del 31 luglio 2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004067/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: New application to avoid collisions with whales

A new application that can be integrated into ships' instruments makes it possible to avoid collisions with whales. It has been developed by researchers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the United States.

The application collates the sound signals produced by whales which, after being picked up by a series of ocean buoys, are transferred directly to the bridges of ships using the instrument.

Collisions with vessels are the leading cause of death of North Atlantic right whales, which are among the most endangered cetaceans. Scientists estimate that there are between 350 and 500 individuals left worldwide. Furthermore, over 20% of whales found dead in the Mediterranean have collided with one of the 200 000 ships sailing on our seas. These collisions are not only a threat to cetaceans — 10 species live in our waters, including the sperm whale, which is considered 'vulnerable', and the fin whale — but also to the vessels involved, sometimes with fatal accidents occurring on board.

Is the Commission aware of the new research and does it believe that the application should be made compulsory in order to protect a dying species?

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

The Commission is aware of research to reduce the risks for ship collisions with cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises) such as the stated application informing mariners of the safest and most current information to reduce the risk of ship and right whale collision as well as the REPCET (real time plotting of cetaceans) system for commercial shipping, which was launched in 2010.

The Commission recalls that the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) adopted, in 2009, specific guidelines ([1]) for minimising the risk of ship strikes with cetaceans, including specific actions at the disposal of concerned States which can be implemented to reduce this risk.

([1]) MEPC.1/Circ. 674 — Guidance document for minimising the risk of ship strikes with cetacean, 31 July 2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004068/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Aumento consumo di droghe sintetiche

In undici anni sono raddoppiati i consumi abituali di allucinogeni e stimolanti tra i giovani italiani. Sono tanti coloro che hanno consumato sostanze almeno una volta, un terzo del totale solo cannabis, e il dato più sconcertante è che i maggiori consumatori rientrano nella popolazione studentesca.

Sul mercato sono immesse quotidianamente nuove sostanze, facili da reperire grazie al commercio che si è sviluppato nella rete e che ha permesso la loro diffusione in tutti gli Stati membri rendendo sempre più difficile il compito di chi vuole bloccare la vendita. Altro dato allarmante è la mancanza di conoscenza di quelle che sono le mortali «controindicazioni» di queste sostanze da parte dei ragazzi. Nella maggior parte dei casi i soggetti che assumono tali sostanze sottovalutano, quando non ignorano totalmente, gli effetti che possono provocare. L'assunzione di una dose eccessiva di ecstasy provoca effetti che variano da un notevole innalzamento della pressione arteriosa a un'accelerazione della frequenza cardiaca fino a temperature corporee elevate (fino a 43°C). Un altro possibile effetto è la rabdomiolisi, vale a dire la distruzione dei muscoli scheletrici, al quale può seguire un'insufficienza renale acuta. In alcuni casi sono stati descritti danni anche a carico del fegato (insufficienza epatica acuta).

Arginare il fenomeno non è semplice per l'UE in quanto le politiche legate alla droga dipendono dalle legislazioni nazionali, senza dimenticare i problemi legati ai confini interstatali, ma allo stesso tempo le istituzioni europee sono sempre al lavoro per sviluppare e implementare una politica antidroga più efficace.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione comunicare:

1. Quali sono i risultati della strategia antidroga dell'Unione europea (2005-2012) e quali i piani e i progetti per il futuro?

2. I dati, inerenti alle percentuali di consumo di droghe sintetiche negli Stati membri, raccolti nell'ultimo anno dall'Osservatorio europeo delle droghe e delle tossicodipendenze (OEDT)?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2012)

La Commissione ha affidato la valutazione esterna dell'attuazione della strategia dell'UE in materia di droga 2005-2012 e dei suoi piani d'azione a RAND Europe che ha provveduto ad effettuarla. La relazione sulla valutazione, completata nel marzo 2012, è stata inviata dalla Commissione ai segretariati delle commissioni ENVI e LIBE. Dalla relazione è emerso chiaramente il valore aggiunto della strategia dell'UE in materia di droga dovuto principalmente al fatto di consolidare il coordinamento degli Stati membri nell'impegno contro la droga e per la convergenza delle politiche nazionali.

La Commissione ha presentato le iniziative che intende intraprendere nei prossimi anni per affrontare il problema della droga nella comunicazione «Verso un'azione europea più incisiva nella lotta alla droga» ([1]). Tra le iniziative rientrano proposte legislative per promuovere una risposta efficace e sostenibile all'emergere e al diffondersi di nuove pericolose sostanze psicoattive in tutta la UE.

L'Osservatorio europeo delle droghe e delle tossicodipendenze (OEDT) pubblica ogni anno sul proprio sito Internet relazioni sulla situazione in Europa per quanto riguarda il problema della droga. L'ultima relazione, che affrontava anche la tematica delle droghe sintetiche e delle nuove sostanze psicoattive, è stata pubblicata nel novembre 2011.

([1]) COM(2011)689 del 25.10.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004068/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Increased synthetic drug consumption

The habitual consumption of hallucinogens and stimulants among young Italians has doubled in 11 years. Many of them have consumed substances at least once, with a third of the total taking cannabis only. Even more disconcerting is the fact that the majority of users are part of the student population.

New substances appear on the market every day. They are easy to locate, thanks to the trade that has developed via the Internet and that has allowed their distribution in all Member States, making the task of those who want to prevent their sale increasingly difficult. Another alarming fact is the lack of knowledge among young people about the deadly 'contraindications' of these substances. In the majority of cases, those taking them either underestimate their effects or are totally unaware of them. Taking an excessive dose of ecstasy causes effects that vary from a significant rise in blood pressure, increased heart rate, up to and including high body temperatures (up to 43°C). Another possible effect is rhabdomyolysis, which is the destruction of skeletal muscle, which can cause acute renal insufficiency. Liver damage (acute hepatic insufficiency) has also been described in some cases.

It is not easy for the EU to stem this phenomenon, because drug policies are based on national legislation, not forgetting the problem connected with international borders, but at the same time, the European institutions are still working on developing and implementing a more effective anti-drug policy.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. What are the results of the EU Drugs Strategy (2005-2012) and what are the plans and projects for the future?

2. What data concerning the percentage of consumption of synthetic drugs in the Member States were collected last year by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

The Commission has launched an external evaluation of the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy 2005-2012 and of its action plans, which was carried out by RAND Europe. The Commission has sent the evaluation report, which was completed in March 2012, to the ENVI and LIBE secretariats. The evaluation report pointed out that the EU Drugs Strategy had clear added value, in particular because it boosted coordination between Member States' efforts in the drugs field and convergence of national policies.

The Commission presented the initiatives that it intends to take in the next years to address challenges in drugs policy in the communication 'Towards a stronger European response to drugs' ([1]). These include legislative proposals to enable a more effective and sustainable response to the emergence and spread of harmful new psychoactive substances across the EU.

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) presents its reports on the state of the drugs problem in Europe annually and publishes them on its website. The last report, which also covers synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances, was published in November 2011.

([1]) COM(2011)689, 25.10.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004069/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ribellione in carcere brasiliano

Più di quattrocento detenuti della prigione Jacinto Filho di Aracaju, nel nord-est del Paese, armati di tre fucili rubati nelle armerie e di vari coltelli, hanno preso in ostaggio 120 persone tra cui tre agenti penitenziari. La maggior parte degli ostaggi sarebbero parenti venuti a far loro visita. Sono stati avviati negoziati; il gesto estremo sembra sia stato compiuto per protestare contro i maltrattamenti subiti dalle guardie e per ottenere una migliore qualità dei pasti serviti in carcere. La polizia locale ha rifiutato le richieste.

Secondo fonti della sicurezza, le armi in mano ai detenuti sarebbero state rubate da un deposito interno della prigione.

Tra i ribelli ci sarebbe anche un italiano arrestato lo scorso dicembre sulla spiaggia di Atalaia, ad Aracaju, dopo il naufragio di uno yacht di una ventina di metri che trasportava oltre 300 chili di cocaina.

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

1. se è a conoscenza di quanto avvenuto nel carcere della Repubblica federativa del Brasile e se sono coinvolti cittadini europei;

2. se la delegazione dell'UE in Brasile è in contatto con le autorità brasiliane per garantire supporto nel caso in cui ce ne fosse bisogno.

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

L'UE è pienamente consapevole della situazione dei detenuti nelle carceri brasiliane e ha introdotto, tra le priorità della sua nuova strategia in materia di diritti umani per il Brasile, una disposizione sul monitoraggio dei diritti dei detenuti. Le carceri sono generalmente sovraffollate — mancano circa 200 000 celle — il che rende difficile rispettare i diritti umani. Per rimediare a tale situazione il presidente Rousseff ha annunciato un investimento a favore del sistema penitenziario pari a un miliardo di real brasiliani, destinati in larga parte alla costruzione di carceri, con particolare attenzione alle condizioni delle detenute.

Il caso dell'aprile 2012 purtroppo non è l'unico negli ultimi mesi; nel carcere di Anibal Bruno a Recife (Pernambuco) è scoppiata una simile sommossa tra il 10 e il 14 maggio 2012 che ha provocato 4 morti e 21 feriti, e a fine mese ne è scoppiata un'altra in cui però nessuno è rimasto ferito. In quest'ultimo caso le autorità degli Stati membri (Paesi Bassi) si sono messe in contatto con le autorità brasiliane.

Per quanto riguarda la rivolta nella provincia di Sergipe, la delegazione dell'UE è stata informata che è durata 27 ore e che il dipartimento di pubblica sicurezza avvierà un'inchiesta per indagare sulle denunce di abuso e le richieste di pasti di migliore qualità. In base alle informazioni raccolte assieme agli Stati membri a Brasilia, tra i cittadini europei coinvolti figurano tre italiani. Un cittadino italiano arrestato il 24 dicembre 2012 con oltre 300 chili di cocaina risulta detenuto in un'altra ala del carcere. Avrebbe chiesto di essere rilasciato, non essendo direttamente coinvolto negli incidenti. La sua compagna, anch'essa cittadina italiana, è detenuta nel settore femminile del carcere e quindi non è stata coinvolta nella sommossa. Infine, un terzo cittadino italiano non è stato interessato dagli incidenti ed è stato rilasciato. I rappresentanti dell'ambasciata italiana si sono messi in contatto con le autorità penitenziarie e hanno fatto visita ai suddetti detenuti, che sono in buone condizioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004069/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Brazilian prison riot

More than 400 inmates of Jacinto Filho prison in the town of Aracaju, located in the north-east of the country, armed with three rifles stolen from the armoury and with various knives, have taken 120 hostages, including 3 prison officers. Most of the hostages seem to be family members visiting at the time. Negotiations are in progress. This extreme gesture seems to have been triggered in protest against mistreatment by guards and to seek an improvement in prison food. Local police are rejecting all requests.

According to security sources, the weapons in the hands of the inmates were stolen from a store inside the prison.

The rebels are said to include an Italian arrested in December 2011 on Aracaju's Atalaia beach after the sinking of a 20-metre yacht carrying more than 300 kilos of cocaine.

In view of the above, could the High Representative state:

1. whether she is aware of events at the prison in the Federative Republic of Brazil and of the involvement of European citizens;

2. whether the EU delegation in Brazil is in contact with the Brazilian authorities to guarantee support, should it be needed?

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

The EU is keenly aware of the situation faced by prisoners in the penitentiary system in Brazil and has included rule of law, notably the monitoring of prisoners' rights as one of the priorities of its newly-adopted human rights strategy for the country. The penitentiary system is generally overcrowded, with a number of difficulties in respecting human rights: there are approximately 200 000 prison cells missing in Brazil. To remedy this situation, President Rousseff announced a RUSD 1 billion investment in the penitentiary system, mostly for the construction of prisons, with a focus on women prisoners.

This case from April 2012 is unfortunately not the only such case over the past few months; the Anibal Bruno Prison in Recife (Pernambuco) also faced a similar riot between 10-14 May 2012 which left four dead and twenty-one wounded. The same prison faced a second riot at the end on the month, which was reportedly contained without anyone being wounded. In this particular case, MS (Netherland) authorities have been in touch with State authorities.

As far as the uprising in Sergipe is concerned, the EU Delegation is informed that it lasted 27 hours and that the Public Security Secretariat in Sergipe will establish an inquiry to investigate claims of abuse and calls for better nutrition. Based on an inquiry with EU Member States in Brasilia, the European citizens concerned include three Italian nationals. An Italian imprisoned on 24 Dec 2012 with over 300 kg of cocaine is said to be located in another wing of the prison. He asked to be removed from the prison, claiming he was not directly involved in the incidents. A second Italian citizen, his female companion, is detained in the female section and thus was not affected. Finally, a third Italian citizen was not involved in the incidents and has since then been released. Representatives from the Italian Embassy have been in contact with prison authorities and have visited the abovementioned prisoners, who are in good condition.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004072/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Viagra e cardiomiopatia diabetica

La pillola dell'amore usata per l'impotenza può curare anche la cardiomiopatia diabetica che porta allo «scompenso cardiaco», cioè al progressivo indebolimento e all'ingrossamento del cuore affaticato. L'effetto terapeutico del viagra è stato dimostrato in persone con cardiopatia indotta dal diabete e, in tutti quelli trattati con il farmaco, si è ottenuto un ritorno alla normalità del cuore, con un miglioramento della contrazione cardiaca.

Lo studio realizzato da un gruppo di ricercatori italiani è stato condotto su un campione di 59 uomini con un'età media di 60 anni, affetti da diabete di tipo 2, detto anche alimentare, con cardiomiopatia diabetica ancora asintomatica. Al gruppo sono stati somministrati 100 mg al giorno di tale sostanza oppure placebo e, con l'aiuto di una particolare tecnica di risonanza magnetica cardiaca, sono stati osservati i cambiamenti cardiaci. Dopo tre mesi di terapia, la «pillola blu» ha prodotto un significativo miglioramento comparato al placebo. Infatti, è aumentata di nuovo la forza delle contrazioni cardiache e sono rientrati nella norma la «geometria» e la cinetica del cuore, che ha anche ripreso un movimento di torsione sul proprio asse come nella norma.

La ricerca potrebbe essere il primo passo per la nascita di nuovi medicinali per cardiopatici. Nel mondo 180 milioni di persone soffrono di diabete e fra loro l'80 % muore per scompenso cardiaco. Lo scompenso cardiaco è una cardiopatia progressiva e poco curabile, tipica non solo dei diabetici, ma anche di chi soffre di ipertensione arteriosa ed altre patologie cardiache e di chi ha avuto un infarto.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza del nuovo studio e se ritiene che la ricerca summenzionata possa essere finanziata attraverso il settimo programma quadro(7° PQ) oppure il programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione;

2. sono in atto ricerche simili finanziate con il programma summenzionato?

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

La Commissione è al corrente dello studio citato dall'onorevole parlamentare, da cui risulta che il principio attivo del Viagra (sildenafil) può migliorare la contrazione cardiaca in pazienti affetti da cardiomiopatia diabetica asintomatica ([1]). Sono necessarie ulteriori ricerche per accertare eventuali effetti positivi del sildenafil in fasi più avanzate della malattia.

Sebbene nell'ambito del settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013) non siano finanziate ricerche specifiche relative al sildenafil e alla cardiopatia diabetica, alla ricerca sulle cardiomiopatie sono stati finora assegnati 17 milioni di euro ([2]). I settori coinvolti comprendono lo studio della sua eziologia (BIG-HEART ([3]), Cardiogenet ([4]), MITOSCAFFOLD ([5]), CADRE ([6]), INHERITANCE ([7])) e lo sviluppo di potenziali strategie terapeutiche, compresi gli approcci sostitutivi (Cardiocell ([8]) CARDIO-IPS ([9])). Sono stati inoltre stanziati circa 340 milioni di euro per sostenere la ricerca sulla comprensione, sulla prevenzione e sul trattamento del diabete per il periodo dal 2007 ad oggi.

In linea con la decisione relativa al programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione, questo programma non sostiene tale tipo di ricerca.

([1]) http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/early/2012/04/11/CIRCULATIONAHA.111.063412.abstract; Chronic Inhibition of Cyclic GMP Phosphodiesterase 5A Improves Diabetic Cardiomyopathy: A Randomized, Controlled Clinical Trial using Magnetic Resonance Imaging with Myocardial Tagging, Elisa Gianetta et al, Circulation, CIRCULATIONAHA.111.063412.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_EN&QZ_WEBSRCH=cardiomyopathy&QM_PJA=&USR_SORT=EN_QVD+CHAR+DESC; http://www.healthcompetence.eu/converis/publicweb/area/1353?show=PROJECT&page=1&sortBy=_short_description&sortAsc=true&items=10&fsequence=0&ftypename=0&fyear=0&farea=&forganisation=&fkeyword=8168&fperson=&fsearchkey=&fcypher=&fcountry=
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/92634_en.html
([4]) http://www.cardiogenet.eu/
([5]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/90405_en.html
([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/89291_en.html
([7]) http://www.inheritanceproject.eu/index.php
([8]) http://www.cardiocell.org/
([9]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/98107_en.html

Sebbene la ricerca in materia di cardiomiopatie non sarà aperta a candidature, l'invito a presentare proposte della tematica «Salute» del 7° PQ (2013) fornirà ulteriori opportunità di ricerca su altre malattie cardiovascolari.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004072/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Viagra and diabetic cardiomyopathy

The love pill used for impotence can also treat diabetic cardiomyopathy, which leads to heart failure, meaning the progressive weakening and enlargement of the fatigued heart. The therapeutic effect of Viagra has been demonstrated in patients with heart disease caused by diabetes. Normal heart function has been restored in all those treated with the drug, with an improvement of cardiac contraction.

The study carried out by a group of Italian researchers was conducted on a sample of 59 men, aged 60 on average, with type 2 diabetes, also known as dietary diabetes, and suffering from asymptomatic diabetic cardiomyopathy. The group was given either 100 mg per day of Viagra or a placebo, and the cardiac changes were observed using a special cardiac magnetic resonance technique. After three months of treatment, the 'blue pill' produced a significant improvement compared to the placebo. The strength of cardiac contractions was increased and the heart 'geometry' and kinetics returned to normal, with the heart returning to twist on its axis as normal.

This research could be the first step in the development of new drugs to treat heart disease sufferers. Around the world, 180 million people suffer from diabetes and 80% of these die of heart failure. Heart failure is a relatively untreatable progressive heart disease, typical not only of diabetics but also of those suffering from arterial hypertension and other heart diseases, as well as heart attack victims.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether:

1. It is aware of the new study and considers that the aforementioned research could be financed through the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme?

2. There is any similar research in progress that is financed by the aforementioned programme?

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

The Commission is aware of the study mentioned by the Honourable Member, showing that the active principle of Viagra (Sildenafil) can improve cardiac contraction in patients affected of asymptomatic diabetic cardiomyopathy ([1]). Further research needs to be performed to ascertain the eventual beneficial effects of sildenafil in more advanced stages of the disease.

Although no specific research related to sildenafil and diabetic cardiomyopathy is currently supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-13), so far EUR 17 million are devoted to research on cardiomyopathies ([2]). Areas addressed include the understanding of its aetiology (BIG-HEART ([3]), Cardiogenet ([4]), Mitoscaffold ([5]), CADRE ([6]), Inheritance ([7])) and the development of potential therapeutic strategies including replacement approaches (Cardiocell ([8]), CARDIO-IPS ([9])). In addition, some EUR 340 million has been allocated to support research on the understanding, prevention and treatment of diabetes for the period 2007 to present time.

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

([1]) http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/early/2012/04/11/CIRCULATIONAHA.111.063412.abstract; Chronic Inhibition of Cyclic GMP Phosphodiesterase 5A Improves Diabetic Cardiomyopathy: A Randomized, Controlled Clinical Trial using Magnetic Resonance Imaging with Myocardial Tagging, Elisa Gianetta et al, Circulation, CIRCULATIONAHA.111.063412.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_EN&QZ_WEBSRCH=cardiomyopathy&QM_PJA=&USR_SORT=EN_QVD+CHAR+DESC; http://www.healthcompetence.eu/converis/publicweb/area/1353?show=PROJECT&page=1&sortBy=_short_description&sortAsc=true&items=10&fsequence=0&ftypename=0&fyear=0&farea=&forganisation=&fkeyword=8168&fperson=&fsearchkey=&fcypher=&fcountry=
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/92634_en.html
([4]) http://www.cardiogenet.eu/
([5]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/90405_en.html
([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/89291_en.html
([7]) http://www.inheritanceproject.eu/index.php
([8]) http://www.cardiocell.org/
([9]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/98107_en.html

Although cardiomyopathies research will not be open for applications, the FP7 Health 2013 call for proposals will provide further opportunities for research on other cardiovascular diseases.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004073/12
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE) e Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Rischi per la marineria siciliana

L'intera marineria dell'isola di Ustica in Sicilia sta occupando in segno di protesta la sala consiliare del Comune, esasperata per il fallimento delle trattative che avrebbero dovuto mitigare il contenuto del decreto ministeriale 21.9.2011 (GURI n. 233 del 24.09.11) adottato in applicazione di normative europee che ha ridotto sia la misura delle maglie delle reti (da 18 a 10 centimetri) sia le specie pescabili.

Queste reti costano circa 20 000 euro, interamente a carico dei pescatori, e non consentono di pescare né pesce spada né tonni né alalunghe, ma solo ope, sgombri e bisi, specie poco remunerative se si considerano i costi di carburante oggi alle stelle e la manutenzione dell'imbarcazione.

Da metà marzo 2012, da quando cioè, si è aperta la stagione della pesca, nessun peschereccio è uscito in mare. Il provvedimento ha paralizzato l'attività non solo dei pescatori di Ustica, ma anche di Isola delle Femmine, Termini Imerese, Santa Flavia-Porticello, delle Eolie, ecc. e rischia di mandare sul lastrico anche gli operatori dell'indotto (produttori di pesce in scatola, commercianti, ristoratori).

Ustica non fa parte della cooperativa di pesca CoGePa e i suoi pescatori non possono accedere ai contributi del bando inserito nella misura 1.4 (piccola pesca costiera) né a quelli dell'acquacultura (sconsigliata in area protetta) né a quelli della pesca del bianchetto.

Può la Commissione far sapere se intende:

1. individuare presto misure compensative per far sì che i pescatori dell'isola di Ustica e delle altre marinerie siciliane siano rimborsati dei costi sostenuti per l'acquisto di imbarcazioni ed attrezzature;

2. autorizzare il Comune di Ustica, Ente gestore dell'Area marina protetta, nei limiti delle proprie competenze territoriali (12 miglia) e conformemente al regolamento di esecuzione (UE) n. 404/2011 («autorizzazioni di pesca»), a effettuare una ricerca scientifica sulle specie da pescare e sulla tipologia di attrezzo da utilizzare al fine di garantire la sostenibilità ambientale di questo specifico territorio, autorizzando per contro i pescatori locali a vendere il prodotto pescato a fini di ricerca onde compensarli del lavoro svolto?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2012)

In base alle disposizioni della politica comune della pesca (PCP), gli Stati membri hanno il dovere di controllare e far rispettare le norme unionali in materia di reti da posta derivanti di cui al regolamento (CE) n. 894/97 del Consiglio. Pur in assenza di un obbligo esplicito di provvedere a ciò attraverso l'imposizione di un quadro normativo (che disponga ad esempio la limitazione delle dimensioni delle maglie), la Commissione ritiene che il decreto ministeriale italiano del 21 settembre 2011 miri a potenziare le misure di controllo e di attuazione del divieto unionale di utilizzare le reti da posta derivanti, in particolare riducendo il rischio di catturare specie che, in forza dell'allegato VIII del regolamento (CE) n. 894/97, non possono essere pescate con tali reti. Questa disposizione è stata di fatto adottata dall'Italia al fine di rispettare la sentenza della Corte di giustizia europea nella causa C-249/08.

Oltre alle norme stabilite a livello unionale, gli Stati membri possono decidere di imporre ai propri pescherecci misure supplementari che vadano oltre i requisiti minimi previsti dall'Unione europea ([1]). Tali decisioni sono adottate a discrezione degli Stati membri, come avviene per il rilascio delle autorizzazioni di pesca a fini scientifici, che rientra tra le competenze e le responsabilità degli Stati membri ([2]).

([1]) Articolo 10 del regolamento (CE) n. 2371/2002 del Consiglio.
([2]) Articolo 7 del regolamento (CE) n. 1224/2009 del Consiglio.

Attraverso il Fondo europeo per la pesca (FEP), gli Stati membri possono decidere di fornire aiuti per gli investimenti in attrezzi da pesca selettivi, purché i nuovi attrezzi siano più selettivi e rispettino criteri e pratiche ambientali riconosciuti e più rigorosi rispetto ai vigenti obblighi normativi previsti dal diritto unionale. Nell'ambito del FEP sono inoltre disponibili aiuti specifici volti ad aiutare i giovani pescatori ad acquistare piccoli pescherecci o altre misure di carattere socioeconomico. La gestione di tali misure è compito dell'autorità italiana preposta alla gestione del FEP.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004073/12
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE) and Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Risks for the Sicilian fishing fleet

The entire fishing fleet of the island of Ustica in Sicily is occupying the municipal council chamber as a mark of protest, exasperated by the failure of the negotiations that should have mitigated the content of the Ministerial Decree of 21 September 2011 (GURI No 233 of 24 September 2011), adopted pursuant to European legislation, which reduced both the mesh size of nets (from 18 to 10 centimetres) and the species that can be fished.

These nets cost around EUR 20 000, a cost borne entirely by the fishermen, and do not allow swordfish, tuna or albacore to be caught, but only ope, mackerel and frigate mackerel, which are relatively unprofitable species considering the cost of fuel, which is currently sky high, and vessel maintenance.

Since the middle of March 2012, when the fishing season opened, not a single fishing-boat has gone to sea. The measure has paralysed the activity not only of Ustica's fishermen, but also of those of Isola delle Femmine, Termini Imerese, Santa Flavia-Porticello and the Aeolian Islands, etc., as well as threatening to impoverish operators in the ancillary economy (canned fish producers, traders, restaurateurs).

Ustica is not a member of the CoGePa fishing cooperative, and its fishermen cannot access the financial grants included in Measure 1.4 (small offshore fishing), nor those relating to aquaculture (not recommended in protected areas) or to whitebait fishing.

Can the Commission state whether it proposes:

1. To identify measures promptly in order to ensure that the fishermen of the island of Ustica and of other Sicilian fishing fleets are reimbursed for the costs incurred to purchase vessels and equipment?

2. To authorise the Municipality of Ustica, the managing authority of the protected marine area, within the limits of its territorial competence (12 miles) and in accordance with Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 ('fishing authorisations'), to carry out a scientific study of the species to be fished and the type of equipment to be used, in order to ensure the environmental sustainability of this specific region — but authorising the local fishermen to sell the product fished for research purposes so that they are compensated for the work done?

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

In accordance with the rules of the common fisheries policy (CFP), Member States have the duty to control and enforce the EU rules on driftnets laid down in Council Regulation No 894/97. Although there is no explicit obligation to do so via the imposition of a regulatory framework (such as the mesh size limitation), the Commission understands that the Italian Ministerial Decree of 21 September 2011 aims at stepping-up control and enforcement of the EU driftnet ban, particularly by reducing the risk of catching species prohibited to be caught in driftnets according to Annex VIII of Regulation No 894/97. This measure was in fact adopted by Italy in an effort to comply with the ruling of the European Court of Justice in Case C-249/08.

In addition to the rules established at EU level, Member States may decide to impose on its fishing vessels additional measures going beyond EU minimum requirements ([1]). Such decisions are at the discretion of the Member States as is the case for the granting of fishing authorisations for scientific purposes which is a competence and a responsibility of Member States ([2]).

Under the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) Member States may decide to provide aid for the investments in selective fishing gear provided that the new gear is more selective and meets recognised environmental criteria and practices which go beyond existing regulatory obligations under Union law. Specific aids to help young fishers acquiring small scale fishing vessels or other socioeconomic measures are also available under the EFF. The management of these measures are under the responsibility of the Italian EFF Managing authority.

([1]) Article 10 of Council Regulation No 2371/2002.
([2]) Article 7 of Regulation No 1224/2009.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004074/12
aan de Commissie
Barry Madlener (NI)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Stop met ontwikkelingshulp aan Guinee-Bissau

Leger Guinee-Bissau wil drugshandel redden

Sinds vorige week zijn de militairen opnieuw aan de macht. De coup kwam enkele weken voor de tweede ronde van de presidentsverkiezingen op 29 april. De junta verklaarde snel te moeten handelen, omdat de regering van waarnemend president Raimundo Pereira van plan was het leger „een kopje kleiner te maken".

De militairen hebben niet alleen de omstreden reputatie zich te veel met de politiek te bemoeien, ze zijn ook op grote schaal betrokken bij de lucratieve drugshandel ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie bereid om onmiddellijk te stoppen met het geven van 102,8 miljoen euro ([2]) aan ontwikkelingshulp voor Guinee-Bissau sinds de militaire staatsgreep aangezien het o.a. wordt besteed om de drugshandel in stand te houden en aangezien het geld hoogstwaarschijnlijk in corrupte ([3]) zakken verdwijnt? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(5 juli 2012)

De Commissie heeft reeds een deel van de EU-samenwerking met Guinee-Bissau opgeschort na de gebeurtenissen van 2010, die hebben geleid tot overleg krachtens artikel 96 en tot Besluit 2011/492 van de Raad, waarin een reeks passende maatregelen voor de hervatting van de samenwerking is vastgelegd. Enkel de samenwerking met de regering werd bevroren. De Europese Unie blijft humanitaire hulp en noodmaatregelen financieren die de bevolking rechtstreeks ten goede komen, met name via thematische lijnen en de „water" en „energie"-faciliteiten.

De vrijmaking van een deel van onze samenwerking zal afhangen van het verloop van de crisis en van de tenuitvoerlegging van een aantal belangrijke hervormingen door de toekomstige regering, met name op het gebied van veiligheid en de strijd tegen de handel in drugs.

([1]) http://www.bndestem.nl/nieuws/algemeen/buitenland/10876261/Leger-Guinee-Bissau-wil-drugshandel-redden.ece.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/country-cooperation/guinea-bissau/guinea-bissau_en.htm
([3]) Guinee-Bissau scoort een 2,2 op de Corruption Perceptions Index van Transparency International: http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004074/12
to the Commission
Barry Madlener (NI)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Stop development aid to Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau army wants to rescue drug trafficking.

Since last week, power has been back in military hands. The coup came a few weeks before the second round of presidential elections, on 29 April. The junta stated that it had to act quickly because the government of acting president Raimundo Pereira intended to 'finish off' the army.

Not only does the military hold the dubious reputation of interfering too much in politics, it is also heavily involved in lucrative drug trafficking ([1]).

1. Is the Commission prepared to immediately stop providing EUR 102.8 million ([2]) in development aid to Guinea-Bissau since the military coup, given that it is also being used, among other things, to finance drug trafficking and given that the money is very probably falling into corrupt hands ([3])? If not, why not?

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

The Commission had already put on hold part of EU cooperation with Guinea-Bissau following the 2010 events, which led to Article 96 consultations and to Council Decision 2011/492 establishing a set of appropriate measures for the restarting of the cooperation. Only cooperation with the government was frozen; humanitarian and emergency operations and activities benefitting directly the population continue, 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.

([1]) http://www.bndestem.nl/nieuws/algemeen/buitenland/10876261/Leger-Guinee-Bissau-wil-drugshandel-redden.ece.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/country-cooperation/guinea-bissau/guinea-bissau_en.htm
([3]) Guinea-Bissau scores 2.2 on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index: http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004075/12
aan de Commissie
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Het Spaanse Tax Lease systeem

1. Op 31 oktober 2011 stelde ik schriftelijke vragen over het Spaanse Tax Lease systeem voor de scheepsbouw (E-010269/2011), waarop ik 23 januari 2012 antwoorden ontving. In die antwoorden stelde de Commissie dat de Spaanse overheid formeel geen nieuw tax lease systeem bij hen had aangemeld. Echter, op 10 november 2011 meldde het Engelse scheepsbouw vakblad Fairplay ([1]) dat de Commissie een nieuw „provisional" Tax Lease systeem dat door Spanje was aangemeld, had afgekeurd. Dit strookt niet met het antwoord dat ik op 23 januari 2012 van de Commissie ontving. Hoe verklaart u de tegenstrijdigheid van de inhoud van het Fairplay artikel t.o.v. uw antwoord?

2. In een persbericht van 3 maart 2012 ([2]) wordt gesteld dat de Commissie een voorstel voor een alternatief Tax Lease systeem dat op 3 februari 2012 door de Spaanse overheid zou zijn aangemeld, heeft afgekeurd. Klopt het dat er op 3 februari 2012 formeel een alternatief Tax Lease voorstel is genotificeerd? Zo ja, klopt het dat de Commissie dit alternatieve voorstel formeel heeft afgekeurd? Zo nee, waarom wordt deze bewering dan in de pers gedaan?

3. Op 5 maart 2012 stelde de Spaanse minister van Industrie in een persbericht dat het probleem van de Tax Lease eind april of begin mei 2012 wel opgelost zal zijn ([3]). Op diezelfde dag stelde de regionale minister van Economie en Industrie in een persbericht ([4])dat er nog geen definitieve beslissing is genomen over het voorstel voor een alternatief Spaans Tax Lease systeem dat de Spaanse centrale overheid op 3 februari 2012 naar de Commissie heeft gestuurd. Hoe verhouden deze uitspraken zich met de bewering in het artikel van 3 maart 2012 (zie vraag 2) waarin wordt gezegd dat de Commissie een alternatief voorstel juist heeft afgekeurd? Hoe verklaart de Commissie deze uitspraken?

4. Indien Spanje op 3 februari 2012 wel formeel een alternatief Tax Lease voorstel heeft aangemeld bij de Commissie waarom heeft de Commissie belanghebbenden zoals scheepsbouw NL hiervan dan niet op de hoogte gesteld?

5. Welke actie(s) onderneemt de Commissie indien zij door een scheepswerf op de hoogte wordt gesteld dat de Spaanse Tax Lease toch weer wordt gebruikt ondanks de Standstill Obligation?

6. Is er op de dag dat de Commissie deze schriftelijke vragen beantwoordt een nieuw systeem door Spanje genotificeerd bij de Commissie? Is er op de dag van beantwoording een systeem goed- of afgekeurd door de Commissie?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(2 juli 2012)

1. t/m 3. Het op 23 januari 2012 aan het geachte Parlementslid gegeven antwoord was correct. De Commissie heeft pas op 30 mei 2012 een formele aanmelding ontvangen. Informeel overleg tussen de Commissie en een lidstaat vóór een eventuele aanmelding is hoe dan ook gebruikelijk. In deze informele prenotificatiefase geeft de Commissie feedback over de toepassing van de staatssteunregels op de ontwerpmaatregel. Dit proces leidt vaak tot het indienen van gewijzigde strunmaatregels vóór de formele aanmelding, maar maatregelen worden in dit stadium niet door de Commissie formeel goed- of afgekeurd.

4. Op 3 februari 2012 is geen aanmelding ontvangen. De procedure inzake staatssteun (Verordening nr. 659/1999) voorziet niet in de raadpleging van belanghebbende derde partijen over steunvoornemens of aanmeldingen. Pas wanneer de Commissie een formele onderzoeksprocedure inleidt, worden derde partijen geraadpleegd.

([1]) Title: Shipyards' tax-lease agony, 10 november 2011, www.fairplay.co.uk.
([2]) March 3, 2012 15:12 GMT Bron: La Voz de Galicia.es; http://www.lavozdegalicia.es/noticia/economia/2012/03/03/bruselas-alarga-agonia-naval-tumbar-tercera-vez-tax-lease/0003_201203G3P38991.htm
([3]) 5.3.2012 — 02:39 — E. A. | GIJÓN Bron: Elcomercio.es, http://www.elcomercio.es/v/20120305/economia/armon-tiene-cartera-menos-20120305.html
([4]) Santiago de Compostela, 5 March 2012. (IRIN) — Bron: Europapress.es; http://www.europapress.es/galicia/noticia-guerra-asegura-no-hay-ninguna-decision-definitiva-tax-lease-admite-dificultades-negociacion-20120305143008.html

5. Volgens de beschikbare informatie heeft Spanje de regeling (die sinds 2002 van kracht was) opgeschort vanaf de inleiding van de formele onderzoekprocedure in juni 2011. Indien de Commissie in haar eindbesluit concludeert dat onverenigbare steun onrechtmatig is verleend is, zal de onverenigbare steun die in het verleden is verleend, normaal gesproken van de begunstigden worden teruggevorderd. Voorts kan Spanje, nog steeds op grond van de standstill-verplichting, geen nieuwe steunregeling ten uitvoer leggen zonder voorafgaande aanmelding bij en toestemming van de Commissie.

6. Zoals hierboven vermeld heeft Spanje op 30 mei 2012 een nieuwe regeling aangemeld. Deze aanmelding wordt nu onderzocht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004075/12
to the Commission
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: The Spanish tax lease system

1. On 31 October 2011, I submitted written questions about the Spanish tax lease system for shipbuilding (E-010269/2011), to which I received a reply on 23 January 2012. In its reply, the Commission stated that the Spanish Government had not formally notified it of any new tax lease system. However, on 10 November 2011, the English shipping trade journal *Fairplay* ([1]) reported that the Commission had rejected a new 'provisional' tax lease system that had been adopted by Spain. This is inconsistent with the reply I received from the Commission on 23 January 2012. Can the Commission explain the discrepancy between the content of the *Fairplay* article and its reply?

2. A press release dated 3 March 2012 ([2]) states that the Commission has rejected a proposal for an alternative tax lease system, which was allegedly notified by the Spanish Government on 3 February 2012. Is it true that an alternative tax lease proposal was formally notified on 3 February 2012? If so, is it true that the Commission has formally rejected this alternative proposal? If not, why then is this allegation made in the press?

3. On 5 March 2012, the Spanish Minister for Industry stated in a press release that the tax lease problem would be resolved by the end of April or early May 2012 ([3]). On the same day, the regional Minister for Economy and Industry stated in a press release ([4]) that no final decision had been taken concerning the proposal for an alternative Spanish tax lease system which the central Spanish Government had sent to the Commission on 3 February 2012. What is the relationship between these statements and the allegation in the article dated 3 March 2012 (see question 2), which states specifically that the Commission has rejected an alternative proposal? How does the Commission explain these statements?

4. If, on 3 February 2012, Spain did indeed formally notify the Commission of an alternative tax lease system, why has the Commission not then informed interested parties of this, such as the Holland Shipbuilding Association?

5. What action(s) will the Commission take if it is informed by a shipyard that the Spanish tax lease is still in use, despite the standstill obligation?

6. On the day that the Commission answered these written questions, did Spain notify the Commission of a new system? On the day it answered, was a system approved or rejected by the Commission?

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

1 to 3. The reply given to the Honourable Member on 23 January 2012 was correct. A formal notification was only received by the Commission on 30 May 2012. However, it is common practice to have informal discussions between the Commission and a Member State prior to a possible notification. In this informal pre-notification phase, the Commission provides feedback as to the application of the state aid rules to the draft measure. This process often results in the submission of modified projects before the formal notification, but the Commission does not formally authorise or reject measures at this stage.

4. No notification had been received on 3 February 2012. The state aid procedure (Regulation 659/1999) does not provide for the consultation of interested third parties on projects or notifications. It is only when the Commission formally opens an investigation procedure that third parties are consulted.

([1]) Title: Shipyards' tax lease agony, 10 November 2011, www.fairplay.co.uk.
([2]) 3 March 2012 15.12 GMT; *Source:* La Voz de Galicia.es, http://www.lavozdegalicia.es/noticia/economia/2012/03/03/bruselas-alarga-agonia-naval-tumbar-tercera-vez-tax-lease/0003_201203G3P38991.htm
([3]) 5 March 2012 02.39 — E. A. | GIJÓN; *Source:* Elcomercio.es, http://www.elcomercio.es/v/20120305/economia/armon-tiene-cartera-menos-20120305.html
([4]) Santiago de Compostela, 5 March 2012. (IRIN); *Source:* Europapress.es, http://www.europapress.es/galicia/noticia-guerra-asegura-no-hay-ninguna-decision-definitiva-tax-lease-admite-dificultades-negociacion-20120305143008.html

5. According to the information available, Spain has suspended the application of the regime in force since 2002 as of the opening of the formal investigation in June 2011. If in its final decision the Commission concludes that incompatible aid was granted illegally, incompatible aid awarded in the past will normally be recovered from the beneficiaries. Furthermore, always pursuant to the standstill obligation, Spain cannot implement a new aid scheme without a prior notification to — and authorisation by — the Commission.

6. As mentioned above Spain notified a new scheme on 30 May 2012. This notification is under analysis.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004077/12
do Komisji
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(19 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Zmiana zasad wsparcia dla grup producentów owoców i warzyw

W dniu 4 kwietnia 2012 r. Komisja Europejska opublikowała w Dzienniku Urzędowym UE nowe rozporządzenie wykonawcze (UE) nr 302/2012 zmieniające rozporządzenie wykonawcze (UE) nr 543/2011 ustanawiające szczegółowe zasady stosowania rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1234/2007 w odniesieniu do sektora owoców i warzyw oraz sektora przetworzonych owoców i warzyw.

Komisja Europejska wprowadziła ogromne ograniczenie wsparcia udzielanego na realizację inwestycji grupom producentów owoców i warzyw – do 10 mln euro w skali całej UE! Ponadto przepisy przejściowe zaproponowane w art. 2 spowodują poważne niejasności prawne wpływające na sytuację grup producentów, które zostały już uznane i wdrażają swoje plany dochodzenia do uznania. Moim zdaniem sytuacja, w której podmiot, który realizuje oficjalnie zatwierdzony plan obejmujący ścisłe założenia finansowe, nagle ma do czynienia z absolutnie nowymi warunkami prawnymi, zmieniającymi podstawowe zasady finansowania, jest nie do zaakceptowania

Chciałbym panu komisarzowi przypomnieć, że celem wsparcia (m.in. na realizację inwestycji) udzielanego w ramach grup producentów było ułatwienie podmiotom posiadającym taki status spełnienia wymogów uznania jako organizacja producentów. KE, zmieniając obecne przepisy w tym obszarze, likwiduje de facto najważniejszy bodziec zachęcający producentów owoców i warzyw do współpracy. W konsekwencji proces organizowania rynku owoców i warzyw znacznie wyhamuje.

Pragnę również przypomnieć, że niestety poziom zorganizowania sektora owoców i warzyw w nowych państwach członkowskich UE pozostaje nadal na bardzo niskim poziomie względem starych państw członkowskich (ok. 15 % w Polsce wobec 80 % i 90 % odpowiednio w Belgii i Holandii).

Ponadto chciałbym uzyskać szczegółowe wyjaśnienia dotyczące motywów zmiany dotychczasowych przepisów i zapytać KE o to, czy jest świadoma, że przyjęte rozporządzenie całkowicie zahamuje powstawanie nowych grup producentów w nowych państwach członkowskich UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(5 czerwca 2012 r.)

Ograniczenie wydatków związanych z grupami producentów uznano za niezbędne dla zapewnienia dyscypliny budżetowej oraz w celu optymalizacji przydziału środków finansowych w sposób trwały i efektywny, gdyż kwota wsparcia, która w momencie wdrożenia reformy sektora owoców i warzyw w 2007 r. wynosiła około 30-40 mln EUR rocznie, wzrosła w 2010 r. do 115 mln EUR, sięgając w 2011 r. 195 mln EUR (polskie grupy producentów otrzymały 89 proc. tej kwoty, czyli 174 mln EUR), a zgodnie z ostatnimi prognozami, przesłanymi przez państwa członkowskie w kwietniu, w 2012 r. może osiągnąć poziom nawet ok. 420 mln EUR. W budżetach na lata 2011 i 2012 środki z tytułu wsparcia na rzecz grup producentów ustalono odpowiednio na kwoty 107 mln EUR i 195 mln EUR.

Roczny pułap pomocy dla grup producentów w wysokości 10 mln EUR, wprowadzony przez rozporządzenie wykonawcze Komisji (UE) nr 302/2012 ([1]), nie ma zastosowania do zatwierdzonych i skutecznie realizowanych planów dochodzenia do uznania, w przypadku gdy inwestycje już się rozpoczęły a grupa producentów zawarła prawnie wiążące umowy ze stronami trzecimi, co zabezpiecza uzasadnione oczekiwania beneficjentów.

Projekt budżetu Komisji na 2013 r., przedstawiony w dniu 25 kwietnia 2012 r., obejmuje wniosek o środki na wsparcie dla grup producentów na kwotę 253 mln EUR. Oznacza to wzrost w porównaniu do środków zatwierdzonych w poprzednich latach.

Komisja nadal dąży do zwiększenia poziomu zorganizowania producentów owoców i warzyw, ale zważywszy, że w Polsce działa już około 300 grup i organizacji producentów, cel ten można osiągnąć przez zwiększanie liczby członków istniejących grup producentów bez tworzenia nowych.

([1]) Dz.U. L 99 z 5.4.2012, s. 21.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004077/12
to the Commission
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Change in the rules of support for fruit and vegetable producer groups

On 4 April 2012, the Commission published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* the new Implementing Regulation (EU) No 302/2012 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 543/2011 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 in respect of fruit and vegetables and processed fruit and vegetables sectors.

The European Commission has introduced significant restrictions on the support granted to fruit and vegetable producer groups with regard to implementing investments, limiting it to EUR 10 million across the EU. In addition, the transitional provisions proposed in Article 2 will create serious legal ambiguities and impact those producer groups which have already been recognised or are in the process of implementing plans for gaining recognition. In my opinion, it is unacceptable for an entity implementing an officially approved plan, which includes precise financial assumptions, to suddenly have to face completely new legal conditions that change the basic financing principles.

I would like to remind the Commission that the aim of the support granted to producer groups (including for the implementation of investments) was to make it easier for entities with that status to meet the criteria for recognition as producer organisations. In changing the current laws in this area, the Commission is actually removing the most important incentive encouraging fruit and vegetables producers to cooperate. Consequently, the process of organising the fruit and vegetable market will slow down significantly.

I would also like to remind you that the level of organisation in the fruit and vegetable sector in new EU Member States is unfortunately still very low relative to the old EU Member States (approx. 15% in Poland compared to 80% and 90% in Belgium and the Netherlands respectively).

In addition, I would like to obtain detailed explanations of the motives for changing the existing regulations. Furthermore, is the Commission aware of the fact that the adopted regulation will bring the formation of new producer groups in new EU Member States to a complete halt?

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

For reasons of budgetary discipline and in order to optimise the allocation of financial resources in a sustainable and effective way, a limitation of expenditure on Producer Groups was deemed necessary when the amount of support, which at the time of the 2007 reform of the Fruit and Vegetables sector had been forecast at around of EUR 30 to 40 million per year, reached EUR 115 million for 2010; EUR 195 million for 2011 (of which EUR 174 million or 89% for Poland only) and could even reach around EUR 420 million for 2012, according to the latest forecasts by Member States in April. The appropriations for aid to producer groups under the 2011 and 2012 budgets had been fixed at EUR 107 million and 195 million respectively.

The annual ceiling for the aid to producer groups of EUR 10 million introduced by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 302/2012 ([1]) does not apply to effectively ongoing recognition plans where the investments have already started and the Producer Group has entered into legally binding agreements with third parties, thus protecting the legitimate expectations of beneficiaries.

The Commission's Draft Budget 2013, presented on 25 April 2012, includes a request for an appropriation in respect of aid to producer groups in the sum of EUR 253 million. Therefore, this represents an increase compared with the voted appropriations in previous years.

The Commission remains committed to increase the level of organisation of fruit and vegetable producers, but with around 300 Producer Groups and Producer Organisations already operating in Poland, this aim can also be reached by increasing the membership of existing groups instead of the creation of new Producer Groups.

([1]) OJ L 99, 5.4.2012, p. 21.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004078/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(19 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόσβαση των γεωργών σε χρηματοδότηση

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, στο ψήφισμά του της 19ης Ιανουαρίου 2012 σχετικά με «την αλυσίδα εφοδιασμού στις γεωργικές εκμεταλλεύσεις: δομή και συνέπειες» (2011/2114(INI) ([1])), τόνισε την ανάγκη αντιμετώπισης του προβλήματος του αυξανόμενου κόστους εισροών που επιβαρύνει τον γεωργικό τομέα. Επεσήμανε δε σχετικά τα ακόλουθα ανησυχητικά στοιχεία:

Το συνολικό κόστος εισροών για τους αγρότες της ΕΕ αυξήθηκε κατά μέσον όρο σχεδόν 40 % μεταξύ του 2000 και του 2010, ενώ οι τιμές παραγωγού αυξήθηκαν κατά μέσον όρο λιγότερο από 25 %, σύμφωνα με την Eurostat. Ειδικότερα, η αύξηση του κόστους εισροών — εντός της δεκαετίας — ήταν της τάξεως του 60 % για την ενέργεια και τα λιπαντικά, σχεδόν 80 % για τα συνθετικά λιπάσματα και τα βελτιωτικά εδάφους, πάνω από 30 % για τις ζωοτροφές, περίπου 36 % για τα μηχανήματα και τον λοιπό εξοπλισμό, σχεδόν 30 % για τους σπόρους και το πολλαπλασιαστικό υλικό και σχεδόν 13 % για τα προϊόντα φυτοπροστασίας.

Επιπλέον, καθίσταται ολοένα και δυσχερέστερη η πρόσβαση των γεωργών σε χρηματοδότηση μέσω τραπεζικών δανείων. Θα πρέπει μάλιστα να σημειωθεί ότι εταιρείες, οι οποίες δραστηριοποιούνται στην Ελλάδα στον κλάδο των γεωργικών εφοδίων, δεν προμηθεύουν πλέον τους γεωργούς επί πιστώσει, αλλά ζητούν άμεση εξόφληση. Υπό αυτές τις συνθήκες, πολλοί Έλληνες γεωργοί εξαναγκάζονται σε παύση καλλιέργειας, καθώς αδυνατούν να αντεπεξέλθουν στο, αυξανόμενο, κόστος των ως άνω γεωργικών εισροών.

Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να αναλάβει άμεσα πρωτοβουλίες, σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, για τη διευκόλυνση της πρόσβασης των γεωργών σε χρηματοδότηση μέσω εργαλείων, όπως λ.χ. εκείνα που εφαρμόζονται υπέρ των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιουνίου 2012)

Κατά την τρέχουσα περίοδο προγραμματισμού τα κράτη μέλη και/ή οι περιφέρειες μπορούν να χορηγούν δάνεια, εγγυήσεις και κεφάλαια επιχειρηματικού κινδύνου με την ενίσχυση του Ευρωπαϊκού Γεωργικού Ταμείου Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΓΤΑΑ). Για τον σκοπό αυτό, θα πρέπει να τροποποιήσουν το πρόγραμμα αγροτικής ανάπτυξης και να παρέχουν τα απαραίτητα αποδεικτικά στοιχεία ότι πληρούνται οι προϋποθέσεις που ορίζονται στα άρθρα 50-52 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1974/2006 ([2]). Στο πλαίσιο αυτό το ελληνικό πρόγραμμα αγροτικής ανάπτυξης προβλέπει την σύσταση ενός ταμείου δανειοδότησης που θα ενισχύεται από το ΕΓΤΑΑ. Η τροποποίηση αυτή του προγράμματος αγροτικής ανάπτυξης έγινε το 2010.

Όσον αφορά το μέλλον, η Επιτροπή υπέβαλε την πρότασή της για την Κοινή Γεωργική Πολιτική (ΚΓΠ) ([3]) καθώς και μια πρόταση για κοινές διατάξεις για το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο, το Ταμείο Συνοχής, το Ευρωπαϊκό Γεωργικό Ταμείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Θάλασσας και Αλιείας ([4]). Το καταστατικό του ταμείου αυτού περιέχει διατάξεις που σχετίζονται με τα χρηματοοικονομικά μέσα που στηρίζονται από όλα τα ταμεία της ΕΕ υπό κοινή διαχείριση. Αυτό θα εξασφαλίσει ότι οι αγρότες θα μπορούν να λαμβάνουν δάνεια και εγγυήσεις, όταν τα εν λόγω ταμεία θα έχουν συσταθεί σε εθνικό και/ή περιφερειακό επίπεδο.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2011/2114(INI).
([2]) ΕΕ L 368/15 της 23.12.2006.
([3]) Όλες οι νομικές προτάσεις για την ΚΓΠ μετά το 2013 διατίθενται εδώ: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/communication/index_en.htm
([4]) Βλέπε COM(2011)615 τελικό/2 της 14.3.2012 εδώ: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2014/proposals/regulation/general/general_proposal_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004078/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Farmers' access to financing

The European Parliament, in its resolution of 19 January 2012 on the 'Farm input supply chain: structure and implications' (2011/2114(INI) ([1])), emphasised the need to address the problem of the increase in input costs incurred by the agricultural sector. It also pointed out the following worrying facts:

The total input costs for EU farmers climbed on average by almost 40% between 2000 and 2010, while farm gate prices increased on average by less than 25%, according to Eurostat. In particular, the increase in input costs within that decade reached 60% for energy and lubricants, almost 80% for synthetic fertilisers and soil improvers, over 30% for animal feed, around 36% for machinery and other equipment, almost 30% for seeds and planting stock and almost 13% for plant protection products.

In addition, farmers' access to financing through bank loans is becoming increasingly difficult. It should also be noted that companies operating in Greece in the field of agricultural supplies are no longer supplying farmers on credit, but demanding immediate payment. Under these circumstances, many Greek farmers are being forced to stop production, since they are finding it difficult to cope with the increased cost of the abovementioned agricultural inputs.

Does the Commission intend to take immediate action at EU level to facilitate farmers' access to financing through instruments such as those implemented in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises?

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

In the current programming period Member States and/or regions can set up loan, guarantee and venture-capital funds with support from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). For that purpose they need to amend their rural development programme and provide the necessary evidence that the conditions laid down in Articles 50-52 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 ([2]) are met. In this context, the Greek Rural Development Programme (RDP) foresees the possibility of a loan fund to be supported by the EAFRD. This amendment of the RDP was introduced in 2010.

As regards the future, the Commission has tabled its proposal for the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) ([3]) as well as a proposal for common provisions for the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund ([4]). The latter contains provisions related to financial instruments supported by all EU funds under shared management. This will ensure that farmers could benefit from loans and guarantees, if such funds are set up at national and/or regional level.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2011/2114(INI)
([2]) OJ L 368/15 from 23.12.2006.
([3]) All legal proposals on CAP post-2013 are available here: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/legal-proposals/index_en.htm
([4]) See COM(2011) 615 final/2 from 14.3.2012 available here: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2014/proposals/regulation/general/general_proposal_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004079/12
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Verloren of vertraagde bagage op luchthavens

De Europese Unie heeft al veel initiatieven genomen om de rechten van de passagiers in alle transportmodi te verbeteren. Zeker in de luchtvaartsector kan een vertraging van enkele uren of dagen grote gevolgen hebben voor de passagiers. De gevolgen van de aswolk in april 2010 hebben de reikwijdte van de huidige regels onder druk gezet. Daarom kondigde de Commissie een herziening van de rechten van de passagiers in de luchtvaartsector aan. Maar naast geannuleerde vluchten en langdurige vertraging worden passagiers ook met andere problemen geconfronteerd.

Jaarlijks gebeuren er heel wat incidenten op onze Europese luchthavens met de bagage van passagiers. Verordening (EG) nr. 889/2002 betreffende de aansprakelijkheid van luchtvervoerders bij ongevallen legt de regels vast bij vertraging, vernietiging, verlies of beschadiging van bagage. Uit cijfers van de Belgische overheid blijkt dat het aantal klachten van passagiers over verloren of vertraagde bagage de afgelopen jaren gedaald is in ons land. Het aantal incidenten op de nationale luchthaven is gedaald van meer dan 76 000 in 2007 naar ongeveer 46 000 in 2010. In 2011 was er weer een lichte stijging vast te stellen.

1. Zijn de lidstaten verplicht deze gegevens op regelmatige wijze aan de Commissie mee te delen?

2. Beschikt de Commissie over vergelijkende cijfers over het aantal klachten van passagiers over verloren of vertraagde bagage in de lidstaten? Zo ja, wat zijn de meest recente conclusies?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(4 juni 2012)

De lidstaten zijn niet verplicht de Commissie statistische gegevens mee te delen over het aantal klachten dat zij ontvangen in verband met verloren, vertraagde of beschadigde bagage.

Hoewel uit de beperkte informatie die voorhanden is, blijkt dat maatregelen die zijn genomen door organisaties zoals IATA — http://www.iata.org/pressroom/facts_figures/fact_sheets/pages/bip.aspx — de bagageafhandeling enigszins hebben verbeterd, doet dit niets af aan de ellende en het ongemak voor de betrokken passagiers. In de context van de herziening van de passagiersrechten in de luchtvaartsector onderzoekt de Commissie momenteel hoe dit vraagstuk kan worden aangepakt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004079/12
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Lost or delayed luggage at airports

The European Union has taken many initiatives to improve the rights of passengers in all modes of transport. Certainly in the area of air travel, a delay of a few hours or days can have serious consequences for passengers. The consequences of the 2010 ash cloud have put the scope of the current regulations under pressure. This is why the Commission has announced a review of the rights of passengers in the air travel sector. However, in addition to cancelled flights and long delays, passengers are also confronted with other problems.

Every year there are many incidents involving passengers' luggage at European airports. Regulation (EC) No 889/2002 on air carrier liability in the event of accidents sets out the rules in cases of delay, destruction, loss or damage of luggage. Statistics provided by the Belgian Government indicate that the number of complaints from passengers in relation to lost or delayed luggage has fallen in our country. The number of incidents at national airports fell from more than 76 000 in 2007 to approximately 46 000 in 2010. In 2011, a slight increase was recorded.

1. Are Member States obliged to share this information with the Commission on a regular basis?

2. Does the Commission have comparable figures for the number of complaints from passengers concerning lost or delayed luggage in Member States? If so, what are the most recent conclusions?

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

There is no obligation on Member States to share with the Commission statistics on the number of complaints received in relation to lost, delayed or damaged baggage.

Although the limited information that is available indicates that measures put in place by organisations such as IATA — http://www.iata.org/pressroom/facts_figures/fact_sheets/pages/bip.aspx — have led to some improvements in baggage handling, this does not minimise the distress and inconvenience caused to those passengers who are affected. The Commission is currently considering how this issue might be addressed in the context of its review on passenger rights in the air transport sector.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004080/12
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Controle op afvalexport

Data van de VN Commodity Trade Statistics Database tonen aan dat tussen 2003 en 2010 grote hoeveelheden potentieel gevaarlijk afval — waaronder chemische substanties — vanuit de EU zijn uitgevoerd naar Albanië. Dit ondanks het feit dat de import van afval in Albanië sinds 2003 sterk aan banden is gelegd. Resterende invoer vereist: bijzondere vergunning van de ministerraad en een formele toestemming van de minister van Milieu. Ondanks deze verstrenging blijkt toch afval in Albanië gelost te zijn zonder de nodige vergunningen. Albanië is sinds 1999 onderworpen aan het Verdrag van Basel en dus gehouden aan het verstrekken van informatie over alle grensoverschrijdende transport van gevaarlijke afvalstoffen. Echter, vanwege verschillen in de nationale definities van gevaarlijk afval, classificatiecodes en verschillen in de wijze van datacollectie, worden blijkbaar niet alle transporten vastgelegd. Overdracht van afvalstoffen aan Albanië gemeld in landen van vertrek, gaan niet steeds gepaard met verslag bij het verdragssecretariaat van de invoer van deze stoffen in Albanië. Frankrijk bv. rapporteerde in 2004 de verzending van 588 ton afval afkomstig van de behandeling van metalen oppervlakken waarvan de import door de Albanese autoriteiten nooit werd gemeld (ook gegevens over de bij wet vereiste toestemming van de Albanese ministerraad ontbreken). Ook gegevens over verdere behandeling vóór storting blijken onduidelijk. Dergelijke gegevens doen meer algemene vragen rijzen in verband met afvalexport:

Kan de Commissie tegen eigen lidstaten optreden in gevallen van afvalexport uit die lidstaten waarbij in het land van bestemming niet aan a) de voorwaarden van het Verdrag van Basel werd voldaan en/of b) niet aan de daar geldende voorwaarden voor import werd voldaan?

Welke instrumenten kan de Commissie daarvoor inzetten en welke middelen heeft ze daarvoor ter beschikking?

Zijn er precedenten van gevallen waarbij de Commissie heeft ingegrepen in een situatie van export van afval waarbij weliswaar in de eigen EU-lidstaat aan de formaliteiten werd voldaan, maar dit in het land van bestemming niet het geval was?

Op welke manier werd daartegen opgetreden?

Zijn er landen van bestemming die wat dit betreft specifiek in de gaten worden gehouden en wat is daar dan de aanleiding voor?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004081/12
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Afvalexport naar Albanië

Data van de VN Commodity Trade Statistics Database tonen aan dat tussen 2003 en 2010 grote hoeveelheden potentieel gevaarlijk afval — waaronder chemische substanties — vanuit de EU zijn uitgevoerd naar Albanië. Dit ondanks het feit dat de import van afval in Albanië sinds 2003 sterk aan banden is gelegd. Resterende invoer vereist bijzondere vergunning van de ministerraad en een formele toestemming van de minister van Milieu. Ondanks deze verstrenging blijkt toch afval in Albanië gelost te zijn zonder de nodige vergunningen.

Albanië is sinds 1999 onderworpen aan het Verdrag van Basel en dus gehouden aan het verstrekken van informatie over alle grensoverschrijdende transport van gevaarlijke afvalstoffen. Echter, vanwege verschillen in de nationale definities van gevaarlijk afval, classificatiecodes en verschillen in de wijze van datacollectie, worden blijkbaar niet alle transporten vastgelegd. Overdracht van afvalstoffen aan Albanië gemeld in landen van vertrek, gaan niet steeds gepaard met verslag bij het verdragssecretariaat van de invoer van deze stoffen in Albanië. Frankrijk bv. rapporteerde in 2004 de verzending van 588 ton afval afkomstig van de behandeling van metalen oppervlakken waarvan de import door de Albanese autoriteiten nooit werd gemeld (ook gegevens over de bij wet vereiste toestemming van de Albanese ministerraad ontbreken). Ook gegevens over verdere behandeling vóór storting blijken onduidelijk.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de omvang van export van afval uit de EU naar Albanië? Welke gegevens zijn daarover beschikbaar (welke stromen uit verschillende EU-lidstaten naar Albanië)?

2. Heeft de Commissie een inschatting van de mate waarin export van afval uit de EU naar Albanië plaatsvindt zonder dat deze voldoet aan de eisen van het Verdrag van Basel en/of de importeisen van Albanië?

3. De Commissie uitte zelf haar bezorgdheid over het milieubeleid in Albanië in het kader van haar advies over het verzoek van Albanië om toetreding tot de Europese Unie van 9 november 2010. In welke mate waakt de Commissie over de rol die de eigen lidstaten vervullen in hun relatie tot Albanië, specifiek voor wat de uitvoer van afval betreft?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(14 juni 2012)

In het kader van Verordening (EG) nr. 1013/2006 betreffende de overbrenging van afvalstoffen ([1]) is de uitvoer van gevaarlijk afval uit de EU naar landen waarop het OESO-besluit niet van toepassing is ([2]), zoals Albanië, verboden. Er bestaan geen systematische gegevens over dergelijke zendingen. De Commissie beschikt niet over concrete aanwijzingen dat gevaarlijke afvalstoffen uit de EU naar Albanië zijn uitgevoerd.

De uitvoer uit de EU van ongevaarlijke afvalstoffen naar derde landen is op grond van die verordening toegestaan, maar de EU-wetgeving vereist niet dat de lidstaten of de Commissie statistieken van de uitvoer van dergelijk afval bijhouden. Albanië heeft het recht om bezwaar te maken tegen de invoer van ongevaarlijke afvalstoffen op haar grondgebied.

De lidstaten zijn verplicht de nodige maatregelen te nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de verordening in de praktijk wordt nageleefd en dat in geval van schending van de bepalingen ervan (bv. illegale zendingen), de verantwoordelijke partijen aansprakelijk worden gehouden. In de verordening is ook bepaald dat de lidstaten ervoor moeten zorgen dat afval traceerbaar is, en zijn verplichtingen vastgesteld met betrekking tot de inspecties van de afvaltransporten. Indien de Commissie gedocumenteerde informatie ontvangt dat in een lidstaat wellicht een schending van de EU-wetgeving heeft plaatsgevonden, gaat zij bij de betrokken nationale autoriteiten na wat de situatie is en neemt zij, indien nodig, passende maatregelen.

([1]) PB L 190 van 12.7.2006.
([2]) Landen waar Besluit C (2001) 107 def. van de OESO-raad niet van toepassing is.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004080/12
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Inspection of waste export

Data from the UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database indicate that between 2003 and 2010 large amounts of potentially hazardous waste — including chemical substances — were exported from the EU to Albania. This is contrary to the fact that the import of waste into Albania has been highly restricted since 2003: outstanding imports require a special permit from the cabinet and formal approval from the Minister of the Environment. Despite this tightening of regulations, waste continues to be dumped in Albania without the necessary permits. Albania has been subject to the Basel Convention since 1999 and is thus obliged to divulge information pertaining to all cross-border transport of hazardous waste. Nevertheless, because of differences in national definitions of hazardous waste, classification codes and differences in the manner of data collection, it would appear that not all transports are recorded. Waste materials transported to Albania registered in countries of departure are still not accompanied by a convention secretariat report on the waste matter. For example, in 2004 France reported the dispatch of 588 tonnes of waste that resulted from the treatment of metal surfaces, the importation of which was never reported by the Albanian authorities (details concerning the legally required approval from the Albanian Cabinet are also missing). Details regarding further treatment prior to dumping also remain unclear. Such details have prompted further general questions in relation to the export of waste.

Can the Commission act against its own Member States in cases of waste export from those Member States in which the country of destination is not a) made to comply with the conditions of the Basel Convention and/or b) is not made to comply with the applicable conditions for import?

What instruments can the Commission deploy and what resources does it have at its disposal for this purpose?

Have there been cases where the Commission has intervened in a situation involving the export of waste in which the formalities are properly observed in the exporting EU Member State, but not in the country of destination?

How was this situation handled?

Are there countries of destination which are monitored in this respect, and what is the reason for this in such cases?

Question for written answer E-004081/12
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Export of waste to Albania

Data from the UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database indicate that between 2003 and 2010 large amounts of potentially hazardous waste — including chemical substances — were exported from the EU to Albania. This is contrary to the fact that the import of waste into Albania is highly restricted. Waste matter yet to be imported requires a special permit from the cabinet and formal approval from the Minister of the Environment. Despite this tightening of regulations, waste continues to be dumped in Albania without the necessary permits.

Albania has been subject to the Basel Convention since 1999 and is thus obliged to divulge information pertaining to all cross-border transport of hazardous waste substances. Nevertheless, because of differences in national definitions of hazardous waste, classification codes and differences in the manner of data collection, it would appear that not all transports are recorded. Waste materials transferred to Albania and registered in countries of departure is still not accompanied by a convention secretariat report on import into Albania. For example, in 2004 France reported the dispatch of 588 tonnes of waste that resulted from the treatment of metal surfaces, the importation of which was never reported by the Albanian authorities (details concerning the legally required approval from the Albanian Cabinet are also missing). Details regarding further treatment prior to dumping also remain unclear.

1. Is the Commission aware of the scale of the export of waste from the EU to Albania? What details relating to this are available (what flows are there from various EU Member States to Albania)?

2. Has the Commission made an estimate of the extent to which the export of waste that takes place from the EU to Albania fails to comply with the requirements of the Basel Convention and/or Albania's import requirements?

3. The Commission itself expressed its concern regarding environmental policy in Albania within the framework of its advice with regard to the request from Albania for entry into the European Union of 9 November 2010. To what extent does the Commission monitor the role of its own Member States in their relationship to Albania, specifically in relation to the transport of waste?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission

(14 June 2012)

Under Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on the shipment of wastes ([1]) the export of hazardous waste from the EU to non-OECD countries ([2]) such as Albania is illegal. No systematic data exists on any such shipments. The Commission does not possess any concrete evidence that hazardous wastes have been exported from the EU to Albania.

EU exports of non-hazardous waste to third countries are allowed under the regulation, but EU legislation does not require Member States or the Commission to keep statistics of the exports of such waste. Albania has the right to object to the imports of non-hazardous waste into its territory.

Member States are obliged to take the necessary measures to ensure that the regulation is complied with in practice and that in the case of violation of its provisions (e.g. illegal shipments), the responsible parties are held accountable. The regulation also requires Member States to ensure that waste is traceable and lays down obligations with respect to inspections of waste shipments. If the Commission receives documented information that a violation of EU legislation may have taken place in a Member State, it will verify the situation with the relevant national authorities and, if needed, take appropriate action.

([1]) OJ L 190, 12.7.2006.

([2]) Countries where OECD Council Decision C(2001)107/final does not apply.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-004084/12
till kommissionen
Marita Ulvskog (S&D)
(19 april 2012)

Angående: Uppgifter i svensk media om EU-förslag att förbjuda svenskt snus

Uppgifter i tidningen *Aftonbladet* ([1]) gör gällande att det förekommer diskussioner inom kommissionen om en revidering av tobaksdirektivet som indirekt skulle kunna leda till ett förbud av snusprodukter i Sverige. Det har kommit till min kännedom att genomförandekommittén för tobaksdirektivet i ett frågeformulär begärt att medlemsstaterna ska inkomma med information om hur smaktillsatser regleras i tobaksprodukter. I förlängningen förväntas kommissionen föreslå striktare regleringar av smaktillsatser i tobaksprodukter. Denna ambition är förvisso god – vi vill inte tillåta cigaretter med t.ex. jordgubbssmak som riktar sig mot barn och ungdomar. Men det finns också en oro för att EU-kommissionen genom generella regleringar av bland annat smaktillsatser och andra karaktärsdrag som präglar det svenska snuset avser förbjuda svenskt snus.

I samband med det svenska EU-inträdet i mitten av 1990-talet var frågan om snusets ställning betydelsefull, och ett undantag från EU:s generella förbud mot marknadsföring och försäljning av snus var viktigt för ett svenskt EU-medlemskap. Med denna bakgrund, och med utgångspunkt i den diskussion som uppstått i svensk media, skulle jag vilja be kommissionen om ett klargörande på följande punkter:

1. Avser kommissionen respektera det svenska undantaget från EU:s generella snusförbud?

2. Hur avser kommissionen garantera att det svenska undantaget från EU:s snusförbud och utbudet av snusprodukter inte påverkas av generella tobaksregleringar, bland annat avseende smaktillsatser?

Svar från John Dalli på kommissionens vägnar
(23 maj 2012)

1. Sverige beviljades undantag för snus i anslutningsfördraget, på villkor att Sverige skulle vidta alla nödvändiga åtgärder för att säkerställa att svenskt snus inte salufördes i de övriga medlemsstaterna ([2]). För närvarande har kommissionen inga avsikter att agera beträffande Sveriges undantag från snusförbudet.

2. Inom ramen för den pågående översynen av tobaksdirektivet ([3]) överväger kommissionen en EU-omfattande reglering av tobaksingredienser. Olika medlemsstater har infört olika bestämmelser om ingredienser. För närvarande utarbetas en konsekvensbedömning och man planerar att anta ett lagförslag före utgången av 2012. I det sammanhanget kommer kommissionen att analysera olika möjligheter och även frågan om snus bör omfattas av de harmoniserade reglerna om ingredienser.

([1]) Artikeln kan läsas via följande länk: http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article14700177.ab.
([2]) EGT L 1, 1.1.1995 (se artikel 151 och bilaga XV).
([3]) EGT L 194, 18.7.2001, s. 26-35, direktiv 2001/37.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004084/12
to the Commission
Marita Ulvskog (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Reports in the Swedish media about an EU proposal to ban Swedish snus (moist powder tobacco)

A report in the newspaper *Aftonbladet* ([1]) claims that a revision of the Tobacco Products Directive is being discussed within the Commission, which could indirectly lead to a ban on snus products in Sweden. It has come to my attention that the Implementation Committee for the Tobacco Products Directive has requested in a questionnaire that Member States provide information about how flavourings are regulated in tobacco products. Ultimately, it is anticipated that the Commission will propose stricter regulations on flavourings in tobacco products. This ambition is undoubtedly good — we do not want to permit cigarettes with, for example, a strawberry flavour targeting children and young people. However, there is also concern that through general regulation of, for example, the flavourings and other traits of Swedish snus, the European Commission intends to ban Swedish snus.

When Sweden joined the EU in the mid-1990s, the question of the position of snus was significant, and a derogation from the EU's general ban on the marketing and selling of snuff was important for Sweden's membership of the EU. In view of this, and on the basis of the debate that has arisen in the Swedish media, I would like to ask the Commission to clarify the following points:

1. Does the Commission intend to respect Sweden's derogation from the EU's general ban on snuff?

2. How does the Commission intend to guarantee that Sweden's derogation from the EU's ban on snuff and the range of snuff products offered will not be affected by general regulations governing tobacco products, including those governing flavourings?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2012)

1. Sweden was granted a derogation for oral tobacco (snus) in its Accession Treaty, under the condition that Sweden takes all necessary measures to ensure that Swedish oral tobacco is not placed on the market in other Member States ([2]). At this stage, the Commission has no intention of taking action on Sweden's derogation from the ban on oral tobacco.

2. In the context of the ongoing revision of the Tobacco Products Directive ([3]), the Commission is considering an EU-wide regulation of tobacco ingredients. Different Member States have introduced different provisions regulating ingredients. An impact assessment is currently under preparation and a legislative proposal is planned for adoption before the end of 2012. In this context, the Commission will analyse, amongst other possibilities, whether or not snus should be covered by harmonised rules on ingredients.

([1]) The article can be accessed via the following link: http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article14700177.ab.
([2]) OJ L 1, 1.1.1995 (see Article 151 and Annex XV thereof).
([3]) OJ L 194, 18.7.2001, p. 26-35, Directive 2001/37.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004085/12
an die Kommission
Klaus-Heiner Lehne (PPE)
(19. April 2012)

Betrifft: Unterschiedliche Standards für die Erteilung von Feinstaubplaketten

Aufgrund der einschlägigen europäischen Feinstaubrichtlinien führen immer mehr Städte spezielle Umweltzonen ein. Diese Umweltzonen können nur mit Fahrzeugen befahren werden, die hohe Umweltstandards erfüllen. Zum Zwecke der Kennzeichnung solcher Fahrzeuge sind häufig spezielle Umweltplaketten vorgeschrieben, die an der Windschutzscheibe oder an anderen Stellen des Kraftfahrzeugs befestigt werden müssen. Ohne diese Plaketten ist regelmäßig eine Einfahrt in die Umweltzonen nicht möglich. In der Praxis führt dies zu einer erheblichen Behinderung des europäischen Reiseverkehrs, da in unterschiedlichen Mitgliedstaaten, zum Teil sogar in unterschiedlichen Städten, unterschiedliche Plaketten gelten, deren Beschaffung regelmäßig mit erheblichen Erschwernissen im Vorfeld verbunden ist. In diesem Zusammenhang möchte ich folgende Fragen an die Kommission richten:

1. Da die Standards für die Erteilung der Umweltplaketten im Wesentlichen durch europäisches Recht einheitlich geregelt sind (Euroschadstoffklassen) stellt sich die Frage, warum nicht auch die Plaketten nach einem einheitlichen europäischen Muster ausgegeben werden?

2. Beabsichtigt die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang konkrete Vorschläge zu unterbreiten, wie eine solche einheitliche europäische Plakette aussehen kann?

3. Hält es die Kommission nicht für sinnvoll, im Rahmen europäischer Rechtsetzung eine wechselseitige Anerkennung der von den Mitgliedstaaten bzw. ihren Behörden ausgestellten Umweltplaketten vorzusehen?

4. Ist die Kommission nicht auch der Ansicht, dass mit einer einheitlichen Plakette bei ohnehin einheitlichen Standards erhebliche Erleichterungen für den Verkehr entstehen würden?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2012)

Die Kommission wies in dem Grünbuch zur urbanen Mobilität ([1]) darauf hin, dass es immer mehr Bereiche mit Zugangsbeschränkungen gibt und für diese oftmals unterschiedliche Zugangsvoraussetzungen gelten. Gemäß dem Aktionsplan urbane Mobilität ([2]) hat die Kommission eine umfassende Studie zur Situation der Zugangsbeschränkungen in europäischen Städten ([3]) veröffentlicht.

Die Initiative Nr. 32 des kürzlich erschienenen Weißbuchs „Fahrplan zu einem einheitlichen europäischen Verkehrsraum“ ([4]) sieht die Entwicklung von EU-Rahmenbedingungen für Zufahrtsbeschränkungen für Innenstädte und deren Anwendung vor, einschließlich eines Rechtsrahmens und eines validierten operationellen und technischen Rahmens für Fahrzeug- und Infrastrukturanwendungen. Die Details, Kosten und Vorteile eines solchen EU-Rahmens werden zurzeit von den Kommissionsdienststellen bewertet, wobei die Grundsätze der Verhältnismäßigkeit und der Subsidiarität beachtet werden. Die Verwendung unterschiedlicher Standards, wie etwa unterschiedlicher Plaketten, ist einer der untersuchten Gesichtspunkte.

([1]) KOM(2007)551 endg.
([2]) KOM(2009)490 endg.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/urban/studies/urban_en.htm
([4]) KOM(2011)144 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004085/12
to the Commission
Klaus-Heiner Lehne (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Different standards in issuing particulate emission stickers

The relevant European air quality directives are leading more and more cities to introduce special low emission zones. These low emission zones may only be entered by vehicles that meet high environmental standards. Special environmental stickers are often required to identify such vehicles and have to be displayed on the windscreen or in other places on the vehicle. Normally, it is not possible to enter low emission zones without these stickers. In practice, this is a serious obstacle to travel within Europe, because different stickers are used in different Member States and sometimes even in different cities, and it is often very difficult to obtain these stickers. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. As the standards for issuing environmental stickers are mostly uniformly regulated by European law (Euro pollutant class), why not also issue the stickers according to a uniform European template?

2. In this context, does it intend to present specific proposals for such a uniform European sticker?

3. Does it not consider it appropriate, within the framework of European legislation, to provide for mutual recognition of the environmental stickers issued by Member States or their authorities?

4. Is it not also the Commission's view that, since standards are uniform anyway, a uniform sticker would make travel much easier?

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

The Commission noted in the Green Paper on urban mobility ([1]) that restricted access zones were increasingly common and were often established with different access requirements. Following the action plan on Urban Mobility ([2]), the Commission published a comprehensive study on the situation with urban access restrictions in Europe ([3]).

Initiative 32 of the recent White Paper 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area' ([4]) foresees the development of an EU framework for urban access restriction schemes and their application, including a legal and validated operational and technical framework covering vehicle and infrastructure applications. The details, costs and benefits of such a framework are now being evaluated by the Commission's services, while taking into account the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity. The use of different standards, including different stickers, is one of the elements under consideration.

([1]) COM(2007)551 final.
([2]) COM(2009)490 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/urban/studies/urban_en.htm
([4]) COM(2011)144 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004086/12
an die Kommission
Holger Krahmer (ALDE) und Jacqueline Foster (ECR)
(19. April 2012)

Betrifft: Einbeziehung des Luftfahrtsektors in das Emissionshandelssystem (EHS)

Der anhaltende Widerstand seitens China, Indien, Russland, den USA und zahlreichen anderen nichteuropäischen Regierungen gegen die Einbeziehung ihrer Fluggesellschaften in das Emissionshandelssystem (EHS) hat nicht überraschend weltweit zu einer zunehmenden Berichterstattung in den Medien geführt. Einige der Meinungsäußerungen, die in den letzten Monaten zu diesem Thema erschienen sind, lesen sich eher wie Werbeanzeigen. In den führenden Zeitungen dieser Länder sind zahlreiche Artikel erschienen, die ihrem Widerstand gegen das EHS lautstark Ausdruck verleihen.

In ihrer Gesamtheit vermitteln diese Meinungsäußerungen und Artikel den Eindruck einer großangelegten Kommunikationskampagne, die von oder im Namen der Kommission durchgeführt wird. Wenn die Kommission Geld für eine solche Kampagne ausgibt, haben die EU-Bürger ein Recht darauf, dies zu erfahren. Daher möchten wir der Kommission folgende Fragen stellen:

— Wie viel Geld hat die GD UMWELT im Jahr 2011 in öffentliche Kampagnen, externe Kommunikation, Medienarbeit und PR oder ähnliche Beratungsdienste investiert? Könnten Sie diese Maßnahmen bitte benennen und näher ausführen?

— Wie viel Geld hat die GD UMWELT im Jahr 2011 in die Finanzierung oder Förderung von Umweltschutz-NRO, Einrichtungen und/oder Einzelpersonen, die sich mit umweltbezogenen Kampagnen befassen, und Interessenvertretern investiert? Könnten Sie bitte die jeweiligen Personen und Organisationen nennen?

— Welche Haushaltslinie verwendet die GD UMWELT im Jahr 2012 für derartige Maßnahmen?

— Hatte oder hat die GD UMWELT externe Dienste unter Vertrag, die Beratung zu klimabezogener Kommunikation, Interessenvertretung oder Öffentlichkeitsarbeit organisieren oder anbieten? Könnten Sie diese Maßnahmen bitte nennen? Kann die GD UMWELT eine Liste der Berater, die sie unter Vertrag hat, zur Verfügung stellen?

— Sind die oben genannten Informationen öffentlich zugänglich? Falls ja, wo? Falls nicht, warum nicht?

— Sofern diese Maßnahmen zum Ziel haben, die öffentliche Meinung und/oder politische Entscheider außerhalb der EU zu beeinflussen, würde dies nicht eine unangemessene Verwendung von Geldmitteln der Kommission darstellen?

Antwort von Frau Hedegaard im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juni 2012)

Keine der Kommunikationsressourcen der GD CLIMA wurde für öffentliche Kampagnen, externe Kommunikation, Medien- oder Öffentlichkeitsarbeit in Verbindung mit der Einbeziehung von Fluggesellschaften in das Emissionshandelssystem (EHS) der EU verwendet.

Im Rahmen der Haushaltslinien 07 12 01 und 07 01 04 05 hat die DG CLIMA jeweils 100 000 EUR bzw. 200 000 EUR für Kommunikationsmaßnahmen im Jahr 2012 zugewiesen.

Im Jahr 2011 hat die GD CLIMA aus den zwei Haushaltlinien 2 556 814,10 EUR für Kommunikationsmaßnahmen zugeteilt, von denen 2,346 Mio. EUR in die derzeit in Vorbereitung befindliche allgemeine Kampagne zur Sensibilisierung der EU-Bürger für Klimapolitik und den Wandel zu einer Gesellschaft mit geringer CO_2-Intensität fließen ([1]).

([1]) Einzelheiten zu dem Vertrag unter: http://ec.europa.eu/clima/tenders/2011/130827/index_en.htm

Ein weiterer Vertrag der GD CLIMA für Kommunikationsmaßnahmen zum Thema EHS-Gestaltung ([2]) läuft unter der Haushaltslinie 07 13 03 mit gebundenen Mitteln in Höhe von 474 018,94 EUR im Jahr 2011. Ziel ist es, das Verständnis des Emissionshandelssystems bei wichtigen Zielgruppen zu erhöhen, insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund, dass andere Länder derzeit ähnliche Handelssysteme entwickeln, die mit dem EHS als Teil eines globalen CO_2-Markts verbunden werden könnten. Die Maßnahmen sind auf Europa, englischsprachige OECD-Länder und asiatische Länder ausgerichtet.

Keine weiteren externen Dienste wurden mit klimabezogener Kommunikation, Beratung oder Öffentlichkeitsarbeit beauftragt.

Im Rahmen des LIFE+-Programms unter der von der GD ENV verwalteten Haushaltslinie 07 03 07 stellt die Kommission Betriebskostenzuschüsse für NRO im Umweltbereich zur Verfügung. Die meisten Begünstigten decken mehrere Prioritätsbereiche des sechsten Umweltaktionsprogramms ab. Andere sind stärker spezialisiert, zum Beispiel auf Klimapolitik. Der für 2011 verfügbare Haushalt lag bei 9 000 000 EUR. Die Begünstigten sind unter http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ngos/pdf/ngos2011.pdf aufgeführt. Es liegen keine Daten vor, aus denen hervorgeht, wie groß der Anteil war, der in klimabezogene Interessenvertretung und Kampagnen floss.

([2]) Einzelheiten zu dem Vertrag unter: http://ec.europa.eu/clima/tenders/2011/130815/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004086/12
to the Commission
Holger Krahmer (ALDE) and Jacqueline Foster (ECR)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Inclusion of the aviation sector in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)

The sustained opposition from China, India, Russia, the USA and many other non-European governments to the inclusion of their airlines in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) has, not surprisingly, resulted in a significant increase in media coverage around the world. Some of the opinion pieces on the subject that have appeared in recent months read more like advertisements. Many articles have appeared in leading newspapers in those countries that are most vocal in their opposition to the ETS.

Taken together, these opinion pieces and articles give the impression of a large-scale communication campaign conducted by or on behalf of the Commission. If the Commission is spending money on such a campaign, EU citizens have a right to know about it. We would therefore like to ask the Commission the following questions:

— In 2011, how much money did DG CLIMA spend on public campaigns, external communications, media and public relations or related consultancies? Can you please identify and detail these activities?

— In 2011, how much money did DG CLIMA spend on funding or sponsoring of environmental NGOs, institutions and/or individuals involved in climate-related campaigning and advocacy? Can you please identify these entities?

— Which budget line is DG CLIMA using for these types of activity in 2012?

— Has DG CLIMA been contracting, or is it currently contracting, outside services to handle or provide advice on climate-related communications, advocacy or outreach activities? Can you please identify these activities? Can DG CLIMA also provide a list of the consultants it has contracted?

— Is any of the above information publicly available? If so, where? If not, why not?

— Insofar as these activities are aimed at influencing public opinion and/or policy-makers outside the EU, does this not constitute an inappropriate use of Commission funds?

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

None of DG CLIMA's communication resources were used for public campaigns, external communications or media and public relations related to the inclusion of aviation into the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS).

Under budget lines 07 12 01 and 07 01 04 05, DG CLIMA has allocated EUR 100 000 and EUR 200 000 respectively for communication activities for 2012.

In 2011, DG CLIMA committed EUR 2 556 814.10 for communication activities under the two budget lines, of which EUR 2 346 million is for a general awareness campaign now in preparation, aimed at an EU audience, on climate action and moving to a low-carbon society ([1]).

DG CLIMA is also running a contract on activities in the field of communication on ETS design ([2]), under budget line 07 13 03: the 2011 committed budget is EUR 474 018.94. The aim is to increase understanding of the emissions trading system by key audiences, especially when other countries are developing similar trading systems that could be linked with the ETS as part of a global carbon market. It is targeted at audiences in Europe, as well as Anglophone OECD countries and Asian countries.

No other outside services have been contracted on climate-related communication, advocacy or outreach activities.

([1]) Details on contract available at http://ec.europa.eu/clima/tenders/2011/130827/index_en.htm
([2]) Details on contract available at http://ec.europa.eu/clima/tenders/2011/130815/index_en.htm

Under the LIFE+ programme, budget line 07 03 07 managed by DG ENV, the Commission provides operating grants to environmental NGOs. Most beneficiaries cover several priority areas of the 6th Environmental Action Programme; others have a more specific focus, such as climate change. In 2011 the available budget was EUR 9 000 000. The list of beneficiaries is available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ngos/pdf/ngos2011.pdf. There is no data that allows identifying the share used specifically for climate-related advocacy and campaigning.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004088/12
to the Commission
Nigel Farage (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Regulation of wine sales

Bearing in mind that a beverage made from the fermented juice of the grape *Vitis vinifera* is universally called 'wine', will the Commission clarify precisely the circumstances in which the term 'wine' can and cannot be used to describe such a beverage?

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

Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([1]) provides in its Article 113d specific provisions for the use of the designation 'wine' for sale in the Union. The term 'wine' may be used only for the marketing of the product defined in Annex XIb of Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007. This annex provides in particular that the wine shall be the product obtained exclusively from the total or partial alcoholic fermentation of fresh grapes, whether or not crushed, or of grape must. This Annex provides also several designations including the term 'wine': e.g.: 'sparkling wine' and 'liqueur wine'.

Article 113d and Point B.3 of Annex XVb to Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 provides that Member States may allow also the use of the term 'wine' if it is part of a composite name. The same article provides that this composite name should not create confusion with products corresponding to the wine categories listed in Annex XIb.

([1]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004089/12
to the Commission
Nigel Farage (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Regulation of the sale of wine

Can the Commission explain why the processing of grapes into wine, when done outside the country of origin of the particular cultivar of grapes used, precludes the use of the universally recognised cultivar name (e.g. Malbec or Chardonnay) to describe the product?

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

EU wine legislation specifies the conditions according to which a wine can be produced on the territory of the Union.

The processing of grapes harvested in a Member State into wine in another Member State of the Union, is not prohibited by EC law, provided such a wine complies with EU requirements. As regards the indication of the name of the wine grape variety, such a wine shall conform with Articles 118z(2)(c) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([1]) and 63 of Regulation (EC) No 607/2009 ([2]).

However, unless otherwise decided by the Council in accordance with the international obligations of the EU, the processing of grapes, must or wines originating in third countries into wine or sparkling wine in the Union is not authorised according to Point B(5) of Annex XV(b) to Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007.

Up to date, the Council has never envisaged any particular measure in this field and it is thus not possible to market on the territory of the EU a wine (with or without the indication of the name of the wine grape variety) which would have been produced in the Union with grapes harvested in a third country.

([1]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 193, 24.7.2009, p. 60.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004090/12
to the Commission
Nigel Farage (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Regulation of wine sales

Will the Commission explain the legal basis and rationale for the prohibition on selling for valuable consideration a wine made in the United Kingdom from the fermented juice of Malbec grapes grown in Argentina?

Question for written answer E-004091/12
to the Commission
Nigel Farage (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Regulation of wine sales

Given the need for growth in the economies of all Member States, would the Commission agree that selling for valuable consideration a wine made in the United Kingdom from the fermented juice of Malbec grapes grown in Argentina would produce revenue for the maker of the wine as well as duty and tax for national treasuries, and that a prohibition on such sales defeats that end without providing any compensating benefit? Will it also explain the rationale for such a prohibition? If it does not agree, why not?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2012)

EU wine legislation specifies the conditions according to which a wine can be produced on the territory of the Union.

According to Point B(5) of Annex XV(b) to Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([1]) 'Unless otherwise decided by the Council in accordance with the international obligations of the Community, fresh grapes, grape must, grape must in fermentation, concentrated grape must, rectified concentrated grape must, grape must with fermentation arrested by the addition of alcohol, grape juice, concentrated grape juice and wine, or mixtures of those products, originating in third countries, may not be turned into products referred to in Annex XIb or added to such products in the territory of the Community'.

However, to date the Council did not envisage any particular measure in this field and it is thus not possible to market on the territory of the EU a wine which would have been produced in the Union with grapes harvested in a third country.

([1]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004092/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — EEAS 2011 budget

According to a December 2011 report by the High Representative, 'The budget of the EEAS in 2011 is EUR 464 million divided between EUR 184 million in headquarters and EUR 280 million in delegations. The EEAS also manages EUR 253 million on behalf of the Commission for the administrative expenses linked to Commission staff in delegations'. Can the High Representative give details as to whether this yearly budget will decrease in 2012? Also, can the High Representative give details as to why the EEAS, which is separate and distinct from the Commission, is managing part of the budget on the latter's behalf?

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

The EEAS budget for 2012 (Section X of the EU General Budget), as jointly approved by the European Parliament and the Council in December 2011, is EUR 492 million divided between EUR 192 million for headquarters and EUR 300 million for delegations. In addition, the EEAS manages EUR 264 million for the administrative expenses linked to Commission staff in delegations.

The Commission has specific competences under the Treaties, notably to implement the EU budget and the European Development Fund as well as regarding trade negotiations. As a result, the Commission has staff in EU delegations. The EEAS is made up of a central administration and of the Union's delegations to third countries and international organisations. For reasons of transparency and sound financial management, the resulting costs of the Commission's activity within the EU delegation are born by the Commission, as they used to be before the creation of the EEAS. However, it has been deemed more practical to entrust the management of delegations entirely to the EEAS. This is why the Commission is providing the EEAS with annual contributions to cover the costs of its staff in delegations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004093/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Funding for Tunisia

In the December 2011 report by the High Representative, it was stated that the EU will provide financial support to Tunisia of 'about four billion euros over the 2011-2013 period'. Given the open-ended language of this funding description, does the High Representative foresee plans to increase funding for Tunisia? If so, by how much would funding increase? Also, could the High Representative detail specific projects for which this funding is being utilised?

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

In December 2011, the HR/VP stated that the EU would endeavour to mobilise EUR 4 billion for Tunisia, involving funding from various sources in the form of grants and loans. The EU has subsequently made considerable efforts to assist Tunisia financially. The Commission was able to increase the funding for 2011-2013 from EUR 240 million to EUR 390 million from the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument. Efforts are ongoing to find extra sources of potential funding.

For 2011, the Commission has focused on the following programmes:

— support for economic growth (EUR 100 million) in line with Tunisia's emergency programme to revive the economy — total donor support amounts to EUR 1 billion;

— support for services (EUR 20 million) to strengthen competitiveness in: health, ICT ([1]), transport, logistics, services for companies and professional services;

— support for less favoured areas (EUR 20 million) aimed at reducing social inequalities and regional discrepancies; micro-finance institutions will also be supported;

— recognising the substantial reforms made after the revolution, the EU decided that Tunisia should be the first beneficiary of financial support from SPRING (an initial EUR 20 million was made available in 2011).

For 2012, the Commission foresees: (i) support to the provision of healthcare in the most impoverished regions and (ii) a second phase of the programme of support for economic growth (for a total of EUR 80 million). Other actions such as a civil society building capacity programme and a justice programme will be funded under remaining additional funds for the period 2011-2013.

The majority of the EUR 4 billion funding would have to come from EU and Member State financial institutions in the form of loans. Effective disbursement of envisaged loans depends on the quality of projects and other market conditions.

([1]) ICT = Information and Communications Technology.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004094/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Somali fishing waters

The outbreak of Somali piracy can arguably be traced to predatory fishing in Somali waters by foreign vessels during the 1990s. This destroyed the livelihoods of Somali fishermen, pushing many into piracy. Does the Commission intend to investigate whether EU/EC vessels were involved in this fishing during the 1990s?

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

The Commission is aware of these allegations. Information on fishing off the coast of Somalia collected by EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta is forwarded regularly to the Commission. EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta also sends information on fishing off the coast of Somalia to the UN Secretariat's Department of Political Affairs at its request. In the course of its duty, EU NAVFOR ATALANTA has not observed any evidence of illegal fishing in Somali waters.

At this stage, there is a lack of proof regarding these allegations and inconsistencies in the accusations relating to alleged illegal fishing by EU vessels in the waters of Somalia. With regard to EU fishing vessels, regular monitoring and analysis of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data show no entries into Somali waters. Nevertheless, the Commission considers it necessary to continue close monitoring and to pay particular attention to analysing future records in depth to assess whether incursions are taking place, if illegal fishing is going on and to what extent this can be curbed. If incursions are spotted, relevant authorities are asked to explain.

EU fishing vessels in the Indian Ocean are bound by the rules of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, which manages the tuna fisheries in the region, the principles of the common fisheries policy and the Bilateral Fisheries Agreements the Union has in the region with third countries. Compliance with those provisions is closely monitored in the first instance by the Member States and then by the Commission.

If substantive information of such allegations is provided, it will be in first instance for the Member States to investigate these allegations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004095/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: The impact of pre-accession funding on democracy in Turkey

Can the Commission detail the progress being made on democratic reforms and the achievement of pre-accession goals in Turkey, given the great amount of funding Turkey has received so far?

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

In line with its role as laid down in the Negotiating framework with Turkey, the Commission publishes each year, as annex to its communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the enlargement strategy, a detailed progress report on the reforms made in Turkey on each of the Copenhagen criteria. This includes a section on the political criteria, including democracy and rule of law and human rights and the protection of minorities. The Honourable Member can find the latest progress report on the Commission's Internet site:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2011/package/tr_rapport_2011_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004096/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Funding for the Southern Mediterranean

In the December 2011 report by the High Representative, it was stated that the EU would allocate EUR 1 billion to the Southern Mediterranean for the 2011-2013 period, and that it had already allocated EUR 3.5 billion to the region. Could the High Representative detail which countries are included in the area of the 'Southern Mediterranean', and the specific projects for which this funding is being utilised?

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

The countries included in the area of the 'Southern Mediterranean' are Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, as well as the occupied Palestinian Territories.

The key EU regional programmes offer an overview of the EU's approach and funding to the Southern Neighbourhood.

The most substantial programme designed for the region is the SPRING umbrella programme. The initial sum of EUR 350 million for the period 2011-2012 is directed towards projects in support of democratic transformation, institution-building, sustainable and inclusive growth and economic development.

The newly-created 'Civil Society Facility' provides funding (EUR 26 million for 2011, EUR 22 million for 2012) for non-state actors to enhance engagement with civil society and increase the EU's involvement in the partner countries. The programmes 'Strengthening democratic reform in the Southern Neighbourhood' in cooperation with the Council of Europe, the 'European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights' and the thematic programme 'Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development' are also important tools totalling EUR 100 million for 2011 and 2012.

The Eramus Mundus funding scheme to provide students from the region with 750 additional scholarships has been extended. The Tempus programme providing support towards the modernisation, opening of universities and forging links between higher education and society has also received significant support for the its 300 projects. In total, EUR 30 million has been budgeted for these two programmes for the period 2011-2013.

For individual country allocations that account for the rest of the funding delivered to the Southern Mediterranean please refer to the reply of the HR/VP to PQ E-001738/2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004097/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Delocalizzazione: il caso dell'azienda Intercast di Parma

Lo scorso marzo 2012, la multinazionale proprietaria della storica azienda Intercast, fondata nel 1975 da due ingegneri di Parma, attiva nel settore della produzione di lenti per occhiali da sole, ha annunciato il licenziamento di 59 dipendenti. L'azienda ha infatti intenzione di trasferire l'attività in un nuovo stabilimento, forse in Cina o in Thailandia.

Mentre la crisi economica e finanziaria globale spinge gli imprenditori italiani al suicidio, la deregulation del commercio internazionale mette sul lastrico altre 59 famiglie.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— ha intenzione di adottare misure d'urgenza per tutelare l'impoverimento del tessuto produttivo europeo, svuotato dalla fuga delle sedi produttive delle aziende a causa della pressione fiscale e del costo del lavoro negli Stati membri?

— Come intende tutelare i lavoratori e le famiglie, prime vittime di questo fenomeno?

— È intenzionata ad attivarsi per un aggiornamento del regolamento relativo al Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione?

— Quali alternative occupazionali si offriranno ai cittadini europei una volta che il settore industriale della produzione sarà stato azzerato?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2012)

Come illustrato nella risposta fornita dal membro della Commissione competente per la politica commerciale all'interrogatione E-1660/2012 ([1]) la Commissione ritiene che l'UE sarebbe la prima a risentire di una politica protezionistica. La risposta giusta consiste nel migliorare la competitività dell'UE, aspetto questo che viene affrontato assieme ad altre politiche e ad altri strumenti a livello di UE e di Stati membri.

Il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) è stato creato nel 2007 per alleviare gli impatti negativi di breve termine che la globalizzazione degli scambi determina sull'occupazione, soprattutto allorché le imprese delocalizzano le loro attività verso paesi siti al di fuori dell'UE. La Commissione ha presentato una proposta ([2]) in base alla quale i licenziamenti legati ai nuovi pattern degli scambi possono essere ammessi a un sostegno del FEG anche durante il periodo 2014-2020. La proposta mantiene inoltre l'attuale soglia di 500 licenziamenti in modo da assicurare che il FEG venga mobilitato soltanto quando è necessario far leva sulla solidarietà dell'UE. Inoltre, la politica di coesione UE è lo strumento finanziario chiave dell'UE per sostenere la coesione economica, territoriale e sociale anche supportando lo sviluppo di attività economiche sostenibili nelle regioni.

La Commissione è consapevole delle conseguenze negative che le ristrutturazioni di imprese possono avere per i lavoratori, le loro famiglie e le regioni e ritiene necessario implementare meglio le buone pratiche in tema di gestione proattiva, preparazione e amministrazione della ristrutturazione nell'UE. Il 30 marzo si è chiusa una consultazione pubblica che prendeva le mosse da un libro verde intitolato «Ristrutturare e anticipare i mutamenti: quali insegnamenti trarre dall'esperienza recente» ([3]) ed intendeva identificare le pratiche e le politiche più efficaci in questo ambito al fine di promuovere l'occupazione, la crescita e la competitività e migliorare le sinergie tra tutti gli attori pertinenti.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) COM(2011)608 definitivo, proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sul Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) 2014-2020.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=it&catId=89&newsId=1166&furtherNews=yes.

La Commissione si baserà sulle risposte al libro verde in modo da diffondere le buone pratiche e assicurare un adeguato follow up.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004097/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Offshoring — the case of Intercast of Parma

In March 2012, the multinational owner of the historic Intercast Company, founded in 1975 by two engineers from Parma and which produces lenses for sunglasses, announced the dismissal of 59 employees. The company intends to transfer its activities to a new plant, perhaps in China or Thailand.

While the global financial and economic crisis is driving Italian entrepreneurs to suicide, the deregulation of international trade has pushed another 59 households closer to the breadline.

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

— Will it adopt urgent measures to protect against the impoverishment of European manufacturing infrastructure, which has been depleted by the closure of manufacturing plants due to taxation levels and labour costs in the Member States?

— How does it intend to protect workers and families, who are the primary victims of this phenomenon?

— Does it intend to work towards the revision of the regulation concerning the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund?

— What employment alternatives are to be offered to European citizens once the industrial manufacturing sector has completely disappeared?

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

As explained in the reply given by the Member of the Commission responsible for Trade to Question E-1660/2012 ([1]), the Commission is of the opinion that the EU would be the first to suffer from protectionism. Improving the competitiveness of the EU, which remains the right answer, is addressed with other policies and instruments at EU and Member states level.

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) was established in 2007 to mitigate the short-term, negative impacts of trade globalisation on employment, in particular when companies delocalise their activities to countries outside the EU. The Commission has submitted a proposal ([2]) according to which trade-related redundancies can qualify for EGF support also during the period 2014-2020. The proposal also maintains the current threshold of 500 redundancies so as to ensure that the EGF is mobilised only when EU solidarity needs to be mobilised. In addition, EU cohesion policy is the key EU financial instrument to support economic, territorial and social cohesion including by supporting the development of sustainable economic activities in regions.

The Commission is aware of the negative consequences that company restructuring may have on the workers, their families and regions and believes it is necessary to better implement good practices on the anticipation, preparation and management of restructuring across the EU. A public consultation closed on 30 March through a Green Paper on 'Restructuring and anticipation of change: lessons from recent experience' ([3]) aims at identifying successful practices and policies in this field to promote employment, growth and competitiveness, and to improve synergies between all relevant actors.

The Commission will build on the response to its Green Paper so as to disseminate best practices and ensure an appropriate follow up.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) COM(2011) 608 final, Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) 2014-2020.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1166&furtherNews=yes.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004098/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Prestiti BCE e sostegno alle imprese e alle famiglie

L'altalena degli interessi dei titoli di Stato e quella conseguente degli spread continuano a seminare sfiducia ed insicurezza, nonostante le misure d'austerità imposte dall'UE e decise dai vari governi della zona euro. Anche l'iniezione di centinaia di miliardi (489,1 più 529) praticata alle banche dalla BCE non è servita a dissipare dubbi e timori sull'auspicata ripresa: l'economia infatti è ferma e le imprese e le famiglie non riescono ad avere prestiti per nuovi investimenti.

La liquidità fornita dalla BCE alle banche italiane, ad esempio, è servita solo per ricomprare le proprie obbligazioni e/o per depositarla nei forzieri di Francoforte? Mentre le banche italiane tra dicembre-gennaio hanno acquistato titoli di Stato per 32,6 miliardi, i prestiti bancari alle imprese e alle famiglie italiane si sono ridotti di 20 miliardi. La seconda tranche del prestito Ltro subirà la stessa sorte?

Si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere alle seguenti domande:

1. Può dirci a quanto assommano i depositi presso la BCE?

2. Qual è il senso dei prestiti BCE se le stesse somme vengono depositate presso la stessa banca centrale che li eroga?

3. Non ritiene la Commissione che questa politica finanziaria risulti un fine a sé stessa, senza portare nessun sostegno all'economia reale?

4. Non crede opportuno e necessario esercitare le più forti pressioni presso la BCE al fine di convincerla a far destinare gli eventuali prestiti alle imprese ed alle famiglie?

5. Quali altri disastri bisognerà sperimentare per convincere i responsabili che questa austerità conduce alla recessione, se nel frattempo non si prevedono misure a sostegno dell'economia reale?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2012)

Gli ultimi dati disponibili sul bilancio della Banca d'Italia risalgono al marzo 2012. In base a tali dati, i depositi da parte di istituti di credito dell'area dell'euro ammontavano a 9,9 miliardi di euro, più 6,7 miliardi di euro sul conto corrente. I dati sulle somme depositate esclusivamente presso la BCE non sono disponibili.

Inoltre, secondo il bilancio della Banca d'Italia summenzionato, alla fine del marzo 2012 i prestiti a lungo termine per le operazioni di rifinanziamento di istituti di credito dell'area dell'euro erano pari a 267,6 miliardi di euro. I dati su depositi e prestiti indicano che i prestiti erogati nell'ambito delle operazioni LTRO della BCE non sono stati nuovamente depositati presso la BCE.

Lo studio condotto dalla BCE nell'aprile 2012 sui prestiti concessi dalle banche rivela una significativa diminuzione del ricorso, da parte delle banche dell'area dell'euro, a standard di concessione di credito alle imprese particolarmente rigorosi, nonostante un deciso inasprimento di tali standard in alcuni dei trimestri del 2011, e indica che ciò è dovuto, con ogni probabilità, all'impatto positivo che le due aste triennali LTRO hanno avuto sulle condizioni di finanziamento delle banche.

Il trattato garantisce l'indipendenza della BCE. Inoltre, esercitare pressioni sulle banche al dettaglio in merito alla gestione della loro liquidità non rientra nelle competenze della BCE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004098/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: ECB loans and support for companies and families

The ups and downs of government bond interest rates and the consequent spreads are continuing to generate pessimism and uncertainty, notwithstanding the austerity measures imposed by the EU and decided by the various governments of the euro area. Even the injection of hundreds of billions of euro (489.1 plus 529) into the banks by the ECB has done nothing to dispel the doubts and fears about the much-desired recovery: in fact, the economy is at a standstill and businesses and families cannot obtain loans for new investments.

Has the liquidity supplied by the ECB to Italian banks, for example, merely been used by them to buy back their own bonds and/or been deposited in the Frankfurt coffers? Whereas, between December and January, Italian banks bought government bonds to the value of EUR 32.6 billion, bank loans to Italian businesses and families dropped by EUR 20 billion. Will the second tranche of the long-term refinancing operation loan suffer the same fate?

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How much do the deposits at the ECB amount to?

2. What is the sense of the ECB loans if the same amounts are being deposited at the same central bank that issued them?

3. Does the Commission not believe that this financial policy is an end in itself, without giving any support to the real economy?

4. Does it not consider it opportune and necessary to put the strongest possible pressure on the ECB in order to convince it to channel any loans to businesses and families?

5. What other disaster needs to happen to convince the authorities that this austerity will lead to recession unless measures to support the real economy are not implemented in the meantime?

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

The latest available data on the Bank of Italy balance sheet is from March 2012, and indicates that deposits from Euro area credit institutions amounted to EUR 9.9 billion plus EUR 6.7 billion on the current account. The data on deposits exclusively to the ECB is not available.

The same balance sheet of the Bank of Italy indicates that long-term lending for refinancing operations to euro area credit institutions amounted to EUR 267.6 billion at the end of March 2012. Data on deposits and lending signals that loans from the ECB's LTRO has not been deposited back to the ECB.

The ECB Bank Lending Survey of April 2012 finds that euro area banks reported a significant decline in the net tightening of credit standards to enterprises albeit after several quarters of substantial tightening in 2011 and concludes that this was likely to reflect the positive impact of the two three-year Long Term Refinancing Operations (LTRO) on bank's funding conditions.

The Treaty guarantees the independence of the ECB. Moreover, it is not in the ECB's competence to pressure retail banks where to channel the liquidity.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004099/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Agenzia di rating europea

Un'autorevole fonte tedesca (Financial Times Deutschland del 16.4) afferma, senza essere fino ad oggi smentita, che il progetto lanciato da Roland Berger di una agenzia di rating europea è naufragato.

Tutte le più importanti istituzioni europee, e soprattutto il Parlamento europeo, avevano pur tuttavia sostenuto in un modo o nell'altro la necessità di mettere fine al monopolio delle «tre sorelle» imperanti nel settore. Successivamente, però, le competenti istituzioni economico-finanziarie dell'UE e le banche francesi e tedesche direttamente sollecitate a parteciparvi, non hanno messo a disposizione i 300 milioni di euro necessari per far partire il progetto.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— come giustifica la Commissione il suo mancato sostegno a questo importante progetto di creazione di un'agenzia di rating europea?

— Non ritiene che, con tale comportamento, essa non abbia tutelato gli interessi diffusi dei risparmiatori e del mercato finanziario europei?

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

Il 15 novembre 2011 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta che modifica il regolamento in vigore sulle agenzie di rating del credito ([1]). Uno degli obiettivi della proposta consiste nel migliorare le condizioni del mercato del rating in modo che siano più propizie alla produzione di rating di elevata qualità e creino più possibilità di scelta sul mercato.

La Commissione accoglie con favore le iniziative private che potrebbero stimolare l'incremento delle possibilità di scelta e della concorrenza sul mercato del merito di credito. Non offre tuttavia sostegno finanziario ad alcuna particolare società di rating in quanto tali azioni potrebbero distorcere la concorrenza e indurre nuovi conflitti d'interesse. Nella valutazione d'impatto che accompagna la sua ultima proposta legislativa, la Commissione ha valutato la fattibilità della creazione di una nuova agenzia europea di rating del credito indipendente: dall'analisi è emerso che l'istituzione di un'agenzia di rating con fondi pubblici, a prescindere dalla sua impostazione, sarebbe onerosa (con un costo stimato di circa 300-500 milioni di euro per un periodo di cinque anni) e potrebbe risultare problematica in termini di credibilità e indipendenza. Rischierebbe inoltre di penalizzare i nuovi operatori privati del mercato. Per questi motivi la Commissione ha deciso, al momento, di abbandonare questa ipotesi.

Più in generale, per migliorare le condizioni del mercato del rating la Commissione ha proposto altre misure: intende ad esempio introdurre una rotazione obbligatoria, che offrirebbe un'opportunità ai nuovi operatori potenziali di accedere al mercato del merito di credito; ha proposto inoltre di agevolare la confrontabilità dei rating emessi da varie agenzie tramite un sito web centralizzato, che crea una banca dati di tutti i rating liberamente accessibile. Tali disposizioni daranno maggiore visibilità alle agenzie di rating meno conosciute.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1060/2009 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 settembre 2009, relativo alle agenzie di rating del credito (GU L 302 del 17.11.2009), modificato dal regolamento (UE) n.513/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 maggio 2011 (GU L 145 del 31.5.2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004099/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: European credit rating agency

An authoritative German source (*Financial Times Deutschland* of 16 April 2012), which has not been contradicted so far, states that the project for a European credit rating agency launched by Roland Berger has fallen through.

All the most important European institutions, above all the European Parliament, nevertheless supported in one way or another the feeling that the monopoly of the 'three sisters' prevailing in the industry had to be broken. Subsequently, however, the EU's competent financial institutions and French and German banks, which had been directly encouraged to participate, did not provide the EUR 300 million needed to start the project.

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

— How does the Commission justify its failure to support this important project to create a European credit rating agency?

— Does the Commission not consider that this type of conduct fails to protect the general interests of Europe's savers and its financial market?

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

The Commission adopted a proposal on 15 November 2011 amending the existing CRA Regulation ([1]). One of the objectives of the proposal is to improve credit rating market conditions so that they are conducive to high-quality ratings and create more choice in the market.

The Commission welcomes any private initiatives that could foster more choice and competition in the credit rating market. However, the Commission does not provide financial support for any particular rating companies as such actions could distort competition and lead to new conflicts of interest. The Commission assessed the feasibility of establishing a new independent European Credit Rating Agency in the impact assessment accompanying its latest legislative proposal. This analysis showed that setting up a CRA with public money, irrespective of its particular model, would be costly (estimated EUR 300-500 million over five years) and it could raise concerns regarding the CRA's credibility and independence. Moreover, it could put new private market players to a disadvantage. For these reasons, the Commission has decided not to pursue this idea further at this point.

More generally in order to improve credit rating market conditions, the Commission has proposed other measures. For example the proposal intends to introduce mandatory rotation which could give an opportunity for new potential players to enter the credit rating market. Moreover, the Commission proposed to facilitate comparison of ratings issued by different CRAs via a centralised website, creating a free public database of all ratings. This would provide more visibility to less known CRAs.

([1]) Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on credit rating agencies of 16 September 2009, OJ L 302, 17.11.2009, as amended by Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011, OJ L 145/30, 31.5.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004100/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: La ludopatia in Europa nell'era della dipendenza dal web

Il gioco d'azzardo in Europa sta diventando una realtà in forte espansione, incrementata dall'attuale crisi economica e finanziaria, che ha contribuito a rendere ancora più incerte le prospettive future dei cittadini europei aumentando il ricorso ad attività d'azzardo, contrariamente a quanto si potrebbe pensare.

In questi anni il fenomeno ha assunto un aspetto particolare: il gioco è diventato patologico, soprattutto tra i più giovani. Il Ministro della Salute italiano ha stabilito che la ludopatia è una malattia che deve essere curata dal servizio sanitario nazionale e che va seguita come forma di dipendenza.

La Commissione;

1. non ritiene di dover effettuare uno studio sulla popolazione europea e il fenomeno della ludopatia, specialmente fra i più giovani?

2. Che cosa intende fare per ridurre o controllare le pubblicità mediatiche sui giochi o il proliferare delle sale da gioco, negli Stati membri, che accrescono il problema inducendo la gente a scommettere?

3. Come intende controllare i giochi d'azzardo on-line che vedono coinvolti principalmente giovani adolescenti?

4. Non ritiene opportuno iniziare una campagna europea sulla ludopatia per dare informazione e aiuto contro l'isolamento sociale che i giochi d'azzardo on-line stanno creando?

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

Nella situazione attuale in assenza di armonizzazione, gli Stati membri possono stabilire i loro obiettivi politici, compreso il livello auspicato di tutela dei consumatori. Gli operatori regolamentati sono in genere tenuti a disporre di sistemi di verifica dell'età per impedire ai minori di accedere ai siti di giochi d'azzardo, mentre il controllo delle loro licenze è di competenza delle autorità di regolamentazione.

Nella comunicazione sul gioco d'azzardo on-line nel mercato interno, la cui adozione è prevista nel 2012 ([1]), la Commissione intende annunciare una serie di orientamenti strategici e, di conseguenza, individuare azioni da realizzare a livello UE e a livello nazionale, tra l'altro per un'adeguata tutela di tutti i cittadini, inclusi i minori e i gruppi vulnerabili.

In tale contesto, la Commissione sta esaminando delle proposte mirate a garantire una pubblicità responsabile nei casi in cui quest'ultima presenti una relazione con il gioco d'azzardo. La normativa UE vigente tutela gli interessi economici dei consumatori vulnerabili, anche per quanto riguarda i giochi d'azzardo on-line. La direttiva 2005/29/CE ([2]) (fatte salve altre norme UE e nazionali sulle condizioni di stabilimento e i regimi di autorizzazione relativi al gioco d'azzardo) vieta una vasta gamma di pratiche commerciali ingannevoli o aggressive. Nel corso del 2012, la Commissione pubblicherà una relazione sull'applicazione della direttiva.

Nessuno studio è attualmente previsto a livello dell'UE. Il progetto «ALICE-RAP», finanziato nell'ambito del settimo programma quadro, sta studiando il fenomeno delle dipendenze in Europa, tra cui la dipendenza dal gioco d'azzardo ([3]). La ricerca in questo settore è necessaria per una migliore comprensione dei termini utilizzati, dei comportamenti, dei fattori e delle cause collegate.

([1]) Seguito al «Libro verde sul gioco d'azzardo on-line nel mercato interno» (COM(2011)128 definitivo).
([2]) Direttiva sulle pratiche commerciali sleali, GU L 149, dell'11.6.2005, pag. 22.
([3]) ALICE-RAP (Ridefinire la dipendenza e gli stili di vita nell'Europa di oggi) è un progetto quinquennale transitorio e interdisciplinare iniziato in data 1.4.2011, finanziato nell'ambito delle scienze socio-economiche e umanistiche tramite il settimo programma quadro dell'Unione europea per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (2007-2013). Il progetto mira a contribuire al dibattito sulle norme attuali e le future implicazioni delle dipendenze e degli stili di vita in Europa nei prossimi 20 anni.

Attualmente, la Commissione non intende avviare una campagna di sensibilizzazione a livello dell'Unione europea sulla dipendenza dal gioco d'azzardo, pur riconoscendone l'utilità.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004100/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Pathological gambling in Europe in an age of Web dependency

Gambling in Europe is becoming a rapidly expanding reality, exacerbated by the current financial and economic crisis, which has helped to make EU citizens' future prospects even more uncertain by increasing gambling, contrary to what one might expect.

In recent years gambling has taken on a specific form and has now become pathological, especially among younger people. The Italian Minister of Health has declared that pathological gambling is a disease that must be treated by the national health service and should be treated as a form of addiction.

1. Does the Commission not think it should conduct a study on the EU population and the phenomenon of pathological gambling, especially among younger people?

2. What will it do to reduce or monitor media advertising on gambling or on the proliferation of gambling halls/amusement arcades in the Member States, which are increasing the problem by encouraging people to bet?

3. How does it intend to control and monitor online gambling, which involves mainly young teenagers?

4. Does it not agree that it should launch an EU campaign on pathological gambling to provide information and support against the social isolation that online gambling is creating?

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

In the current situation, Member States can set their policy objectives in the absence of harmonisation, including the level of consumer protection sought. Regulated operators are generally required to have age verification systems in place to prevent minors from accessing gambling sites, whilst regulators have the competence to monitor their licensees.

In the communication on online gambling in the internal market, foreseen for adoption in 2012 ([1]), the Commission intends to announce a number of policy orientations and accordingly identify actions to be carried out at EU and at national levels, *inter alia* towards an appropriate protection of all citizens, including minors and vulnerable groups.

In this context the Commission is considering proposals aimed at ensuring responsible advertising to the extent that it bears some connection to gambling. Existing EU legislation protects the economic interest of vulnerable consumers, including as regards online gambling. Directive 2005/29/EC ([2]) (without prejudice to other EU and national rules on conditions of establishment and authorisation regimes relating to gambling) bans a wide range of misleading or aggressive business practices. In the course of 2012 the Commission will publish a Report on the application of the directive.

No EU-wide study is currently planned. 'ALICE-RAP', funded through the 7th Framework Programme is studying the phenomenon of addiction in Europe, including gambling,. ([3]) Research in this area is required for a better understanding of the terms used, the behavioural attitudes and the factors and causes linked to this.

Currently, the Commission does not intend to launch an EU-wide awareness raising campaign on gambling addiction, although it recognises their usefulness.

([1]) Follow-up to the Green Paper consultation on online gambling in the internal market (COM(201) 12 final).
([2]) Directive on Unfair Commercial Practices OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([3]) ALICE-RAP (Addiction and lifestyles in contemporary Europe, reframing addictions) is a five-year transitional and interdisciplinary project started on 1.4.2011, funded under the Socioeconomic Sciences and Humanities theme through the 7th Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013). The project aims at contributing to the debate on current norms and future implications of addiction and lifestyles in Europe over the next 20 years.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004101/12
aan de Commissie
Barry Madlener (NI)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Commissie wil dat Nederland zijn arbeidsmarkt volledig opent voor Roemenen en Bulgaren

De Europese Commissie wil dat Nederland zijn arbeidsmarkt volledig opent voor Roemenen en Bulgaren. Ook wil de Commissie dat er een minimumloon voor hen komt.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Nederland moet arbeidsmarkt volledig openen voor Roemenen en Bulgaren" ([1])?

2. Is het de Commissie bekend dat er in Nederland al zo'n 300 000 Midden- en Oost-Europeanen zijn?

3. Is het de Commissie bekend dat er in Nederland enorme problemen zijn met Midden- en Oost-Europeanen, vooral op het gebied van (georganiseerde) criminaliteit, overlast, uitkeringsafhankelijkheid e.d.? Is de Commissie, in dit licht bezien, met de PVV van mening dat het onwenselijk is om de Nederlandse arbeidsmarkt volledig te openen voor nog meer Oost-Europeanen zoals Roemenen en Bulgaren, omdat de problemen daardoor hoogstwaarschijnlijk zullen toenemen?

4. Is het de Commissie bekend dat Roemenië en Bulgarije op de corruptie-index van „Transparency International" ([2]) nog altijd een dikke onvoldoende scoren, namelijk 3,6 respectievelijk 3,3? Is de Commissie, in dat licht bezien, met de PVV van mening dat Roemenië en Bulgarije absoluut niet klaar zijn om volledige toegang tot de Nederlandse arbeidsmarkt te krijgen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

5. Is het de Commissie bekend dat Nederland al een flinke (toenemende) werkloosheid kent ([3])? Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat de komst van Roemenen en Bulgaren tot nóg meer werkloosheid onder Nederlanders zal leiden, en dat dat ongewenst is? Zo neen, waarom niet?

6. Is het de Commissie bekend dat in Roemenië en Bulgarije meer dan een miljoen Roma leven, dat zij als tweederangsburgers behandeld worden, dat onder hen een hoge werkloosheid heerst en dat zij dus mogelijk naar Nederland zullen komen? Hoe kan Nederland werkzoekende Roemenen en Bulgaren weren en/of uitzetten?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(7 juni 2012)

1. Het bericht verwijst naar het werkgelegenheidspakket van de Commissie ([4]), waarin zij er bij de negen lidstaten ook op aandringt nog eens na te gaan of het noodzakelijk is hun beperkingen op de vrije toegang tot de arbeidsmarkt voor Bulgaarse en Roemeense werknemers tot het einde van de overgangsperiode te handhaven.

2. De Commissie is bekend met een studie van de Universiteit Utrecht volgens welke er naar schatting 300 000 Midden- en Oost-Europese onderdanen in Nederland verblijven. Het lijkt hierbij echter ook om mobiele werknemers voor korte tijd te gaan die hebben bijgedragen aan het socialezekerheidsstelsel van Nederland zonder dat zij er hun gewone verblijfplaats hadden.

5. De Commissie ziet nauwlettend toe op de ontwikkeling van de arbeidsmarkt van de lidstaten. Uit recente Eurostat-gegevens blijkt dat Nederland het op één na laagste werkloosheidspercentage in de EU heeft (4,9 % in februari 2012 ([5])), ruim onder het EU-gemiddelde (10,2 %).

Volgens verscheidene studies had de mobiliteit na de uitbreiding zeer weinig invloed op het werkloosheidspercentage in de bestemmingslanden ([6]).

([1]) http://www.europa-nu.nl/id/viyrla95mayw/nieuws/nederland_moet_arbeidsmarkt_volledig?ctx=vh6ukzb3nnt0.
([2]) http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/.
([3]) http://nos.nl/video/362088-meer-langdurig-werklozen-in-nederland.html
([4]) COM(2012) 173 final.
([5]) Eurostat, voor seizoensinvloeden gecorrigeerde cijfers.
([6]) Zie samenvatting in *Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2011* van de Europese Commissie, hoofdstuk 6 (Arbeidsmobiliteit binnen de EU en de invloed van de uitbreiding). .

3., 4. en 6. De enige criteria in het toetredingsverdrag van Bulgarije en Roemenië die de lidstaten toestaan tot en met 31 december 2013 beperkingen op de arbeidsmarkt te handhaven, zijn ernstige verstoringen van de arbeidsmarkt of de dreiging van dergelijke verstoringen. Na die datum moeten alle beperkingen worden opgeheven.

Er worden geen beperkingen van het vrije verkeer van Bulgaarse en Roemeense burgers toegestaan. Zij genieten derhalve sinds de toetreding dezelfde verblijfsrechten als andere EU-onderdanen.

Om de lidstaten te helpen bij de verandering van de situatie van de Roma, biedt de EU allerlei juridische, politieke en financiële middelen ([7]).

([7]) In haar mededeling betreffende "Een EU-kader voor de nationale strategieën voor integratie van de Roma tot 2020" (COM(2011) 173 van 5 april 2011) riep de Europese Commissie de lidstaten op hun nationale strategieën of geïntegreerde pakketten beleidsmaatregelen bij te werken of te ontwikkelen om de uitdagingen van de integratie van de Roma efficiënter aan te pakken en de kloof tussen Roma en niet-Roma wat betreft de toegang tot onderwijs, werkgelegenheid, gezondheidszorg, huisvesting en essentiële voorzieningen te verkleinen. In maart 2012 hadden alle lidstaten een nationale strategie voor de integratie van de Roma of een overeenkomstig pakket beleidsmaatregelen voorgesteld, dat was ingebed in hun bredere beleid voor sociale integratie (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/national-strategies/index_en.htm). De Commissie heeft de strategieën grondig beoordeeld; de belangrijkste conclusies van deze beoordeling werden op 23 mei 2012 in een mededeling aan het Europees Parlement en de Raad en in een begeleidend werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie bekendgemaakt (COM(2012) 226 van 21 mei 2012).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004101/12
to the Commission
Barry Madlener (NI)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: The Commission wants the Netherlands to open its labour market fully to Romanians and Bulgarians

The European Commission wants the Netherlands to open its labour market fully to Romanians and Bulgarians. The Commission also wants there to be a minimum wage for these workers.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the article 'Netherlands must open labour market fully to Romanians and Bulgarians' ([1])?

2. Is the Commission aware that there are already around 300 000 Central and Eastern Europeans in the Netherlands?

3. Is the Commission aware that there are enormous problems with Central and Eastern Europeans in the Netherlands, primarily in the area of (organised) crime, nuisance, benefit dependency, etc.? In view of this situation, does the Commission agree with the Party for Freedom (PVV) that it is undesirable for the Dutch labour market to be fully opened up to even more Eastern Europeans, such as Romanians and Bulgarians, because the problems would most likely increase as a result?

4. Is the Commission aware that Romania and Bulgaria still obtain highly unfavourable scores on the corruption index of Transparency International ([2]), and in the light of that fact, does it share the view of the PVV that Romania and Bulgaria are absolutely not ready to gain full access to the Dutch labour market? If not, why not?

5. Is the Commission aware that the Netherlands already has considerable (and growing) unemployment ([3])? Does the Commission share the view of the PVV that the arrival of Romanians and Bulgarians will lead to even greater unemployment among Dutch nationals, and that this is undesirable? If not, why not?

6. Is the Commission aware that in Romania and Bulgaria, there are more than one million Roma, that they are treated as second-class citizens, that there is high unemployment among them and that this may be why they come to the Netherlands? How can the Netherlands keep out and/or expel Romanian and Bulgarian job-seekers?

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

1. The article refers to the Commission's Employment Package ([4]) in which it also urges the nine Member States to reconsider the need to maintain their restrictions on free labour market access of Bulgarian and Romanian workers until the end of the transitional period.

2. The Commission is aware of a study by Utrecht University that estimates the number of Central and Eastern European nationals resident in the Netherlands at around 300 000. However, this seems to include short-term mobile workers who contributed to the Dutch social security system without being usually resident there.

5. The Commission follows closely the evolution of Member States' labour markets. Recent Eurostat figures show that the Netherlands have the second lowest unemployment rate in the EU (4.9% in February 2012) ([5]) well below EU average (10.2%).

Several studies estimated that post-enlargement mobility had very limited impact on the unemployment rate in the destination countries ([6]).

3, 4, 6: The only criteria in Bulgaria's and Romania's Accession Treaty to allow Member States to maintain labour market restrictions until 31 December 2013 are serious labour market disturbances or the threat thereof. After that date, all restrictions must end.

([1]) http://www.europa-nu.nl/id/viyrla95mayw/nieuws/nederland_moet_arbeidsmarkt_volledig?ctx=vh6ukzb3nnt0
([2]) http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/
([3]) http://nos.nl/video/362088-meer-langdurig-werklozen-in-nederland.html
([4]) COM(2012)173 final.
([5]) Eurostat, seasonally adjusted figures.
([6]) See summary in the European Commission's Employment and Social developments in Europe 2011, Chapter 6 (Intra-EU labour mobility and the impact of enlargement).

No restrictions are allowed on the free movement of Bulgarian and Romanian citizens who have therefore been enjoying the same rights of residence as other EU nationals since accession.

The EU has made available a wide range of legal, policy and financial instruments to support Member States to change the situation of Roma ([7]).

([7]) The European Commission in its communication on 'An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020', (COM(2011)173 of 5 April 2011) called on Member States to update or develop national strategies or integrated sets of policy measures to address more effectively the challenges of Roma inclusion and reduce the gap between Roma and non-Roma in access to education, employment, healthcare, as well as housing and essential services. By March 2012, all Member States had presented a National Roma Integration Strategy or a corresponding set of policy measures within their broader social inclusion policies (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/national-strategies/index_en.htm). The Commission has carried out an in-depth assessment of the strategies the main conclusions of which were presented on 23 May 2012 in a communication to the European Parliament and the Council and an accompanying Commission Staff Working Document. (COM 2012)226 of 21 May 2012.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004102/12
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Vervolgvragen omtrent huisaankoop commissaris De Gucht

Op 16 april jl. ontving ik antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie op eerdere vragen inzake een huisaankoop door commissaris De Gucht (E-001759/2012). In dat kader deze vervolgvragen:

1. Allereerst verwijst de Commissie naar schriftelijke vraag P-011951/2011 van geachte collega Eppink. De vragen zijn (met enige moeite) wel op internet te vinden, maar de beantwoording ervan door de Commissie opmerkelijk genoeg niet. Bovendien blijken de vragen van de heer Eppink van een geheel andere inhoud te zijn dan die van mij. De enige overeenkomst bestaat in het gegeven dat het dezelfde eurocommissaris betreft, maar daarmee houdt iedere vergelijking op. Voor beantwoording van mijn originele vragen 1, 2, 4 en 5 vraag ik dus hierbij nadrukkelijk om een inhoudelijke beantwoording en handhaaf ik deze vragen.

2. In antwoord op mijn vraag 3 bevestigt de Commissie dat er een subsidie van 1 500 euro aan de heer De Gucht is gegeven voor het betalen van een consultant voor productie van „biodynamische wijn". Kan de voorzitter van de Commissie onomwonden verklaren dat de heer De Gucht geen andere EU-subsidie heeft ontvangen, waarvan de Commissie op de hoogte zou dienen te zijn?

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

1. De Commissie onthoudt zich van commentaar op de door het geachte Parlementslid in vraag E-001759/2012 aan de orde gestelde aangelegenheden. Zoals eerder werd meegedeeld in de antwoorden op de vragen P-11951/2011 van de heer Eppink en E-1759/2012 van het geachte Parlementslid, die volgens de regels aan het Europees Parlement ([1]) zijn bezorgd, houden deze aangelegenheden verband met een lopende procedure tussen de Belgische belastingautoriteiten en de heer De Gucht.

2. De Commissie heeft geen weet van subsidies die de heer De Gucht uit de begroting van de Europese Unie zou hebben ontvangen, afgezien van de jaarlijkse subsidie van 1 500 euro voor het betalen van een consultant voor de productie van biodynamische wijn, die werd ontvangen door de onderneming SS La Macinaia, waarvan de heer De Gucht aandeelhouder is.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004102/12
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Follow-up questions on house purchase by Commissioner De Gucht

On 16 April 2012 I received an answer from Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission to earlier questions regarding a house purchase by Commissioner De Gucht (E-001759/2012). In view of this, I have these follow-up questions:

1. First of all, the Commission refers to Written Question P-011951/2011 by Mr Derk Jan Eppink, MEP. The questions can (with some difficulty) be found on the Internet but, remarkably enough, the answers to them given by the Commission cannot. Moreover, the contents of the questions by Mr Eppink appear to be entirely different from mine. The only common point is that they concern the same European Commissioner, but any comparison ends there. For the answer to my original questions 1, 2, 4 and 5, I therefore emphatically request a substantive answer and I maintain these questions.

2. In response to my question 3, the Commission confirms that a subsidy of EUR 1 500 was given to Commissioner De Gucht to pay a consultant for the production of 'biodynamic wine'. Can the President of the Commission unequivocally state that Mr De Gucht did not receive any other EU subsidy of which the Commission should be aware?

Answer given by M. Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2012)

1. The Commission has no further comments to make on the matters raised by the Honourable Member in his Question E-001759/2012. As already stated in its previous replies to questions P-11951/2011 by Mr Derk Jan Eppink and E-1759/2012 by the Honourable Member, which have been duly transmitted to the European Parliament ([1]), those matters concern an ongoing proceeding between the Belgian tax authorities and Mr De Gucht.

2. The Commission is not aware of any subsidy which Mr De Gucht would have received from the Budget of the European Union other than the annual EUR 1 500 subsidy to pay for the services of a consultant on bio-dynamic winery received by the company SS La Macinaia of which Mr De Gucht is a shareholder

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004103/12
aan de Commissie
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Voedselverspilling in supermarkten

Referentie Verslag: P7_TA(2012)0014

Tussen de 30 en 50 % van onze voedselproductie gaat verloren. Dat gebeurt voor een gedeelte bij supermarkten die veel voedsel weggooien. Ze willen niet aansprakelijk worden gesteld na de „ten minste houdbaar tot"-datum (t.h.t.-datum), terwijl heel veel voedsel dan nog bruikbaar is. Ook de consument weet vaak niet het verschil tussen de „ten minste houdbaar tot"- en „te gebruiken tot"-datum. Producten buiten de koelkast als pasta, voedsel in blikken of potten, zijn tot ver na de t.h.t.-datum te gebruiken en hebben deze datum niet nodig.

Het blijkt dat het publiceren van afvalcijfers in Noorwegen grote gevolgen heeft gehad op voedselverspilling van supermarkten in Noorwegen. Supermarkten werden door de verschillen onderling aangespoord zo min mogelijk weg te gooien en konden van elkaar leren hoe dit te doen. Dit zou een oplossing zijn om voedselverspilling in heel Europa tegen te gaan.

— Is de Commissie het er mee eens dat het hanteren van de „ten minste houdbaar tot"-datum in veel gevallen niet noodzakelijk is en voedselverspilling in de hand werkt?

— Is de Commissie van plan strengere eisen op te stellen wat betreft de t.h.t.-datum, om voedselverspilling te voorkomen?

— Ziet de Commissie een mogelijkheid tot het afschaffen van de t.h.t.-datum als deze over (lang) houdbare producten gaat?

— Is de Commissie bereid te onderzoeken op welke producten deze t.h.t.-datum nodig is en wanneer deze zou moeten worden afgeschaft?

— Ziet de Commissie het nut van het publiceren van de cijfers hoeveel voedsel supermarkten weggooien, om voedselverspilling in Europa tegen te gaan?

— Is de Commissie bereid te onderzoeken of de afvalcijfers van supermarkten kunnen worden geopenbaard zodat voedselverspilling wordt tegengegaan?

Antwoord van de heer Dalli namens de Commissie
(21 juni 2012)

Tijdens de recente herziening van het EU-wetgevingskader inzake etikettering van levensmiddelen werd de datum van minimale houdbaarheid niet in vraag gesteld. Integendeel, de wetgevers achtten het noodzakelijk het onderscheid tussen de datum van minimale houdbaarheid en de uiterste consumptiedatum duidelijker te maken. In dit verband bepaalt Verordening (EU) nr. 1169/2011 ([1]) dat een levensmiddel na de uiterste consumptiedatum onveilig wordt geacht overeenkomstig artikel 14, leden 2 tot en met 5, van Verordening (EG) nr. 178/2002 ([2]).

De Commissie ziet geen aanleiding om de datum van minimale houdbaarheid af te schaffen. Niettemin kan de Commissie onderzoeken of, en voor welke producten, de huidige afwijking voor het vermelden van de datum van minimale houdbaarheid kan worden uitgebreid.

([1]) PB L 304 van 22.11.2011.
([2]) PB L 31 van 1.2.2002.

In het kader van het Stappenplan voor efficiënt hulpbronnnengebruik in Europa ([3]) van de Commissie en in het kader van de in 2013 te verschijnen Mededeling over duurzaam voedsel analyseert de Commissie samen met de belanghebbenden hoe voedselverspilling kan worden beperkt zonder de voedselveiligheid in het gedrang te brengen. Zij zal ook overleg plegen met de lidstaten en deskundigen om de meest geschikte maatregelen op EU-niveau te bepalen. Er zal worden onderzocht of het zin heeft cijfers te publiceren over de hoeveelheid voedsel die supermarkten weggooien, om voedselverspilling tegen te gaan.

([3]) COM(2011) 571.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004103/12
to the Commission
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Food wastage in supermarkets

Reference Report: P7_TA(2012)0014

Between 30% and 50% of our food production is lost. The loss occurs in part at supermarkets that throw a lot of food away. They do not want to be held liable after the 'best before' date, although a lot of food is still usable at that point. Consumers also frequently do not know the difference between the 'best before' and the 'use by' dates. Products that are not refrigerated, such as pasta and food in tins or jars, can be used well beyond the 'best before' date.

It appears that the publishing of figures for waste in Norway has had significant consequences for food wastage by supermarkets there. Supermarkets were encouraged by the differences among them to throw away as little food as possible and were able to learn from each other how to do so. This would be a solution for combating food wastage throughout Europe.

— Does the Commission agree that using the 'best before' date is often not necessary and helps to contribute to food wastage?

— Is the Commission planning to impose stricter requirements as regards the 'best before' date, in order to prevent food wastage?

— Does the Commission think it is possible to abolish the 'best before' date for long-life products?

— Is the Commission prepared to investigate which products require the 'best before' date and those for which it should be abolished?

— Does the Commission see the benefit of publishing figures on how much food supermarkets throw away, in order to combat food wastage in Europe?

— Is the Commission prepared to investigate whether the refuse figures for supermarkets can be published in order to combat food waste?

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

During the recent revision of the EU legal framework on food labelling, the 'best before' date was not questioned. On the contrary, the legislators considered it necessary to clarify more clearly the distinction between the 'best before' and 'use by' dates. In this regard, Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([1]) states that beyond the 'use by' date, a food shall be deemed to be unsafe in accordance with Article 14(2) to (5) of Regulation No 178/2002 ([2]).

There is no evidence to cause the Commission to abolish the 'best before' date. Nevertheless, the Commission could examine whether, and for which products, the extension of the current derogation from providing the 'best before' date would be possible.

In the context of the Commission's Roadmap to a Resource-Efficient Europe ([3]) and in the context of the forthcoming Communication on Sustainable Food (due for adoption in 2013) the Commission is analysing with relevant stakeholders how to minimise food waste without compromising food safety, and will also consult Member States and experts in order to define the most appropriate actions at EU level. The effectiveness of revealing food waste figures from supermarkets, in order to further prevent food waste, will be considered.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.
([2]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002.
([3]) COM(2011)571.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004104/12
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Tadeusz Cymański (EFD) oraz Mirosław Piotrowski (ECR)
(19 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Zmniejszenie ilości pozwoleń na emisje CO_2

Otrzymaliśmy sygnały od zaniepokojonych przedsiębiorców, którzy przedstawiali krytyczne stanowisko w sprawie propozycji Komisji dotyczącej wycofania z rynku pewnej ilości pozwoleń na emisję, CO_2 na początku trzeciej fazy ETS/UE, tzw. set – aside. Pracodawcy informowali o możliwych, negatywnych, konsekwencjach takich decyzji dla europejskiej gospodarki.

1. Czy Komisja może przedstawić prognozowaną liczbę pozwoleń, które zostaną wycofane z rynku oraz analizy dotyczące wpływu takich decyzji na gospodarki poszczególnych państw?

2. Jakie kryteria będą brane pod uwagę przy obliczaniu nowych limitów emisji oraz ilości pozwoleń na emisje?

3. Zmniejszenie ilości pozwoleń na emisje będzie prowadzić do wzrostu ich ceny na rynku. Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja, aby zmniejszyć bezpośrednie koszty firm związane z prognozowanym wzrostem cen limitów emisyjnych? Czy Komisja rozważa wprowadzenie dodatkowych lub wydłużenie istniejących okresów przejściowych dla krajów, w których wzrost kosztów pozwoleń na emisję może spowodować znaczne straty i spowolnienie w gospodarce np. Polski? Prosimy o przedstawienie analizy SWOT dotyczącej wpływu projektu Komisji na sektor MŚP.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(12 czerwca 2012 r.)

Komisja nie złożyła wniosku dotyczącego wycofania uprawnień do emisji. Komisja prowadzi obecnie przegląd funkcjonowania unijnego systemu handlu uprawnieniami do emisji (EU ETS). W odpowiednim czasie przedstawi sprawozdanie Radzie i Parlamentowi zgodnie z art. 10 ust. 5 dyrektywy ([1]). Jest to również okazja do przeglądu harmonogramu aukcji. Nie byłoby właściwe, aby Komisja przewidywała, jaki będzie wynik przeglądu przed jego zakończeniem.

([1]) Dyrektywa 2003/87/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 13 października 2003 r. ustanawiająca system handlu przydziałami emisji gazów cieplarnianych we Wspólnocie oraz zmieniająca dyrektywę Rady 96/61/WE (Dz.U. L 275 z 25.10.2003).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004104/12
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Tadeusz Cymański (EFD) and Mirosław Piotrowski (ECR)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Reducing the number of CO_2 emission permits

We have received signals from concerned entrepreneurs who have come out in criticism of the Commission's proposal to set aside a certain number of CO_2 emission permits at the beginning of the third EU/ETS phase (the 'set-aside'). Employers have informed us of the possible negative consequences of such decisions for the European economy.

1. Can the Commission provide the projected number of permits that will be withdrawn from the market as well as analyses of the impact of such decisions on the economies of individual countries?

2. What criteria will be taken into consideration in calculating new emission limits and the number of emission permits?

3. Reducing the number of emission permits will lead to an increase in their price on the market. What actions does the Commission intend to take to decrease the direct costs to companies related to the projected increase in the price of emission limits? Is the Commission considering the introduction of additional transitional periods, or the extension of existing ones, for countries in which an increase in the cost of emission permits may cause significant losses and a slowdown in the economy, for example in Poland? We kindly ask for a SWOT analysis of the impact of the Commission's project on the SME sector.

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

The Commission has not made a proposal to 'set aside' allowances. It is reviewing the functioning of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and will be submitting in due course a report to the Council and the Parliament under Article 10(5) of the directive ([1]). This *also offers an opportunity to include a review of the auction time profile*. It would not be appropriate for the Commission to anticipate the outcome of the review before it is complete.

([1]) Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 2003 establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC, OJ L 275, 25.10.2003.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-004105/12
za Komisijo
Tanja Fajon (S&D)
(19. april 2012)

Zadeva: Ali so evropski predori načrtovani tako, da napaka voznika ni kaznovana s smrtjo voznika, sopotnikov in drugih udeležencev v prometu?

V evropskih tunelih se zgodi veliko nesreč, tudi s smrtnim izidom. Tudi nedavna nesreča belgijskega avtobusa je posledica nestrokovnega načrtovanja varnosti v predorih. Strokovnjaki na to že leta opozarjajo in si med ostalim prizadevajo za varna in zastrta svetila v rumenem svetlobnem spektru, varno cestišče, ropotajoče linije, opustitev pločnikov.

Nepotrebni pločniki: veliko varnejša od ostrega roba pločnika bi bila „ropotajoča črta“, ki opozarja na vožnjo čez rob cestišča in omogoča varno korekcijo v pravo smer. Če vozilo podrsa po steni predora, takšna poškodba ne vpliva na vozne sposobnosti vozila.

V Italiji v večini predorov ni pločnika. Predori bi morali biti zaprti za pešce in kolesarje – saj tudi na avtocesto ne smejo.

Odstavne niše so grajene s pravokotnimi vogali. Boljša bi bila izpeljava v blagem kotu, z dodatnimi blažilci trkov (velika zračna blazina ali „živi pesek“ na aktivacijo.)

Preveč luči in bleščanje: med vožnjo skozi predore smo zaslepljeni z lučmi na stropu ali ob strani in s številnimi LED-oznakami v raznih barvah. Ti preštevilni viri koncentrirane svetlobe odsevajo na steklih vozila in očalih in skupaj z našim gibanjem sestavljajo navidezno gibanje svetlobnih virov. Zaradi prevelike tovrstne obremenitve je zmožnost zaznavanja v predoru zmanjšana. Preizkusi kažejo: predori so veliko preveč osvetljeni ponoči, prehodi pa premalo osvetljeni podnevi, tako da sta uvoz in izvoz iz predora šok za voznika in ga začasno zaslepita.

Največji problem so glavna svetila v predoru, ker se bleščijo. Zaradi zožitve zenice se izgubijo detajli v temnem delu slike, zato izgubimo globino in občutek za razdaljo. Zaznava dogajanja je veliko slabša, zato se upočasnijo refleksi, varnost pa drastično zmanjša. V Italiji obstajajo predori, ki imajo luči v črnih okvirih, tako da svetloba sveti samo navzdol. Virov svetlobe ne opazimo, ni bleščanja, vidljivost in varnost sta odlični.

Potrebujemo izboljšanje nacionalnih standardov za oznake in opremo predorov ter sestavo enotnih smernic za opremo, osvetlitev in prezračevanje predorov, ki bi bile veljavne po vsej EU.

Komisijo sprašujem: kaj nameravate storiti, da se na nacionalnih ravneh uvedejo višji standardi varnosti v predorih po vzoru držav, ki predstavljajo merilo na tem področju?

Odgovor komisarja Kallasa v imenu Komisije
(4. junij 2012)

Komisija želi spoštovano poslanko opozoriti na dejstvo, da Direktiva 2004/54/ES Evropskega parlamenta in Sveta z dne 29. aprila 2004 o minimalnih varnostnih zahtevah za predore v vseevropskem cestnem omrežju ([1]) določa vrsto tehničnih in operativnih ukrepov za zagotovitev enotne osnovne ravni varnosti v predorih. Direktiva velja za cestne predore v vseevropskem cestnem omrežju, ki so daljši od 500 metrov.

Niz minimalnih varnostnih zahtev se mora spoštovati za predore, ki obratujejo, so v gradnji ali v fazi projektiranja. Poleg tega se države članice spodbujajo, da določbe direktive glede varnosti v predorih uporabljajo za predore, ki niso zajeti v področju uporabe vseevropskega omrežja.

Postopek dodatnega opremljanja obstoječih predorov, ki še vedno poteka, mora biti končan do 30. aprila 2014, razen v državah članicah z veliko skupno dolžino predorov na njihovem ozemlju, kjer mora biti v skladu z odločitvijo zakonodajalca dodatno opremljanje izvedeno do leta 2019.

([1]) UL L 167, 30.4.2004, str. 39.

Komisija skrbno spremlja ustrezno izvajanje direktive v okviru rednih sestankov s strokovnjaki iz držav članic in bo sprejela primerne ukrepe, da se zagotovi redno posodabljanje tehničnih prilog Direktive 2004/54/ES. Poleg tega Komisija podpira izmenjavo izkušenj med strokovnjaki za varnost v cestnih predorih. Januarja 2012 je Komisija tudi sprožila dopolnilno študijo o analizi tveganja v predorih.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004105/12
to the Commission
Tanja Fajon (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Has everything possible been done when designing European road tunnels to ensure that driver error does not lead to the deaths of the driver, passengers and other road users?

There are a lot of accidents, including fatal ones, in European tunnels. Even the recent Belgian coach accident was due to the inadequate safety design of the tunnel. Experts have been warning us about this for years and have, amongst other things, been calling for the introduction of safe lighting, where beams in the yellow light spectrum are dipped, safe road surfacing, rumble strips and shoulder drop-offs.

Unnecessary pavements: a much safer solution than a sharp pavement edge would be a rumble line, alerting you when you start to stray onto the verge and enabling you to return to the carriageway safely. Then, if a vehicle merely grazes the tunnel wall, the damage caused would not be sufficient to affect its ability to continue driving.

Most tunnels in Italy do not have pavements. Tunnels should be closed to pedestrians and cyclists, as is, indeed, the case with motorways.

Breakdown bays are constructed with rectangular corners. A gentler angle design would be a better solution, with additional collision buffers (with large airbags or 'quicksand' being activated on impact).

Excessive light and glare: when driving through a tunnel, it is easy to be blinded by light reflecting off the ceiling or walls and by the many LED signs in a range of colours. These sources of concentrated light — and there are far too many of them — are reflected in the windows of passing vehicles and in drivers' spectacles and, especially when we are, ourselves, in motion, create the impression of moving light sources. Because of this overload of light sources, our sensory abilities become reduced in tunnels. Tests have shown that there is too much lighting in tunnels at night and too little at entry and exit points in daylight, which can be a surprise for the driver and lead to temporary blindness when entering or exiting a tunnel.

The main lighting in tunnels is the biggest problem, because of the glare. Pupillary constriction means we fail to pick out details in darker areas in our range of vision, which is why we lose a sense of depth and distance. Awareness of what is happening is much poorer and, as a result, our reflexes become slower and safety is drastically reduced. In Italy, there are some tunnels where the lighting is set into a black frame, so that light is directed downwards. This hides the direct source of light and reduces dazzle, and both visibility and safety levels are excellent.

We need to improve national tunnel signage and equipment standards and draw up uniform guidelines for equipment, lighting and ventilation systems that apply across the whole of the EU.

My question to the Commission is as follows: what action do you intend to take to ensure that Member States introduce higher tunnel safety standards, following the example of countries which have provided a benchmark in this field?

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

The Commission wishes to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the fact that directive 2004/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on minimum safety requirements for tunnels in the trans-European road network ([1]) establishes a wide range of technical and operative measures to ensure a uniform basic level of safety in tunnels. The directive covers road tunnels of more than 500 metres in length in the trans-European road network.

A set of minimum safety requirements are to be applied to tunnels that are already in operation, planned or at the design status. Moreover, Member States are encouraged to apply the tunnel safety provisions of the directive on tunnels outside the scope of the trans-European network.

The process of retrofitting existing tunnels is still underway, and is required to be completed by 30 April 2014, except for those Member States with a high total length of tunnels on their territory for which the legislator has given time until 2019 for completing the retrofitting.

([1]) OJ L 167, 30.4.2004, p. 39.

The Commission is monitoring closely the adequate application of the directive in the framework of regular meetings with experts from Member States and it will take adequate action to ensure that the technical annexes of Directive 2004/54/EC are kept up to date. In addition, the Commission has supported the exchange of experience among road tunnel safety officers. Finally, the Commission launched a complementary study concerning risk analyses of tunnels in January 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004106/12
a la Comisión
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(19 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Establecimiento de un salario mínimo en Europa

El pasado 18 de abril el Comisario Andor presentó una batería de medidas para que la recuperación económica sea más intensiva en términos de generación de empleo. Entre estas medidas se incluyó el establecimiento de un salario mínimo en todos los Estados miembros, así como la subida de salarios con carácter general como instrumento de estímulo a la demanda interna y por ende del crecimiento económico en la Unión. Dicha medida permitirá avanzar hacia unos mejores y más uniformes sistemas de protección social al mismo tiempo que se fomenta la eficiencia estimulando a los empresarios a que compitan en mayor medida en términos de calidad de sus productos y servicios y en menor medida en términos de costes y competencia de salarios. A su vez ayudará al 8 % de los trabajadores europeos cuyo salario no les permite vivir por encima del umbral de la pobreza.

Si, tal como afirma la Comisión, el riesgo de pobreza en el trabajo es especialmente alto en países con alta desigualdad en la distribución de ingresos y bajos salarios mínimos, así como entre los trabajadores temporales y precarios, ¿podría explicar la Comisión por qué sigue exigiendo a los países sometidos a programas de ayudas económicas (y que afrontan especiales dificultades en este sentido) recetas contrarias a lo que exige al resto de los países, es decir congelación de salarios mínimos o incluso bajadas?

El salario mínimo en España es inferior al 40 % del salario medio en el país y sin embargo las recomendaciones de la Comisión siguen dirigidas a la reducción de costes laborales y congelación de salarios. ¿Podría explicar la Comisión por qué?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2012)

El Paquete sobre Empleo ([1]) subraya la necesidad de que los salarios sean dignos y sostenibles. El establecimiento de un salario mínimo en niveles adecuados puede contribuir a evitar el riesgo de pobreza en el trabajo o de los ocupados. Sin embargo, el impacto del salario mínimo tanto en la demanda, como en la oferta puede variar considerablemente de un Estado miembro a otro en función de su nivel o de otras políticas o instituciones laborales. Por lo tanto, es necesario que los salarios mínimos sean suficientemente ajustables y que participen en su ajuste los interlocutores sociales de modo que los salarios reflejen la evolución económica global. Para paliar la pobreza en el trabajo, el Paquete sobre Empleo apunta a la posibilidad de crear prestaciones en el empleo.

En los países que participan en el Programa los salarios mínimos que permiten un rápido ajuste de los salarios son esenciales para combatir los desequilibrios existentes: alta tasa de desempleo y pérdida de competitividad. Sin embargo, la Comisión respeta plenamente el principio de la negociación colectiva y autónoma y, por lo tanto, durante las negociaciones consulta regularmente a los interlocutores sociales.

En España el salario mínimo está por encima del umbral de la pobreza. Además del nivel de los salarios, el principal motivo de la pobreza en el trabajo es el bajo nivel de las horas trabajadas. Éste es un problema que debería abordarse con políticas de fomento de la permanencia en el mercado de trabajo y con el aumento de las horas trabajadas ([2]).

La Comisión ha adoptado el 30 de mayo una recomendación del Consejo sobre el programa español de reforma de 2012.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final de 18.4.2012.
([2]) Véase capítulo 4 de la publicación de la Comisión titulada «Evolución Social y del Empleo en Europa de 2011».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004106/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Setting a minimum wage in Europe

On 18 April 2012, Commissioner Andor introduced a package of measures to boost economic recovery so as to generate employment. These measures included setting a minimum wage in all Member States and increasing wages, in general, as a tool to stimulate internal demand, and hence economic growth, in the Union. This measure will allow progress to be made towards better and more uniform social protection systems, and will also promote efficiency by encouraging employers to compete more in terms of the quality of their products and services and less in terms of costs and wage competition. This will in turn help the 8% of European workers whose wage does not allow them to live above the poverty line.

If, as the Commission affirms, the risk of working poverty is particularly high in countries with high inequality in income distribution, low minimum wages, and inequality among temporary and casual workers, could the Commission explain why it continues to require countries needing financial aid programs (and facing particular difficulties in this respect) to take measures that are contrary to those required of other countries, i.e. freezing or even lowering minimum wages?

The minimum wage in Spain is less than 40% of the country's average wage, yet the Commission's recommendations continue to be aimed at reducing labour costs and freezing wages. Could the Commission explain why?

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

The Employment Package ([1]) is underlying the need of decent and sustainable wages. Setting minimum wages at appropriate levels can help prevent in-work poverty. Nevertheless, the impact of minimum wage on both demand and supply can differ markedly across Member States, depending on the level set, as well as on other labour market policies and institutions. Therefore, wage floors need to be sufficiently adjustable, with the involvement of social partners to reflect overall economic developments. To alleviate in-work poverty, the Package points to the possible use of in-work benefits.

In programme countries, minimum wages that allow for rapid wage adjustment are essential to combat the existing imbalances — high unemployment and loss of competitiveness. Nevertheless, the Commission fully respects autonomous collective bargaining, and therefore social partners are regularly consulted during negotiations.

The minimum wage in Spain is above the poverty threshold. Furthermore, in addition to wages, the main driver of in-work poverty is low level of hours worked. This should be tackled through policies strengthening labour market attachment and increasing the hours worked ([2]).

A Recommendation for a council recommendation on Spain's 2012 NRP has been adopted by the Commission on 30 May.

([1]) COM(2012)173 final 18/04/2012.
([2]) See Chapter 4 of the 'Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2011' publication of the European Commission.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004107/12
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(19. April 2012)

Betrifft: Arbeitnehmerrechte in Europäischen Aktiengesellschaften

Durch die Europäische Aktiengesellschaft (SE) wurde erstmals auch die Möglichkeit eines Wahlrechts zwischen dem im deutschsprachigen Raum üblichen dualistischen System und dem im angelsächsischen Raum üblichen monistischen Verwaltungssystem geschaffen.

Dabei gilt Bestandsschutz für die Mitbestimmung der Arbeitnehmer: Wenn eine deutsche AG mit einer englischen verschmilzt, muss man sich mit den Arbeitnehmern zunächst über die Mitbestimmung einigen.

Können sich die Parteien nach sechs Monaten nicht einigen, bleibt das für die Arbeitnehmer vorteilhafte Recht aus dem Herkunftsland bestehen.

Das können Unternehmen jedoch umgehen: Falls eine SE schon zwei Jahre besteht, kann sie wieder in eine nationale AG umgewandelt werden. Es besteht somit die Möglichkeit, den Sitz einer SE von Deutschland nach England zu verlegen und diese nach zwei Jahren in eine Gesellschaft englischen Rechts umzuwandeln, um sich so der Mitbestimmung zu entziehen.

Daher stellen sich folgende Fragen:

1. Hat die Kommission Vorschläge, wie solch ein Verhalten unterbunden werden könnte?

2. Wenn ja, welche?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(14. Juni 2012)

In ihrer Mitteilung ([1]) zur Überprüfung der Richtlinie 2001/86/EG ([2]) erläuterte die Kommission das von dem Herrn Abgeordneten erwähnte potenzielle Szenario, wonach eine Europäische Gesellschaft (SE) mit Arbeitnehmermitbestimmung ihren Sitz verlegt und in eine Aktiengesellschaft ohne (oder mit einer weniger umfassenden) Arbeitnehmermitbestimmung umgewandelt wird.

Dieses Thema wurde in der ersten Phase der Konsultation der Sozialpartner über eine mögliche Änderung der Richtlinie 2001/86/EG behandelt ([3]). Die Sozialpartner waren jedoch nicht der Ansicht, dass ein solches Thema eine Änderung der Richtlinie rechtfertigen würde.

Die Kommission denkt derzeit über die Zukunft des EU-Gesellschaftsrechts einschließlich der Formen der Europäischen Aktiengesellschaft nach. Sollte die Kommission Änderungen an der Verordnung über die Europäischen Aktiengesellschaften (SE) ([4]) vorschlagen, die wiederum Änderungen an der Richtlinie über die Beteiligung der Arbeitnehmer nach sich zögen, würde sie vor der Vorlage eines entsprechenden Vorschlags die zweite Phase der Konsultation der Sozialpartner einleiten.

([1]) Mitteilung der Kommission zur Überprüfung der Richtlinie 2001/86/EG des Rates vom 8. Oktober 2001 zur Ergänzung des Statuts der Europäischen Gesellschaft hinsichtlich der Beteiligung der Arbeitnehmer, KOM(2008)591 endg. vom 30.9.2008, Punkte 4.3 und 4.4.

([2]) Richtlinie 2001/86/EG des Rates vom 8. Oktober 2001 zur Ergänzung des Statuts der Europäischen Gesellschaft hinsichtlich der Beteiligung der Arbeitnehmer.

([3]) Konsultationsdokument, Erste Phase der Konsultation der Sozialpartner gemäß Artikel 154 AEUV über die mögliche Änderung der Richtlinie 2001/86/EG zur Ergänzung des Statuts der Europäischen Gesellschaft hinsichtlich der Beteiligung der Arbeitnehmer, K(2011)4707 vom 5.7.2011.

([4]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2157/2001 des Rates vom 8. Oktober 2001 über das Statut der Europäischen Gesellschaft (SE), ABl. L 294 vom 10.11.2001, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004107/12
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Labour rights in European public limited liability companies

The establishment of the European company (SE) for the first time provided a right to choose between the dualist regulatory system practised in the German-speaking territories and the monistic system usually followed in the Anglo-Saxon world.

Provision is made to safeguard existing employee participation standards: if a German public limited liability company merges with an English one, an agreement must first be reached with the workforce on employee participation.

If the parties are unable to agree after six months, employees retain the favourable rights from their country of origin.

However, companies can circumvent this: once an SE has been in existence for two years, it can be converted back into a national public limited liability company. This makes it possible to move the location of an SE from Germany to England and then to transform it into a company incorporated under the laws of England and Wales after two years, thereby avoiding the employee participation requirement.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any proposals for preventing such behaviour?

2. If so, what are they?

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

In its communication ([1]) on the review of Directive 2001/86/EC ([2]), the Commission outlined the potential scenario mentioned by the Honourable Member where a European company (SE) subject to employee participation transfers its registered office and converts into a public limited company without employee participation (or with a lower level of employee participation).

This issue was also raised during the first phase of the consultation of the social partners on a possible review of Directive 2001/86/EC ([3]). However, the social partners did not feel that such an issue could justify a review of the directive.

The Commission is currently reflecting on the future of EU company law, including the European forms of company. Should the Commission propose changes to the regulation on the SE ([4]) which would, in turn, entail changes to the directive on the involvement of employees, it would launch a second-phase consultation of the social partners before submitting any such proposal.

([1]) Communication from the Commission on the review of Council Directive 2001/86/EC of 8 October 2001 supplementing the Statute for a European company with regard to the involvement of employees COM(2008)591 final of 30.9.2008, points 4.3 and 4.4.

([2]) Council Directive 2001/86/EC of 8 October 2001 supplementing the Statute for a European company with regard to the involvement of employees.

([3]) Consultation Document, First phase consultation of Social Partners under Article 154 TFEU on the possible review of Directive 2001/86/EC supplementing the Statute for a European company with regard to the involvement of employees, 5.7.2011, C(2011) 4707.

([4]) Council Regulation (EC) No 2157/2001 of 8 October 2001 on the Statute for a European company (SE), Official Journal L 294, 10.11.2001, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004108/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: EU-wide minimum wage

I have received the following request from Kerry County Council (Ireland):

'That we the members of Kerry County Council ask the Government and the Irish Members of the European Parliament to request that all countries in the European Union have the same rate of minimum wage. This would stop the exodus of industry and companies leaving Ireland for cheaper labour.'

In the light of this, can the Commission state what efforts are being made to harmonise minimum wages across the EU, and whether it intends to make a statement on the matter, given that if all Member States had the same rate of minimum wage this would disincentivise the exodus of industry and companies from some Member States in order to avail themselves of cheaper labour in others?

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

The Commission points out that, under the title on Social Policy of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, the European Union does not have the competence to harmonise minimum wages across the EU. It recalls that pay is excluded from the scope of Article 153 TFEU.

Nevertheless, labour demand depends on total labour cost — that incorporates non-wage labour cost as well — and furthermore, also on productivity. In the 2012 Annual Growth Survey the Commission points to several measures to enhance labour demand, such as for instance shifting the fiscal burden away from labour towards other sources that are less detrimental for growth.

Moreover, in the recently adopted Employment Package the Commission is underlying the need of decent and sustainable wages and avoiding low-wage traps. Setting minimum wages at appropriate levels can help prevent growing in-work poverty and it is an important factor in ensuring decent job quality. The impact of the minimum wage on both demand and supply can differ markedly across Member States, depending on the level set, as well as other labour market policies and institutions. The Commission is therefore addressing the issue in the country specific recommendations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004109/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Loss of employment and funding

Can the Commission provide details of any funding available to local authorities in Ireland to compensate for the loss of employment caused by the recession, and by the exodus of companies and industries to EU countries with lower minimum wages, and specify how they can avail themselves of it?

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

The European Social Fund (ESF) is the European Union's main financial instrument for supporting employment and enhancing people's education and skills. In Ireland, the Human Capital Investment Programme will receive EUR 375.4 million from the ESF between 2007 and 2013, with national authorities supplying the same amount ([1]).

On the ground, the ESF in Ireland is helping those made unemployed during the crisis with 50% of all ESF funding allocated to measures to support the unemployed. In 2010, 42% of all participants in ESF funded measures were unemployed. By the end of 2011, Ireland had absorbed over 60% of the total ESF allocation, the highest rate in the EU-27.

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund ([2]) (EGF) helps redundant workers find new jobs and develop new skills when they have lost their jobs as a result of changing global trade patterns. In 2009, the EGF was temporarily enabled to co-finance measures helping workers made redundant as a result of the crisis to quickly find new jobs. Ireland made use of this possibility on six occasions and has received to date a total amount of EUR 60.6 million to support almost 10 000 redundant workers.

In 2011, the Commission made a proposal to extend this 'crisis derogation' by a further two years. The Council has so far failed to agree on this proposal, so that this derogation expired *de facto* at the end of 2011. Ireland still has the possibility to apply for EGF support when workers are made redundant because of trade globalisation (e.g. delocalisation of production to a non-EU country). Details on the EGF are available on its website ([3]).

([1]) See http://www.esf.ie for details of ESF in Ireland.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006, OJ L 48, 22.2.2008, p. 82.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/egf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004110/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Application for EGF funding

More than 300 Intel staff in my constituency were made involuntarily redundant between November 2009 and May 2011. They now wish to apply for EGF funding so they can go back to college and upskill or start up new businesses.

Will the Commission now provide an update on the status of their application and indicate the projected timeframe in which my constituents can expect the outcome?

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

The Commission cannot provide any update on an application which has not been submitted to the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). A list of applications and their current situation is regularly published on the EGF website ([1]). The Honourable Member may wish to consult the EGF Regulation ([2]) which specifies the rules governing this Fund. This regulation provides in particular that applications must be submitted by Member States, as opposed to individuals or companies. 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 Ireland ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/egf.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, OJ L 406, 30.12.2006.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004111/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Profit from West Bank resources

Israel's Supreme Court recently issued a ruling that Israeli companies are entitled to profit from West Bank resources. This decision came as a result of a petition by the Israeli human rights organisation Yesh Din that mining in the West Bank, which is worth USD 900 million to Israeli companies, is illegal under Articles 43 and 55 of the Fourth Hague Convention and of the 'usufruct rule', in particular (Article 55).

The usufruct rule is a long-standing principle of international law which says that an occupying power is an administrator of the territories and must safeguard its capital for the benefit of the local population. The natural resources of an occupied territory do not belong to the occupying power for it to exploit.

However, Israel's Supreme Court decided otherwise. Israel has decided that international law no longer applies to the West Bank because of the long-term nature of the occupation. It indicates that Israel has in effect annexed the West Bank and views the territory as its own.

If Israel already acts as though the West Bank were its own territory, it endangers the two-state solution, which is the stated aim of all parties to the Middle East peace process.

As a key player in the Middle East peace process through its role in the Quartet, the EU has been working hard for a two-state solution. It is therefore astonishing that the EU, and in particular the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, has not made any statement about this ruling.

Will the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs make a strong statement on this significant ruling by the Israeli Supreme Court?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is aware of the judgment rendered by the High Court of Justice of Israel on 26 December 2011. The European External Action Service is currently examining the implications of this ruling.

The EU Delegation in Tel Aviv is monitoring further developments on this issue, in particular any decision that may be taken by Yesh Din to pursue other legal avenues.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004112/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Information request concerning groups in receipt of funding from the EU's Culture programme

The Commission is asked to provide a list of projects in Ireland having received funding from Creative Europe or from the EU's Culture programme (2007-2013). For each of the years that this funding stream has been open, and for each particular project, it is asked to state the specific location of the project, the number of people employed, the amount of funding received, and the nature of the project.

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

Ireland has actively participated in the Culture Programme submitting a total of 46 cultural projects for the period 2007-2012 (for 2012 only partial results so far). Out of these, 13 grants have been awarded to Irish cultural operators as project leaders (action grant) or as cultural body (operating grant), representing an approximate total amount of EUR 1.36 million. The support to Irish cultural operators for the period 2007-2012 is detailed in the table in annex, sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004113/12
aan de Commissie
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(19 april 2012)

Betreft: Randvoorwaarden en vergroening — controle van vruchtwisseling in de lidstaten

Kan de Commissie, gelet op het feit dat de lidstaten volgens Verordening (EG) nr. 1782/2003 ([1]) van de Raad (bijlage IV) „normen voor vruchtwisseling in voorkomend geval" moesten definiëren en dat dit vervolgens facultatief werd als gevolg van de „gezondheidscontrole" (bijlage III bij de Verordening (EG) nr. 73/2009 ([2]) van de Raad), ingaan op de hieronder genoemde kwesties?

1. Kan de Commissie per jaar een overzicht verstrekken, waarin staat vermeld welke lidstaten dergelijke normen hebben ingevoerd en welke lidstaten gebruik hebben gemaakt van afwijkingen (onder vermelding van de redenen en de geldigheidsduur van de betreffende afwijkingen)? Zijn alle percelen in het landbouwpercelenidentificatiesysteem (LPIS-GIS) op plaatsen waar controles zijn uitgevoerd, onderworpen aan administratieve kruiscontroles (vergelijking van het jaar N met de jaren N-1 of N-2 voor het perceel X) op basis van de gegevens uit de aanvraagformulieren? Op welke wijze is dit door middel van controles ter plaatse gecontroleerd (bijvoorbeeld door vergelijkingen met het geïntegreerde beheers- en controlesysteem (IACS), LPIS-GIS-documenten (specifiek voor de gecontroleerde steekproef of voor 100 % van de percelen), checklists enz.)?

2. Kan de Commissie details verstrekken over de lidstaten waarin boeren in hun jaarlijkse aanvragen nog steeds gebruik maken van individuele IACS-gewascodes, in het bijzonder voor eiwithoudende gewassen en peulgewassen?

3. Houdt gewasdiversificatie in lidstaten waarin echte vruchtwisseling wordt afgedwongen of beoefend in reële termen niet een verlaging in van de milieunormen en daarmee van de kwaliteit?

4. Betekent het schrappen van vruchtwisseling uit de goede landbouw- en milieucondities (GLMC) geen verlaging van de milieukwaliteit?

5. Kan de Commissie haar argumentatie toelichten voor de uitsluiting van meerjarige voorwaarden zoals vruchtwisseling uit de vergroeningsmaatregelen, vanwege het feit dat randvoorwaarden niet veranderen en daarmee dus ook meerjarig zijn?

6. Wanneer er geen gewassen gespecificeerd moeten worden volgens de regelgeving van de WHO, zoals wordt beweerd in de effectbeoordeling (bijlage 2, blz. 11, 2.3.2), op welke manier zijn gewassen dan anders volgens artikel 38 van de voorgestelde verordening rechtstreekse betalingen, dat gaat over herkoppeling? Wat betekent dit voor gewasgroepen?

Antwoord van de heer Cioloş namens de Commissie
(12 juni 2012)

1. Vijf lidstaten passen geen GLMC-normen voor vruchtwisseling toe. Niet alle 22 overblijvende lidstaten passen vruchtwisseling toe (zes lidstaten passen bijvoorbeeld gewasdiversificatie toe en in 12 lidstaten geldt een verbod op monocultuur voor bepaalde soorten). De lidstaten verrichten veelal een administratieve controle op basis van de steunaanvraag, aangevuld met een steekproefgewijze controle ter plaatse.

2. De Commissie beschikt niet over de gevraagde informatie.

3. en 4. Aangezien er flexibiliteit geldt ten aanzien van de vaststelling van de eisen inzake GLMC, worden de GLMC-normen inzake vruchtwisseling niet eenvormig en algemeen toegepast. Hoewel deze eis inzake GLMC geen subsidiabiliteitsvoorwaarde was, wordt vruchtwisseling overeenkomstig het GLB-voorstel van oktober 2011 bovendien een voorwaarde voor het ontvangen van de groene betaling. Voorts kan een landbouwer die niet aan de diversificatie-eis voldoet, worden onderworpen aan een sanctie die hoger is dan het niveau van de groene betaling. Door diversificatie op te nemen in de vergroeningsmaatregelen wordt de basis voor agromilieubetalingen bovendien breder en wordt het mogelijk ambitieuzere doelen te stellen.

([1]) PB L 270 van 21.10.2003, blz. 1.
([2]) PB L 30 van 31.1.2009, blz. 16.

5. Aangezien de desbetreffende vergroeningsverplichtingen een voorwaarde voor het ontvangen van de groene betaling worden, zullen deze voor 100 % worden gecontroleerd aan de hand van administratieve controles. In het geval van meerjarige verplichtingen zoals vruchtwisseling zou dit een grote administratieve belasting met zich hebben meegebracht.

6. Vrijwillig gekoppelde steun is ontwikkeld om tot de „blauwe doos" in het kader van de WTO-afspraken te worden gerekend. Dit is de reden waarom er in de regeling maxima zijn opgenomen (afgebakende kwantitatieve grenzen op basis van vaste arealen, opbrengsten of een vast aantal dieren).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004113/12
to the Commission
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Cross-compliance and 'greening' — control of crop rotation in the Member States

Given that under Council Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003 ([1]) (Annex IV) the Member States had to define 'standards for crop rotations where applicable', and that this became optional following the 'health check' (Annex III to Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([2])), could the Commission address the issues outlined below?

1. Please provide a yearly overview indicating which Member States enforced such standards, and which made use of derogations (please include the grounds for such derogations and the length of time for which they were applicable). Where checks were carried out, were all parcels in the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS-GIS) subject to administrative cross-checks (comparing year N with year N-1 or N-2 for parcel X) on the basis of application form data, and how was this checked by means of on-the-spot inspections (e.g. through comparisons with Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) LPIS-GIS records (either specific to the inspection sample or covering 100% of parcels), tick boxes, etc.)?

2. Please provide details as to which Member States still have individual IACS crop codes used by farmers in their yearly applications, in particular for protein or leguminous crops.

3. In real terms, in those Member States in which real crop rotation is enforced/practised, does crop diversification not represent a lowering of environmental standards and therefore of quality?

4. Does the removal of crop rotation from Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) not lower environmental quality?

5. Please explain your reasoning for excluding multiannual requirements such as crop rotation from the greening measures, given that cross-compliance requirements do not change and are therefore also multiannual.

6. If, as stated in the impact assessment (Annex A, p. 11, 2.3.2), no crops should be specified under WTO rules, how are crops different under Article 38 of the proposed direct payment regulation, which concerns recoupling? What about groups of crops?

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

1. Five Member States do not apply the GAEC on crop rotation. Of the remaining 22 Member States, not all apply a crop rotation (e.g six Member States apply diversification, 12 Member States apply a ban of monoculture for some species). The Member States mainly carry out an administrative control on the basis of the aid application complemented with an on the spot check on a sample basis.

2. The Commission does not have the information requested.

3 and 4. As there is flexibility to define a GAEC, currently the GAEC on crop rotation is not implemented in a uniform and generalised way. Besides, while this GAEC was not an eligibility condition, according to the CAP proposal of October 2011 crop diversification will be condition for getting the green payment. Furthermore a farmer not fulfilling diversification may be subject to a sanction that may go beyond the level of the greening payment. Besides, including diversification in greening will increase the baseline for agro-environmental payments and allow setting up more ambitious goals.

5. As the relevant greening obligations will be a condition for receiving the green payment, they will be checked with 100% of administrative checks. With multi-annual commitments such as rotation this could only have been done in an administratively very burdensome way.

6. Voluntary coupled support has been designed so as to be included in the WTO blue box commitments. This is also why limits are included in the scheme (defined quantitative limits based on fixed areas, yields or number of animals).

([1]) OJ L 270, 21.10.2003, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009, p. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004114/12
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Unintended consequences of late payments legislation

Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions aimed to create, for small and medium-sized enterprises, a legal and business environment supportive of timely payments in commercial transactions.

Is the Commission aware of the unintended consequences of this directive, in the sense that shorter payment times have forced some businesses to renegotiate their contracts with their suppliers, resulting in some cases in suppliers losing contracts? As a consequence further down the line, fewer new products and a restricted product range are offered to customers, thus limiting choice.

Similarly, is the Commission aware that a one-size-fits-all policy on payment terms does not take account of different stock turnover times for different sectors (for example, the turnover for grocery products is much quicker than is the case for numerous home improvement products, yet the directive does not take account of this, with the result that some businesses have to face a relatively larger negative impact on working capital)?

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

Being aware of the problems faced by European economic operators throughout the Union due to late payment, the Commission initiated the recast of Directive 2000/35/EC ([1]), aimed at promoting a culture of timely payment.

The new Directive ([2]) harmonises the payment period only for commercial transactions between public authorities and businesses. According to the new rules the former will have to pay within 30 days as a general rule, and only in exceptional circumstances within 60 days. As regards commercial transactions between businesses, Directive 2011/7/EC promotes contractual freedom. The directive provides that payment has to be done in within 60 days unless expressly agreed otherwise and if it is not grossly unfair. Only in case there is no contract or no provision establishing the date of payment, have debtors to pay within 30 days.

In commercial transactions between businesses, SMEs and creditors in general have to be protected against abuses by large companies or distributors that are in an advantageous position. Hence for those situations where the debtors impose long terms of payment on suppliers, the new Directive reinforces the right conferred to the latter to face and combat grossly unfair clauses and practices.

It should also be noted that situations where SMEs benefit from long payment periods (trade credit) are a crucial element to ensuring the competitiveness of SMEs which represent 93% of European undertakings. This is why contractual freedom among businesses has been respected as far as it does not constitute an abuse of power against the supplier. Finally it should be clarified that there is no sectoral approach as regard the payment period in commercial transactions between businesses, contractual freedom being the rule.

([1]) Directive 2000/35/EC on combating late payment in commercial transactions (OJ 200, 8.8.2000, p. 35).
([2]) Directive 2011/7/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 (OJ 48, 23.2.2011, p .1).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004116/12
alla Commissione
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Gianni Vattimo (ALDE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE) e Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(19 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Situazione del credito in Europa a seguito delle due operazioni LTRO adottate dalla BCE

Lo scorso 29 febbraio la Banca Centrale Europea ha distribuito a 800 banche europee 529,5 miliardi di euro a tre anni con un tasso di interesse dell'1 % nell'ambito del secondo LTRO (Operazione di rifinanziamento a lungo termine). Come per il primo LTRO, grazie al quale lo scorso 22 dicembre 523 banche usufruirono di 489 miliardi di euro, l'erogazione di liquidità di lungo termine ha lo scopo di allentare la tensione sul mercato dei debiti soprattutto per quei paesi caratterizzati da bilanci in rosso. Considerando entrambe le operazioni di rifinanziamento, la BCE ha introdotto nel sistema finanziario oltre 1000 miliardi di euro in poco più di un trimestre.

Nel corso di una conferenza stampa tenutasi lo scorso marzo a Francoforte, il Presidente della Banca centrale europea Mario Draghi ha affermato che, mentre il primo LTRO aveva lo scopo di «garantire liquidità al sistema finanziario, la seconda tranche di LTRO si prefigge di sostenere l'economia reale, e soprattutto le PMI, che costituiscono circa l'80 % del mercato occupazionale».

Considerato che l'afflusso di risorse finanziarie rappresenta un fattore imprescindibile per la crescita dell'economia europea, può la Commissione far sapere:

— in che misura le banche beneficiarie del prestito della BCE hanno destinato le risorse ricevute per sostenere l'economia reale, quale settore ne ha usufruito maggiormente e soprattutto se tale prestito ha migliorato le condizioni di cittadini e imprese nell'accesso ai mutui?

— qual è l'attuale tasso d'interesse medio applicato dalle banche europee per l'ottenimento di mutui e prestiti, e se esso è diminuito a seguito dei due LTRO?

— cosa è in grado di fare per assicurarsi che le risorse erogate raggiungano effettivamente l'economia reale e siano meglio finalizzate ad aiutare cittadini e imprese?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(7 agosto 2012)

— L'iniezione straordinaria di liquidità da parte dell'Eurosistema non poteva raggiungere l'economia reale, soprattutto il settore privato, prima di diversi mesi. I dati pubblicamente disponibili, tuttavia, indicano che tra il dicembre 2011 e il febbraio 2012 il totale delle attività delle banche dell'area dell'euro è aumentato di 179 miliardi di euro. Questa espansione delle attività è quasi interamente dovuta all'incremento delle detenzioni di titoli da parte delle banche: si tratta di titoli emessi da altre banche (52 miliardi di euro), dai governi centrali (99 miliardi di euro) e dal settore societario privato (11 miliardi di euro). Nello stesso periodo i prestiti alle famiglie e al settore societario non finanziario hanno subito un declino rispettivamente di 10 e di 14 miliardi di euro. Questi dati suggeriscono che, alla fine di febbraio, l'iniezione di liquidità abbia recato benefici esclusivamente al settore pubblico e finanziario.

— Sulla base dei dati di fine febbraio 2012, nell'area dell'euro il tasso di interesse medio annuale sui nuovi prestiti alle società non finanziarie e alle famiglie era rispettivamente di 4,59 % e 3,92 %, mentre nel dicembre 2011 era rispettivamente di 4,67 % e 4,02 %. Questo calo, seppur significativo, deve essere inquadrato nel contesto delle fluttuazioni ordinarie dell'attività economica. Ciò significa che il possibile impatto specifico della liquidità straordinaria sul costo del denaro non si è ancora fatto sentire.

— La liquidità in eccesso non è una condizione sufficiente per dare impulso ai prestiti al settore privato. In primo luogo è necessario reperire imprenditori privati disposti ad impegnarsi in progetti che essi ritengano redditizi. Per incentivare la richiesta di prestiti da parte di imprenditori e famiglie potrebbero essere necessarie profonde riforme strutturali in settori quali la politica del mercato del lavoro, la previdenza sociale, la fiscalità e le imprese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004116/12
to the Commission
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Gianni Vattimo (ALDE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE) and Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: European credit situation following the ECB's two LTRO operations

On 29 February 2012, as part of its second long-term refinancing operation (LTRO), the European Central Bank (ECB) distributed EUR 529.5 billion to 800 European banks for a three-year period at an interest rate of 1%. As with the first LTRO, on 22 December 2011, when 523 banks benefited from EUR 489 billion, the provision of long-term liquidity aims to relieve debt market tension, especially for those countries whose finances are in the red. Considering both refinancing operations, the ECB has introduced over EUR 1 000 billion into the financial system in just over three months.

During a press conference held in March 2012 in Frankfurt, the European Central Bank President, Mario Draghi, said that while the first LTRO was intended to provide liquidity for the financial system, the second tranche of the LTRO aims to support the real economy, especially SMEs, which account for about 80% of the labour market.

Given that the inflow of financial resources is an indispensable factor for the growth of the European economy, can the Commission state:

— to what extent the banks which received ECB loans have earmarked the resources received to support the real economy; which sector has benefited most and, above all, whether the loans have improved conditions for citizens and businesses seeking access to mortgages;

— what current average interest rate is charged by European banks for loans and mortgages and whether it has decreased as a result of the two LTROs;

— what can be done to ensure that the resources allocated actually reach the real economy and are targeted more effectively in order to help citizens and businesses?

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

— The extra liquidity injected by the Eurosystem could not possibly reach the economy, especially the private sector, before at least several months. Nevertheless, the publicly available data suggests that, between December 2011 and February 2012, banks in the euro area have increased their total assets by EUR 179 billion. This expansion of assets is almost entirely attributable to an expansion of banks' holdings of securities, respectively issued by other banks (EUR 52 billion), by central governments (EUR 99 billion) and by the private corporate sector (EUR 11 billion). Loans to households and to the non-financial corporate sector have actually declined during this period by EUR 10 and EUR 14 billions respectively. This data suggests that, by the end of February, the extra liquidity has benefitted exclusively the public and financial sectors.

— Based on end-of-February 2012 data, the average annual interest rate on new loans to non-financial corporations and households in the euro area was respectively 4.59% and 3.92%. These numbers compare to 4.67% and 4.02% back in December 2011. While a decline is noticeable, it should be put in the context of regular business fluctuations. Hence, the possible specific impact of the extra liquidity on the cost of borrowing is yet to come.

— The surplus liquidity is not a sufficient condition for boosting lending to the private sector. What is needed above all are private entrepreneurs willing to engage in what they consider viable business projects. It might well be that profound structural reforms, in areas such as labour market policy, social security, taxation and business regulation, are required in order to spur loan demand by businessmen and households.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004117/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(19 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Uwolnienie więźniów politycznych na Białorusi

Na skutek ostatnio wypracowanego mocnego stanowiska Unii Europejskiej wobec Białorusi dwóch ważnych więźniów politycznych – Andrei Sannikau i Dzmitrij Bandarenka – zostało zwolnionych z kolonii karnych, w których byli uwięzieni od grudnia 2010 r. W więzieniach przebywa jednak jeszcze kilkunastu więźniów politycznych. Wielu z nich to młodzi aktywiści, których nazwiska nie są wymieniane na forum międzynarodowym.

W związku z powyższym pragnę zapytać Komisję o jej dalszą strategię zmierzającą do uwolnienia pozostałych opozycjonistów. Czy Komisja posiada informacje o stworzonej przez białoruski reżim liście więźniów politycznych, która ich kategoryzuje w zależności od tego, jak ważni wydają się być dla społeczności międzynarodowej?

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

W dniu 15 kwietnia 2012 r. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wydała oświadczenie, w którym z zadowoleniem przyjęła uwolnienie więźniów politycznych Andrieja Sannikaua i Dzmitrija Bandarenki oraz ponowiła skierowany przez UE do Białorusi apel o uwolnienie i zrehabilitowanie wszystkich pozostałych więźniów politycznych.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Ashton nadal popiera naciski polityczne na Białoruś w celu uwolnienia i zrehabilitowania wszystkich więźniów politycznych. W swoich konkluzjach z dnia 23 marca 2012 r. Rada do Spraw Zagranicznych wyraźnie zaznaczyła, że kwestia wprowadzenia środków ograniczających pozostaje otwarta i jest stale analizowana, oraz że na następnym posiedzeniu Rady kolejni przedsiębiorcy i kolejne przedsiębiorstwa odnoszące korzyści ze współpracy z reżimem lub go wspierające zostaną poddane środkom ograniczającym, jeżeli wszyscy białoruscy więźniowie polityczni nie zostaną uwolnieni.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca nie posiada informacji na temat wspomnianej przez Szanownego Pana Posła listy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004117/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(19 April 2012)

Subject: Release of political prisoners in Belarus

As a result of the firm stance the European Union has recently been taking with Belarus, two prominent political prisoners, Andrei Sannikau and Dzmitry Bandarenka, have been released from the penal colonies in which they had been imprisoned since December 2010. However, a dozen or so prisoners are still being held, many of whom are young activists whose names are never mentioned in international circles.

In view of this, can the Commission say how it will now go about securing the release of the opposition figures still being held? Does it have any information about the list of political prisoners drawn up by the Belarusian regime, in which the prisoners are ranked in accordance with how important they are felt to be to the international community?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President in a statement on 15 April 2012 welcomed the release of political prisoners Andrei Sannikaw and Dzmitry Bandarenka, and repeated the EU's call on Belarus to now release and rehabilitate all remaining political prisoners.

The HR/VP remains committed to keeping up the political pressure on Belarus in order to obtain the release and rehabilitation of all political prisoners. In its conclusions of 23 March 2012, the Foreign Affairs Council made clear that its restrictive measures remain open and under constant review and that the Council will agree further designations of businessmen and companies benefitting from or supporting the regime at upcoming Council meetings if all Belarusian political prisoners are not released.

The HR/VP has no information about the list referred to by the Honourable Member.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004118/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Fondos de reserva de las pensiones en el Estado español

Diversos medios de comunicación han publicado en fecha reciente el carácter de las operaciones realizadas por el Fondo de Reserva de la Seguridad Social. Según los datos, el Fondo de Reserva de la Seguridad Social (con un tamaño de 60 000 millones de euros) ha invertido el 90 % de sus fondos en deuda pública española ([1]).

Los motivos aducidos por el Gobierno español son su alta rentabilidad (mayor al 5 %) y la seguridad de la deuda pública como activo sin riesgo.

Teniendo en cuenta que la deuda pública de Grecia ha recibido recientemente una quita para los inversores privados de aproximadamente el 50 %, se plantean nuevas incógnitas ante un activo que obviamente tiene un cierto riesgo de impago.

1. ¿Cómo valora la Comisión la falta de diversificación en las operaciones del Fondo de Reserva de la Seguridad Social?

2. ¿Ha pensado la Comisión en aplicar tests de stress a los fondos de reserva de las pensiones con tal de mejorar su capacidad de resistir situaciones imprevistas en lo que respecta al riesgo de la deuda pública?

3. Si el Fondo de Reserva de la Seguridad Social hubiera tenido entre sus activos deuda griega en el momento en que se ha aplicado una quita sobre su valor, ¿cree la Comisión que el Fondo de Reserva de la Seguridad Social habría estado exento?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de junio de 2012)

1. El Fondo de Reserva de la Seguridad Social fue creado para amortiguar el régimen de pensión por reparto habida cuenta de las previsiones de envejecimiento de la población. La gestión de dicho Fondo es responsabilidad del Gobierno español, que es quien debe decidir el mejor modo de emplear esos activos públicos en el actual período de crisis de las finanzas públicas.

2. La Comisión supervisa la sostenibilidad general de las finanzas públicas de los Estados miembros en los que los regímenes públicos de pensión tienen una gran importancia. La Comisión no realiza, sin embargo, pruebas de estrés de las reservas de los regímenes públicos de pensión. Por el contrario, esos fondos se cuantifican en el marco de la evaluación de la deuda pública.

3. Una de las condiciones más importantes para que el FMI y los ministros de finanzas de la zona euro aprobaran la financiación del segundo programa de ajuste económico griego ha sido que se efectuara con éxito un canje de deuda porque ello contribuiría a mejorar la sostenibilidad de la deuda. Las condiciones de dicho canje de deuda fueron fijadas por las autoridades griegas tras consultar a los representantes de los obligacionistas privados, a los Estados miembros de la zona euro y a la Troika. Para garantizar su éxito, se decidió no discriminar entre unos y otros obligacionistas que se pudieran beneficiar del canje de la deuda. La Comisión no dispone de datos sobre las pérdidas individuales por grupo o tipo de obligacionistas privados del Gobierno griego. Por otro lado, el Gobierno griego ha comunicado al Eurogrupo que no compensará a los obligacionistas privados por las pérdidas en que incurran a raíz del canje de deuda.

([1]) http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20120411/hucha-pensiones-alcanzo-2011-66814-millones-euros-379-mas/515255.shtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004118/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Pension reserve funds in Spain

Various media sources have recently published details of transactions by the Social Security Reserve Fund amounting to EUR 60 billion), indicating that it has invested 90% of its capital in Spanish public debt ([1]).

The reasons given by the Spanish Government are its high yield (over 5%) and the safety of public debt as a riskless asset.

Given that private investors have recently accepted a cut of around 50% in Greek public debt, this raises new questions about an asset that is obviously exposed to some risk of default.

1. What view does the Commission take of the lack of diversification in the Social Security Reserve Fund's transactions?

2. Has the Commission considered applying stress tests to pension reserve funds in order to improve their ability to withstand unexpected situations with respect to public debt risk?

3. If the assets of the Social Security Reserve Fund had included Greek debt at the time when the latter was reduced, does the Commission believe that the Social Security Reserve Fund would have been exempt from cuts?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2012)

1. The Social Security Reserve Fund was set up as a buffer for the Spanish pay-as-you-go pension scheme in view of the projected ageing of the population. The management of the Fund is the responsibility of the Spanish Government, which must consider how these public assets can be best used in view of the current public finance crisis.

2. The Commission monitors the overall sustainability of the Member State's public finances in which public pension schemes play an important part. Separate stress tests of public pension reserves are not carried out by the Commission. Instead, such funds are considered in the broader assessment of public debt.

3. A successful debt exchange was an important pre-condition for Euro area finance ministers and the IMF to approve the financing of the second Greek economic adjustment programme, as it contributed to an improvement of the debt sustainability. The terms of the debt exchange were determined by the Greek authorities after consulting representatives of private bondholders, Euro area Member States and the Troika. To ensure its overall success, it was decided not to discriminate between holders of bonds eligible for the debt exchange. The Commission does not have the data on individual losses by group or type of holders of Greek Government bonds. The Greek Government also stated to the Eurogroup that it will not compensate any private bondholders for the losses incurred due to the debt exchange.

([1]) http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20120411/hucha-pensiones-alcanzo-2011-66814-millones-euros-379-mas/515255.shtml.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004119/12
ao Conselho
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(20 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: O mandato do BCE e a governação económica da UE

De acordo com os artigos 123.° e 124.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia, é proibido todo o tipo de concessão de crédito, pelo Banco Central Europeu, em benefício de governos centrais, autoridades regionais, locais ou outras entidades públicas, outros organismos do setor público ou empresas públicas dos Estados-Membros, bem como a compra direta de títulos de dívida a essas entidades pelo Banco Central Europeu ou pelos bancos centrais nacionais. Tal é aplicável a qualquer medida que não se baseie em considerações de ordem prudencial e que estabeleça acesso privilegiado dos governos ou de qualquer outro organismo público às instituições financeiras.

Nos últimos três anos, o BCE forneceu mais de 1 bilião de euros em financiamentos a custo reduzido a bancos comerciais da zona euro, uma iniciativa que muitos consideraram como tendo evitado uma grave crise bancária.

Muitos bancos aproveitaram esta facilidade proporcionada pelo BCE para concederem créditos a governos com taxas de juro muito mais elevadas. Poder-se-á argumentar que a possibilidade de o BCE conceder créditos diretamente aos Estados-Membros a taxa zero produziria resultados mais eficientes.

Face ao exposto:

1. Além das disposições do Tratado, que obstáculos poderão, na opinião do Conselho, prejudicar a resolução de problemas de liquidez dos governos e das autoridades locais, que tentam adaptar-se às circunstâncias sem perturbar o crescimento?

2. Quais as condições impostas pelo Conselho para que se proceda à alteração das disposições do Tratado, a fim de permitir ao BCE a concessão de crédito a outras entidades que não bancos, tais como os tesouros nacionais ou as autoridades locais?

3. Concorda o Conselho com o facto de existir uma margem para que o BCE desempenhe um papel mais importante na arquitetura da UE, principalmente em tempos de crise económica e financeira?

Resposta
(19 de junho de 2012)

O Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia expõe claramente as responsabilidades respetivas das instituições da União (inclusive as do Banco Central Europeu) e dos Estados-Membros na gestão das políticas económica e orçamental.

No quadro da coordenação da política económica, os Estados-Membros submetem os planos orçamentais abrangentes e os planos económicos mais alargados a exercícios de supervisão no âmbito do Conselho. Esses exercícios são levados a cabo no âmbito do Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento, do Procedimento relativo aos desequilíbrios macroeconómicos e da Estratégia UE2020, todos no âmbito do Semestre Europeu coordenado. Em última análise, os Estados-Membros conservam a responsabilidade para a preparação e execução dos seus programas orçamentais e económicos, neste quadro de coordenação.

O Conselho, em cooperação com o Parlamento Europeu, adotou alguns diplomas para reforçar a governação económica da UE e da área do euro. Os Estados-Membros da área do euro também têm atuado no sentido de aprofundar a integração e de garantir mecanismos financeiros apropriados para o necessário apoio à estabilidade dentro da área do euro.

O Conselho não analisou a questão da alteração do Tratado para modificar o mandato do BCE. O Conselho congratula-se com o papel desempenhado pelo BCE até à data e está plenamente convicto de que continuará a exercer o seu mandato com base na independência consagrada no Tratado. O Conselho continuará a observar a sua obrigação, decorrente do Tratado, de não procurar influenciar o BCE no desempenho das suas funções.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004119/12
to the Council
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: ECB mandate and EU economic governance

Under Articles 123 and 124 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, any type of credit facility with the European Central Bank in favour of central governments, regional, local or other public authorities, other bodies governed by public law, or public undertakings of Member States is prohibited, as is the purchase of debt instruments directly from them by the European Central Bank or national central banks. The same applies to any measure that is not based on prudential considerations and which establishes privileged access by governments or any other public body to financial institutions.

In the last three years, the ECB has provided more than EUR 1 trillion in low-cost financing to commercial banks in the eurozone, an initiative widely credited as having prevented a serious banking crisis.

Many of the banks took advantage of the cheap ECB money to lend on to governments at a much higher interest rate. One could argue that it would be much more efficient for the ECB to lend money directly to the Member States at a zero rate.

In the light of the above:

1. Aside from the Treaty provisions, what obstacles does the Council think might cause problems in addressing the liquidity problems of governments and local authorities that are trying to adjust without destroying growth?

2. Under what conditions would the Council consent to a Treaty change with a view to enabling the ECB to lend to entities other than banks, such as national treasuries or local authorities?

3. Does the Council agree that there is room for the ECB to have a stronger role within the EU's architecture, especially in times of economic and financial crisis?

Reply
(19 June 2012)

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is explicit in setting out the respective responsibilities of the Union's institutions (including the European Central Bank) and of the Member States in the management of economic and budgetary policies.

As part of economic policy coordination, Member States submit comprehensive budgetary and broader economic plans to surveillance exercises within the Council. These exercises are conducted within the framework of the Stability and Growth Pact, the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure and the EU2020 framework, all within the coordinated European Semester. Ultimately, Member States retain responsibility for the preparation and implementation of their budgetary and economic programmes, within this framework of coordination.

The Council, acting together with the European Parliament, has adopted a number of pieces of legislation to reinforce the economic governance of the EU and of the euro area. Member States of the euro area have also acted to deepen integration and to ensure appropriate financial mechanisms for necessary stability support within the euro area.

The Council has not discussed amending the Treaty to alter the mandate of the ECB. The Council welcomes the role the ECB has played thus far and has every confidence that it will continue to exercise its mandate, underpinned by the independence enshrined in the Treaty. The Council will continue to respect its Treaty obligation not to seek to influence the ECB in the performance of its responsibilities.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004120/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D) και Malika Benarab-Attou (Verts/ALE)
(20 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Εργαλείο κατάταξης U-Multirank

Τον Ιούνιο του 2009, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ανέθεσε στον όμιλο CHERPA (Center for Higher Education and Research Performance Assessment) την εκπόνηση μελέτης σκοπιμότητας σε δύο στάδια σχετικά με την πολυδιάστατη και διαδραστική κατάταξη των πανεπιστημίων σε παγκόσμια κλίμακα. Κατά την εκπόνηση του προγράμματος U-Multirank, ο συγκεκριμένος όμιλος επικουρείτο από τέσσερις ομάδες εργασίας στις οποίες συμμετείχαν εκπρόσωποι της Επιτροπής και των διεθνών οργανισμών, διεθνείς εμπειρογνώμονες, ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη καθώς και εκπρόσωποι των σπουδαστών.

Ποια διαδικασία επιλογής ακολούθησε η Επιτροπή για την εκπόνηση του εν λόγω έργου συμπεριλαμβανομένης της έρευνας σκοπιμότητας προτού την αναθέσει στον όμιλο CHERPA; Ποια διαδικασία ακολούθησε για την επιλογή των εμπειρογνωμόνων που συμμετείχαν στις ομάδες εργασίας οι οποίες αναφέρονται στην τελική έκθεση που εγκρίθηκε τον Ιούνιο του 2011;

Σύμφωνα με την τελική έκθεση, 158 φορείς από 57 χώρες του κόσμου δέχτηκαν να συμμετάσχουν στη μελέτη σκοπιμότητας, ωστόσο, μόνο οι 109 εξ αυτών παρέσχον τελικά πλήρη στοιχεία. Η Επιτροπή είναι ικανοποιημένη με τον αριθμό των φορέων που συμμετείχαν στην έρευνα; Οι φορείς που συμμετείχαν αποτελούν αντιπροσωπευτικό δείγμα των φορέων που υπάρχουν ανά χώρα;

Στην εν λόγω μελέτη συμμετείχαν και ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη. Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να προσδιορίσει τα κριτήρια επιλογής των ανωτέρω και να διευκρινίσει αν έμεινε ικανοποιημένη από την αντιπροσωπευτικότητα και την ποιότητα των απαντήσεων που έλαβε;

Βάσει της έκθεσης, στη μελέτη συμμετείχαν 6 770 σπουδαστές και στην ανάλυση συμπεριλήφθηκαν τελικά 5 901 απαντήσεις. Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ικανοποιητικό τον αριθμό των απαντήσεων που έδωσαν οι σπουδαστές; Με ποιο τρόπο σκοπεύει να διασφαλίσει τη συμμετοχή των σπουδαστών στην εκπόνηση και στην εφαρμογή του συστήματος κατάταξης U-Multirank;

Στην ανακοίνωσή της στις 20 Σεπτεμβρίου 2011 με τίτλο «Στήριξη της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης και της απασχόλησης — ένα θεματολόγιο για τον εκσυγχρονισμό των συστημάτων τριτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης της Ευρώπης», η Επιτροπή ανακοίνωσε τη συνέχιση του έργου το 2013. Ποια θα είναι συγκεκριμένα τα επόμενα στάδια για την καθιέρωση του συστήματος και πώς διαμορφώνεται το χρονοδιάγραμμα δράσης;

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

Τον Ιούνιο του 2009, η Επιτροπή ανακοίνωσε την έναρξη μελέτης σκοπιμότητας για την ανάπτυξη μιας πολυδιάστατης παγκόσμιας κατάταξης των πανεπιστημίων. Η κοινοπραξία για την τριτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση και την αξιολόγηση των επιδόσεων της έρευνας (Δίκτυο CHERPA) επιλέχτηκε με βάση τις συνήθεις διαδικασίες κατόπιν πρόσκλησης υποβολής προσφορών. Οι εμπειρογνώμονες που συμμετέχουν στις ομάδες εργασίας έχουν επιλεγεί από το CHERPA επικουρούμενο από συμβουλευτική επιτροπή ενδιαφερόμενων μερών και από ομάδα διεθνών εμπειρογνωμόνων, συμπεριλαμβάνοντας τις υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής. Για τη λήψη βασικών αποφάσεων ζητήθηκε η γνώμη της ομάδας διεθνών εμπειρογνωμόνων. Η ανατροφοδότηση από τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη είναι υψίστης σημασίας, και στην επόμενη φάση του σχεδίου θα περιληφθεί ένα συμβουλευτικό όργανο.

Η Επιτροπή είναι ικανοποιημένη με τον αριθμό των ιδρυμάτων που συμμετέχουν στη μελέτη σκοπιμότητας και με τον αριθμό των σπουδαστών που συμμετείχαν στην έρευνα. Ένα δίκτυο εμπειρογνωμόνων από περισσότερες από 50 χώρες βοήθησε το δίκτυο CHERPA να εντοπίσει μια πολυσχιδή και αντιπροσωπευτική ομάδα ιδρυμάτων.

Η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί με τα συμπεράσματα της μελέτης σκοπιμότητας που απέδειξε ότι είναι εφικτή η έννοια της πολυδιάστατης κατάταξης και η περαιτέρω εφαρμογή της.

Κατά συνέπεια, η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε, στις 20 Μαρτίου 2012 πρόσκληση υποβολής προσφορών (EAC/42/2011) για την εφαρμογή της νέας κατάταξης. Τα πρώτα αποτελέσματα της κατάταξης θα δημοσιευθούν προς το τέλος του 2013. Μετά το 2013 θα υπάρχει μια φάση συνεχούς βελτίωσης, κατά την οποία θα είναι σημαντική η ανατροφοδότηση από τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη και τους τελικούς χρήστες.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004120/12
à la Commission
Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D) et Malika Benarab-Attou (Verts/ALE)
(20 avril 2012)

Objet: Outil U-Multirank

En juin 2009, la Commission européenne a confié au consortium Cherpa (Center for Higher Éducation and Research Performance Assessment) la réalisation d'une étude de faisabilité en deux phases sur un classement multidimensionnel et interactif des universités à l'échelle mondiale. Lors de l'élaboration du projet U-Multirank, ce Consortium a été assisté par quatre groupes de travail avec la participation des représentants de la Commission et des organisations internationales, des experts internationaux, des parties intéressées y compris des représentants des étudiants.

Quelle procédure de sélection la Commission a-t-elle lancé pour la réalisation de ce projet y compris pour l'étude de faisabilité avant qu'elle soit confiée au Consortium Cherpa? Quelle procédure a-t-elle lancé pour la sélection des experts participant aux groupes de travail mentionnés au rapport final adopté en juin 2011?

Selon le rapport final, 158 institutions de 57 pays du monde ont accepté de participer à l'étude de faisabilité, mais seulement 109 ont finalement fourni des données complètes. La Commission se déclare-t-elle satisfaite du nombre des institutions participant à l'étude? Ces institutions constituent-elles un échantillon représentatif des institutions existantes par pays?

Des parties prenantes ont été associées à ce projet. La Commission peut-elle préciser sur quels critères elles ont été choisies et si elle a été satisfaite de la représentativité et de la qualité des réponses reçues?

Selon le rapport, 6 770 étudiants ont participé à l'étude et 5 901 réponses fournies ont pu être inclues à l'analyse. La Commission considère-t-elle le nombre de réponses reçues par les étudiants satisfaisant? De quelle façon entend-elle assurer la participation des étudiants à l'élaboration et la mise en place du système de classement U-Multirank?

Dans sa communication du 20 septembre 2011 sur «Soutenir la croissance et les emplois — un projet pour la modernisation des systèmes d'enseignement supérieur en Europe», la Commission a annoncé la poursuite du projet en 2013. Quelles seraient les prochaines étapes concrètes envisagées pour la mise en place du système et quel serait le calendrier d'action?

Réponse donnée par Mme Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(19 juin 2012)

En juin 2009, la Commission a annoncé le lancement d'une étude de faisabilité d'un classement multidimensionnel des universités à l'échelle mondiale. Le consortium pour l'évaluation des capacités de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche (réseau Cherpa) a été sélectionné à l'issue d'une procédure normalisée d'appel d'offres. Les experts des groupes de travail ont été choisis par Cherpa, assisté d'un comité consultatif constitué de parties prenantes et d'un groupe d'experts internationaux, dont les services de la Commission. Ce groupe d'experts internationaux a été consulté pour les décisions importantes. Le retour d'informations des parties prenantes est un élément de la plus haute importance et un comité consultatif figurera également parmi celles-ci dans la prochaine étape du projet.

La Commission est satisfaite du nombre d'institutions participant à l'étude de faisabilité et de l'échantillon d'étudiants interrogés. Un réseau d'experts de plus de 50 pays a aidé le consortium Cherpa à trouver un éventail représentatifs d'institutions.

La Commission souscrit aux conclusions de l'étude de faisabilité qui a montré que le classement multidimensionnel était une idée réaliste et réalisable.

Dans cette optique, la Commission a lancé le 20 mars 2012 un appel d'offres (EAC/42/2011) concernant l'introduction du nouveau classement. Les résultats en seront publiés vers la fin de 2013. Par la suite, le retour d'informations provenant des parties prenantes et des utilisateurs finals sera un outil important pour l'affinement continu de ce classement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004120/12
to the Commission
Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D) and Malika Benarab-Attou (Verts/ALE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: U-Multirank tool

In June 2009, the Commission awarded CHERPA (the Consortium for Higher Education and Research Performance Assessment) the task of carrying out a feasibility study in two phases on a multi-dimensional and interactive global university ranking system. When the U-Multirank project was drawn up, this Consortium was assisted by four working groups, with the participation of Commission representatives and international organisations, international experts and interested parties, including student representatives.

What selection procedure did the Commission use to carry out this project and the feasibility study before it was entrusted to CHERPA? What procedure was used to select the experts participating in the working groups referred to in the final report adopted in June 2011?

According to the final report, while 158 institutions in 57 countries around the world agreed to participate in the feasibility study, only 109 provided complete results. Is the Commission satisfied with the number of institutions participating in this study? Do these institutions constitute a representative sample of the existing institutions in each country?

Stakeholders were involved in this project. Can the Commission specify which criteria were used to select these stakeholders and whether it is satisfied with the representativeness and the quality of the answers received?

According to the report, 6 770 students participated in the study and 5 901 answers provided were included in the analysis. Does the Commission consider the number of answers received from students satisfactory? How does it intend to ensure student participation in setting up and implementing the U-Multirank ranking system?

In its communication of 20 September 2011 on 'Supporting growth and jobs — an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems', the Commission announced the continuation of the project in 2013. What are the next practical steps to be taken for implementing the system and what will the timetable be?

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

In June 2009 the Commission announced the launch of a feasibility study to develop a multi-dimensional global university ranking. The Consortium for Higher Education and Research Performance Assessment (CHERPA-Network) were selected on the basis of standard procedures following a Call for Tender. Experts participating in the working groups were chosen by CHERPA assisted by an Advisory Board of stakeholders and an international expert panel, including the Commission services. The international expert panel was consulted on key decisions. Feedback from stakeholders is of the highest importance and an Advisory Board will also be a feature of the next phase of the project.

The Commission is satisfied with the number of institutions participating in the feasibility study and with the number of students surveyed. A network of experts in over 50 countries helped the CHERPA-network to find a diverse and representative group of institutions.

The Commission agrees with the conclusions of the feasibility study which demonstrated that the concept of a multidimensional ranking and its further implementation was feasible.

Accordingly, the Commission published on 20 March 2012 a Call for tender (EAC/42/2011) for the implementation of the new ranking. The first ranking results will be published towards the end of 2013. After 2013 there will be a continuous refinement phase where feedback from stakeholders and end-users will be important.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004121/12
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(20 avril 2012)

Objet: Erasmus pour tous et les langues régionales

Le 23 novembre 2011, dans une communication au Parlement, la Commission a présenté les grandes lignes du futur programme «Erasmus pour tous», qui remplacerait notamment, à partir de 2014, le Programme pour l'éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie. Depuis 2007, celui-ci, particulièrement via l'activité clé n°2 «Langues» de son programme transversal, a financé nombre de projets liés aux langues régionales. À dire vrai, c'était la seule source de financement européen pour les langues minoritaires. Si le multilinguisme et la diversité linguistique semblent faire partie des priorités du programme «Erasmus pour tous», ce dernier ne comporte toutefois aucune référence explicite aux langues régionales dans la communication.

— Qu'adviendra-t-il de l'activité clé n°2 «Langues» du programme transversal du Programme pour l'éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie?

— Quelles seront précisément les possibilités offertes aux porteurs de projets liés aux langues régionales et minoritaires de l'Union européenne? Quelle sera la part du budget consacrée à ces langues, qui sont précisément celles qui ont le plus besoin d'un soutien financier et politique de l'Union européenne?

— Ne serait-il pas opportun de mettre en place un programme transversal spécifique consacré aux langues régionales et minoritaires, pour que l'Europe se donne les moyens de préserver ce patrimoine si précieux et fasse honneur à son attachement à sa diversité interne? Cela devient d'autant plus urgent que certaines langues sont menacées de disparition, comme le rappelle régulièrement l'Uunesco. Si le projet Poliglotti4.eu est positif, il est très largement insuffisant: il ne suffit plus de coordonner, d'échanger ou d'informer. Il est urgent d'agir, ce qui implique des financements propres.

Réponse donnée par Mme Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(21 juin 2012)

La Commission, dans sa communication de 2008 intitulée «Multilinguisme: un atout pour l'Europe et un engagement commun» ([1]), a présenté sa stratégie concernant les langues officielles, nationales, régionales, minoritaires et des migrants, qui confirme son soutien à toutes les langues parlées dans l'Union européenne, y compris les langues des minorités.

Le projet de programme «Erasmus pour tous», actuellement à l'examen auprès du Conseil et du Parlement, ambitionne, au travers de ses six objectifs spécifiques, d'améliorer l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues et d'encourager la diversité linguistique. Le programme prévoit, pour simplifier sa gestion, d'intégrer toutes les activités dans les trois actions essentielles (mobilité, partenariats et soutien politique) applicables aux différents secteurs éducatifs. Cette approche intégrée sera également appliquée aux activités de nature linguistique et l'activité clé n° 2 de l'actuel programme d'éducation et de formation tout au long de la vie sera supprimée.

Cela n'empêchera pas la Commission de soutenir, dans le nouveau programme, les langues européennes moins répandues. La proposition de la Commission réaffirme l'importance du multilinguisme et du multiculturalisme à soutenir par «la mobilité des apprenants et des professeurs de langues, par la coopération en vue de l'élaboration de méthodes et d'instruments innovants pour l'enseignement des langues et par l'appui stratégique de la réforme de l'enseignement des langues et de la diversité linguistique dans les systèmes éducatifs».

Les actions ouvertes aux langues régionales et minoritaires seront admises de la même façon que les actions concernant toute autre langue; aucune affectation financière n'est prévue pour une catégorie quelconque de langues.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004121/12
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Erasmus for All and regional languages

In a communication to Parliament on 23 November 2011, the Commission outlined the future Erasmus for All programme, which, in particular, would replace the Lifelong Learning Programme from 2014 onwards. Since 2007, this has funded a number of projects related to regional languages, particularly through its transversal programme key activity No 2 'Languages'. In fact, it was the only source of European funding for minority languages. Although multilingualism and linguistic diversity appear to be a priority in the Erasmus for All programme, it makes no explicit reference to regional languages in the communication.

— What will happen to the transversal programme key activity No 2 'Languages' of the Lifelong Learning Programme?

— What options exactly will be offered to promoters of projects related to the regional and minority languages of the European Union? What proportion of the budget will be set aside for these languages, the very languages that are most in need of financial and political support from the European Union?

— Would it not be advisable to implement a transversal programme specifically for regional and minority languages, so that Europe has the means to preserve this precious heritage and can do justice to its commitment to internal diversity? This is all the more urgent since some languages are endangered, as is regularly pointed out by Unesco. While the Poliglotti4.eu project is a positive step, it is far from sufficient: it is not enough to coordinate, exchange or inform. Action is urgently required and therefore requires specific funding.

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

The Commission's strategy covering official, national, regional, minority and migrant languages was presented in its 2008 Communication 'Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment' ([1]), confirming the Commission's support for all languages spoken in the European Union, including the languages spoken by minorities.

The proposal for the Erasmus for All Programme, now being examined by the Council and the Parliament, aims among its six specific objectives to improve the teaching and learning of languages and promote linguistic diversity. The programme foresees a streamlining of all activities into three key actions applicable to the different educational sectors (mobility, partnerships and policy support), in order to simplify management of the programme. This integrated approach will apply also to language-related activities and the Key Activity 2 of the current Lifelong Learning Programme will be discontinued.

This will not prevent the Commission from supporting the less widely used European languages in the new programme. The Commission proposal restates the values of multilingualism and multiculturalism, to be supported through 'the mobility of learners and language teachers, cooperation to develop innovative tools and methods for language education and policy support for the reform of language teaching and linguistic diversity in education systems'.

Actions involving regional and minority languages will be eligible to benefit from programme funding on an equal footing with actions concerning all other languages; no earmarking is foreseen for any category of languages.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004122/12
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(20 avril 2012)

Objet: Europe créative et diversité linguistique

Dans une communication adressée au Parlement européen, la Commission a présenté les grandes lignes du futur programme «Europe créative» dédié aux secteurs de la culture et de la création, qui devrait être lancé en 2014. Ce programme vise à remplacer les actuels programmes Culture, MEDIA et MEDIA Mundus. L'un des problèmes de ces programmes est qu'ils n'étaient pas ouverts aux langues régionales de l'Union européenne, comme il leur a été reproché à maintes reprises. Ainsi, même le programme de soutien aux traductions littéraires était réservé aux langues officielles, alors que les langues qui en auraient eu le plus besoin sont justement les langues régionales, les langues les plus fragiles et pauvres (notamment en France).

— La Commission a-t-elle l'intention de remédier à cette situation dans le programme «Europe créative»? Quelles possibilités comportera-t-il pour les langues régionales? La Commission insiste en effet sur le fait que le programme «Europe créative» a notamment pour objectif de contribuer à la protection et à la mise en valeur de la diversité culturelle et linguistique de l'Europe, dont les langues régionales sont un des éléments les plus essentiels. Concrètement, comment la Commission prévoit-elle de mettre en œuvre cet objectif essentiel?

— Dans sa communication, la Commission évoque un soutien plus stratégique en faveur de la traduction littéraire. Ce soutien inclura-t-il cette fois les langues régionales?

— En ce qui concerne le cinéma, des mesures sont-elles prévues pour soutenir la production ou la traduction de films en langues régionales?

— Quel sera le contenu du sous-programme intersectoriel, notamment en ce qui concerne la diversité linguistique et culturelle?

Réponse donnée par Mme Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(22 juin 2012)

La promotion de la culture et de la diversité linguistique restera un objectif central du programme Europe créative. Les acteurs culturels engagés dans la mise en valeur des langues minoritaires et régionales pourront utiliser le programme pour développer des projets de coopération et des activités en réseau. Il convient de rappeler que le programme Culture soutient déjà aujourd'hui un certain nombre de projets valorisant la diversité linguistique. La Commission, au travers d'initiatives de soutien plus stratégique, cherche à encourager la traduction littéraire à la fois des langues dominantes vers les langues moins répandues et réciproquement et à élargir le public s'intéressant à de nouvelles traductions.

À l'instar de son prédécesseur, le futur volet MEDIA du programme Europe créative interviendra aussi en amont et en aval du processus de production et ne soutiendra pas directement l'industrie cinématographique, qui relève des États membres. En revanche, le volet MEDIA facilite la distribution de films européens dans d'autres pays européens que ceux qui les ont produits. À cet égard, les coûts éligibles incluent notamment le doublage et le sous-titrage dans toute langue jugée nécessaire par le distributeur du film dans une région, qu'il s'agisse de cinémas ou de services de location de vidéos à la demande. Il est proposé que le volet transsectoriel d'Europe créative s'emploie entre autres à conquérir un public plus large en aidant précisément les institutions actives dans le domaine de la diversité linguistique à mettre en valeur leur utilité et renforcer leur visibilité.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004122/12
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Creative Europe and linguistic diversity

In a communication addressed to the European Parliament, the Commission has outlined the future Creative Europe programme for the cultural and creative sectors, due to be launched in 2014. This programme is set to replace the current Culture, MEDIA and MEDIA Mundus programmes. One of the problems of these programmes is that they were not open to the regional languages of the European Union, for which they were repeatedly criticised. Thus, even the support programme for literary translations was reserved for official languages, while the languages that would have needed it most are in fact regional languages, the most fragile and poorest languages (particularly in France).

— Does the Commission intend to remedy this situation in the Creative Europe programme? Which opportunities will it include for regional languages? The Commission stresses that the objective of the Creative Europe programme is to help protect and enhance cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe, where regional languages are one of the most important elements. How does the Commission specifically plan to implement this key objective?

— In its communication, the Commission refers to more strategic support for literary translation. Will this support include regional languages this time?

— As for the cinema, are there plans to introduce measures to support the production and translation of films in regional languages?

— What will be the content of the intersectoral sub-programme, in particular regarding linguistic and cultural diversity?

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

Fostering cultural and linguistic diversity will continue to play a central role in the Creative Europe Programme. Cultural actors engaged in promoting minority and regional languages will be able to use the programme to develop cooperation projects and network activities. It is worth recalling that the current Culture Programme already supports a number of projects promoting linguistic diversity. The Commission is seeking to promote translations in both directions between dominant and lesser-used languages and to focus on building readership of new translations through more strategic support.

As under its predecessor, the future MEDIA strand under the Creative Europe Programme will also intervene upstream and downstream of the production phase and will not give direct support to cinematographic production, which lies in the responsibility of Member States. In turn, the MEDIA strand supports the distribution of European films in European countries other than their country of origin. In this respect, eligible costs include *inter alia* the costs for dubbing and subtitling in any language a distributor considers necessary for the distribution of the film in a region, be it in cinemas and/or through video on demand services. It is proposed that the cross-sectional strand of Creative Europe among other things will seek to promote audience building, thus helping institutions active in the field of linguistic diversity to boost their relevance and visibility.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004123/12
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(20 april 2012)

Betreft: Openstelling Nederlandse kabel

Op 11 februari 2009 werd bekendgemaakt dat de Europese Commissie haar goedkeuring verleent aan een voorstel van de Nederlandse telecomregulator OPTA om Ziggo en UPC te dwingen alternatieve exploitanten toegang te verlenen tot hun netwerken. Op 18 augustus 2010 besliste Het College voor Beroep van het Bedrijfsleven (CBB) het besluit van OPTA om de concurrentie te bevorderen te vernietigen. Daarom is de Nederlandse kabel tot op vandaag nog niet opengesteld voor concurrentie.

Op 9 maart 2012 werd door verschillende mediabedrijven geschreven dat commissaris Kroes bevestigt de openstelling van de kabel in Nederland tegen te gaan.

Heeft de Commissie inzicht in de openstelling van de kabel in Nederland en in het tijdpad volgens welke dit gebeurt?

Is de huidige situatie in Nederland in strijd met de Europese regelgeving?

Is de Commissie van plan de openstelling van de Nederlandse kabel te verhinderen?

Heeft de Commissie inzicht in het percentage van de omzet die telecomoperatoren investeren in infrastructuur?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(7 juni 2012)

De Commissie houdt de concurrentiesituatie op de markt voor elektronische communicatie in Nederland voortdurend nauwlettend in het oog. Het bevorderen van concurrentie bij het aanbieden van elektronische-communicatiediensten is een van de belangrijkste doelstellingen van het Europees beleid op dit gebied. Bij elke vorm van regulatie van elektronische-communicatiediensten op nationaal niveau moet er rekening worden gehouden met de verplichtingen die zijn vastgelegd in het regelgevingskader ([1]). In de kaderrichtlijn ([2]) is met name voorgeschreven dat de onafhankelijke nationale regelgevende instanties ex ante regulerende verplichtingen dienen op te leggen in overeenstemming met de beginselen en procedures die in deze richtlijn zijn omschreven. In artikel 8, lid 2, van die richtlijn is bepaald dat de nationale regelgevende instanties concurrentie bij de levering van elektronische-communicatienetwerken en -diensten en de bijbehorende faciliteiten dienen te bevorderen, onder meer door ervoor te zorgen „dat er in de sector elektronische communicatie geen verstoring of beperking van de concurrentie is".

De Commissie kan berichten in de pers niet bevestigen dat vicevoorzitter Kroes zou hebben verklaard tegen ontwerpwetgeving inzake het openstellen van de kabelnetwerken in Nederland te zijn. Mevrouw Kroes heeft geen standpunt ingenomen over specifieke ontwerpwetgeving; dat is een zaak voor bilateraal contact tussen de Commissie en de Nederlandse regering.

In Nederland heeft de sector in 2010 24 % van de omzet geïnvesteerd, dat is een van de hoogste cijfers in de Europese Unie en bijna het dubbele van het EU-gemiddelde van 12,4 %.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/ecomm/index_en.htm
([2]) Richtlijn 2002/21/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 7 maart 2002 inzake een gemeenschappelijk regelgevingskader voor elektronische-communicatienetwerken en -diensten, gewijzigd bij Richtlijn 2009/140/EG.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004123/12
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Opening up the Dutch cable networks

On 11 February 2009 it was announced that the European Commission was clearing a proposal by the Dutch telecoms regulator, OPTA, to compel Ziggo and UPC to grant alternative providers access to their networks. On 18 August 2010, the 'College voor Beroep van het Bedrijfsleven' (CBB, the Dutch Trade and Industry Appeals Tribunal) decided to overturn OPTA's decision to improve competition. Therefore, to this day, the Dutch cable networks have not been opened up to competition.

On 9 March 2012, various media companies wrote that Commissioner Kroes had confirmed that she would oppose the opening-up of the cable networks in the Netherlands.

Has the Commission any insight into the opening-up of the cable networks in the Netherlands and into the timetable according to which this will take place?

Is the current situation in the Netherlands contrary to European law?

Does the Commission intend to prevent the opening-up of the Dutch cable networks?

Does the Commission know the percentage of turnover that telecoms operators invest in infrastructure?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2012)

The Commission continues to carefully monitor the competitive situation on the Dutch electronic communications market. The promotion of competition in the provision of electronic communication services is one of the main objectives of European policy in this field. Any attempt to regulate electronic communication services, at national level, must respect the obligations laid down in the regulatory framework ([1]). In particular the framework Directive ([2]) provides that *ex ante* regulatory obligations should be imposed by independent national regulatory authorities (NRAs), in accordance with the principles and procedures defined in this directive. Article 8(2) of the same Directive states that NRAs shall promote competition in the provision of electronic communications networks, electronic communications services and associated facilities *inter alia* by 'ensuring that there is no distortion or restriction of competition in the electronic communications sector, including the transmission of content'.

The Commission does not confirm the press statement according to which Vice-President Kroes would have declared her opposition to the draft legislation concerning the opening of the cable networks in the Netherlands. Ms Kroes did not give her assessment of the specific draft legislation, which is a matter for bilateral contacts between the Commission and the Dutch Government.

The Netherlands had in 2010 an investment to revenue ratio of 24%, one of the highest in the European Union, almost double the EU average of 12.4%.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/ecomm/index_en.htm
([2]) Directive 2002/21/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 March 2002 on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services as amended by Directive 2009/140/EC.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004124/12
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Jolanta Emilia Hibner (PPE) oraz Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(20 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Zakaz sprzedaży na rynku UE kosmetyków zawierających składniki testowane na zwierzętach

Zgodnie z harmonogramem określonym w dyrektywie 2003/15/WE 11 marca 2013 r. wejdzie w życie zakaz sprzedaży na rynku UE kosmetyków zawierających składniki testowane na zwierzętach, mimo że nie są dostępne metody badań alternatywnych. Dotyka to w szczególności przemysłu kosmetycznego, który jest jedynym w UE sektorem objętym wspomnianym zakazem, a który jako jedyny finansuje rozwój metod alternatywnych, z których korzystają następnie wszystkie inne sektory (przykładowo projekt SEURAT-1). Jednocześnie rozporządzenie 1223/2009/WE wskazuje, że w ocenie bezpieczeństwa produktów kosmetycznych niezbędne są dane toksyczności systemowej uzyskane w badaniach z wykorzystaniem zwierząt. Wprowadzenie przedmiotowego zakazu oznacza, że do momentu opracowania metod alternatywnych na rynku UE nie będą mogły być wprowadzane produkty kosmetyczne zawierające innowacyjne składniki, co w mojej opinii nasuwa szereg pytań o konkurencyjność czy kontrole kosmetyków importowanych. Z pełnym przekonaniem popieram wprowadzenie całkowitego i globalnego zakazu testowania składników kosmetyków na zwierzętach, jednak w mojej ocenie na chwilę obecną strategia wycofywania badań na zwierzętach wydaje się sprzeczna z obowiązującymi wymaganiami dotyczącymi bezpieczeństwa kosmetyków, stanem nauki oraz strategią Europa 2020.

W związku z powyższym chciałabym zapytać Komisję, czy w opinii Komisji:

1. zakaz nie stanowi zagrożenia dla bezpieczeństwa konsumentów?

2. zakaz nie spowoduje osłabienia konkurencyjności w UE?

3. zakaz jest spójny ze strategią wzrostu Europa 2020 i czy nie godzi w innowacyjność, która jest kluczowym filarem tej strategii?

4. Biorąc pod uwagę, że skala badań na zwierzętach wykonywanych przez przemysł kosmetyczny jest znacznie mniejsza niż w innych sektorach, a jednocześnie, że przemysł kosmetyczny jest jedynym sektorem, który inwestuje w rozwój metod alternatywnych, czy w opinii Komisji wprowadzenie w UE zakazu sprzedaży kosmetyków zawierających składniki testowane na zwierzętach mimo braku metod alternatywnych stanowi faktyczną i istotną korzyść z punktu widzenia dobrostanu zwierząt, w tym liczby zwierząt oszczędzonych w badaniach?

5. Biorąc pod uwagę, że zakaz nie jest globalny i dotyczy wyłącznie rynku europejskiego, w jaki sposób KE zamierza prowadzić nadzór importu produktów kosmetycznych w celu zapewnienia, że żadne produkty zawierające składniki testowane na zwierzętach nie wejdą na rynek UE po 11 marca 2013 r.?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johna Dallego w imieniu Komisji
(22 czerwca 2012 r.)

Komisja finalizuje obecnie ocenę skutków w odniesieniu do terminu przewidzianego na rok 2013. Będzie ona publicznie dostępna zgodnie z przyjętą praktyką przeprowadzania ocen skutków.

1. Komisja nie uważa, by wdrożenie zakazu wprowadzania do obrotu w 2013 r. mogło mieć wpływ na bezpieczeństwo konsumentów. Na rynek europejski będą mogły być wprowadzane tylko produkty spełniające wymogi prawne. Oznacza to, że w przypadku braku istotnych danych z badań produkt nie będzie mógł zostać wprowadzony na rynek.

2.-3. Komisja przeprowadza ocenę skutków w celu określenia możliwego wpływu na konkurencyjność europejskiego przemysłu kosmetycznego i jego zdolność do innowacji.

4. Komisja uznaje zaangażowanie przemysłu kosmetycznego w badania nad metodami alternatywnymi. Przyznała również, że liczba wykorzystywanych zwierząt jest stosunkowo niska. Leżąca u podstaw tego problemu kwestia dobrostanu zwierząt dotyczy jednak nie tylko ich liczby, ale również aspektów etycznych.

5. Podczas gdy zakaz testowania jest stosowany wyłącznie w Unii Europejskiej, zakaz wprowadzania do obrotu ma zastosowanie do wszystkich produktów kosmetycznych wprowadzanych na rynek w Unii Europejskiej, w tym produktów z przywozu. Kontrola i egzekwowanie zakazu należy do zadań państw członkowskich w zakresie nadzoru rynku, a prawodawstwo w dziedzinie kosmetyków stanowi, że dokumentacja produktu musi zawierać informacje istotne dla takiego nadzoru.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004124/12
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Jolanta Emilia Hibner (PPE) and Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: EU ban on selling cosmetic products containing ingredients that have been tested on animals

In accordance with the timetable set out in Directive 2003/15/EC, the EU ban on selling cosmetic products containing ingredients tested on animals will enter into force on 11 March 2013, even though alternative methods of research are not available. This affects, in particular, the cosmetics industry, which is the only sector in the EU included in the aforementioned ban, and the only one that is financing the development of alternative methods which are then used in all other sectors (for example, project SEURAT-1). At the same time, Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 indicates that systemic toxicity data obtained from research using animals are vital when carrying out safety assessments of cosmetic products. The introduction of the ban means that, until alternative methods are developed in the EU, it will not be possible to introduce cosmetic products containing innovative ingredients. In my opinion, this raises a series of questions about competitiveness and the control of imported cosmetics. I fully support the introduction of a complete and global ban on testing the ingredients of cosmetic products on animals; however, the current strategy of phasing out animal testing seems to be inconsistent with the applicable requirements concerning the safety of cosmetic products, the state of science and the Europa 2020 strategy.

In view of the above, I would like to put the following questions to the Commission:

1. Does the ban not pose a risk to consumer safety?

2. Will the ban not weaken competitiveness in the EU?

3. Is the ban consistent with the Europa 2020 growth strategy? Is it not detrimental to innovation, which is a key pillar of this strategy?

4. Given that the scale of research on animals conducted by the cosmetics industry is significantly smaller than in other sectors, and — at the same time — that the cosmetics industry is the only sector that is investing in the development of alternative methods, will the introduction in the EU of the ban on selling cosmetic products containing ingredients which have been tested on animals, in spite of the absence of alternative methods, constitute — in the Commission's opinion — a real and significant benefit in terms of animal welfare, including the number of animals spared in research?

5. Taking account of the fact that the ban is not global and applies only to the European market, how does the European Commission intend to supervise the importing of cosmetic products to ensure that no products containing ingredients tested on animals enter the EU market after 11 March 2013?

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

The Commission is currently finalising the impact assessment in relation to the 2013 deadline. It will be made available and public as is normal practice for impact assessments.

1. The Commission does not consider that the implementation of the 2013 marketing ban will impact consumer safety. Only products that comply with the legal requirement can be placed on the European market. This means that where the relevant testing data is missing, the product can not be placed on the market.

2-3. The Commission is carrying out the impact assessment in order to identify the possible impacts on the competitiveness of the European cosmetics industry and its capacity to innovate.

4. The Commission recognises the cosmetics industry engagement in the research of alternatives. It has also acknowledged that the number of animals in question is comparatively low. The underlying animal welfare question is however not only one of numbers, but also an ethical consideration.

5. While the testing ban only applies in the European Union, the marketing ban applies to all cosmetic products placed on the market in the European Union, including imported products. Control and enforcement of the ban is part of the market surveillance tasks of the Member States and the cosmetics legislation stipulates that the product information file has to contain the information relevant to such surveillance.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004126/12
à la Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE)
(20 avril 2012)

Objet: Application de l'article 287, paragraphe 1, second alinéa, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (traité FUE) par la Cour des comptes européenne

L'article 287, paragraphe 1, second alinéa, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (traité FUE) dispose que: «La Cour des comptes fournit au Parlement européen et au Conseil une déclaration d'assurance concernant la fiabilité des comptes ainsi que la légalité et la régularité des opérations sous-jacentes, qui est publiée au Journal officiel de l'Union européenne. Cette déclaration peut être complétée par des appréciations spécifiques pour chaque domaine majeur de l'activité de l'Union.»

Au fil des années, la Cour des comptes européenne a présenté cette déclaration d'assurance de manières différentes et, dernièrement, pour l'exercice clos au 31 décembre 2010, sous la forme de quatre opinions portant sur:

— la fiabilité des comptes;

— la légalité et la régularité des recettes sous-jacentes aux comptes;

— la légalité et la régularité des engagements sous-jacents aux comptes;

— la légalité et la régularité des paiements sous-jacents aux comptes, assortie d'éléments étayant cette dernière opinion qui est défavorable.

Le fait, pour la Cour des comptes, de présenter une déclaration d'assurance à l'issue de son audit en la scindant en quatre opinions distinctes, rend difficile, pour le Parlement européen, d'apprécier si nous sommes en présence d'une déclaration d'assurance positive ou négative. Or l'exacte appréciation de l'opinion de la Cour des comptes par le Parlement européen est indispensable pour qu'il puisse, en toute connaissance de cause, contrôler l'exécutif européen et exercer sa responsabilité politique consistant à donner, sur recommandation du Conseil, la décharge à la Commission européenne sur l'exécution du budget de l'Union européenne en application de l'article 319 du traité FUE sur la base de la déclaration d'assurance visée à l'article 287, paragraphe 1, alinéa 2, du même traité.

C'est dans ces conditions que je demande à qui de droit à la Commission, si, en présentant sa déclaration d'assurance sous cette forme de quatre opinions distinctes, la Cour des comptes européenne fait une exacte application de l'article 287 du traité FUE qui prévoit une déclaration d'assurance unique et non pas plusieurs opinions?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2012)

L'article 287 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne dispose que la Cour des comptes européenne fournit une déclaration d'assurance concernant, d'une part, la fiabilité des comptes et, d'autre part, la légalité et la régularité des opérations sous-jacentes.

La Cour s'acquitte de ces obligations une fois par an et conformément à ses procédures internes. La Commission n'est pas compétente pour commenter le fait que la Cour a choisi de rendre une déclaration sur la fiabilité des comptes et trois déclarations sur la légalité/régularité des opérations sous-jacentes (recettes, engagements et paiements). Du point de vue de la Commission, le mieux serait que la question soulevée par l'Honorable Parlementaire soit posée à la Cour.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004126/12
to the Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Compliance by the European Court of Auditors with the second subparagraph of Article 287(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)

The second subparagraph of Article 287(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states that: 'The Court of Auditors shall provide the European Parliament and the Council with a statement of assurance as to the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions which shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*. This statement may be supplemented by specific assessments for each major area of Union activity.'

Over the years, the European Court of Auditors has presented this statement of assurance in different ways and, more recently, for the financial year ending on 31 December 2010, in the form of four opinions on:

— the reliability of the accounts;

— the legality and regularity of revenue underlying the accounts;

— the legality and regularity of commitments underlying the accounts;

— the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts, together with evidence supporting this last opinion, which is unfavourable.

The fact that the Court of Auditors has presented a statement of assurance following its audit in the form of four separate opinions makes it difficult for the European Parliament to decide whether it is dealing with a positive or negative statement of assurance. However, it is vital that the Court of Auditors' opinion is accurately assessed by the European Parliament so that, in full knowledge of the facts, it can monitor the Commission and exercise its political responsibility which involves — acting on a recommendation from the Council — giving a discharge to the European Commission in respect of the implementation of the EU budget pursuant to Article 319 TFEU based on the statement of assurance referred to in the second subparagraph of Article 287(1) TFEU.

In view of this, I am asking whoever it may concern at the Commission, whether, by submitting its statement of assurance like this with four separate opinions, the European Court of Auditors is acting in strict compliance with Article 287 TFEU, which provides for a single statement of assurance and not several opinions?

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

Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union requests the European Court of Auditors to produce a declaration of assurance on the reliability of the accounts on the one hand and on the legality and regularity of the underlying transaction on the other.

The Court fulfils these obligations on an annual basis and in accordance with its internal procedures. The Commission has no competence to comment on the fact that the Court has chosen to express one declaration on the reliability of the accounts and three declarations on the legality/regularity of the underlying transactions (revenue, commitments and payments). The Commission is of the view that the question raised by the Honourable Member could be best asked to the Court.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004127/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(20 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Informazioni circa la rete d'informazione Europe direct

Nel 2005 è stata lanciata una rete d'informazione, Europe direct, la quale agisce come intermediario tra l'Unione europea e i cittadini svolgendo attività di raccolta, analisi e diffusione della documentazione, nonché di informazione e promozione della conoscenza delle Istituzioni e delle politiche europee. Allo stato attuale questo network conta 450 antenne informative nei 27 Stati membri.

Premesso ciò, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. a quanto ammonta la dotazione finanziaria complessiva e di quale budget dispone ogni singolo centro d'informazione locale? la Commissione è a conoscenza dei modi e dei tempi con cui vengono utilizzate le risorse finanziarie?

2. è al corrente del grado di soddisfazione dei cittadini europei di questo servizio e esiste un vero coordinamento di tutti i centri d'informazione per permettere il flusso di informazioni?;

3. è possibile implementare il sito web centrale di Europe Direct non solo con informazioni base, ma con informazioni aggiornate riguardanti le attività attuali della Commissione, i bandi in corso, le consultazioni pubbliche, ecc;

4. quando sarà indetta la prossima gara d'appalto per la selezione delle strutture ospitanti i centri Europa direct?

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

1. Il bilancio annuale complessivo stanziato per le sovvenzioni dei Centri d'informazione Europe Direct (EDIC) è pari a 11 400 000 EUR. La sovvenzione per azioni ricevuta da ciascun EDIC va da un minimo di 15 000 EUR a un massimo di 25 000 EUR.

La Commissione seleziona le strutture ospitanti degli EDIC attraverso un invito a presentare proposte. Le sovvenzioni per azioni annuali sono assegnate nella forma di importi forfettari sulla base dei piani d'azione presentati dalle strutture ospitanti. L'importo finale della sovvenzione dipende da tasso d'implementazione del piano d'azione.

2. Una valutazione intermedia sulle prestazioni generali degli EDIC completata nel gennaio di quest'anno indica che i cittadini sono estremamente soddisfatti dei servizi degli EDIC e si sentono meglio informati sulle questioni attinenti all'UE grazie al loro operato.

La Commissione coordina e supporta gli EDIC. Essa fornisce informazioni di contesto sulle priorità dell'UE, assicura il flusso di informazioni, identifica gli strumenti di comunicazione più adeguati e si cura dello scambio transnazionale di buone pratiche e dei collegamenti in rete tra gli aderenti all'intera rete. A livello nazionale le rappresentanze della Commissione forniscono orientamenti sui piani d'azione nazionali degli EDIC, organizzano riunioni di coordinamento per tutti i membri della rete e impartiscono a tutti i centri una formazione affinché questi sappiano come adattare le priorità in tema di comunicazione alle esigenze locali e regionali.

3. Il sito web centrale di Europe Direct [1] intende rendere disponibili e promuovere i servizi del Centro di contatto Europe Direct e delle reti Europe Direct. Informazioni generali sulle attività della Commissione nonché annunci in merito a consultazioni, inviti a presentare proposte, ecc. sono comunicati sulle pagine web Europa consacrate a tali attività. Gli EDIC promuovono le politiche dell'UE pubblicando informazioni aggiornate sui loro siti web.

4. Nel giugno del 2012 verrà indetto un invito a presentare proposte per selezionate le strutture ospitanti della nuova generazione di EDIC al fine di avviare la terza generazione di EDIC a partire dal gennaio 2013.

[1] http://www.europedirect.europa.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004127/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Information regarding the Europe Direct information network

The Europe Direct information network was launched in 2005. It acts as an intermediary between the European Union and its citizens and gathers, analyses and distributes documentation, as well as providing information on and raising awareness of the European institutions and EU policies. The network currently has 450 information centres in the 27 Member States.

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

1. What is the overall budget for the network and how much money does each individual local information centre have at its disposal? Does the Commission know how and when the financial resources are spent?

2. Does it know how satisfied European citizens are with this service, and is there proper coordination among all information centres in order to ensure that information flows as it should?

3. Would it be possible for the central Europe Direct website to provide not only basic information but also up-to-date information regarding the current activities of the Commission, current tender procedures, public consultations, and so on?

4. When will the next call for proposals be issued for the purpose of selecting organisations to host Europe Direct centres?

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

1. The total annual budget allocated to the Europe Direct Information Centres' (EDICs) grants is EUR 11 400 000. The action grant received by each EDIC shall range from a minimum of EUR 15 000 to a maximum of EUR 25 000.

The Commission selects the host structures of the EDICs via a call for proposals. Annual action grants are awarded in form of lump sums based on actions plans presented by the host structures. The final amount of the grant depends on the rate of implementation of the action plan.

2. A mid-term evaluation of the overall performance of EDICs completed in January this year indicates that citizens are very satisfied with the EDICs services and feel better informed about EU affairs thanks to their work.

The Commission coordinates and provides support to the EDICs. It provides background information on EU priorities, ensures the information flow, identifies suitable communication tools, and caters for transnational exchange of good practice and networking among the entire network. At national level, the Commission's Representations provide guidance on the annual action plans of the EDICs, organise coordination meetings for all network members and train all the centres on how to adapt the communication priorities to local and regional needs.

3. The central Europe Direct website ([1]) is designed to make available and promote the services of the Europe Direct Contact Centre and Europe Direct networks. General information on Commission activities as well as announcements on consultations, call for proposals, etc. are communicated on Europa webpages dedicated to these activities. EDICs promote EU policies by publishing up-to-date information on their websites.

4. A call for proposals to select host structures for the new generation of EDICs will be launched in June 2012 in order to launch the third generation of EDICs as of January 2013.

([1]) http://www.europedirect.europa.eu.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004128/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(20 de abril de 2012)

Asunto: Vertedero en Sant Mateu de Bages

La empresa Efienergia SL ha iniciado los trámites para la restauración de los terrenos afectados por la extracción de arcillas mediante el relleno con balas de residuos en la zona de La Vinya del Tort, en la población de Sant Mateu de Bages (Catalunya). Sin embargo, el objetivo que realmente persigue la empresa Efienergia SL es construir de facto un nuevo vertedero de 110 000 toneladas al año, cosa que lo convertiría en el más importante de la comarca, puesto que el vertedero del polígono Bufalvent, en Manresa, tiene una capacidad de 50 000 toneladas al año.

Cabe subrayar que la propuesta de la empresa no plantea ninguna solución para el transporte de los residuos, ni cómo evitar el mal olor. Asimismo, la compañía no ha presentado ningún análisis sobre las aguas residuales, especialmente sobre la lixiviación del agua de lluvia a través del subsuelo, ya que podría arrastrar a los acuíferos todas las sustancias inertes y no inertes que contienen las balas plastificadas de residuos sólidos urbanos, con los problemas que eso comportaría para el río Cardener.

Finalmente, cabe tener en cuenta que dicho vertedero estaría ubicado en la población de Sant Mateu de Bages, mientras que los residuos provienen de la región metropolitana de Barcelona.

¿Cree la Comisión que un vertedero en Sant Mateu de Bages, además de vulnerar regulaciones urbanísticas y ambientales, contravendría la Directiva 2008/98/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 19 de noviembre de 2008, que fija los criterios de proximidad y autosuficiencia para el tratamiento de residuos y que, por lo tanto, establece que los residuos se deben tratar cerca de donde se generan a fin de evitar también transportes innecesarios e insostenibles?

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

La Comisión entiende que el vertedero de Sant Mateu de Bages se encuentra actualmente en fase de proyecto. En su calidad de actividad de gestión de residuos, el proyecto de vertedero está sujeto a la expedición de una licencia de obras y de un permiso de explotación por parte de las autoridades competentes. En consecuencia, las autoridades deben evaluar los posibles efectos ambientales del vertedero y garantizar que el emplazamiento se ajusta a las disposiciones pertinentes del Derecho de la Unión en materia de residuos.

La distancia entre la ciudad de Barcelona y Sant Mateu de Bages es de unos 80 km. Aunque hay que tener en cuenta la distancia y el transporte necesario de acuerdo con el principio de proximidad, no reviste menos importancia evaluar otros factores tales como la capacidad de tratamiento de residuos disponibles cerca del punto de generación de los residuos y la idoneidad del lugar de tratamiento elegido. En algunos casos puede resultar realmente difícil ajustarse al principio de proximidad si las instalaciones no están repartidas o situadas de forma adecuada respecto al lugar de generación de los residuos. En algunas circunstancias, la circulación de residuos podría implicar recorridos más largos, sin dejar por ello de representar la mejor opción ambiental viable. El principio de autosuficiencia se aplica a la Unión en su conjunto y a cada uno de los Estados miembros, no a escala local o regional en lo relativo a la creación de una red integrada y adecuada de instalaciones de eliminación de residuos, así como de instalaciones de recuperación de residuos urbanos mezclados de los hogares.

Teniendo en cuenta lo expuesto, la Comisión no detecta en este momento ninguna infracción del Derecho de la UE sobre residuos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004128/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Landfill in Sant Mateu de Bages

The Efienergia SL enterprise has begun to take measures to restore land affected by clay extraction, involving the use of waste pellets for landfill purposes in the La Vinya del Tort area of Sant Mateu de Bages (Catalonia). However, the Efienergia SL enterprise is in fact seeking to open a new landfill with a capacity of 110 000 tonnes per year, making it the largest in the county, the landfill at the Bufalvent industrial estate in Manresa having a capacity of 50 000 tonnes per year.

It should be emphasised that the enterprise is not proposing any solution for transporting the waste or preventing unpleasant odours. Furthermore, it has not presented any wastewater analyses, particularly relating to rainwater leaching into the subsoil, possibly contaminating the groundwater with all the inert and active substances contained in the plastic-coated pellets of urban solid waste, with all the problems this would entail for the Cardener River.

Finally, it should be noted that the landfill would be located in the town of Sant Mateu de Bages, while the waste would come from the metropolitan region of Barcelona.

Does the Commission take the view that a landfill in Sant Mateu de Bages, in addition to infringing town planning and environmental regulations, would also be an infringement of Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008, which lays down criteria of proximity and self-sufficiency regarding waste treatment, specifying accordingly that waste must be treated near to where it is generated in order to avoid unnecessary and unsustainable transport operations?

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

The Commission understands that the landfill in Sant Mateu de Bages is currently at the project stage. As a waste management activity the landfill project is subject to the issuance of planning permission and of an operating permit by the competent authorities. Accordingly, the authorities are requested to assess the potential environmental impacts of the landfill and ensure that the site complies with the relevant EU waste legislation.

The distance between the city of Barcelona and Sant Mateu de Bages is of approximately 80 km. Although under the proximity principle the distance and transport involved need to be taken into consideration; it is, however, not less important to assess other factors such as the waste treatment capacity available near the point of generation of waste and the appropriateness of the chosen treatment site. In some case, adherence to the proximity principle may be, in effect, difficult where there is an inadequate range or distribution of facilities close to where the waste is generated. In some circumstances the movement of waste could involve longer journeys but might nevertheless represent the best practicable environmental option. The principle of self-sufficiency applies to the Community as a whole and to Member States individually, and not on a local or regional basis for the establishment of an integrated and adequate network of waste disposal installations and of installations for the recovery of mixed municipal waste collected from private households.

Taking the above into account, the Commission cannot identify any violation of the EU waste legislation at this stage.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004129/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(20 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διασφάλιση της λειτουργίας της επένδυσης για την εξόρυξη χρυσού στη Χαλκιδική και τήρηση της περιβαλλοντικής νομοθεσίας

Εμφύλιες «συγκρούσεις» μεταξύ των κατοίκων της Χαλκιδικής, στη Βόρεια Ελλάδα, εξακολουθεί να προκαλεί η επένδυση για τη δημιουργία μεταλλείων εξόρυξης χρυσού. Η επένδυση ύψους 1,5 δισ ευρώ αναμένεται να δημιουργήσει 1 500 άμεσες και πολλαπλάσιες έμμεσες θέσεις εργασίας και θα μπορούσε να δώσει σημαντική αναπτυξιακή ώθηση στην περιοχή και να αντιμετωπίσει το εντονότατο τοπικό πρόβλημα ανεργίας. Από την άλλη πλευρά, η τοπική κοινωνία είναι δικαιολογημένα καχύποπτη απέναντι στη ικανότητα του ελληνικού κράτους και των υπηρεσιών του να επιβάλλει την τήρηση της αυστηρής ευρωπαϊκής περιβαλλοντικής νομοθεσίας (ιδιαίτερα σε μια ενδεχομένως επιβαρυντική βιομηχανική δραστηριότητα όπως είναι η εξόρυξη χρυσού) και να εγγυηθεί την ασφάλεια των κατοίκων, αλλά και την προστασία της ιδιαίτερου φυσικού κάλλους ευρύτερης περιοχής που στηρίζει πλήθος δραστηριοτήτων και θέσεων εργασίας στον κλάδο του τουρισμού.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Δεδομένων των τεράστιων αναγκών της Ελλάδας για προσέλκυση επενδύσεων και δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας, είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να παράσχει τεχνογνωσία στην Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση και να συμβάλει στην αξιολόγηση και παρακολούθηση αυτής της σημαντικής επένδυσης και στη διαφύλαξη του κοινοτικού κεκτημένου στον τομέα του περιβάλλοντος; Μια τέτοια βοήθεια θα διασφάλιζε την τήρηση αυστηρότατων περιβαλλοντικών όρων, θα ενίσχυε την εμπιστοσύνη των πολιτών στην επένδυση και θα αποδείκνυε ότι αναπτυξιακές δραστηριότητες δεν είναι κατ' ανάγκη αντίθετες με την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος, όπως η εμπειρία αντίστοιχων έργων σε άλλα κράτη μέλη έχει αποδείξει.

2. Θα μπορούσε η Ομάδα Δράσης της Επιτροπής για την Ελλάδα, με συμβολή των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής, να αναλάβει συμβουλευτικό ρόλο για την αξιολόγηση και υλοποίηση της επένδυσης;

3. Τι στοιχεία έχει συλλέξει η Επιτροπή από τις ελληνικές αρχές σχετικά με την τήρηση της περιβαλλοντικής νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της οδηγίας 2006/21/ΕΚ; Είναι ικανοποιημένη από τα στοιχεία και τις μελέτες περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων;

4. Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή πληροφορίες για επιτυχημένες παρόμοιες επενδύσεις εξόρυξης χρυσού σε άλλα κράτη μέλη, όπου η εξορυκτική δραστηριότητα πραγματοποιείται με σεβασμό της περιβαλλοντικής νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Ιουνίου 2012)

1. Σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της επικουρικότητας και της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης, τα κράτη μέλη είναι υπεύθυνα για την επιλογή, την αξιολόγηση, την αδειοδότηση και την παρακολούθηση των έργων. Η Επιτροπή δεν δύναται να υποκαταστήσει τα κράτη μέλη όσον αφορά τις αρμοδιότητές τους.

2. Η αποστολή της Ομάδας Δράσης για την Ελλάδα περιλαμβάνει τον προσδιορισμό και συντονισμό, σε στενή συνεργασία με την Ελλάδα, της τεχνικής συνδρομής που χρειάζεται η χώρα προκειμένου να υλοποιήσει το πρόγραμμα διαρθρωτικής προσαρμογής. Το εν λόγω πρόγραμμα αναφέρεται μεταξύ άλλων στην εκχώρηση δικαιωμάτων εξόρυξης. Επομένως, η Ομάδα Δράσης θα ήταν σε θέση να συνδράμει τις ελληνικές αρχές κατά την προπαρασκευή της ανάθεσης και υλοποίησης συμφωνιών εκχώρησης που αφορούν μεταλλεία χρυσού. Έως τώρα οι ελληνικές αρχές δεν έχουν προσεγγίσει την Ομάδα Δράσης σε αυτό το πλαίσιο.

3. Τα κράτη μέλη δεν είναι υποχρεωμένα να αποστέλλουν στην Επιτροπή πληροφορίες σχετικά με το σχεδιασμό και την ανάπτυξη έργων που προορίζονται για συγχρηματοδότηση από τα Διαρθρωτικά Ταμεία και το Ταμείο Συνοχής, εκτός εάν πρόκειται για τα καλούμενα «μεγάλα έργα» όπως προβλέπεται από τον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006 του Συμβουλίου ([1]) (άρθρα 39-41). Σύμφωνα με τις διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες, το έργο αποτέλεσε αντικείμενο Εκτίμησης Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων (ΕΠΕ), σύμφωνα με τις απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας 2011/92/ΕΕ ([2]). Κατά τη διάρκεια της διαδικασίας ΕΠΕ πραγματοποιήθηκαν εκτεταμένες διαβουλεύσεις· όλες οι αρμόδιες αρχές (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των περιβαλλοντικών), οι οργανισμοί τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης και το ενδιαφερόμενο κοινό είχαν την ευκαιρία να διατυπώσουν παρατηρήσεις και να εκφέρουν τη γνώμη τους. Η διαδικασία ΕΠΕ ολοκληρώθηκε με την έκδοση Κοινής Υπουργικής Απόφασης (201745/26.7.11), που έλαβε υπόψη τα διατυπωθέντα σχόλια και αναφέρεται επίσης στη διαχείριση των εξορυκτικών αποβλήτων.

4. Περισσότερες πληροφορίες για την επίπτωση της εξόρυξης χρυσού στην ΕΕ μπορούν να αναζητηθούν σε πρόσφατη μελέτη ([3]).

([1]) ΕΕ L 49 της 31.7.2007.
([2]) ΕΕ L 26 της 28.1.2012.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/mining/pdf/IH_2010-001.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004129/12
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Measures to ensure the success of the gold mining investment in Halkidiki and compliance with environmental legislation

Violent clashes between residents of Halkidiki in northern Greece are continuing as a result of a decision to invest in the development of gold mining in the region. The EUR 1.5 billion investment is expected to generate 1 500 direct jobs and several indirect jobs and could give a significant boost to development in the area and help provide an answer to the very severe local unemployment problem. On the other hand, the local community is justifiably suspicious about the ability of the Greek State and its agencies to enforce strict European environmental legislation (particularly in the case of a potentially polluting activity such as gold mining) and ensure the safety of residents, and to protect the particular natural beauty of a broader region which supports numerous activities and jobs in the tourism industry.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Given Greece's huge need to attract investment and generate jobs, is it in a position to provide expertise to the Greek Government and to contribute to the evaluation and monitoring of this significant investment and safeguarding of the Community *acquis* in relation to the environment? Such assistance would help to ensure compliance with very strict environmental provisions, would strengthen citizens' confidence in the investment and would show that developmental activities are not necessarily incompatible with the protection of the environment, as experience has shown with similar projects in other Member States.

2. Could the Commission's Task Force for Greece, with the contribution of the Commission's agencies, undertake an advisory role for the evaluation and the implementation of the investment?

3. What data have the Greek authorities provided for the Commission in relation to compliance with EU environmental legislation, including Directive 2006/21/EC? Is it satisfied with the data and the environmental impact studies?

4. Does the Commission have any information on similar — successful — investments in gold mining in other Member States, where mining has been conducted in accordance with EU environmental legislation?

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

1. In accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and shared management, Member States (MS) are responsible for selecting, evaluating, permitting and monitoring projects. The Commission cannot substitute MS in their responsibilities.

2. The mission of the Task Force (TF) for Greece includes the identification and coordination, in close cooperation with Greece, of the technical assistance that the country needs in order to deliver the adjustment programme. This programme refers *inter alia* to the concession of mining rights. Therefore the TF would be in a position to assist the Greek authorities to prepare the granting and implementation of concession agreements relating to gold mines. So far the TF has not been approached by the Greek authorities in that context.

3. MS are not obliged to send information concerning planning and development of projects intended to be co-financed by the Structural and the Cohesion Funds to the Commission, unless these are the so called 'major projects' as foreseen under Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 ([1]) (Articles 39-41). According to the information available, the project was made subject to an environmental impact assessment (EIA), in accordance with the requirements of Directive 2011/92/EU ([2]). During the EIA process, an extensive consultation was carried out; all relevant authorities (including the environmental ones), local authorities and the public concerned had the opportunity to express their comments and opinions. The EIA was concluded by the adoption of a Joint Ministerial Decision (201745/26.7.11), which took into account the comments expressed and also refers to the management of extractive waste.

([1]) OJ L 49, 31.07.07.
([2]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

4. More information on the impacts of gold extraction in the EU can be found in a recent study ([3]).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/mining/pdf/IH_2010-001.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004130/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Towing of cars behind motor homes

Does the Commission have any plans to introduce legislation as regards the towing of cars behind motor homes using an A-frame tow bar, which effectively converts the car into a trailer?

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

The Commission does not intend to introduce legislation related to the towing of cars behind motorhomes using an A-frame tow bar.

Furthermore, the Commission would like to refer to its answer to written Question P-299/2012 ([1]).

([1]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004131/12
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(20 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Farmaci contraffatti su Internet

Le vendite di sorbitolo sono state bloccate in tutto il mondo dopo il caso di Teresa Sunna, la 29enne morta a Barletta dopo aver ingerito una fiala di sorbitolo poco prima di sottoporsi ad un test di intolleranza alimentare nello studio di un gastroenterologo. Gli inquirenti, in sostanza, stanno cercando di capire se il sorbitolo somministrato alla giovane donna fosse stato adulterato o se avesse subito qualche contaminazione o attività di manomissione. I controlli si stanno svolgendo in tutta Europa perché il sorbitolo sotto accusa è stato venduto via Internet in altri paesi dell'Unione europea.

I nuovi regolamenti impongono norme di tracciabilità molto ferree, per garantire l'autenticità e l'identificazione delle singole confezioni dei farmaci, per verificare lo stato dell'imballaggio e una sua eventuale manomissione. E in Italia? La direttiva europea è del febbraio 2011 ma ad oggi non è stata ancora integrata alla legislazione, pertanto vendere e acquistare farmaci in Internet è ancora illegale ma molti italiani ne sono inconsapevoli come ha dimostrato una recente indagine dell'AIFA (Agenzia italiana del Farmaco).

In ambito europeo coesistono situazioni diverse: se in alcuni paesi si è proceduto ad autorizzare le farmacie online, e l'attività di vendita e acquisto di farmaci in rete è dunque considerata legale, in altri, come l'Italia, ciò non è ancora avvenuto. Secondo l'Ente statunitense LegitScript, il servizio di verifica e controllo delle farmacie online, l'unico riconosciuto ufficialmente dalle federazioni dei farmacisti, solo l'1 % delle 40000 farmacie censite sarebbe legale, ovvero controllato dalle autorità competenti. Mentre il resto dell'esistente sarebbe rappresentato da farmacie false o illegali.

Si tenga altresì presente la multa di 500 milioni di dollari che Google ha dovuto pagare a seguito di un'indagine del Dipartimento di Stato Americano che ha notificato la presenza di annunci in adwords che pubblicizzavano l'acquisto di farmaci provenienti dal Canada, medicinali di dubbia origine che non presentavano le dovute certificazioni di sicurezza e qualità.

Può inoltre la Commissione adoperarsi affinché sia migliorato il servizio di verifica e controllo delle farmacie online da parte delle autorità competenti?

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

Il sorbitolo è un dolcificante alimentare, non un prodotto medicinale. Per tale motivo il Sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi (RASFF) è stato correttamente allertato dalle autorità italiane in seguito ai fatti descritti dall'onorevole deputato.

La direttiva 2011/62/UE ([1]) sui medicinali falsificati, adottata dal Parlamento europeo e dal Consiglio l'8 giugno 2011, deve essere recepita nella legislazione nazionale entro il 2 gennaio 2013.

Le regole per l'autorizzazione e il controllo delle farmacie «tradizionali» e di quelle «online» rimarranno di competenza degli Stati membri che conserveranno inoltre la responsabilità di far rispettare tali regole e di comminare sanzioni.

([1]) Direttiva 2011/62/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'8 giugno 2011, che modifica la direttiva 2001/83/CE, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano, al fine di impedire l'ingresso di medicinali falsificati nella catena di fornitura legale GU L 174 dell'1.7.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004131/12
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Counterfeit medicines on the Internet

Sales of sorbitol have been stopped worldwide following the case of Teresa Sunna, the 29-year-old who died in Barletta after swallowing a vial of the substance prior to taking a food intolerance test in a gastroenterologist's surgery. Investigators are basically trying to ascertain whether the sorbitol administered to the young woman had been adulterated or if it had been tampered with or contaminated. Checks are being made throughout Europe because the suspect sorbitol has been sold online in other EU countries.

New regulations require very strict traceability standards regarding procedures to ensure the authenticity and identification of individual packets of drugs, check the condition of the packaging and detect any tampering. What is the situation regarding Italy? The European Directive in question dates from February 2011 but has not yet been transposed. Consequently, buying and selling medication on the Internet is still illegal but many Italians are unaware of this, as demonstrated by a recent survey carried out by AIFA (the Italian Medicines Agency).

In a European context, several situations coexist: some countries have authorised online pharmacies, which means that buying and selling medication online is considered legal; in others, like Italy, this has not yet happened. According to LegitScript, the only US agency officially recognised by pharmacist associations for monitoring and controlling online pharmacies, only 1% of 40 000 pharmacies surveyed are legal, in other words monitored by competent authorities. The rest appear to be bogus or illegal pharmacies.

It is also worth remembering that a fine of USD 500 000 000 was paid by Google following an investigation by the US State Department that identified the presence of 'AdWords' advertising that promoted the purchase from Canada of medication of dubious origin, lacking the required safety and quality certification.

Will the Commission also take action to ensure that the monitoring of online pharmacies by competent authorities is improved?

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

Sorbitol is a food sweetener, not a medicine. For this reason, the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) was correctly alerted by Italian Authorities following the facts described by the Honourable Member.

Directive 2001/62/EU ([1]) on falsified medicinal products, adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 8 June 2011, has to be transposed into national legislations by 2 January 2013.

The rules for the authorisation and the control of 'traditional' as well as of 'online pharmacies' will remain under the competence of Member States who will also remain responsible for their enforcement and for setting up penalties.

([1]) Directive 2011/62/EU of Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2011 amending Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, as regards the prevention of the entry into the legal supply chain of falsified medicinal products. OJ L 174, 1.7.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004132/12
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(20 aprile 2012)

Oggetto: Intese per evitare le evasioni fiscali e la fuga illecita di capitali all'estero

L'evasione fiscale e la fuga illecita di capitali all'estero rappresentano un noto problema irrisolto. Risulta pertanto di prioritaria importanza la lotta contro questi fenomeni.

Negli ultimi mesi la Svizzera ha raggiunto alcuni accordi con singoli Stati europei sulla tassazione dei capitali in fuga. Gli accordi negoziati recentemente con Germania e Regno Unito sono uno dei possibili strumenti per pervenire a tal fine, stabilendo un regime di doppia imposizione. I recenti accordi si basano infatti sul principio di una regolarizzazione del passato, tramite un'imposta sui capitali depositati ed un'imposta sugli interessi negli anni a venire pari al livello di imposizione nel paese di origine.

Nel 2017 entrerà in vigore una direttiva europea in base alla quale Bruxelles pretenderà un prelievo del 35 % su tutti i capitali svizzeri depositati da cittadini e società dell'UE e lo scambio automatico dei dati fiscali.

La direttiva 2011/16/UE, abrogando la precedente in materia (direttiva 77/799/CEE), prevede norme più chiare e precise che disciplinano la cooperazione amministrativa fra gli Stati membri relativamente alla riscossione delle imposte.

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

— Non ritiene che questo tipo di accordi bilaterali, come quelli negoziati da Germania e Gran Bretagna con la Svizzera, siano in contrasto con la nuova direttiva europea che prevede una cooperazione efficace tra le autorità competenti degli Stati membri e lo scambio automatico d'informazioni?

— Quali iniziative intende assumere per monitorare la coerenza e la cooperazione europea in materia di governance fiscale, nonché per coordinare le politiche degli Stati membri al fine di rafforzare le norme antievasione nel quadro di un approccio globale?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2012)

Circa la compatibilità degli accordi fiscali bilaterali con la direttiva 2011/16/UE del Consiglio, la Commissione ricorda che l'obbligo di scambio di informazioni fiscali definito dalla direttiva riguarda esclusivamente gli scambi tra autorità degli Stati membri. Essa non contiene obblighi analoghi per quanto riguarda gli scambi tra Stati membri e paesi terzi.

Nella misura in cui sono interessate le relazioni tra gli Stati membri, la Commissione vigilerà per tutelare il campo di applicazione e il fine della direttiva 2011/16/UE del Consiglio e cercherà di assicurare che tutti i meccanismi creati per la sua attuazione funzionino in modo efficace ed efficiente.

Relativamente alla seconda domanda dell'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione intende presentare una comunicazione nel corso dell'anno in materia di governance fiscale con particolare attenzione ai paradisi fiscali e alla pianificazione di una politica fiscale aggressiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004132/12
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Agreements to prevent tax evasion and the illicit flight of capital overseas

Tax evasion and the illicit flight of capital overseas are well-known and unresolved problems. Seeking to prevent these activities is therefore a priority.

In recent months, Switzerland has reached agreements with individual European States on the taxation of flight capital. The agreements recently negotiated with Germany and the United Kingdom are one of the tools that can be used to achieve this end, establishing a double taxation system. The recent agreements are based on the principle of regularising the past by taxing both deposited capital and interest in the years to come at the same level of taxation as that applied in the country of origin.

In 2017, a European Directive will come into force whereby Brussels will demand a 35% levy on all Swiss capital deposited by EU citizens and companies, with an automatic exchange of tax information.

Directive 2011/16/EU, repealing the previous applicable EU legislation (Directive 77/799/EEC), contains clearer, more precise provisions regarding administrative cooperation among Member States with regard to tax collection.

In view of this:

— Does the Commission not believe that such bilateral agreements, for example those negotiated with Switzerland by Germany and the United Kingdom are at odds with the new European Directive that provides for effective cooperation between the competent authorities of the Member States and automatic exchange of information?

— How does it intend to monitor consistency and cooperation in the field of fiscal governance at European level and coordinate Member State policies for reinforcing anti-evasion laws as part of a global approach?

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

Concerning the compatibility of bilateral tax agreements with Council Directive 2011/16/EU, the Commission would like to recall that the obligation to exchange tax information defined by the directive exclusively concerns exchanges between authorities of Member States. It does not contain similar obligations regarding exchanges between Member States and third countries respectively.

As far as the relations between Member States are concerned, the Commission will be vigilant in protecting the scope and aim of Council Directive 2011/16/EU, and will seek to ensure that all mechanisms created for its implementation function effectively and efficiently.

Concerning the second question of the Honourable Member, the Commission intends to bring forward a communication later in the year relating to tax governance with particular emphasis on tax havens and aggressive tax planning.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004134/12
do Rady
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(20 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Koszty podróży pomiędzy trzema siedzibami Parlamentu Europejskiego w ramach misji

1. Czy Rada mogłaby podać szacunkowe dane dotyczące czasu trwania i kosztów misji urzędników i innych pracowników, którzy musieli podróżować do siedziby Parlamentu Europejskiego w a) Luksemburgu i b) Strasburgu w sprawach służbowych od 2000 r.?

2. Czy Rada mogłaby wskazać, jaki był jej wkład w pokrycie kosztów a) najmu oraz b) utrzymania biur i wyposażenia w a) Luksemburgu i b) Strasburgu od 2000 r.?

3. Czy Rada mogłaby wskazać inne koszty związane z misjami realizowanymi przez jej pracowników (podróż, zakwaterowanie i diety dzienne)?

Odpowiedź
(2 lipca 2012 r.)

Pytania 1 i 3:

Szacunkowe dane dotyczące czasu trwania i kosztów (w tym podróż, zakwaterowanie i diety dzienne) misji urzędników i innych pracowników, którzy musieli podróżować do siedziby Parlamentu Europejskiego w a) Luksemburgu i b) Strasburgu w sprawach służbowych od 2000 r. są następujące:

— 2000: a) 6 dni, 1 194 EUR; b) 785 dni, 227 562 EUR;

— 2001: a) 7 dni, 1 776 EUR; b) 790 dni, 234 527 EUR;

— 2002: a) 6 dni, 1 423 EUR; b) 708 dni, 246 273 EUR;

— 2003: a) 4 dni, 601 EUR; b) 694 dni, 234 401 EUR;

— 2004: a) 3 dni, 506 EUR; b) 483 dni, 166 645 EUR;

— 2005: a) 11 dni, 2 548 EUR; b) 646 dni, 254 245 EUR;

— 2006: a) 6 dni, 685 EUR; b) 616 dni, 273 062 EUR;

— 2007: a) 5 dni, 600 EUR; b) 618 dni, 266 022 EUR;

— 2008: a) 5 dni, 866 EUR; b) 517 dni, 211 893 EUR;

— 2009: a) 6 dni, 1 335 EUR; b) 554 dni, 237 932 EUR;

— 2010: a) 3 dni, 308 EUR; b) 725 dni, 288 623 EUR;

— 2011: a) 3 dni, 436 EUR; b) 715 dni, 314 234 EUR.

Ponieważ w tym okresie Sekretariat Rady zmienił systemy IT obsługujące misje, dane sprzed roku 2006 mają wartość przybliżoną.

Pytanie 2:

Jak wyjaśniono w odpowiedzi na pytanie E-002934/12, Rada nie ponosi żadnych kosztów związanych z biurami dostępnymi w Strasburgu, a centrum konferencyjne w Luksemburgu wynajmuje na własne potrzeby.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004134/12
to the Council
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Travel costs for missions between the European Parliament's three seats

1. Could the Council please give an estimate of the duration and cost of missions by officials and other staff required to travel to the European Parliament in (a) Luxembourg and (b) Strasbourg on official business since 2000?

2. Could the Council indicate what contribution it has made towards the cost of (a) renting and (b) maintaining offices and equipment in (a) Luxembourg and (b) Strasbourg since 2000?

3. Could the Council identify other costs connected with the missions undertaken by its staff (travel, accommodation and daily allowances)?

Reply
(2 July 2012)

Questions 1 and 3:

The duration and cost (including travel, accommodation and daily allowances) of missions by officials and other staff required to travel to the European Parliament in (a) Luxembourg, and (b) Strasbourg, since 2000, are estimated respectively as follows:

— 2000: (a) 6 days, EUR 1 194; (b) 785 days, EUR 227 562

— 2001: (a) 7 days, EUR 1 776; (b) 790 days, EUR 234 527

— 2002: (a) 6 days, EUR 1 423; (b) 708 days, EUR 246 273

— 2003: (a) 4 days, EUR 601; (b) 694 days, EUR 234 401

— 2004: (a) 3 days, EUR 506; (b) 483 days, EUR 166 645

— 2005: (a) 11 days, EUR 2 548; (b) 646 days, EUR 254 245

— 2006: (a) 6 days, EUR 685; (b) 616 days, EUR 273 062

— 2007: (a) 5 days, EUR 600; (b) 618 days, EUR 266 022

— 2008: (a) 5 days, EUR 866; (b) 517 days, EUR 211 893

— 2009: (a) 6 days, EUR 1 335; (b) 554 days, EUR 237 932

— 2010: (a) 3 days, EUR 308; (b) 725 days, EUR 288 623

— 2011: (a) 3 days, EUR 436; (b) 715 days, EUR 314 234

Given the fact that the Council Secretariat has changed its mission-specific IT systems during this period, pre-2006 figures have to be considered as a reasonable approximation.

Question 2:

As explained in the answer to Question E-002934/12, the Council does not incur any expenses for the offices available in Strasbourg, and the Council is renting a conference centre in Luxembourg for its own needs.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004135/12
do Komisji
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(20 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Koszty podróży pomiędzy trzema siedzibami Parlamentu Europejskiego w ramach misji

1. Czy Komisja mogłaby podać szacunkowe dane dotyczące czasu trwania i kosztów misji urzędników i innych pracowników, którzy musieli podróżować do siedziby Parlamentu Europejskiego w a) Luksemburgu i b) Strasburgu w sprawach służbowych od 2000 r.?

2. Czy Komisja mogłaby wskazać, jaki był jej wkład w pokrycie kosztów a) najmu oraz b) utrzymania biur i wyposażenia w a) Luksemburgu i b) Strasburgu od 2000 r.?

3. Czy Komisja mogłaby wskazać inne koszty związane z misjami realizowanymi przez jej pracowników (podróż, zakwaterowanie i diety dzienne)?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Maroša Šefčoviča w imieniu Komisji
(14 czerwca 2012 r.)

1. Komisja nie jest w stanie udzielić takiej informacji, ani podjąć – na potrzeby udzielania odpowiedzi na zapytanie pisemne – długotrwałej i kosztownej analizy, jaka byłaby konieczna, aby przedstawić Szanownej Pani Poseł wymagane informacje. Ponadto pytanie w zakresie, w jakim dotyczy personelu również innych instytucji, wykraczałoby poza zakres przewidzianych w Traktacie kompetencji Komisji oraz administracyjnej autonomii poszczególnych instytucji.

2. a) i b) Lokalizacja pomieszczeń biurowych Komisji w Luksemburgu nie jest związana z faktem, że Luksemburg jest jednym z miejsc pracy służb PE, lecz z faktem, że mieści się tu jedna z siedzib Komisji. Biura w Strasburgu są natomiast związane bezpośrednio z działalnością PE w tym mieście.

Koszty budynków i innego wyposażenia w Luksemburgu określone zostały w rocznym budżecie Komisji ([1]). Komisja nie ponosi żadnych kosztów wynajmu lub utrzymania budynków w Strasburgu, ponieważ koszty te pokrywane są z budżetu PE na budynki.

3. Zgodnie z art. 11 załącznika 7 regulaminu pracowniczego urzędników Unii Europejskiej urzędnik odbywający podróż służbową na podstawie polecenia wyjazdu uprawniony jest do zwrotu kosztów podróży oraz do diety dziennej. Zasady dotyczące zwrotu kosztów podróży różnią się w zależności od wybranego środka transportu. Jako ogólną zasadę przyjmuje się jednak, że pracownicy zobowiązani są korzystać z najbardziej oszczędnych i odpowiednich do realizacji celów wyjazdu służbowego środków transportu. Diety dzienne określone są indywidualnie dla poszczególnych krajów i naliczane zgodnie z długością podróży służbowej.

([1]) Zob. Dz.U. z 29.2.2012, II/994-998, pozycje 26 01 23 02/03/04/05/06, budżety z wcześniejszych lat dostępne są w internecie – zob.: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/budget/www/index-pl.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004135/12
to the Commission
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Travel costs for missions between the European Parliament's three seats

1. Could the Commission give an estimate of the duration and cost of missions by officials and other staff required to travel to the European Parliament in (a) Luxembourg and (b) Strasbourg on official business since 2000?

2. Could the Commission indicate what contribution it has made towards the cost of (a) renting and (b) maintaining offices and equipment in (a) Luxembourg and (b) Strasbourg since 2000?

3. Could the Commission identify other costs connected with the missions undertaken by its staff (travel, accommodation and daily allowances)?

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

1. The Commission is not in a position to provide such information and to undertake, for the purpose of answering a written question, the lengthy and costly research that would be required to provide the Honourable Member with the information requested. Moreover, the question, insofar as it also concerns staff of other institutions, would go beyond the scope of the Commission's competence under the Treaty and the administrative autonomy of each institution.

2(a) and (b) The Commission's office space in Luxembourg is not related to the situation of Luxembourg as one of the working places of the EP, but due to the fact that Luxembourg is one of the seats of the European Commission. The offices in Strasbourg on the other hand are directly linked to the activities of the EP there.

The costs of buildings and other equipment in Luxembourg are set out in the Commission's annual budget. ([1]) There is no renting or maintenance costs for the Commission in Strasbourg as this is covered by the EP budget for its buildings.

3. According to Article 11 of the annex A of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union, an official travelling on mission and holding an appropriate travel order shall be entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses and to daily subsistence allowance. Rules for travel expenses differ according to the mode of transport used, but as a general rule staff must use the most appropriate and cost-effective means of transport for achieving the purposes of the mission. Daily subsistence allowances are calculated according to the length of the trip and are established country by country.

([1]) See OJ of 29.2.2012, II/994-998, references 26 01 23 02/03/04/05/06, and the following link for other years available on the Internet http://eur-lex.europa.eu/budget/www/index-en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004136/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Fish bait as animal feed

Was it the Commission's intention that bait used for catching fish in recreational fishing, many of which are thrown back, should be classified as 'animal feed' under Regulation (EC) No 767/2009 ([1]), and does it plan any guidance on implementation in this context?

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

Regulation (EC) No 767/2009 ([2]) of the Parliament and of the Council covers the marketing of feed for all animals including those not entering the food chain. Feed legislation e.g. about feed additives or undesirable substances in feed must not only address the safety for the potential consumer of animal products but also for the animals ingesting it. Therefore, fishing baits are considered to be covered by Regulation (EC) No 767/2009. The Commission has currently no plans to elaborate a guidance document on this issue.

([1]) OJ L 229, 1.9.2009, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 229, 1.9.2009, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004137/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Fish bait in the UK

Has the Commission had any communication with the UK fish bait sector or their representatives on the impact and implementation of Regulation (EC) No 767/2009?

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

The Commission responded to a query from a company based in the UK concerning the use of colouring in fish baits in December 2011. Apart from this, there was no specific communication with the UK fish bait sector or their representatives on the impact and implementation of Regulation (EC) No 767/2009 ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:229:0001:0028:EN:PDF.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004139/12
an die Kommission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(20. April 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Geschlechterungleichheit in Pakistan

Der EAD hat gegen die Geschlechterungleichheit in Pakistan bereits Stellung bezogen. In ihrem Länderstrategiepapier fordert die EU die pakistanische Regierung auf, die notwendigen Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung der Situation der Frauen in diesem südasiatischen Land zu ergreifen Radikale Pakistaner wenden noch das Zina-Gesetz an, nach dem Frauen für sexuelle Handlungen bestraft werden, häufig auch in Fällen, in denen allein sexuelle Belästigung vorliegt.

Darüber hinaus stellt nach wie vor die Müttersterblichkeit ein Problem dar. Pakistan wird von der EU seit vielen Jahren in dem Bemühen unterstützt, die Millennium-Entwicklungsziele schnell und einfach zu erreichen. Bislang scheint die pakistanische Regierung den Empfehlungen der EU-Delegation nicht in vollem Umfang nachgekommen zu sein.

1. Die EU ist Pakistans wichtigster Handelspartner und auch der wichtigste Geldgeber des Landes. Wie sieht der EAD das mangelnde Engagement Pakistans zur Verbesserung der Situation der Frauen?

2. Falls Pakistan die Rechte der Frauen weiterhin missachtet, wenn es um Straftaten nach dem Zina-Gesetz und dem Blasphemiegesetz geht, beabsichtigt der EAD dann die Überprüfung seiner Unterstützung Pakistans, die sich seit dem Beginn der Zusammenarbeit zwischen der EU und Pakistan 1976 auf insgesamt 500 Millionen EUR beläuft?

3. Welche Maßnahmen wurden bereits ergriffen, um dieser eindeutigen Diskriminierung unter dem Deckmantel religiöser, moralischer und ethischer Gesetze entgegenzuwirken?

4. Welche speziellen Programme wurden entwickelt, um die Mutterfürsorge in pakistanischen Krankenhäusern zu verbessern?

5. Kann der EAD nähere Informationen zur Müttersterblichkeitsrate in Pakistan geben?

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

Fragen zu Frauenrechten werden regelmäßig im Menschenrechtsdialog zwischen der EU und Pakistan zur Sprache gebracht, wie zuletzt beim Treffen zum Thema Menschenrechte zwischen der EU und Pakistan im Februar 2012 und während des Besuchs der Hohen Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin in Islamabad von 5. bis 6. Juni 2012. Die EU hat die pakistanische Regierung dazu aufgefordert, unverzüglich Maßnahmen zum Schutz der Frauenrechte zu ergreifen.

Im Jahr 2011 hat die pakistanische Regierung neue Rechtsvorschriften erlassen, um die Diskriminierung von Frauen und die Gewalt gegen Frauen besser anzugehen, darunter Gesetze gegen Zwangsehen, Belästigung am Arbeitsplatz und zu Hause sowie gegen Säureanschläge.

Maßnahmen im Rahmen des Finanzierungsinstruments für die Entwicklungszusammenarbeit sind nicht an allgemeine Auflagen gebunden; vielmehr wird die Menschenrechtsfrage ohnehin bei allen Kooperationsmaßnahmen berücksichtigt. Das EIDHR ([1])-Budget für Pakistan beträgt jährlich 900 000 EUR.

Die EU hat Mittel für die Finanzierung mehrerer Projekte in Pakistan ([2]) bereitgestellt, die sich alle mit einem wichtigen übergreifenden Thema wie der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter und der Verbesserung der Situation der Frauen befassen und mit denen folgende Ziele verfolgt werden: Sensibilisierung/Bereitstellung von Informationen zu den grundlegenden Menschenrechten von Frauen; Unterstützung des Aufbaus von Frauenorganisationen; Schaffung von Beschäftigungsmöglichkeiten und Kapazitätsaufbau; Bereitstellung der wichtigsten, von Frauengruppen genannten sozialen Leistungen/lokalen Infrastruktur sowie Einleitung von Reformen, die unter anderem die diskriminierenden Rechtsvorschriften betreffen.

([1]) EIDHR = European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (Europäisches Instrument für Demokratie und Menschenrechte).

([2]) Unter anderem zu folgenden Themen: Beendigung der Diskriminierung von Frauen und Kindern und der Gewalt gegen Frauen und Kinder, Zugang von Frauen, Kindern und anderen benachteiligten Gruppen zum Recht, Förderung der politischen Teilhabe von Frauen, Unterstützung von gewählten Gremien und demokratischen Institutionen (unter anderem Unterstützung des Ausschusses für Menschenrechte der Nationalversammlung), Menschenhandel, sexuelle Belästigung am Arbeitsplatz, Minderheitenrechte, Sensibilisierung der Zivilgesellschaft für Menschenrechte sowie Kapazitätsaufbau der in diesem Bereich arbeitenden NRO.

Im Rahmen des MNCH ([3])-Programms der pakistanischen Regierung, das von internationalen Gebern und Agenturen, insbesondere von Unicef ([4]), unterstützt wird, werden Frauen während der Schwangerschaft und der Geburt betreut sowie Mütter und Kinder in den ersten Lebenswochen. Zu den wichtigsten internationalen Gebern im Gesundheitsbereich in Pakistan gehören USAID ([5]), DFID ([6]), GIZ ([7]) und die Weltbank. Die Müttersterblichkeitsrate liegt in Pakistan bei 260 Todesfällen pro 100 000 Geburten (Schätzung der VN von 2011).

([3]) MNCH = Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (Gesundheit von Müttern, Neugeborenen und Kindern).
([4]) Unicef = Kinderhilfswerk der Vereinten Nationen.
([5]) USAID = United States Agency for International Development (US-Agentur für internationale Entwicklung).
([6]) DFID = United Kingdom Department for International Development (Britisches Ministerium für internationale Entwicklung).
([7]) GIZ = Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004139/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Gender inequality in Pakistan

The EEAS has already taken a stance against gender inequality in Pakistan. In its Country Strategy Paper, the EU urged the Pakistani Government to take the measures necessary to improve the situation of women in this southern Asian country. The Offence of Zina Ordinance is still being used by Pakistani radicals to blame women for sexual intercourse, often in cases which are purely sexual harassment.

In addition, maternal mortality is still an issue. Pakistan has been supported by the EU for many years in an effort to quickly and easily achieve the Millennium Development Goals. So far it seems that the Pakistani Government has not fully followed the recommendations of the EU delegation.

1. The EU is Pakistan's largest trading partner and also its biggest donor. How does the EEAS view the lack of commitment by Pakistan to improving the situation of women?

2. Should Pakistan continue to ignore women's rights when it comes to offences under the Zina Ordinance and the blasphemy law, does the EEAS intend to review its funding for Pakistan, which has totalled EUR 500 million in projects and programmes since the beginning of EU-Pakistan cooperation in 1976?

3. What action has already been taken to address this clear discrimination under the guise of religious, moral and ethical laws?

4. What specific programmes have been developed to improve maternity care for women in Pakistani hospitals?

5. Can the EEAS provide details of the maternal mortality rate in Pakistan?

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

Issues relating to women's rights are regularly raised in the EU's human rights dialogue with Pakistan, most recently during the February 2012 EU-Pakistan human rights meeting and the HR/VP's visit to Islamabad on 5-6 June 2012. The EU has encouraged the Government of Pakistan to take urgent measures to ensure protection of women's rights.

The Government of Pakistan introduced new legislation during 2011 in order to better tackle issues of discrimination and violence against women, including laws against forced marriages, harassment at the workplace and at home, and acid attacks.

There is no general conditionality for the EU's Development Cooperation Instrument activities; instead human rights are mainstreamed across all cooperation activities. The EIDHR ([1]) budget for Pakistan is EUR 900 000 annually.

EU funds in Pakistan have been committed to funding several projects ([2]), all of which include a crucial cross-cutting issue such as gender equality and improvement of the situation of women with the objective of: awareness-raising/providing information on women's basic human rights; helping to form Women's Organisations; creating employment opportunities and capacity building; delivering priority social services/community infrastructure identified by women's groups; and introducing reforms to discriminatory legislation among other issues.

([1]) EIDHR = European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights.

([2]) On issues which include: ending discrimination and violence against women and children, access to justice for women, children and other disadvantaged groups, women's political empowerment, support to elected bodies and democratic institutions (among which, support to the Human Rights Committee of the National Assembly), trafficking in human beings, sexual harassment at the workplace, minorities' rights, civil society sensitisation on human rights and capacity building of NGOs working in this field.

The MNCH ([3]) programme is a Pakistan Government-run programme, supported by international donors and agencies, notably Unicef ([4]), which provides care to women during pregnancy and birth and to both mother and child in the first weeks of life. The main international donors for health in Pakistan include USAID ([5]), DFID ([6]), GTZ ([7]) and the World Bank. The maternal mortality rate in Pakistan is 260 deaths per 100 000 live births (UN 2011 estimate).

([3]) MNCH = Maternal, Newborn and Child Health.
([4]) Unicef = United Nations Children's Fund.
([5]) USAID = United States Agency for International Development.
([6]) DFID = United Kingdom Department for International Development.
([7]) GTZ = Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004142/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(20 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Entrada em vigor do novo pacote de medidas de apoio ao emprego

Tendo em conta que:

— No discurso do Estado da União realizado a 28 de setembro de 2011 no Parlamento Europeu, o Presidente da Comissão Europeia referiu que era necessário «reorientar as nossas prioridades da gestão da crise para o modelo de crescimento do futuro, em consonância com a nossa estratégia Europa 2020»;

— Na reunião conjunta das comissões dos Assuntos Económicos e Monetários, do Emprego e dos Orçamentos, realizada a 27 e 28 de fevereiro de 2012 no Parlamento Europeu, o Presidente da Comissão Europeia referiu que «os objetivos do semestre europeu e das políticas de crescimento só serão atingidos com a implementação de reformas efetivas nos Estados-Membros»;

— A 18 de abril de 2012, a Comissão Europeia apresentou um pacote de novas medidas para uma recuperação geradora de emprego, pretendendo definir um conjunto de medidas concretas para fomentar a empregabilidade;

— A proposta em causa se centra «no lado da procura da criação de emprego e define formas de os Estados-Membros incentivarem a contratação, através da redução da carga fiscal sobre o trabalho ou de um apoio acrescido à criação de novas empresas»;

— O Presidente da Comissão Europeia afirmou que «a Europa precisa de uma estratégia de criação de postos de trabalho para fazer face aos níveis de desemprego inaceitáveis. A UE possui um importante potencial de criação de emprego ainda por explorar»;

— O Comissário Europeu para o Emprego, os Assuntos Sociais e a Inclusão, László Andor, também referiu que «os atuais níveis de desemprego na UE são dramáticos e inaceitáveis. A criação de emprego deve passar a ser uma verdadeira prioridade europeia»;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Sabendo-se que as medidas do novo pacote do emprego apenas serão discutidas numa conferência de alto nível a realizar a 6 e 7 de setembro, quando se perspetiva a sua entrada em vigor?

2. Como irá ser aplicado o referido pacote europeu? Será coordenado pela Comissão ou descentralizado para cada Estado-Membro?

3. Quais as medidas que pode desde já começar a implementar para garantir a criação de postos de trabalho e assim reduzir os elevados níveis de desemprego?

4. Qual o valor do pacote apresentado e qual a origem dos fundos que irão financiar as medidas em causa?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(14 de junho de 2012)

1. O «Pacote de Emprego» adotado na comunicação da Comissão «Uma recuperação geradora de emprego» ([1]) inclui algumas medidas que estão a ser aplicadas em vários Estados-Membros e de outras que carecem de consenso que terá de ser construído por intermédio das instituições da UE. A conferência de alto nível a que o Senhor Deputado se refere é uma ocasião para que os decisores políticos, os académicos e as partes interessadas possam debater a atual situação do emprego e as políticas em vigor neste campo.

2. O «Pacote de Emprego» faz uma distinção clara entre as ações a empreender pelos Estados-Membros e pela União Europeia, em conformidade com as respetivas competências. A comunicação da Comissão contém uma proposta para um reforço da coordenação e da vigilância multilaterais, a nível europeu, das políticas de emprego seguidas pelos Estados-Membros.

([1]) COM(2012)173 de 18.4.2012.

3. O «Pacote de Emprego» completa a Análise Anual do Crescimento de 2012, que identifica prioridades e responde às conclusões do Conselho Europeu da primavera, com a identificação de medidas de emprego que promovam condições favoráveis à criação de postos de trabalho e à procura de mão-de-obra. Aponta também os setores e as atividades com maior potencial de emprego, tais como o setor da economia «verde», da saúde e das TIC, prevendo ainda reformas do mercado de trabalho mais bem sucedidas.

4. O pacote de emprego apresenta propostas para reformas do emprego que podem ser apoiadas por instrumentos financeiros europeus e, nomeadamente, pelo Fundo Social Europeu. No quadro financeiro plurianual para 2014/2020, a Comissão propôs dotações mínimas para o Fundo Social Europeu destinadas a melhorar a utilização e a eficácia do financiamento da UE em apoio das reformas dos Estados-Membros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004142/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Entry into force of the new package of measures to boost employment

In the State of the Union address given on 28 September 2011 in the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission said that it was necessary 'to shift the focus from crisis management to the growth model of the future, in line with our Europe 2020 strategy'.

In the joint committee meeting between the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the Committee on Budgets, held on 27 and 28 February 2012 in the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission stated that the European Semester and growth policy objectives will only be achieved by implementing effective reforms in the Member States.

On 18 April 2012, the European Commission tabled a package of new measures to boost job creation, with the aim of laying down a set of concrete measures to promote employability.

The proposal in question focuses on 'the demand-side of job creation, setting out ways for Member States to encourage hiring by reducing taxes on labour or supporting business start-ups more'.

The President of the Commission stated that 'Europe needs a job-creation strategy to tackle its unacceptable level of unemployment. The EU has a large untapped potential to boost job creation'.

The European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor, also said that 'current levels of unemployment in the EU are dramatic and unacceptable. Job creation must become a real European priority'.

1. When is the new employment package expected to enter into force, given that the measures contained therein will only be discussed at a high-level conference to be held on 6 and 7 September 2012?

2. How will this European package be implemented? Will it be coordinated by the Commission or decentralised to each Member State?

3. What measures can begin to be implemented to ensure job creation and thus reduce high unemployment levels?

4. How much will the tabled package cost and where will the funds to finance the measures in question come from?

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

1. The 'employment package' adopted through the Commission's communication 'Towards a job rich recovery' ([1]) contains some measures that are being implemented in a number of Member States and others for which consensus will have to be built through the institutions. The high-level conference to which the Honourable Member refers is an occasion for policy-makers, academics and stakeholders to discuss the current employment situation and policies.

2. The 'employment package' makes a clear distinction between actions to be implemented by the Member States and by the European Union in line with respective competences. The Commission's Communication contains a proposal for a reinforced coordination and multilateral surveillance of Member States' employment policies at the European level.

3. The 'employment package' complements the 2012 Annual Growth Survey priorities and responds to the Spring European Council conclusions in identifying employment measures that help create conditions favourable to job creation and labour demand. It also points to those sectors and activities with the greatest job potential, such as the 'green' economy, the health sector and ICTs, and lays down successful labour market reforms.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 of 18.4.2012.

4. The 'employment package' proposals for employment reforms can be supported by European financial instruments, and notably the European Social Fund. In the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020, the Commission has proposed minimum allocations for the European Social Fund and to improve the use and efficiency of EU funding in support of Member States' reforms.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004143/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(20 de abril de 2012)

Assunto: Medidas de incentivo à criação de emprego jovem

Tendo em conta que:

— Na sessão plenária do Parlamento Europeu do passado dia 18 de abril de 2012, a Comissão Europeia apresentou um novo pacote de medidas que visam criar mais oportunidades de emprego, salientando a necessidade de se dar especial atenção aos jovens;

— No referido documento, é salientado que «a Comissão sublinha ainda a necessidade de facultar oportunidades aos jovens, bem como desenvolver a aprendizagem ao longo da vida»;

— A Comissão irá empenhar-se na remoção dos obstáculos jurídicos e práticos à livre circulação de trabalhadores, nomeadamente através da melhoria da portabilidade das pensões, do tratamento fiscal dos trabalhadores transfronteiriços, da sensibilização para os direitos e obrigações ou da exportação dos respetivos subsídios de desemprego por um período superior ao atual em 3 meses;

— O pacote de medidas apresentadas propõe transformar o portal de procura de emprego EURES numa verdadeira plataforma europeia de colocação e recrutamento, prevendo a realização de aplicações «self-service» inovadoras em linha, capazes de dar aos utilizadores uma visão geográfica clara das ofertas de emprego na Europa;

— É ainda entendimento da Comissão que se deve apoiar o autoemprego, reforçando assim a aposta no empreendedorismo e na inovação;

— Além de todas as medidas agora apresentadas, salienta-se que já se encontram em vigor outras iniciativas, como os programas Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus Primeiro Emprego ou Erasmus para Todos;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como se conjugam as medidas agora apresentadas na área do emprego jovem com as outras já em vigor e dinamizadas pela Comissão?

2. Com tantas medidas e propostas apresentadas, não considera a Comissão que é extremamente difícil para um jovem europeu aceder facilmente à informação sobre o emprego jovem?

3. Está a Comissão ponderar a criação de um «site» especificamente direcionado para a juventude, capaz de agregar todos os programas e medidas de incentivo ao emprego jovem?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2012)

As medidas relacionadas com a juventude do recente pacote do emprego ([1]) são totalmente consentâneas com a estratégia Europa 2020 e com as iniciativas emblemáticas «Juventude em Movimento» ([2]) «Agenda para novas qualificações e novos empregos» ([3]). Constituem um desenvolvimento da «Iniciativa Oportunidades para a Juventude» ([4]) aprovadas pela Comissão no passado mês de dezembro.

Os jovens europeus não deveriam ter dificuldades de acesso à informação sobre o emprego dos jovens. Com efeito, foi recentemente criada uma nova página web no sítio web Europa ([5]) que apresentam, de forma resumida, os objetivos e as medidas da Iniciativa Oportunidades para a Juventude. A partir desta página web, os jovens interessados podem facilmente encontrar ligações pertinentes para as ações da Comissão de luta contra o desemprego juvenil.

([1]) COM(2012)173 de 18.4.2012.
([2]) COM(2010)477 de 15.9.2010.
([3]) COM(2010)682 de 23.11.2010.
([4]) COM(2011)933 de 20.12.2011.
([5]) (http://ec.europa.eu/social/yoi).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004143/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Stimulus measures to create jobs for young people

During the European Parliament's plenary session of 18 April 2012, the Commission tabled a new package of measures designed to create more job opportunities, highlighting the need to pay particular attention to young people.

This document emphasises that 'the Commission also stresses the need to deliver on opportunities for young people, as well as developing lifelong learning'.

The Commission intends to work towards removing legal and practical obstacles to the free movement of workers, particularly through improving the portability of pensions, the tax treatment of cross-border workers, awareness of rights and obligations, and the export of respective unemployment benefits for a period longer than the current three months.

The package of measures tabled proposes to transform the EURES job seeker portal into a true European placement and recruitment platform, with innovative online self-service applications planned, to provide users with a clear geographical overview of European job offers.

The Commission also believes that self-employment should be supported, thereby strengthening support for entrepreneurship and innovation.

In addition to the abovementioned measures, it should be noted that other initiatives, such as the 'Leonardo da Vinci', 'Erasmus first job' and 'Erasmus for all' programmes, are already in force.

I wish to ask the Commission:

1. How do these recently tabled youth employment measures fit in with others already in force and promoted by the Commission?

2. With so many initiatives and proposals on the table, does the Commission not think it is extremely difficult for young Europeans to easily access information on youth employment?

3. Does the Commission intend to create a website specifically aimed at young people, to bring together all youth employment programmes and incentives?

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

The youth related measures of the recent Employment package ([1])are fully in line with the Europe 2020 strategy and with the flagship initiatives 'Youth on the Move' ([2]) and 'An Agenda for new skills and jobs' ([3]). They are building upon the 'Youth Opportunities Initiative' ([4]). adopted by the Commission last December.

Young Europeans should not have difficulties in accessing information on youth employment. Indeed, a new web page has recently been created on the Europa ([5]) website summarising the objectives and measures of the Youth Opportunities Initiative. From this web page interested young people will easily find relevant links to the Commission actions fighting youth unemployment.

([1]) COM(2012) 173, 18.4.2012.
([2]) COM(2010) 477, 15.9.2010.
([3]) COM(2010)682, 23.11.2010.
([4]) COM(2011) 933, 20.12.2011.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/yoi.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-004144/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(20. April 2012)

Betrifft: Euratom-Forschungstätigkeit im Bereich Infrastruktur und Humanressourcen

In ihrer Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-001409/2012 von Hans-Peter Martin betreffend Fördermittel für die Erforschung der Endlagerung von Atommüll schreibt Kommissarin Geoghegan-Quinn, dass im Siebten Euratom-Rahmenprogramm die Forschungstätigkeiten im Nuklearbereich die vier Hauptbereiche „Entsorgung radioaktiver Endabfälle, Reaktorsysteme, Strahlenschutz, Infrastruktur und Humanressourcen" umfassen.

— Welche prozentualen Anteile der Forschungsmittel aus dem Siebten Rahmenprogramm der Europäischen Atomgemeinschaft entfallen jeweils auf jeden der vier Hauptbereiche?

— Was ist mit dem Begriff Humanressourcen gemeint und welche konkreten Projekte fallen in diesen Bereich? Welche Fördermittel erhalten die einzelnen Projekte im Bereich Humanressourcen und in welchen Mitgliedstaaten werden sie durchgeführt?

— Welche konkreten Projekte werden im Bereich Infrastruktur durch Fördermittel aus dem Siebten Rahmenprogramm unterstützt? Welche Fördermittel erhalten die einzelnen Projekte im Bereich Infrastruktur und in welchen Mitgliedstaaten werden sie durchgeführt?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(29. Mai 2012)

Das Siebte Rahmenprogramm der Europäischen Atomgemeinschaft (Euratom) für Forschungs- und Ausbildungsmaßnahmen (2007 bis 2011) ([1]) fördert Maßnahmen im Bereich der Entsorgung radioaktiver Endabfälle mit 20 %, im Bereich Reaktorsysteme mit 39,9 %, im Bereich Strahlenschutz mit 24,5 % und im Bereich Infrastruktur und Humanressourcen mit 15,6 % des Budgets.

Bei den Projekten im Bereich Humanressourcen handelt es sich um solche aus dem Bereich „Bildung, Ausbildung und Qualifizierung", die auf Koordinierungs- und Unterstützungsmaßnahmen basieren. Die Euratom-Maßnahmen werden gemeinsam mit den Mitgliedstaaten finanziert, wobei die EU in diesem Bereich 5,77 Mio. EUR zur Unterstützung nationaler Forschungsmaßnahmen bereitgestellt hat. Die Maßnahmen werden hauptsächlich in Frankreich, Spanien, Belgien, Deutschland, Finnland, dem Vereinigten Königreich, der Tschechischen Republik, Bulgarien, Schweden, den Niederlanden und Italien durchgeführt.

Die Projekte des Siebten Euratom-Rahmenprogramms im Bereich Infrastruktur beziehen sich auf den grenzüberschreitenden Zugang zu großmaßstäblichen Infrastrukturen (TALI) und ermöglichen den Austausch von Forschern und die Durchführung von Forschungsmaßnahmen in den am besten geeigneten Infrastrukturen. Insgesamt wurden 11,6 Mio. EUR für Koordinierungs- und Unterstützungsmaßnahmen bereitgestellt. Die Maßnahmen werden hauptsächlich in Deutschland, Frankreich, Belgien, dem Vereinigten Königreich, Spanien, der Schweiz, Italien und der Tschechischen Republik durchgeführt. Eine detaillierte Aufstellung findet sich im Anhang.

([1]) Veröffentlichungen von CORDIS: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp6-euratom/library_en.html; http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/euratom-fission/library_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004144/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(20 April 2012)

Subject: Euratom research activity in the areas of infrastructure and human resources

In her reply to my Written Question E-001409/2012 on funding for research into the final storage of nuclear waste, Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn said that under the Seventh Euratom Framework Programme nuclear research activities cover four main areas: management of ultimate radioactive waste, reactor systems, radiation protection, infrastructure and human resources.

— What percentage shares of the funding for research from the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community are allocated to each of the four main areas?

— What is meant by the term 'human resources' and what specific projects does this area cover? What funding do the individual projects in the area of human resources receive and in which Member States are they carried out?

— What specific projects in the area of infrastructure are supported by funding from the Seventh Framework Programme? What funding do the individual projects in the area of infrastructure receive and in which Member States are they carried out?

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

The Seventh Framework Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) for nuclear research and training activities (2007-2011) ([1])'s level of funding is 20% towards radioactive final waste activities, 39.9% towards reactor systems, 24.5% towards radiation protection, and 15.6% towards infrastructure together with human resources.

Human resources projects are related to 'education, training and skills' projects and using coordinating and support actions (CSA). The Euratom activities are cost-shared with Member States and EUR 5.77 million EU contribution has been provided on this field in support to national research actions. They are mainly carried out in France, Spain, Belgium, Germany, Finland, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Sweden, The Netherlands and Italy.

Infrastructures projects under the FP7 Euratom Framework programme are related to transnational access to large scale infrastructures (TALI), allowing exchange of researchers and carrying out activities in the most appropriate research infrastructures. A total of EUR 11.6 million have been committed through coordinating and support actions (CSA). They are mainly carried out in Germany, France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Spain, Switzerland, Italy and the Czech Republic. A detailed list is attached.

([1]) CORDIS publications: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp6-euratom/library_en.html; http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/euratom-fission/library_en.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004146/12
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(23 april 2012)

Betreft: Verplichtstellen bijmengen tweede generatie biobrandstoffen

In Nederland wordt opgeroepen het bijmengpercentage biobrandstoffen te verhogen, onder de voorwaarde dat dit uitsluitend met tweede generatie biobrandstoffen gebeurt.

Volgens de Nederlandse regering is dat onmogelijk, omdat Richtlijn hernieuwbare energie (2009/28/EG, artikel 17, lid 8) stelt dat een separate verplichting voor tweede generatie biobrandstoffen alleen toelaatbaar is als het wordt gemotiveerd met andere argumenten dan extra duurzaamheid. De richtlijn stelt dat lidstaten bij het opleggen van verplichtingen aan brandstofleveranciers geen andere duurzaamheidsredenen mogen eisen dan al in de richtlijn zijn opgenomen.

Omdat de beweegreden voor het opleggen van een separate doelstelling voor tweede generatie biobrandstoffen juist de extra duurzaamheid is, treedt strijdigheid met de richtlijn op, aldus de Nederlandse regering. De Nederlandse regering vindt het uit juridisch oogpunt te riskant om een specifieke verplichting in te voeren voor een aandeel tweede generatie biobrandstoffen.

Tweede generatie biobrandstoffen dragen meer bij tot het tegengaan van klimaatverandering en zijn duurzamer dan eerste generatie biobrandstoffen. Het is daarom van belang dat obstakels weg worden genomen die het stimuleren van het gebruik van tweede generatie biobrandstoffen tegengaan.

Is het mogelijk om voorwaarden te stellen aan het verhogen van het bijmengpercentage biobrandstoffen zoals de voorwaarde dat dit uitsluitend gebeurt met de tweede generatie biobrandstoffen?

Zijn er juridische belemmeringen? Zo ja welke?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(25 mei 2012)

De lidstaten kunnen op nationaal niveau specifieke verplichtingen opleggen inzake het gebruik; van biobrandstoffen van de tweede generatie. Zij mogen evenwel het bijmengpercentage van biobrandstoffen niet in zulke mate optrekken dat bepaalde soorten biobrandstoffen, die voldoen aan de duurzaamheidscriteria van de richtlijn hernieuwbare energie ([1]), de facto niet mogen worden meegeteld voor het bereiken van het streefcijfer, niet in aanmerking komen voor financiële steun of niet kunnen worden meegeteld wanneer wordt nagegaan of wordt voldaan aan de verplichtingen inzake het gebruik van hernieuwbare energiebronnen. De desbetreffende specifieke verplichtingen moeten voldoen aan het bepaalde in artikel 17, lid 8, van de richtlijn.

([1]) Richtlijn 2009/28/EG, PB L 140 van 5.6.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004146/12
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(23 April 2012)

Subject: Making the blending of second-generation biofuels mandatory

In the Netherlands there are calls to increase the blend rate of biofuels, on condition that this be done exclusively with second-generation biofuels.

According to the government of the Netherlands, this is impossible because the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC, Article 17, paragraph 8) states that a separate requirement for the use of second-generation biofuels is permissible only if it is justified on grounds other than greater sustainability. The directive states that Member States may not, when imposing requirements on fuel suppliers, require sustainability grounds other than those already included in the directive.

Because the grounds for imposing a separate target for second-generation biofuels are precisely their greater sustainability, the Dutch Government considers this to be contrary to the directive. The Dutch Government finds it too risky, from a legal point of view, to introduce a specific requirement for a proportion of second-generation biofuels.

Second-generation biofuels contribute more to combating climate change and are more sustainable than first-generation biofuels. It is therefore important to remove obstacles that impede the promotion of the use of second-generation biofuels.

Is it possible to lay down conditions for raising the blend rate of biofuels, such as the condition that this may be done solely with second-generation biofuels?

Are there legal impediments to doing so? If so, what are they?

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

Member States can introduce at national level specific obligations for the use of second generation biofuels. However, they cannot raise the blend rate of biofuels in such a way that certain types of biofuels, which comply with the sustainability criteria laid down in the Renewable Energy Directive ([1]), are de facto excluded from counting towards the target, being eligible for financial support or being counted towards the renewable energy obligations. Such measures must comply with Article 17(8) of the directive.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004149/12
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(23. April 2012)

Betrifft: Bewältigung der Wirtschaftskrise

Auf europäischer Ebene sind verschiedene Maßnahmen diskutiert, teilweise verabschiedet und umgesetzt worden, um die Wirtschaftskrise zu bewältigen. Diese sollen die Ursachen der Schuldenkrisen bekämpfen sowie deren Symptome und Folgen abmildern.

Hier sind zu nennen: Fiskalpakt, Monetarisierung von Staatsschulden, Euro-Rettungsschirm, etc.

Doch retten wird uns das nicht. Zu groß sind die unterschiedlichen Finanz- und Wirtschaftsstrukturen. Das BIP pro Kopf in Österreich 2012 ist 3 x höher als in Bulgarien.

Daher stellen sich folgende Fragen:

1. Kann sich die Kommission vorstellen, die Eurozone in Nord- und Südeuro aufzuteilen?

2. Falls nein, warum nicht?

3. Wie steht die Kommission zu den Plänen, dass die hochverschuldeten Staaten die Eurozone verlassen sollten?

4. Kann sich die Kommission vorstellen, die Schuldenstaaten in die Insolvenz laufen zu lassen, um einen Neuanfang zu erleichtern?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(21. Juni 2012)

Die Einführung einer neuen Währung oder der Austritt eines Mitgliedstaates aus dem Euro-Währungsgebiet ist keinesfalls beabsichtigt oder geplant. Die Kommission arbeitet eng mit anderen Organen und Akteuren einschließlich des Europäischen Parlaments zusammen, um die Wirtschaftsführung und die Finanzstabilität im Euro-Währungsgebiet zu verbessern und somit das künftige Funktionieren der Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion abzusichern. Die Unwiderruflichkeit der Mitgliedschaft im Euro-Währungsgebiet ist ein integraler Bestandteil des Europäischen Vertragswerks (Artikel 140 Absatz 3 AEUV).

Hoch verschuldete Mitgliedstaaten sollten nach Ansicht der Kommission geeignete Maßnahmen ergreifen, um die Tragfähigkeit der öffentlichen Finanzen zu gewährleisten und ihr Wachstumspotenzial zu steigern. Eine Reihe von Mitgliedstaaten haben in diesem Zusammenhang wesentliche Maßnahmen zur Haushaltskonsolidierung und für Strukturreformen getroffen. Die Anstrengungen zur Durchführung der angekündigten Maßnahmen sollten fortgesetzt und erforderlichenfalls weitere Maßnahmen verabschiedet werden. Die kürzlich auf EU-Ebene im Rahmen der haushaltspolitischen und makroökonomischen Überwachung (d. h. des Europäischen Semesters und des Verfahrens zur Bekämpfung makroökonomischer Ungleich-gewichte) umgesetzten Maßnahmen und der neue Aufsichtsrahmen für den EU-Banken- und Finanzmarktsektor dürften ebenfalls dazu beitragen, ein weiteres Anwachsen der makroökonomischen Ungleichgewichte in den Mitgliedstaaten zu verhindern und die makrofinanzielle Stabilität in der EU zu stärken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004149/12
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(23 April 2012)

Subject: Coping with the economic crisis

At a European level various measures for coping with the economic crisis have been discussed and, in some cases, agreed upon and implemented. These measures are supposed to combat the causes of the debt crises and alleviate their symptoms and consequences.

They include the fiscal pact, monetisation of Member State debts, the euro safety net, etc.

But all this will not save us. The differences in financial and economic structures are too great. GDP per head in Austria in 2012 is three times higher than in Bulgaria.

That being so:

1. Can the Commission envisage separating the euro area into a northern and a southern euro?

2. If not, why not?

3. How does the Commission view the plans according to which the heavily indebted Member States should leave the euro area?

4. Can the Commission envisage allowing the indebted states to go bankrupt in order to make it easier for them to start again?

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

There is no intention or plan to set up a new currency or to have a Member State out of the euro area. In order to underpin the functioning of economic and monetary union for the future, the Commission is working closely with other institutions and stakeholders, including the Parliament, to enhance economic governance and financial stability in the euro area. The irrevocability of membership in the euro area is an integral part of the Treaty framework (Article 140(3) TFEU).

With regard to heavily indebted Member States, the Commission is of the opinion that they should take appropriate measures to ensure fiscal sustainability and increase their growth potential. In this regard, a number of Member States have put in place important fiscal consolidation and structural reform measures. Efforts should continue to implement the announced measures and to adopt further action if needed. Recent measures implemented at EU level in the context of fiscal and macroeconomic surveillance (e.g. the European Semester and the macroeconomic imbalance procedure) and the new EU banking and financial market supervisory framework should also contribute to prevent the accumulation of macroeconomic imbalances in Member States and reinforce macro-financial stability in the EU.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004150/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κανόνες καταπόνησης των ιπταμένων

Στις 4.4.2012, η Ένωση Ευρωπαίων Πιλότων (ECA), σε ανακοίνωσή της, εξέφρασε την αντίθεσή της σχετικά με την τελευταία πρόταση του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Ασφάλειας Αεροπορίας (EASA) για τους κανόνες καταπόνησης των ιπταμένων. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, η ECA καταλογίζει στον EASA ότι αγνόησε επιστημονικά δεδομένα για την σωματική κούραση των πιλότων και υιοθέτησε τις θέσεις των αεροπορικών εταιριών που θέλουν ελαστικότερους κανόνες για τις ώρες εργασίας των πιλότων σε βάρος της ασφάλειας των πτήσεων. Η Ένωση των Πιλότων τονίζει, μεταξύ άλλων, τα εξής σημεία:

1. Οι νυχτερινές πτήσεις, που είναι πολύ επικίνδυνες, θα έπρεπε να περιοριστούν σε 10 ώρες αντί για 11 που προτείνει ο EASA, συντασσόμενος με τις αεροπορικές εταιρίες,

2. Σύμφωνα με την πρόταση του EASA, οι πιλότοι και το πλήρωμα πρέπει να είναι διαθέσιμοι όταν καλούνται από την εταιρία τους· η πρόταση του EASA επιτρέπει οι πιλότοι να οδηγούν μετά από 20 ώρες πτήσης, έχοντας μείνει άυπνοι για 22 ώρες και αυτό δεν είναι ασφαλές.

3. Η πρόταση του EASA επιτρέπει πολλές ώρες εργασίας με πολλές απογειώσεις σε πλήρη αντίθεση με τα επιστημονικά δεδομένα για τις ασφαλείς πτήσεις.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: σκοπεύει να ανακαλέσει την πρόταση για τους κανόνες καταπόνησης των ιπτάμενων; Θεωρεί πως η πρόταση αυτή εξασφαλίζει τις προδιαγραφές για ασφαλείς πτήσεις; Θα λάβει δέοντως υπόψη τις ενστάσεις της ECA;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει ακόμη καμμιά απόφαση σχετικά με τους κανόνες καταπόνησης των πιλότων. Πριν λάβει οποιαδήποτε απόφαση, η Επιτροπή θα μελετήσει προσεκτικά την τελική πρόταση (γνώμη) του Οργανισμού, που αναμένεται για το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2012. Με βάση την γνώμη του EASA η Επιτροπή θα εκτιμήσει κατά πόσο χρειάζονται τροποποιήσεις οι ισχύοντες κανόνες και, αν χρειασθεί, ενδέχεται να θεσπίσει την ενδεδειγμένη νομοθεσία με την μέθοδο της επιτροπολογίας (κανονιστική διαδικασία με έλεγχο).

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει επίσης το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντησή της στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-002344/2011, E-003346/2012 και E-004226/2011 ([1]).

([1]) Βλέπε http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004150/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2012)

Subject: Pilot fatigue rules

On 4 April 2012, the European Cockpit Association (ECA), in a press release, expressed its opposition to the recent proposal of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) regarding pilot fatigue rules. More specifically, the ECA claims that the EASA has ignored scientific evidence regarding pilot physical fatigue and has adopted the position of the airline companies, who want more flexible rules on pilots' working hours at the expense of flight safety. Among other points, the ECA emphasises the following:

1. Night flights, which are very dangerous, should be restricted to 10 hours, instead of 11 as proposed by the EASA in agreement with the airlines;

2. According to the EASA proposal, pilots and crew must remain on standby so as to be available when required by their airline: the EASA proposal allows pilots to fly after 20 hours of duty and after having been awake for 22 hours, and this is not safe;

3. The EASA proposal allows long working hours with multiple take-offs, in total contradiction to the scientific evidence on flight safety.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to seek the withdrawal of the proposal for pilot fatigue rules? Does it consider that the proposal meets flight safety requirements? Will it take due account of the ECA's objections?

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

The Commission has not yet taken any decision on the subject of pilot fatigue rules. Before taking a decision the Commission will carefully consider Agency's final proposal (Opinion) expected in the second half of 2012. Based on the EASA Opinion, the Commission will assess whether amendments to the current rules need to be made and, if considered necessary, may adopt appropriate legislation through comitology (regulatory procedure with scrutiny).

The Commission further refers the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-002344/2011, E-003346/2012 and E-004226/2011 ([1]).

([1]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004151/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 Απριλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χώρος Ανεξέλεγκτης Διάθεσης Απορριμμάτων Δήμου Ερμιονίδος

Στο δημοτικό διαμέρισμα Διδύμων του Δήμου Ερμιονίδος, εντός δασικής έκτασης, εξακολουθεί να υπάρχει Χώρος Ανεξέλεγκτης Διάθεσης Απορριμμάτων (ΧΑΔΑ). Πριν από 2,5 περίπου χρόνια οι αρμόδιες αρχές τοποθέτησαν «δεματοποιητή» για να μειωθεί ο όγκος των απορριμμάτων. Τα δέματα αυτά όμως παρέμειναν εκεί και σήμερα υπάρχουν περίπου 18 000, στα οποία προστίθενται και αλλά απορρίμματα που δεν έχουν δεματοποιηθεί. Τα προβλήματα έχουν διαπιστώσει τόσο η Ειδική Υπηρεσία Επιθεωρητών Περιβάλλοντος όσο και το Τμήμα Περιβάλλοντος της Περιφέρειας. Ο δήμος ενέκρινε αρχικά μελέτη αποκατάστασης του ΧΑΔΑ, που όμως προκάλεσε τις διαμαρτυρίες των κατοίκων καθώς η μελέτη προβλέπει την ταφή των απορριμμάτων χωρίς να λαμβάνει υπόψη ότι το έδαφος είναι υδατοπερατό και στην περιοχή υπάρχουν υπόγεια ύδατα που χρησιμοποιούνται για την ύδρευση και την άρδευση της περιοχής, αλλά και χωρίς τελικά να υπάρχει κανένα σχέδιο για την διαχείριση των απορριμμάτων.

Η περίπτωση αυτή δυστυχώς δεν είναι μοναδική. Υπό την πίεση της εύρεσης άμεσης λύσης για τα απορρίμματα για να αποφευχθούν τα πρόστιμα από την ΕΕ για τους ΧΑΔΑ, προωθείται η (υγειονομική ή μη) ταφή των απορριμμάτων και δεν γίνεται κανένας σχεδιασμός για την μείωση και ανακύκλωση των απορριμμάτων και την διαλογή στην πηγή.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: γνωρίζει την συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση του ΧΑΔΑ στη θέση Δίδυμα Ερμιονίδος; Συγχρηματοδοτεί το έργο αποκατάστασης του ΧΑΔΑ; Έχει προτείνει στις ελληνικές αρχές να προωθήσουν την πρόληψη και την ανακύκλωση στην πηγή αντί για την «δεματοποίηση» και την ταφή των απορριμμάτων; Τι πρόοδο σημειώνει η Ελλάδα σε αυτή την κατεύθυνση;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιουνίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει την ανησυχία της για την κατάσταση όσον αφορά τη διαχείριση των αποβλήτων στην Ελλάδα. Σύμφωνα με τις τελευταίες διαθέσιμες στατιστικές, το 82 % των αστικών αποβλήτων που παρήχθησαν στην Ελλάδα καταλήγει σε χώρους υγειονομικής ταφής. Αυτό έρχεται σε αντίθεση με το 38 % του ενωσιακού μέσου όρου.

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει υπόψη της την ιδιαίτερη περίπτωση του Δήμου Ερμιονίδος την οποία της έθεσε υπόψη το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή συνεχίζει να λαμβάνει μέτρα για την πλήρη εφαρμογή της απόφασης του Δικαστηρίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (υπόθεση C-502/03) από την Ελλάδα σχετικά με την έλλειψη κατάλληλης περιβαλλοντικής υποδομής για τη διαχείριση αποβλήτων και την ύπαρξη ανεξέλεγκτης και παράνομης διάθεσης αποβλήτων σε ολόκληρη τη χώρα. Τα μέτρα αυτά αφορούν πρωτίστως τη σωστή χρήση της διαθέσιμης ενωσιακής συγχρηματοδότησης, βραχυπρόθεσμα, και τη συμμετοχή της νεοσυσταθείσας Ομάδας Δράσης (ΟΔ) για την Ελλάδα ώστε να παράσχει τεχνική βοήθεια στον τομέα της διαχείρισης αποβλήτων.

Κατά την πρώτη συνάντηση εργασίας της εν λόγω ΟΔ που πραγματοποιήθηκε στην Αθήνα τον περασμένο Απρίλιο καθορίστηκαν οι μελλοντικές ενέργειες με βάση την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών και εμπειρογνωμοσύνης με άλλα κράτη μέλη με σκοπό την πρόληψη και την ανακύκλωση των αποβλήτων στην Ελλάδα. Η ΟΔ κατέληξε στο συμπέρασμα ότι οι εν λόγω δράσεις πρέπει να αφορούν τα χαρακτηριστικά κάθε περιοχής, την οικονομική βιωσιμότητά της και την ανάγκη εξορθολογισμού των διοικητικών και δημοσιονομικών δαπανών μέσω της προώθησης της συνεργασίας μεταξύ δήμων.

Δεν υπάρχουν συγχρηματοδοτούμενα έργα διαχείρισης αποβλήτων στον Δήμο Ερμιονίδος.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004151/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2012)

Subject: Uncontrolled waste disposal site in the municipality of Ermionida

There is still an uncontrolled waste disposal site in a wooded area of the Didima district in the municipality of Ermionida. About two and a half years ago, the competent authorities imposed a 'parcelling' system to reduce the volume of waste. These parcels still remain and now there are around 18 000 of them, to which has been added further waste which has not been 'parcelled'. Both the Special Environmental Inspectorate and the regional authority's environmental department have confirmed the existence of these problems. The municipality initially adopted a study on the restoration of the site, which provoked protests from residents, since the study specified that waste sh ould be buried but failed to take account of the permeable nature of the soil and the use of underground water sources for the area's water supply and irrigation; in addition, the study contains no plan for waste management.

This unfortunate situation is not unique. Under pressure to find an immediate solution for waste and in order to avoid EU fines for uncontrolled waste disposal sites, the burial of the waste is being promoted (whether it is hygienic or not) and there is no plan to reduce or recycle waste or to sort it at source.

Can the Commission answer the following: is it aware of this waste disposal site situation in the Didima district of Ermionida? Is it co-financing the restoration work? Has it suggested to the Greek authorities that they should promote waste reduction and recycling at source as opposed to 'parcelling' and burial? What progress is Greece making in this direction?

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

The Commission is concerned about the situation regarding waste management in Greece. According to the latest available statistics, 82% of the municipal waste generated in Greece is landfilled. This contrasts with the 38% EU average.

The Commission is not aware of the particular case in Ermionida brought to its attention by the Honourable Member. However, The Commission continues to take measures towards the full implementation of the Court ruling (Case C-502/03) by Greece for the lack of appropriate environmental infrastructure for waste management and the existence of uncontrolled and illegal waste disposal accross the country. These measures primarily bear on the proper use of available EU co-financing in the short term and the involvement of the newly-created Task Force (TF) for Greece to provide technical assistance in the field of waste management.

A first workshop of this TF held in Athens last April has set the actions for the future based on exchange of best practices and expertise with other Member States towards waste prevention and recycling in Greece. The TF concluded that such actions should have regard of the characteristics of each region, their financial viability and the need to rationalize administrative and financial costs by promoting cooperation amongst municipalities.

There are no co-financed waste management projects in the municipality of Ermionida.